



Dawson Regional Planning Commission

On The Land We Walk Together • Nän käk ndä tr'ädäl

Annual Report 2019-2020

April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

Prepared by:

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1. Introduction

The Minister of Energy Mines and Resources appointed the Dawson Regional Planning Commission (the Commission) in February 2019 and publicly announced the appointments on March 7, 2019.

The mandate of the Commission is to recommend a regional land use plan for the Dawson Region that is consistent with, and achieves, the objectives of Chapter 11 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement. Commission Members and staff include:

Members

Debbie Nagano, Chair
Art Webster, Vice Chair
Alice McCulley
Angie Joseph-Rear
Dan Reynolds
John Flynn

Staff

Tim Van Hinte, Senior Land Use Planner
Katie Fraser, Land Use Planner

Yukon Land Use Planning Council Support Staff

Ron Cruikshank, Director
Heidi Hansen, Senior Financial Administrator
Sam Skinner, Senior Planner
Nicole Percival, Land Use Planner

The Commission is assisted by the Yukon Land Use Planning Council (YLUPC) in carrying out its mandate in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between YLUPC and the Commission (see Appendix F of the Transfer Payment Funding Agreement). In addition, as indicated in the Commission's Terms of Reference (ToR) (Updated June 2019), the Commission is supported by the Technical Working Group (TWG) (see ToR Appendix B) and the Senior Liaison Committee (SLC) (see ToR Appendix C).

Overview of major planning activities in 2019-2020:

- YLUPC and Commission staff facilitated an orientation and training session for new Commission members in April 2019;
- The Commission held four regular meetings (April, June, September, December 2019) and one working session (February 2020);
- The Commission revised and endorsed its Vision Statement in September 2019;
- The Commission and staff produced a Draft Issues & Interest Report and Resource Assessment Report following a public engagement process on both documents in the fall and winter;
- The Commission and staff conducted its first phase of public engagement between October 2019 – January 2020 including two successful community meetings in Dawson and Whitehorse; and
- The Commission and staff began work on draft goals and objectives for the land use plan.

2. Planning

2.1 Planning Process Activities

Planning process activities include Commission meetings and training, staff working group meetings and public engagement activities (see also Section 3 of this report).

Key highlights in 2019-2020 included the following:

- A two-day **Commission orientation and training session** facilitated by an independent contractor and supported by YLUPC was held in early April. The group covered a variety of topics including, but not limited to, the TH Final Agreement, Terms of Reference, the regional planning process and consensus-based decision-making.
- The Commission held its **inaugural meeting** in Dawson City on April 29-30, 2019.
- Commission members and staff participated in a **flight tour of the planning region** on June 20, 2019. The tour included the northwestern portion (e.g. Tombstone range, Tatonduk River watershed, Yukon River) and southern portion (e.g. Sixty Mile River watershed, White River, Indian River valley) of the planning region.
- Public outreach activities included **information booths and/or presentations** at the Dawson International Gold Show, Council of Yukon First Nations General Assembly, Renewable Resource Councils Annual Gathering and Yukon Geoscience Forum.
- The Commission and staff hosted two **public engagement sessions** in Dawson City and Whitehorse in November 2019. The objective was to present the Commission's Vision Statement and seek public feedback on the draft Issues & Interests Report and Resource Assessment Report. A total of approximately 90 people attended the community meetings.
- A Land Use Planner was hired to assist the Commission and a small workspace was secured in Dawson City for this employee.

2.2 Planning Products

The Commission is required to produce a number of products to fulfill its planning and public engagement responsibilities. These planning products are outlined in Section 10 of the ToR and in the Commission's 2019-2020 work plan.

Vision Statement and Planning Principles

This document was developed and approved by the previous Commission and the new Commission is required to review, modify if required and adopt the document.

Summary of work completed: The Commission reviewed the document at its June meeting and ratified the new Vision Statement on September 25, 2019.

Resource Assessment Report

This report provides a summary of the region's known economic, social, ecological and traditional/cultural values. The report was developed and approved by the previous Commission and has been updated by Council and Commission staff with support from TWG. The new Commission is required to review, modify if required and adopt the document.

