

Update: Northern Relationships/Circumpolar

Initiative Title:	Northern Relationships/Circumpolar
City Council Lead(s):	Councillor Gibbons, Councillor Leibovici and Councillor Batty
Department Lead(s):	Brian Hlus, Office of the City Manager

Objective:

The purpose of the Northern Council Initiative is to explore opportunities to develop and expand the City's partnerships with its northern neighbours with the dual aims of benefiting the neighbours and positioning Edmonton as a global leader on northern and circumpolar issues. On December 14, 2011, Council approved the Terms of Reference for this Council Initiative.

Key Outcomes, Projects or Activities and their Status as of May 2013:

The Way We Prosper

- On March 20, 2013, Council approved the City's economic development plan, *The Way We Prosper*. One of the key activities in the report includes supporting Edmonton's relationship with the North. The City, Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC) and the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce are already collaborating on the Northern strategy, by establishing a working group and undertaking work to map out comprehensive plans and activities that will line up with the implementation of *The Way We Prosper*.

Chamber of Commerce Update

- In keeping with the City's interest to foster stronger economic ties with its northern neighbours, and also in recognition of Premier Floyd's comment that "whatever is good for Edmonton is good for the North and vice versa," an April 2013 business trip to Yellowknife was facilitated by the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce/World Trade Centre Edmonton, EEDC and City Administration. Councillor Gibbons met with several elected officials and business leaders including:
 - Yellowknife Deputy Mayor
 - Yellowknife Councillor Bob Brooks
 - NWT Deputy Minister Peter Vician
 - Canadian Chamber Director (and Norman Wells representative)
 - NWT Chamber President and Executive Director
 - Yellowknife Chamber Executive Director
 Councillor Gibbons also attended the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce during the trip.

Edmonton Economic Development Corporation Update

- The Enterprise Edmonton arm of EEDC has two areas of focus – China and the North. On the latter focus, the goal is to connect Edmonton and area's businesses

to the North. Industries of focus include energy, energy value-add, transportation and logistics, and goods manufacturing. EEDC has been engaging industry in the development of its Northern Strategy which also aligns with *The Way We Prosper*.

City's Northern Initiatives Advisory Group

- The purpose of the group, which was launched by the Mayor in June 2012, includes generation of ideas for relationship building and advancing Edmonton's role as a hub to the North. Some of these ideas are already incorporated in *The Way We Prosper*.

Meet the North Conferences

- In recent years, the City has supported the three major northern business/economic development conferences through delegate participation, speaking opportunities and conference sponsorship. The next *Meet the North* Conferences are *Prospects North* which takes place in Yellowknife in September 2013 and *Opportunities North* which takes place in Whitehorse in 2014. The 2012 conference took place at the Marriott Cree Resort with the City of Edmonton as a key sponsor. The City of Edmonton anticipates being a sponsor for the 2013 event in Yellowknife.

Future Steps:

- The immediate next steps for this Council Initiative are to continue:
 - the implementation of the northern component of *The Way We Prosper*; and
 - planning for the City's participation in the *Prospects North Conference* in Yellowknife in September.