



Alternatives North

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT April 1st 2016 – March 31st 2017

Defending and Promoting Public Health Care

In January 2017, Suzette Montreuil attended the Canadian Health Coalition's *2017 Medicare Lobby Day* on behalf of Alternatives North. In total 125 lobbyists took part in over 100 meetings with MP's including the MP for the NWT, Michael McLeod. Discussions with MPs focused on a National Public Drug Plan, the renewal of the Health Accord, and Pro-Public Health Care. Alternatives North also issued a press release supporting a national health accord and expressing dismay in the GNWT decision to sign a bilateral agreement instead.

Poverty

Anti-Poverty Round Table: In November 2016 and March 2017 the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) hosted Anti-Poverty Round Table. Alternative North participated in both and promoted authentic poverty reduction ideas. Aboriginal governments, non-government organizations (NGOs), municipalities, relevant GNWT departments, the private business sector and other NWT stakeholders were consulted on ways to reduce and mitigate the impacts of poverty.

Living Wage Recognition

Alternatives North arranged for production of the Living Wage logo decal and provided to the previously identified Living Wage employers. The pamphlet describing the concept and current situation in Yellowknife was completed and copies were printed and sent to Living Wage employers as well.

Housing Survey Submission

Alternatives North researched housing issues and submitted its findings and ideas to the GNWT Housing Survey.

Housing First Training

Alternatives North sent a representative to the training around the concept and implementation of a Yellowknife Housing First program.

Basic Guaranteed Income

A thematic information session was organized with Shelagh Regehr from BIG Canada to explain the concept and the work that is being done on this issue across the country.

Chew on This! Event

In October 2016, Alternatives North assisted the Federation of Labour to carry out this event as part of a national campaign organized by Canada Without Poverty to promote the creation of a national poverty reduction strategy.

Yellowknife Homelessness Road Map

Mayor Mark Heyck was invited to do a presentation on this strategy and its implication for the level of homelessness in YK.

Climate Change and Energy

In 2016, the GNWT announced that it would be creating a new 10-year energy strategy and a “climate change strategic framework”. During the summer of 2016, Alternatives North hired Andrew Robinson to research the potential for renewable energy to be used in all sectors of NWT society. The report, titled “100% Renewable Energy in the NWT by 2050; Starting the conversation” was released on November 1, 2016 and was followed up with a public presentation, interviews on local media, a [presentation](#) as part of the NWT Legislature’s “Knowledge Series” in January, 2017, and a presentation at the NAPEG professional development conference in May, 2017.

Alternatives North also participated in the 2-day consultation session on energy and climate, held in Yellowknife on December 5th & 6th and submitted written feedback in February. AN also wrote a letter to the Premier responding to statements he made that “there were no alternatives to fossil fuels in the NWT”.

Electoral Reform

Alternatives North followed-up on the Liberal promise that the 2015 election would be the last to use the “first past the post” voting system. We attended consultations with Minister Monsef on August 30, presented to the special committee on electoral reform at their hearings in Yellowknife on September 30th. A group of AN members also presented MP McLeod with a framed poster of the Liberal pledge on Dec 9th.

Giant Mine Working Group

The working group is a forum for the parties to the environmental assessment to focus on addressing concerns and resolving issues in an ongoing forum – providing input into the early phases of issues to avoid conflict at a later date.

In 2016-17, Alternatives North was represented by Tee Lim, Erika Janes, Andrew Robinson and Gordon Hamre. Karen Hamre and Nancy Vail also contributed to workshops. As in the previous year, there were 10 regular meetings covering a wide variety of matters that arose both from the operations of the site, but increasingly closure, as the proponents (INAC and GNWT) continue to develop their closure plan. At this point, the project is refining the concepts and broad strokes that were presented at the environmental assessment into more detailed plans and designs.

Through this process a number of key subjects required specific work – most notably the Surface Design Engagement, where a cross section of people was brought together to help provide input into the values that will guide the design. In the past, these values were arrived at by INAC, and did not always reflect community interests. In general, this effort was successful, with the outcomes reviewed and found to be in line with what was heard and expressed in the forum.

In this period, the Giant Mine Oversight Board commenced operations, providing 3rd party expert reviews. AN appointed David Livingstone as its independent member of the Board, and continues to review operations through participation on the working group. We've welcomed additional technical, engineering, health and other scientific input that the Board, and the proponents, have brought to the process. The experts help to ensure that the high expectations that our community has for this project are met.

Besides surface design, some of the other key topics included dust mitigation, ongoing site stabilization work, water effluent works including Baker Creek, and complex communication activities.

Action Plan

Alternatives North developed an action plan for the year 2017-2018. All members were invited to participate in the process. Two afternoon sessions were held and much work was done by email. The final project was a list of strategic orientations, with objectives, actions and dates.