Summary of work completed: Staff completed a draft of the Resource Assessment Report in August 2019 and provided the draft report to the Commission for review. The draft report was released to the public for review and feedback between October 2019 – January 2020. The report was subsequently revised based on public feedback and with the help of TWG in the spring of 2020.

Issues and Interests Report

This report provides a summary of key planning issues and interests identified by the Parties and the public to be considered through development of the plan. The report was developed and approved by the previous Commission and the new Commission is required to review, modify if required and adopt the document.

Summary of work completed: Staff revised the report based on the issues and interests submissions provided by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (August 27, 2018 and April 16, 2019) and Yukon Government (June 2019). The updated report was reviewed by the Commission in September 2019 and released to the public for review and feedback between October 2019 – January 2020. The report was subsequently revised based on public feedback and with the help of TWG in the spring of 2020.

In Your Words – Summary Report on Public Engagement

This draft report was prepared by staff to provide a summary of feedback received from public engagement activities between October 2019 – January 2020. The objective of this first phase of public engagement was to understand public perspectives on information that has been collected to date (i.e. draft Issues & Interests Report and Resource Assessment Report) and the key planning issues in the Region. Key statistics from this engagement period include:

- Approximately 90 people attended community meetings in Dawson City and Whitehorse in November 2019;
- Over 300 people fully or partially completed online surveys; and
- Staff received 18 formal written submissions from people or groups and an additional 10 email responses and/or phone calls.

Summary of work completed: Staff compiled, processed and summarized input received from the public and plan partners in January 2020 to be presented at the Commission's February meeting. Following preparation of the preliminary draft report, the Commission and staff identified some gaps in public input and further reached out to youth and tourism industry groups. A session with TH citizens planned for the Commission's February meeting was postponed due to the unfortunate passing of an elder in the community. However, staff worked with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Land Stewardship Framework Program to engage with citizens via online surveys and phone interviews. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in lead this initiative with support from

Commission staff and information has been incorporated into the report. The report is expected to be finalized in summer 2020.

Cumulative Effects Report

This draft report was prepared by YLUPC staff and explores the potential cumulative effects of future land use in the planning region. The report is to be reviewed by the Parties before being reviewed and endorsed by the Commission.

Summary of work completed: The draft report was circulated to the Parties (through TWG) in the spring of 2019 and preliminary comments were received in November 2019. Staff held six separate meetings with technical staff from the Parties to help review and update the report. Meetings were held the week of December 9-12th, 2019 and involved representatives from both Parties (TH and YG). The objectives of the meetings were to review previously developed scenarios and to explore potential effects from surface disturbance. In addition, a new Cumulative Effects Working Group was formed in the winter of 2020 based on advice from SLC. The main objective of the working group is to provide guidance to the Commission on how to address cumulative effects in the Draft Plan.

In summary, staff worked on updating sections of report based on the December technical meetings and meetings with the working group. This work is ongoing.

Draft Plan

The Draft Plan includes goals, objectives and concepts developed during internal discussions and input from the Commission, the Parties and the public.

Summary of work completed: The Commission and staff began development of goals and objectives for the Draft Plan in the winter and spring of 2020 with input from TWG. In addition, staff began developing the Draft Plan document and started writing introductory chapters.

2.3 Variance in Work Plan

In summary, the Commission completed many of the elements of its work plan for the period of April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020. Key variances in the work plan since submission of the Interim Report in September 2019 include the following:

- Following the Commission's first public engagement period in the fall of 2019, staff anticipated that documentation of public feedback would occur in December 2019. However, the Commission and staff decided to extend the commenting period to early January 2020 to allow the public additional time to provide feedback. Due to the additional volume of feedback received, and identified gaps in public input (e.g. seniors/elders, youth, tourism industry groups), more work than anticipated was required to produce the In Your Words Summary Report on Public Engagement. The report is expected to be finalized in summer 2020.
- After reviewing public feedback on the draft Issues & Interests Report and Resource Assessment Report, the Commission and staff concluded that some additional revisions to both reports were necessary. Staff worked with TWG and other technical experts to

further update the reports however this required more staff time than anticipated. Both reports are expected to be finalized in spring 2020.

