



Chairperson David Livingstone
Giant Mine Oversight Board
PO BOX 1602
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P2
livingstone21@hotmail.com

March 29, 2021

Dear Mr. Livingstone:

Giant Mine Site Land Use Planning

Thank you for your letter dated February 23, 2021 regarding Giant Mine Site Land Use Planning. The Department of Lands (Department) is aware that the Giant Mine Oversight Board (GMOB) would like to see the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), the City of Yellowknife (the City), the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and the North Slave Métis Alliance work together to jointly develop a post-remediation land use plan for the Giant Mine site.

The Department is the lead for the GNWT's input into regional land use planning. While the Department continues to collaborate with federal and Indigenous governments on regional-scale land use planning, including regions without Aboriginal rights agreements, local area planning within municipal boundaries, and the development of community plans, are typically led by the responsible community, even for areas within municipal boundaries where the GNWT owns the land. In this light, the GNWT will continue working with the City and other partners on land related matters associated with the Giant Mine site, but does not intend to lead land use planning efforts for the site.

The Giant Mine site is entirely within the municipal boundary of the City of Yellowknife. As per the Northwest Territories (NWT) *Community Planning and Development Act*, communities in the NWT, such as the City of Yellowknife, have authority to prepare a community plan and approve zoning bylaws. A Community Plan is adopted by a municipal council and is approved by the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

As GMOB is aware, the 2020 City of Yellowknife Community Plan (the Plan) designates the Giant Mine site and it is within a growth management zone. The Plan limits permitted uses of Giant Mine to remediation. Other development activities are not permitted. The Plan states that "after remediation is complete, the City will re-evaluate opportunities for development of this area only if it is deemed safe to do so on the advice of remediation experts and legally permitted by higher orders of government" (p. 70). An amendment to the current designation of the Giant Mine site in the Community Plan would be required before any development could proceed. The Plan also notes that remediation is expected to take until at least 2030 due to the complexity of the project.

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The project has a Closure and Reclamation Plan approved by the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. The Project also completed a Human Health and Ecological Risk assessment in 2017 which was done as part of the federal government's remediation process to demonstrate the safety and viability for future uses of the property. The GNWT notes that the Giant Mine Remediation Project Team is preparing a constraints map in 2021-2022 that will communicate land-use constraints for the Giant Mine property post-closure, and this could be used to inform future community planning activities. Reclamation plans will support a variety of future uses on the site, for example the townsite will be safe for future residential use and other areas, outside of constraint areas, will be safe to support future recreational activities.

Moving forward, the GNWT will continue working with all partners as required. As an example, the Government of Canada, GNWT, and the City of Yellowknife have entered into an *Access Agreement* for the Giant Mine Townsite area. The *Access Agreement* lays out a formal process for remediating lands in and around the public boat launch, Yellowknife Historical Society, and the Great Slave Sailing Club. Furthermore, the Giant Mine Remediation Project has committed to ensuring that there will be continued public access to Great Slave Lake during remediation of the area.

I would like to thank you for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely,



Shane Thompson
Minister, Lands

c. Honourable Caroline Cochrane
Premier

Honourable Daniel Vandal
Minister of Northern Affairs

Ms. Shaleen Woodward
Principal Secretary

Honourable Paulie Chinna
Minister, Municipal and Community Affairs

Honourable Caroline Wawzonek
MLA, Yellowknife South

Honourable Julie Green
MLA, Yellowknife Centre

Ms. Caitlin Cleveland
MLA, Kam Lake

Ms. Katrina Nokleby
MLA, Great Slave

Mr. Rylund Johnson
MLA, Yellowknife North

Mr. Steve Norn
MLA, Tu Nedheé- Williideh

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly
MLA, Frame Lake

Ms. Sylvia Haener
Deputy Minister, Lands

Dr. Erin Kelly
Deputy Minister, Environment and Natural Resources

Ms. Natalie Plato
Director, Giant Mine Remediation Project

Mr. Chris MacInnis
Director, Giant Mine Remediation Project

Her Worship Rebecca Alty
Mayor, City of Yellowknife

Mr. Todd Slack
Northern Environmental Research

Mr. Gordon Hamre
Alternatives North

Chief Ernest Betsina
Yellowknives Dene First Nation- Ndıłq

Chief Edward Sangris
Yellowknives Dene First Nation – Dettah

Mr. William Lines
Community Liaison and Technical Advisor, Yellowknives Dene First Nation

President Bill Enge
North Slave Métis Alliance

Ms. Jessica Hurtubise
Regulatory Analyst, North Slave Métis Alliance

Ms. Adelaide Mufandaedza
Environmental Manager, North Slave Métis Alliance