



Strategic Plan

2015 - 2020

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDT	Community Development Team
CS	Community Services
FCM	Federation of Canadian Municipalities
LAC	Local Advisory Committee
MARC	Municipal Act Review Committee
OTOF	Our Towns, Our Futures
YG	Yukon Government

1. BACKGROUND, VISION & MISSION

The Association of Yukon Communities (AYC) is an umbrella organization that supports and works on behalf of Yukon communities to help them provide strong governance and services for their citizens. This plan reflects the work done by AYC members at a planning session in Faro on Sept 20, 2014, which was then refined by the Executive Committee.

While it is time to consider new goals and objectives for the next five years, AYC continues to work towards the **vision** for the future outlined in its 2009-2014 strategic plan:

The Association of Yukon Communities is a strong and vibrant organization respected by federal, territorial and First Nation governments. With AYC's support, AYC members are effectively and sustainably governing their communities, thereby improving the quality of life for all Yukoners.

AYC also continues to operate under its **existing mission** (what AYC does to make the vision a reality):

The Association of Yukon Communities works to build and sustain strong and effective local governments through its program and services, by serving as a spokesperson on common issues of concern.

This document presents the Goals, Objectives and Strategies for the next five years, 2015 - 2020, along with summaries of key ideas and discussion points from the planning session (see the Appendix for a list of participants). Please note that detailed notes from the planning session are available in a separate document entitled *AYC Strategic Planning 2015 - 2020: Workshop Notes*.

2. TAKING STOCK - AYC OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Before setting the course for the next five years, it is important to take stock of what happened during the last five. Key points and highlights from this exercise at the planning workshop are presented below.

Success in Positive Partnerships

AYC has achieved a good deal when working in a positive collaboration (as opposed to confrontational) approach, particularly with the Yukon Government. While members still feel a need to advocate for municipal interests at the Territorial and Federal levels, it is important to them to do so using a solution-oriented approach.

OTOF and MARC

The Our Towns, Our Futures (OTOF) and Municipal Act Review Committee (MARC) processes have been very significant for AYC, and will continue for some time to come. Both processes have been empowering for AYC and its members in terms of having a strong voice and having attention on community interests. It is important that AYC continues to have a strong role in both processes.

Community Advisor Turnover

There has been significant turnover in the Community Advisor positions at YG Community Services. This has caused frustration with stalled projects, lost momentum, and the need to continually develop new relationships. AYC members have sometimes had to deal directly with Assistant Deputy Ministers, which is inefficient for all concerned. AYC would like to see more stability in these positions.

Proactive Approach

Members are generally happy with how AYC has taken advantage of opportunities that have arisen, but would like to see more of a proactive approach to setting priorities and advocating for them. AYC meetings should devote more time for this purpose so as to avoid operating in a reactive mode. This would require times that are specifically devoted to strategic thinking, and checking back in on the progress of the strategic plan.

3. NEEDS AND ROLES FOR AYC

What do you most value about AYC? What would you miss if the doors closed?

AYC member's value the united advocacy role played by the association and the opportunity it provides to have a collective voice. The AGM is seen as a forum to come together and share ideas and identify common needs. AYC is a key link between Yukon communities and the Yukon Government, particularly in Whitehorse where a significant amount of discussion and decision-making occurs. Members also value the informal connections that happen during meetings in different communities. These are opportunities to build relationships among members, and to participate in local activities and events.

AYC is valued training resource for new councilors and managers in the communities. Further, AYC provides resources to address costly technical training required for local service delivery (e.g. waste water treatment). The association also provides a venue for sharing best practices, success and resources among the members.

Where could AYC play a different or stronger role for you?

Members would like to see more direct engagement with AYC about their specific priorities and issues. Regular AYC meetings generally focus on business at hand, and do not allow much opportunity for proactive strategizing. To this end, members would like to see a specific time for discussing strategic priorities that would guide AYC's advocacy and lobbying efforts.

AYC can play a role in offsetting turnover and the lack of capacity at the municipal level in several ways. Regular updates on the AYC strategic plan will increase engagement with members, and help to address local turnover. Common resources such as skills banks (of AYC members) and best practices directories help expand local capacity by directing members where to go for different issues.

Where is AYC's role unclear?

It is not clear whether AYC's mandate is limited to topics and issues of common concern among all members, or whether AYC also has a role supporting municipalities on specific, individual needs. Some issues are shared by all communities, but their solutions have unique, specific characteristics in each community (e.g. waste management). Clearly, the capacity of AYC staff needs to be considered in regards to this question. AYC members would like support from their association without pushing it past its limits. Some members are concerned that a focus on smaller, individual issues that look like "easy wins" could distract AYC and its partners from broader, more system-wide goals.

4. GOALS FOR 2015 - 2020

The broad goals below encompass the desired future for AYC in five years. They were developed by asking “Where do you want AYC to be in five years? What has been accomplished? What does the organization look like?”

1. Advocacy & Partnerships

AYC advocates for the strategic priorities identified by its members in a proactive, collaborative fashion. AYC works in partnership with other governments and agencies to address the issues of importance to Yukon communities.