- The Commission’s meeting scheduled for February 19-20, 2020 was postponed due to the unforeseen passing of an elder in the community. Unfortunately, the session with TH citizens planned for this meeting was also postponed. While the Commission and staff did manage to hold an internal working session on February 19, 2020, the regular public meeting was rescheduled to early April. However, restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic took effect in mid-March, creating a high degree of uncertainty for the planning process in 2020-2021.

2.4 Other Reports and Documents

The Commission and staff produced other reports and documents in 2019-2020 as follows:

DRPC Policies and Procedures – The Commission endorsed a policies and procedures handbook in June 2019. This document was drafted by YLUPC and reviewed by the Parties in 2018-2019 (see ToR Section 6.5).

DRPC Public Engagement Strategy - Meaningful public participation is critical to any planning process and the Commission must strive for open and representative public engagement processes using transparent strategies (see ToR Section 9.7). Accordingly, the Commission approved a public engagement strategy in September 2019 to help guide public participation throughout the planning process.

Senior Planner Reports – These reports are intended to update the Commission and the public on the work of staff and are presented as part of each Commission meeting. Staff prepared four reports in 2019-2020 (June, September, November 2019 and February 2020).

Interim Report – The Commission submitted its Interim Report in accordance with the Transfer Payment Funding Agreement (TPFA) in September 2019.

Audited Financial Statements – The Commission’s audited financial statements were completed and submitted in accordance with the TPFA in July 2020. There was no management letter associated with the audit.

3. Commission Meetings

Commission Meetings

The following table lists Commission meetings and training for the period of April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020.

Date	Subject	Location
Apr 9-10/19	Commission Orientation and Training	Downtown Hotel, Dawson City
Apr 15-16/19	TH 101 Course	TH Administration Building, Dawson City

Date	Subject	Location
Apr 29-30/19	Commission Meeting #1	KIAC, Dawson City
Jun 18-19/19	Commission Meeting #2	KIAC, Dawson City
Jun 20/19	Commission and staff flight tour	Dawson Planning Region
Sep 24-25/19	Commission Meeting #3	Downtown Hotel, Dawson City
Nov 13/19	Public Engagement Open House	KIAC, Dawson City
Nov 20/19	Public Engagement Open House	Yukon Inn, Whitehorse
Dec 4-5/19	Commission Meeting #4	Downtown Hotel, Dawson City
Feb 19/20	Commission Meeting #5 (Working Session Only*)	Yukon College, Dawson City

*Regular meeting postponed as a result of the unexpected passing of an elder in the community.

Technical Working Group Meetings

Staff attended the following TWG meetings for the period of April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020.

Date	Location
17-Apr-19	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse
9-May-19	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse
28-May-19	TH Admin. Office, Dawson City
18-Jul-19	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse
15-Aug-19	EMR Boardroom, Whitehorse
5-Sep-19	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse
26-Sep-19	Downtown Hotel, Dawson City
10-Oct-19	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse
28-Oct-19	Conference call, YLUPC Boardroom – CE Report
14-Nov-19	DRPC office, Dawson City
3-Dec-19	Yukon College, Dawson City
10-Jan-20	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse
30-Jan-20	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse and DRPC Office, Dawson
18-Feb-20	TH Admin. Office, Dawson City
16-Mar-20	YLUPC Boardroom, Whitehorse and DRPC Office, Dawson

Senior Liaison Committee Meetings

Commission members and/or staff attended the following SLC meetings for the period of April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020.

Date	Location
01-May-19	Conference call
23-Oct-19	Elijah Smith Building, Whitehorse
3-Dec-19	TH Administrative Office, Dawson City
07-Feb-20	Elijah Smith Building, Whitehorse

Public Engagement Activities and Other Meetings

The following table lists other key meetings/events that Commission members and/or staff have participated in for the period of April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020.

Date	Subject	Individual/Group	Method
May 17-18/19	Public event	Dawson International Gold Show	Information booth
Jun 13/19	Meet & greet	Klondike Place Miners Association Yukon Chamber of Mines	In person meeting
Jun 14/19	Meet & greet	White River First Nation – GIS staff	In person meeting
Jun 25-27/19	Public event	Council of Yukon First Nations General Assembly	Information booth
Sep 4/19	Meet & greet	Yukon Water Board	In person meeting
Sep 9/19	Status update	Wildlife Conservation Society	In person meeting
Oct 7/19	Status update	Dawson District RRC	In person meeting
Oct 30/19	Invited participant	Canadian Wildlife Service: Priority Place – Yukon South Beringia	Round table
Nov 12/19	City of Dawson Planning Priorities	City of Dawson, Mayor and Council/CAO	In person meeting
Nov 15/19	Public event	RRC Annual Gathering	Information booth
Nov 19-20/19	Public event	Yukon Geoscience Forum	Presentation and information booth
Dec 9-12/19	Cumulative Effects Workshops	YG and TH technical experts	In person / video conference meetings
Jan 10/20	Youth Engagement	TH Cultural Education Coordinators	In person meeting
Jan 16/20	Cumulative Effects	Cumulative Effects Working Group (YG, TH, YLUPC staff)	In person / teleconference
Jan 17/20	Status update	YESAB Dawson DO staff	In person meeting
Jan 22/20	Wildland Fire Management: Community Protection Plan	Wildland Fire Management staff and relevant representatives from the community	In person meeting
Feb 4/20	Cumulative Effects	Cumulative Effects Working Group	In person / teleconference
Mar 10/20	Status update	YESAB Dawson DO staff	In person meeting
Mar 12/20	Cumulative Effects	Cumulative Effects Working Group	In person / video conference meeting

4. Next Steps in the Planning Process

The Commission's Final Recommended Work Plan and Budget 2020-2021 was submitted and accepted by the Parties and YLUPC in February 2020. At the time, the Commission anticipated completing the following key milestones and activities in 2020-2021:

- **Public Engagement: Plan Goals and Direction** – The Commission anticipates holding public engagement events in April-May 2020. The event would include presentation of:
 - “What We Heard” from public feedback on planning issues and interests from engagement sessions in November 2019;
 - The Commission's goal statements and plan direction; and
 - Discussion of potential planning and management tools to be used to address issues (e.g. Landscape Management Units, zoning, cumulative effects management).

The events would occur in both Dawson City and Whitehorse to gather public feedback to help the Commission build the Draft Plan.

- **Draft Plan** – The Draft Plan includes goals, objectives and concepts developed during discussions and input from the Commission, the Parties and the public. The Commission will continue its work developing, writing and assembling the Draft Plan between April and September 2020 through an iterative process with input from key plan partners. Subsequently, the Draft Plan will be submitted in October 2020, including a “plain language” summary document for the public.
- **Public Engagement: Draft Plan** – The Commission will conduct a public review of the Draft Plan and host public engagement events in October-November 2020. The events would occur in both Dawson City and Whitehorse to gather public feedback on the Draft Plan and to help guide submission of the Recommended Plan. Following the engagement, the Commission will prepare a report on Draft Plan consultation in December 2020.
- **Recommended Plan** – The Recommended Plan is the complete regional land use plan based on Chapter 11 and taking into account the Commission's vision and values and feedback from the Parties and public on the Draft Plan. Following review of comments on the Draft Plan, the Commission will work towards submitting a Recommended Plan to the Parties by March 2021, including a “plain language” summary document for the public.

However, since the final work plan and budget was submitted, the COVID-19 pandemic had spread worldwide and restrictions in the Yukon took effect in mid-March, creating a high degree of uncertainty for the planning process in 2020-2021. With full support from the YLUPC and Commission members, staff continue to work from home, and are balancing the need to prioritize their families while remaining active in their planning roles. The Commission continues to work out the details of how to proceed in these unprecedented times.