

STRATEGIC PLAN
Municipal and Community Affairs
Lands Administration Division
April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2010



INTRODUCTION

Role of this Strategic Plan

In October 2002, the Land Administration Division published its first Strategic Plan. The Plan contained the vision and long-term goals to be pursued, set specific strategies to achieve the goals, and to define the general areas of responsibility, measures of success, and resource requirements for the management of Commissioner's Land in the Northwest Territories.

Since 2002, there have been numerous changes impacting the management of land. These include self-government negotiations, and the New Deal for Community Governments. There also remains the potential for devolution in the form of transfers of responsibilities over land and resource development from the federal government to the Government of the Northwest Territories.

To ensure the Strategic Plan remains meaningful, the Division embarked on a process to update its vision, mission, goals, strategies, and measures of performance. Divisional management and staff in headquarters and in the regions were fully engaged in this process, through the use of a web-based questionnaire, interviews, and a series of facilitated workshops. In addition, interviews were held with personnel from other departments, and with a number of Senior Administrative Officers to gain the community perspective on land management.

The Strategic Plan serves as a practical tool for managing respective responsibilities, as well as demonstrating the progress and results of the Division. It should enable those engaged in land management to clearly draw linkages between major areas of work, how these contribute to the strategic direction, and how success will be measured.

Overview of the Division

The Land Administration Division is located in Yellowknife. Land administration professionals are situated throughout the Department's network of regional offices in Yellowknife, Norman Wells, Inuvik, Fort Simpson, and Fort Smith with overall responsibility for:

- Providing information on interests in Commissioner's Land;
- Facilitating the transfer of Commissioner's Land to community governments;
- Establishing and administering leases which includes ensuring compliance with the legislative, regulatory and policy framework in place, processing lease applications, executing amendments, assignments, and surrenders, maintaining records and revenue management;
- Providing advice and assistance on community planning issues; and
- Providing property assessment services.

Performance Review

The Division has implemented a number of initiatives and demonstrated success in a range of areas, most notably:

- The completion of a land administration agreement with the Town of Inuvik. The Town of Norman Wells is interested in a similar arrangement;
- Commissioner's Land transfers to the City of Yellowknife in 2006 (601 hectares) and the Town of Hay River in 2004 (490 hectares);
- Streamlining the Division's relationship with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, respecting the Division's role in the administration of federal Crown land within municipal boundaries;



- The completion of the land verification project and the implementation of ATLAS, a geographic information system that provides graphic and textual information on parcels of land in Northwest Territories communities;
- Working with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to reduce the costs of providing public housing by converting standard leases to fully-paid equity leases;
- Administering Interim Measures Agreements which outline the consultation processes for the disposition of Commissioner's Land in unsettled land claim areas; and
- Completing General Assessments in the six tax-based communities.

UPDATED STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND MANDATE

Vision:

Community governments administer land within their municipal boundaries. All other Commissioner's lands are managed by the Division and by land administration professionals for the benefit of all Northerners.*

Mission:

The Division facilitates the transfer of Commissioner's Land, and offers ongoing support, advice, and information to community governments and the public, and conducts fair and equitable property assessments.

Values:

- **Respectful:** We are professional and honest with each other, our partners, and those we serve.
- **Diligent:** We ensure continued excellence in our work.
- **Responsible:** We take responsibility for our actions and results in a way that is positive.
- **Empowering:** We embrace the move towards self-governing communities and provide the foundation for successful land management in this effort.

** The management of lands for the purposes of this Strategic Plan encompasses the administration of leases, agreements, and dispositions; the provision of information on interests in Commissioner's lands; community planning advice and support; property assessment and surveys and mapping.*



Goals:

- To ensure community governments have the capacity to manage all aspects of Commissioner's Land.
- To provide meaningful information and support to community governments and private individuals, with respect to the transfer of interests in Commissioner's Land.
- To request transfers of parcels of federal Crown land to the Commissioner to meet the priorities and directions of the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- To educate the public and clients about Commissioner's Land so they appreciate the value of proper land management.
- To provide sound and effective administration of lands, property assessment services, community planning, and surveys and mapping functions.

GNWT STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The vision of the 15th Legislative Assembly - Self-reliant individuals and families sharing the rewards and responsibilities of healthy communities and a prosperous and unified Northwest Territories

GNWT Goals	Department Vision	Department Mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Well-governed, sustainable communities and regions able to fulfill their potential. 5. Care and protection of the natural environment. 	<p>Capable, accountable, and self-directed community governments providing a safe, sustainable, and healthy environment for community residents.</p>	<p>The Minister and the Department are responsible for the development and maintenance of community governments, responsive and responsible to the residents, with sufficient legal authority to carry out community responsibilities, to provide their public programs and services essential to good community life and to deal effectively with other governments and organizations.</p>

Areas of Strength, Opportunity and Risk for the Division

The current environment, including the political evolution of community and Aboriginal governments presents a number of opportunities and challenges for the Division. Coupled with this are the strengths of the Division that need to be maintained in support of its mandate.