2. Financial Stability

AYC is a financially sustainable organization, with adequate resources to meet its operational needs, and to provide the services and resources desired by members.

3. Identity & Engagement

AYC is known as the main umbrella agency working on behalf of Yukon communities, with a strong identity and image. Members think of AYC as the “go-to” agency for addressing municipal issues, and feel engaged and empowered through their participation.

4. Training & Resources

AYC offers training to communities that empowers their elected officials and staff to do their jobs well. AYC also supports training around the provision of local municipal services, and serves as an information center for members to access resources that help them address their needs and issues.

Looking back, these broad goals are largely congruent with those identified in the previous strategic plan for 2009 - 2014. This reflects that AYC’s overall mandate and reason for existing remains consistent with what was developed by previous members. Current members have developed new strategies and objectives to reflect where AYC is at in terms of reaching these goals, and what needs to happen over the next five years.

5. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Each goal identified above is paired with general strategies to help address barriers to success, and with specific objectives that will move them forward over the next five years.

Goal	Strategies	Objectives
1. Advocacy & Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify key strategic priorities to focus effort ○ Take a proactive, constructive advocacy role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Devote specific time at meetings and AGMs for strategic discussions ➤ Continue to participate in OTOF and MARC processes ➤ Work directly with YG to assist in the development of a comprehensive waste management program for the territory
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that municipal issues are on the Federal and Yukon agendas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocate for AYC issues at debates and forums during next election ➤ Continue advocating at the Federal level with FCM ➤ Ask MP candidates if they are Hometown Champions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve Community Services' staff value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocate for more consistent Community Advisory staffing stability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop small working groups to focus on results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify potential projects for a Community Development Team ➤ Explore the development of issue specific AYC internal working groups

Goal	Strategies	Objectives
2. Financial Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase income from current financial sources ○ Demonstrate the real dollar value of the services delivered by municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lobby for a general and/or annual grant increase for AYC, comparable to similar organizations ➤ Increase AYC membership to generate more revenue from fees ➤ Lobby for an increase in the CMG through formula revisions and add-ons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore diversifying sources of revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate other appropriate and feasible sources of funding for AYC

3. Identity & Engagement

Goal	Strategies	Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Raise the profile of AYC with public, YG and Federal gov't 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote the use of the AYC office for members to meet others ➤ Meet regularly with the Minister of Community Services and other Ministers when appropriate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthen the relationship between AYC and its members ○ Improve participation and accessibility of AYC meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct community visits to build personal relationships ➤ Devote time at AYC meetings to checking in on the relationship ➤ AYC members to forward copies of meeting minutes to the office ➤ Develop options for moderate use of video-conferencing for members to attend meetings ➤ Provide opportunities at the AGM to allow for more idea exchanges between members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage participation of LACs and First Nation gov'ts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Directly engage LACs and , where appropriate, FNs to identify areas of common interests ➤ Include LACs, and where appropriate FNs, on mail-outs and group e-mails ➤ Seek financial support from YG for LACs to participate in AYC meetings

4. Training & Resources

Goal	Strategies	Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide newly elected mayors and councils with the appropriate amount of training and support to govern effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue with training for newly elected officials post fall elections ➤ Develop and provide elected officials with access to a virtual “tool kit” of resources and supports ➤ Foster ongoing linkages between elected officials to generate a peer support system
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assist communities with training for locally needed skills and job related requirements/certifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to administer the Community Training Trust Society (CTTS) funding ➤ Advocate for secure, and increasing CTTS funding ➤ Continue to be a member of committees at Yukon College that address community operations training needs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide resources to support municipal operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assess topic areas to develop “best practices” inventories ➤ Develop a “skills bank” that lists areas of expertise of AYC members ➤ Foster continued networking between CAOs to identify and address operational issues and needs

6. APPENDIX: List of Participants

NAME	COMMUNITY	POSITION/ROLE
Cory Bellmore	Carmacks	CAO
Scott Bolton	Mayo	Mayor
Deb Carreau	Faro	Mayor
Angie Charlebois	Haines Junction	Councilor
Gord Curran*	Teslin	Councilor/AYC 1 st VP
Dan Curtis	Whitehorse	Mayor
Laura Eby	AYC - Whitehorse	Manager of Operations
Paul Gudaitis	AYC - Whitehorse	Executive Director
Betty Irwin*	Whitehorse	Councilor/AYC 2 nd VP
Bill Kendrick	Dawson	Councilor
Clara Jules	Teslin	Mayor
Wayne Potoroka *	Dawson	Mayor/AYC President
Diana Rogerson*	Faro	Councilor/AYC VP at Large
Lisa Snyder	Faro	Councilor
Richard Durocher	Watson Lake	Mayor
John Streicker	Whitehorse	Councilor
Shelley Hassard	Teslin	CAO
Tara Wheeler	Carmacks	Councilor

* Denotes AYC Executive Committee member