Areas of Strength:

- **Information technology:** The Division has successfully developed and implemented the ATLAS geographic information system. ATLAS provides state-of-the-art information technology to support effective land administration.
- **Professional, responsive, and knowledgeable staff:** Officials are known for their dedication, work ethic, adaptability, and their skills in addressing complex issues while building positive, cooperative relationships.
- **Leadership and a community centered approach:** The Division provides leadership in building the capabilities and knowledge of its staff, as well as community government councils and their employees.

Areas of Opportunity:

- **Land claims:** The settlement of land claims will provide for greater stability in the management of Commissioner's Land.
- **Profile of the Division:** There are further opportunities to raise the profile of the Division with its clients and stakeholders.
- **Technology and information management:** There are opportunities for further technological development and integrated access to information on Commissioner's Land.



- **Legislation:** The legislative and policy framework for lands administration can be updated to reflect both current and anticipated needs of community and Aboriginal governments, clients and stakeholders.
- **Building capacity:** Capacity building efforts in lands administration practices across regions can be expanded for staff and stakeholders to ensure greater consistency.

Areas of Risk:

- **Complexities of lease administration:** Addressing complex legal and administrative lease issues and trespass on Commissioner's Land is a continued area of challenge.
- **Diversity in the lands administration environment:** There are varied capacities and diverse needs among stakeholders in assuming responsibilities for land administration.
- **Multiple demands and priorities:** Managing competing demands and priorities with limited resources is an ongoing challenge.
- **Growing need for land:** Addressing the need for suitable land for development in communities is particularly important in relation to housing initiatives, and the overall growth and development of communities.

DIVISIONAL STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Guiding principles have been established to ensure the successful pursuit and conclusion of projects and initiatives. These principles will shape future decisions regarding the priority to be attached to requests for service, as well as the allocation of staff effort, and funds. These principles are as follows:

- The work of the Division should be aligned with its goals and those of the Department as well as the GNWT.
- Sufficient human and financial resources should be available to carry out the work of the Division.
- The work of the Division should be accepted and supported by communities and stakeholders.
- The work of the Division should be conducted in accordance with the GNWT's legislative, regulatory, and policy framework.
- The work should be anchored in sound land management principles and practices.

The following are the strategies that will be pursued by the Division. In support of each strategy, specific actions have been identified along with critical milestones and accountabilities for ensuring success in implementation.

GOALS, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS AND MILESTONES

Goal To ensure community governments have the capacity to manage all aspects of land.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
<p>1. Initiate an internal policies and procedures review and develop new internal policies or procedures where required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reconstitute the policy review committee (senior land officers). ● Consolidate work to-date. ● Revise policies as appropriate. ● Obtain internal approvals. ● Complete the lands administrations procedure manual. ● Draft and finalize procedure manuals for each region.
<p>2. Amend legislation and regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, • Lands, • Planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a legislative review committee. ● Identify where changes to current legislation and regulations are needed. ● Identify stakeholders for consultation. ● Form legislation proposals. ● Confirm and clarify regulatory authorities

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
3. Enhance the level of liaison with key stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a Commissioners Land Review Committee with GNWT departmental stakeholders.
4. Build the capacity of communities for lands administration and enter into lands administration agreements with municipalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a generic template for agreements. ● Negotiate agreements with select municipalities. ● Implement and monitor agreements, and update as required. ● Develop training and mentoring program under the New Deal for Northwest Territories communities.
5. Establish consultative processes to involve community and Aboriginal government administrators in the development of new land administrative technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Form advisory panel. ● Engage in monitoring and regional training. ● Provide user manuals and support. ● Continue to work with regional offices (Superintendents, Senior Land Officers) through bi-weekly teleconferences and regional visits.
6. Provide timely, reliable and accessible mapping and lands information to support effective administration as well as the land claims process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a plan for supporting land claims negotiations (develop a protocol with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations regarding mapping). ● Complete implementation of databases. ● Conduct review of feasibility of integrating assessment and lands data management.



<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate (through GIS and identified commonalities) key databases and information management activities.• Establish a process for ongoing monitoring to maintain the integrity of key database(s). • Enhance the current data, level of client support, and ATLAS system
7. Update and transfer land development standards for communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish and provide generic standards and criteria.

Goal To provide meaningful information and support to community governments and private individuals, with respect to the transfer of interests in Commissioner’s Land.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
<p>8. Continue converting leaseholder interests to fee-simple title where land claims have been settled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check status and issue notices to leaseholders. • Ensure all communities have land administration by-laws in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delegate to regional offices to manage transactions.
<p>9. Minimize transactions in the ad-hoc registry and transfer to the Land Titles Office where surveys exist.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direction and share experiences with regions • Confirm process for determining extent and nature of surveying activity • Complete surveys and continue with the transfer of registrations to the Land Titles Office. • Ensure all needed information on parcels is provided (pre-survey) to surveys and mapping

<p>10. Advocate and promote the advantages of community planning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed sub-division designs; • Updates to land use plans; • Updated zoning in communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in pilot projects to develop and promote community standards for design and planning as well as land development construction standards
<p>11. Inventory roads, easements, and right-of-ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of information on hinterland parcels
<p>12. Work with the Housing Corporation on the implementation of the Affordable Housing Initiative and update the inventory of vacant lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the Housing Corporation to improve the level of coordination in effort • Engage in inspections of lots in communities • Maintain count of vacant lots

Goal To ensure transfers of parcels of federal Crown land to the Commissioner are managed to meet the priorities and directions of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
<p>13. Improve the level and nature of communication on areas of priority, responsibility and initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with federal government representatives regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarifications to the existing Lands Administration Agreement including roles and responsibilities ▪ The practice of environmental assessments as required to identify possible contaminated sites • Meet with Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations negotiators to discuss current initiatives and clarify next steps where necessary • Meet and/or communicate with regions on the status of initiatives and progress made towards priorities • Meet with other GNWT departments as necessary

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
14. Assess the environmental status of contaminated sites to ensure that they are complete.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record (update) information on database regarding the number of sites and status• Update mapping as appropriate

Goal To ensure the public and clients are aware, and appreciate the value of proper land management.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
<p>15. Launch a public awareness campaign that considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochures, advertisements, television, Internet, and postings; • Newsletters and mail outs; • Open houses; • Presentations; • Public surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm material and content that would be appropriate for the various audiences • Establish communication options and prepare material outlines • Share outlines with Corporate Affairs for approval • Share outlines with Regional Superintendents • Produce and distribute materials to communities and key Regional Superintendents
<p>16. Provide for regular liaison with community staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for training, workshops, and interactive Compact Discs • Increase the number of regional visits

Goal To provide sound and effective administration of lands, property assessment services, community planning, and surveys and mapping services.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Supporting Actions</i>
17. Implement and train on changes to filing and records management (ARCS/ORCS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement corporate work plan for following fiscal year
18. Carry out operational and functional reviews of each area, and assess resource requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete functional reviews • Update job descriptions
19. Improve the level of communication and collaboration within the Division and at the regional level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a schedule of regional and headquarter meetings • Engage in monthly meetings with Regional Superintendents
20. Approve and align work plans to employee performance reviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize individual work plans • Incorporate work plans in next cycle of employee performance reviews
21. Confirm the purpose and role of the property assessment function and implications of the New Deal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a Property Assessment section representative to the Department’s New Deal task team • Complete a strategic plan and business case for the Property Assessment section

22. Update schedule and resourcing plan for assessments

- Carry out a gap analysis of work demands and resource requirements

23. Provide for professional development opportunities to enhance skills and abilities

- All Managers and Senior Officers to participate in leadership training

MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<i>Targets</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated amount (\$) of potential property assessment and taxation revenues unrealized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at October 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage (%) change in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Additions to property assessment rolls; ◦ Deletions to property assessment rolls; ◦ Value of assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at October 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and location of communities with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Updated assessments; ◦ Out-dated assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at October 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage (%) of properties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In database with current mapping; ◦ Surveyed (overall, by region) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at March 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage (%) of communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In need of a community plan; ◦ With dated or out-of-date community plans; ◦ With current community plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at March 31

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<i>Targets</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average number of working days from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Receipt of an application through to issuance of a lease or permit; ◦ Receipt of an information request through to a formal response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target is 90 days. Report annually at March 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of lands administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Applications received; ◦ Applications in process; ◦ Approvals provided (leases issued); ◦ Rent reviews required and completed; ◦ Surrenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at March 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of lots transferred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monthly and annual total (\$) of land administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Revenues invoiced; ◦ Outstanding accounts receivables • The percentage of land administration revenues invoiced relative to the estimated maximum revenue potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report quarterly at June 30, September 30, December 30, and March 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average frequency of updates to topographical information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually at March 31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumulative total of mortgage registrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual number and description of presentations (seminars) to governing authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD