

SPRING 2024 HPW SESSION BRIEFING NOTES

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Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2023-24 Supplementary Overview

HPW TAB#1

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Spring 2024

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Recommended response:

- The changes outlined in the Supplementary Estimates No. 2 highlight the government's commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and communities. The government will continue to make important investments to support our healthcare system, enhance public safety, and provide needed infrastructure across the territory.
- The 2023-24 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 forecasts an overall net increase of \$32.1 million in spending. This includes:
 - A \$61.0 million increase in gross O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$29.4 million in recoveries, and
 - Other than a small transfer of \$143,000 in the Yukon Legislative Assembly, there is no change in overall gross capital spending, and a small decrease of \$397,000 in recoveries.
- Changes in the Supplementary Estimates result in a revised forecast surplus of \$1.7 million and year-end net debt of \$444.5 million.
- The ability to remain in a surplus position despite an increase in spending is largely owed to significant infrastructure investments:
 - Infrastructure investments, which are mostly tangible capital assets, impact net debt when they are realized. However, as they are anticipated to provide benefits over many years, their

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Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2023-24 Supplementary Overview

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impact on the surplus/deficit position is recognized over their expected life.

O&M

- In O&M, the most significant increases are for programs and initiatives in the Department of Health and Social Services:
 - \$25.6 million is required for Insured Health Services for physician claims, hospital claims, pharmacare and medical travel.
 - More than \$12 million in O&M spending will increase funding for the Yukon Hospital Corporation for unanticipated costs, which are partially a result of a global shortage of health care providers and work done to retain our valuable nurses.
- Some other significant items in the supplementary estimates include:
 - \$6.7 million to sustain initiatives aimed at strengthening justice and community safety within our territory.
 - \$4.1 million to cover costs for new teachers, educational assistants, learning assistant teachers and mental health and wellness counsellors, as well as Yukon University and Governance increases.
- The 29.4 million increases in O&M recoveries are mostly comprised of a \$25 million recovery expected to be received for work completed and underway at the Minto Mine, this year.

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Capital

- In Capital, there is no significant change in overall expenditures, but there are increases in several projects which are offset by decreases in other areas:
 - Most of the increases are for the Dempster Fibre project, which will receive an additional \$18.4 million to support faster than anticipated progress during the year. This project will provide Yukoners with more reliable access to the internet as well as necessary redundancy.
 - There is also a \$14.6 million increase for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement project and a \$7.9 million increase for the Whitehorse airport taxiway improvements and runway replacement.
 - Finally, there will be an \$5.8 million increase is required for the Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre replacement and the Old Crow 10-unit mixed-use housing project.
- These increases are offset by a number of decreases in other capital projects to reflect revised timelines:
 - The most notable decrease is a \$21.3 million reduction for the Skagway Marine Service Platform project, which has been moved to 2025-26.

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- There is also an \$8 million decrease in Northern Carve Out funding, which is being deferred to 2024-25.
- Delays in some of the community projects under the infrastructure development funding will also see an additional \$7.7 million decrease in capital.

Additional Response:

- Revenues for 2023-24 are expected to decrease by \$14.9 million, mainly to reflect lower forecasts for tobacco and corporate income tax revenues and quartz mining royalties.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023-24 Supplementary Estimates #2 is tabled in the spring session and will be the subject of debate.

Approved

Signature on file	February 29, 2024
_____ Deputy Minister, Finance	_____
Signature on file	February 28, 2024
_____ Deputy Minister, HPW	_____ Approved

Session Briefing Note
Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

TAB# 27
Spring 2024
Finance

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to supporting Yukoners and communities while delivering strong, sustainable fiscal management.
- The Yukon's economy is returning to normal with inflation falling, tourism rebounding, and growth in wages leading to higher consumer spending.
- This budget will benefit all Yukoners by providing significant investments in health care, education, and housing, and will ensure that Yukoners have opportunities to thrive in a vibrant and sustainable economy:
 - An additional \$15.3 million in funding is included to support the operations of the Yukon Hospital Corporation and another \$30 million is directed towards our Insured Health services system.
 - \$4.4 million will help increase the number of educational support staff and wellness professionals in our schools and create a learning environment that is inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of our students.
 - \$101 million in capital is dedicated for land development, housing, education and health care.
 - This year's budget also delivers on our commitment to environmental stewardship, demonstrated through more than \$55 million allocated to support existing and new actions identified in *Our Clean Future*.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

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- Through Budget 2024-25, the government will continue to lay the foundation for the territory's new health authority. We will also provide funding to implement the *Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy* in coordination with our partners.
- This budget includes strategic investments in infrastructure, particularly in housing for the most vulnerable. Investments in housing include projects in Watson Lake, Mayo, Faro and Dawson City and funding support for various affordable and community housing projects.
- Like in previous budgets, Budget 2024-25 continues to build relationships and further reconciliation with Yukon First Nations.
- Revenue growth continues to accelerate alongside record levels of recoveries. The Yukon's strong financial position continues to improve as we look towards the future.

Additional response:

- The Yukon government is delivering on its commitment to grow a strong and resilient economy while ensuring robust, sustainable fiscal management.
- A strong surplus will serve as a prudent fiscal management tool and demonstrates the ability of the government to address unforeseen events without going into a deficit.

Session Briefing Note**Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

- The fiscal summary includes a \$50 million contingency for unforeseen pressures and emergencies. Including a contingency has been a proven method to offset the cost of expected but undefined expenditures that arise throughout the fiscal year while limiting their impact on the territory's fiscal position.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2024-25 Main Estimates will be debated during the March 2024 legislative session.
-

Background:

- The 2024-25 Main Estimates include a projected surplus of \$119 million and net debt of \$488.8 million.
- Total revenue is expected to be \$1.69 billion in 2024-25. This is an increase of \$115.8 million, or 7.4 per cent, from the 2023-24 Main Estimates.
- Gross O&M spending is forecast at \$1.6 billion, reflecting a \$141.4 million or 9.7 per cent increase over 2023–24 Main Estimates. Approximately 12 per cent is recoverable from Canada and other partners, making the net impact \$88.6 million, or a 6.7 per cent net increase over 2023–24 Mains.
- Forecast capital expenditures total \$484.0 million with recoveries of \$171.3 million. Although gross capital expenditures are consistent with the previous year (\$483.8 million in 2023-24) increased recoveries result in a 2.1 per cent decrease in net capital expenditures from the 2023-24 Main Estimates.

Session Briefing Note

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Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

Finance

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- There are 5,484.5 FTEs in the 2024-25 budget, which is an increase of 152.8 FTEs from 2023-24. Growth primarily for CASA Education commitments (61.0) and Health Human Resources commitments (11.5) as well as Putting People First (28.5).

Approved by:

February 28, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

Recommended response:

- Since its introduction in 2019, the Government of Yukon has been supportive of carbon pricing as a policy to help us reduce emissions and move toward our ambitious climate targets.
- The Department of Environment and the Department of Finance work closely to ensure that we take a balanced approach to carbon pricing in the territory, one which considers the need to reduce emissions as well as the fair return of carbon pricing revenues to Yukoners.
- Our two departments work together to coordinate with our federal counterparts to assess the implications of carbon pricing in the territory and to ensure the needs of the territory are recognized in national policy.
- This includes retaining control over how revenues are distributed back to Yukon individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations and businesses.
- It also includes excluding carbon price from electricity generation or aviation, in recognition of the unique constraints of our northern jurisdiction.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

Additional response:

- Carbon pricing is just one tool in our toolkit to address the climate emergency.
- We continue to implement Our Clean Future to reduce the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and, more broadly, to reduce the impact of the carbon levy on Yukoners.
- In December of last year, we announced 42 new actions under Our Clean Future as part of the third Our Clean Future annual report outlining the progress we have made on the strategy.
- Although we have made progress on many of our commitments, there is still significant work required to meet our target of reducing our emissions by 45 per cent by 2030
- Our government continues to stand by carbon pricing as sound, evidence-based policy on climate change, but we share concerns about equity; specifically, for those Yukoners who do not use heating oil for their homes.
- The policies in Our Clean Future, as well as carbon pricing, are intended to incentivize Yukoners to make the switch to low carbon energy sources, like electric heating or heat pumps. Despite this change to the federal carbon levy, Yukoners continue to lead the way to support this low carbon transition.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

- Ensuring that we utilize every policy lever at our disposal, including carbon pricing, is essential to meet our goals.
- Together, we are finding solutions to reduce our emissions while strengthening our economy and supporting our industry partners.

Third response:

- The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue-neutral. We are committed to both reducing carbon emissions in the territory and to returning all the federal government's revenues to Yukoners.
 - Returning proceeds to individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations, and businesses is a critical part of our approach to carbon pricing in the Yukon.
 - We are returning 100 per cent of the federal carbon levy to these four rebate groups who receive more, on average, than they pay in carbon pricing levies.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In October 2023, the federal government announced a temporary 3-year exemption for home heating oil from the federal carbon price, with the intention of helping Atlantic Canada in particular.
 - While Atlantic Canada welcomed this change, the exemption has received considerable backlash. Most provincial governments (except for British Columbia) have called for extending the carbon price exemption to all home-heating fuels (including natural gas).
-

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**

Environment & Finance

- Critics also argued that the exemption undermines the credibility of the carbon tax, and may weaken the incentives to switch to lower carbon heating options.

Background:

- The federal Draft Regulations Amending the Fuel Charge Regulations stipulate that all heating oil will be exempt from the fuel charge starting November 8, 2023, until April 2027.
- This means that light fuel oil consumption in all buildings, including residential, commercial, and institutional, will be exempt from the fuel charge.
- Nearly half (49.2% in 2022) of Yukon homes use oil-based heating.
- In Yukon, individuals, businesses, placer/quartz mining operations, Yukon First Nations governments and municipal governments are all eligible for a rebate for carbon pricing.
 - Individuals who live outside of Whitehorse receive a remote supplement, which was recently increased from 10 to 20% (and is now in line with the federal remote supplement for backstop jurisdictions including Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Saskatchewan).

Approved by:

Michael Prochazka, Deputy Minister of
Environment

March 1, 2024

Date approved

Deputy Minister of Finance

February 26, 2024

Date approved

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

Recommended response:

- Many Yukoners continue to face challenges across the housing continuum, including:
 - homelessness and a lack of access to housing with services;
 - a lack of affordable rental supply; and
 - high house prices and mortgage rates.
- Exceptionally high building costs and rising interest rates are creating significant challenges for both Yukon Housing Corporation and its partners.
- The corporation's new strategic plan, Creating Home, will help transform affordable housing service delivery through the adoption of a more client-centred and collaborative approach that integrates supports and leads to better outcomes for Yukoners.

Additional response:

- Across government, we are working with stakeholders to develop new land parcels, increase housing stock while also responding to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on Housing.
- We continue to advance projects that provide new housing to meet Yukoners' needs.

Context:

- The combination of high rental costs, limited affordable housing options, and difficulties in securing mortgages, continue to be a challenge for many Yukoners.
-

Background:

General housing information in the Yukon

Homelessness

- At least 197 people were experiencing homelessness in the 2023 Whitehorse Point-in-Time Count. This included: 58% men; 38 % female; 4% other.

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

Rental pricing

- As of October 2023, the median rent for units in Whitehorse in all types of buildings \$1,368. This is 5.1% higher than it was in October 2022. For rental units in buildings with three or more units, the median rent was \$1,250, and the vacancy rate was 1.2%. Within the renter population in Whitehorse:
 - 22.7% live in unaffordable housing;
 - 17.9% live in unsuitable housing; and
 - 10.5% live in inadequate housing.

Rental and vacancy rate, Yukon (YBS)

	April 2022	October 2022	April 2023	October 2023
Median rent (all types)	\$1,300	\$1,301	\$1,325	\$1,368
Vacancy rate (all types)	1.6%	1.7%	2.2%	1.9%

Housing Construction

- Residential building construction declined by 19.3% over the same period. There was \$81.9 million in residential building construction in Yukon in 2023. This figure represents a 7.5% decline from 2022.
- Labour shortages contribute to higher construction costs and are leading to lower residential construction output.¹

House prices

- Yukon Bureau of Statistics real estate reports show that average prices for single detached and condos have fallen for three consecutive quarters; however, house prices remain high and many Yukoners face affordability challenges due to rising mortgage rates.
- Average House Prices (YBS)

Type	Whitehorse Average House Prices		
	2022 Q3	2023 Q3	Change
Single-detached house	\$701,200	\$664,600	(-5.2%)
Condominium	\$459,400	\$426,600	(-7.1%)

¹ Northern Housing Report, 2023

Yukon Housing Corporation Accomplishments

Creating Home – YHC new strategic plan

- Creating Home is the corporation's new 5-year strategic plan that will transform affordable housing service delivery through the adoption of a more client-centred and collaborative approach that integrates supports and leads to better outcomes for Yukoners and communities.
- The plan draws on a recognized framework intended to re-design and transform health care delivery, called the Quadruple Aim, and adapts it to housing.
 - This innovative approach to housing delivery will lead to better outcomes by:
 - improving the client and provider experience
 - strengthening community wellbeing; and
 - contributing to a sustainable future
- Creating Home represents a significant shift in how Yukon Housing Corporation operates and delivers housing services.

Capital builds recently completed by YHC or partners:

- 60 units completed between 21/22 and 22/23 by YHC
- **February 2024** 10 units in Old Crow (with HPW)
- **March 2024** accessible duplex in Faro
- **January 2024** – 3-unit mobile home delivered and prepared for occupancy for RRDC staff to help improve social conditions in the community.
- **August 2023** – two accessible, affordable duplexes in Mayo and Carmacks, YHC
- **July 2023** – a 12-bed men's shelter, Jëje Zho, in Dawson City, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- **May 2023** – 9-unit Elders' complex, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
- **January 2023** – 87-unit rental development in Whitehorse by Boreal Commons
- **January 2023** – 47-unit build for in Whitehorse YHC
- **December 2022** – 84-unit Seniors' Supportive Housing Facility, Normandy Living.
- **July 2022** – 45-unit multi-use building, Cornerstone: Opportunities Yukon
- **June 2022** – triplex in Whitehorse, YHC
- **Summer 2022** – 20-unit, Whistle Bend: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- **March 2022** – triplexes in Mayo and Watson Lake, YHC

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

Underway or Upcoming housing capital projects for YHC and partners

YHC- Underway (12 units)

- 10-unit Watson Lake Housing First building
- 2-unit affordable duplex in Dawson

YHC – Upcoming (112+ units) Community housing:

- 34-unit building with 8 accessible units in Dawson
- 45+ unit building with 9 accessible units on 6th Avenue in Whitehorse (formerly Ryder Apartments)
- 10 units in Mayo
- 6-plex in Teslin
- 6-plex in Carcross
- 6-plex Haines Junction
- Accessible triplex in Whitehorse
- Accessible duplex in Ross River

Staff housing:

- Accessible duplex in Destruction Bay
- Accessible duplex in Pelly Crossing
- Duplex in Burwash Landing

Rent subsidy programs to make life more affordable for renters and seniors:

- July 2023, the corporation acquired an additional 16 units for lease from Normandy, for a total of 26 units to lease to YHC clients through its rent supplement program.
- Since 2020, the corporation has supported over 300 households pay rent through the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit. As of April 2024, 177 clients are receiving monthly support.

Support for homeowners:

- March 2024 – CYHB Homeowners stream
- June 2023 the Yukon government launched an \$8.25 million flood recovery program for residents and businesses affected by flooding in the Klondike Valley. (Tab #19)

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

- April 2023, YHC launched the expanded Yukon Home Ownership Program which provides mortgages for qualified households to build and buy their homes across the territory, including Whitehorse.
 - The program is currently under review and scheduled for revision in the coming year.
- In 2020, YHC launched the revised Home Repair Program to support low to moderate-income Yukon homeowners to remain in their homes and age in place by providing funding to address mobility requirements, repairs, or core housing needs.

Support for new residential land development 2023:

- June 2023, the Government of Yukon partnering with the Government of Canada and the City of Dawson to develop [four new residential lots in Dawson City](#).
- February 2023 – 120 lots, including single family, multi-family and townhouse lots in Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
- March 2023 Government of Yukon partnered with Liard First Nation on developing 43 new residential lots on Frances Avenue in Watson Lake.
- March 2023 – 74 residential lots in Mayo and the Logan and Whistlebend subdivisions of Whitehorse made available through public lottery.
- November 2022, signed a loan agreement with Kwanlin Dün First Nation's (KDFN) arm's-length development corporation Chu Níkwän Limited Partnership (CNLP) for a new residential land development project at [Copper Ridge West in Whitehorse](#), the first large-scale residential land development on settlement land in the Yukon. An amended loan agreement was signed August 2023 with Chu Níkwän for the same development.

Approved by:

President, Yukon Housing Corporation

April 30, 2024

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

Finance

Recommended:

- Inflation has continued to improve in recent months, but all Yukon households continue to see their budgets stretched by elevated prices, with lower-income households often feeling the worst effects.
- The Government of Yukon continues to track inflation and its impact on Yukoners, so that we can take steps to ease the burden.
- As inflationary pressures continue to lessen, efforts to make life more affordable for Yukoners and to help industry are shifting from short-term assistance to measures with the potential to provide longer-term benefits, such as actions to improve home affordability.

Additional response:

- This year's Budget continues to support Yukoners by making sure they can access essential services at prices they can afford.
 - o The Budget includes massive investments to advance affordable housing projects across the Yukon. From the Housing First Project in Watson Lake, the Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse, and the Korbo Multiplex in Dawson, the Yukon government will be taking action to build more affordable homes for Yukoners, especially those in vulnerable situations.
 - o There is also over \$42 million in continued funding for early learning and child care in this Budget. This includes funding for the universal child care program, which has reduced child care fees to less than \$10 per day on average.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

Finance

- o We are also making life more affordable and leading the nation with our Yukon-wide dental program, which will see \$5.4 million in continued funding for 2024-25.
 - o To make sure that more people have the option of staying home when they are sick, we have extended the Temporary Paid Sick Leave and included the necessary funding to do so in this Budget. We have also extended the Interim Electrical Rebate, which will provide welcome relief from power bills to Yukoners across the territory.
- These are just a few examples of the many programs and initiatives that will continue to support Yukoners this year.
- The Yukon's minimum wage has also been responsive to price changes, as its annual change is tied to inflation in the year prior. After growing 6.8 per cent in 2023, the minimum wage is scheduled to grow a further 4.9 per cent to \$17.59 per hour as of April 1, 2024. The new minimum wage would represent the second highest wage in Canada, behind only Nunavut's minimum wage of \$19.00 per hour.
- Higher inflation impacts various Government of Yukon programs through indexation, including:
 - o Subsidies for medical travel
 - o The Yukon Child Benefit
 - o Social Assistance Payments
 - o Student Financial Assistance
 - o Seniors' benefits
 - o The Pioneer Utility grant

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

Finance

- o The Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation
- o The minimum wage
- o Residential rent caps
- o The tobacco tax rate

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Inflation has fallen from historical highs but remains elevated in Canada and in the Yukon.
- While improved, energy prices remain elevated, and food and shelter costs continue to be prominent drivers of overall inflation. These are all areas where higher prices are more obvious to consumers.
- Housing affordability has been a concern in the Yukon for several years.
- After more than a year of local inflation being among the highest in Canada, growth in the Whitehorse CPI trended down throughout 2023 and was once again below the national inflation in the last three months of 2023 [and the first two months of 2024](#).
- Higher earnings were reported across most industries in 2023, and several industries reported earnings growth more than 2023's average inflation of 4.9 per cent. Even as some industries had earnings gains outpace inflation, earnings growth of 2.8 per cent in the industry total fell short of the overall increase in prices in 2023.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

Finance

Background:

Inflation – Recent performance and outlook

- Early in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, some price pressures were slower to materialize in the Yukon than in other parts of the country, as inflation for Whitehorse was amongst the lowest in Canada in the first half of 2022.
- Robust price growth in the CPI components of food, shelter and recreation, education and reading material were key drivers of overall inflation in 2023.
- Actions taken by the Bank of Canada to rein in inflation by cooling the Canadian economy appear to be having the desired effects. The national labour market has softened, consumer spending has slowed, and real GDP has leveled out. Following ten increases in the overnight rate since March 2022, discussion among many analysts has shifted towards the timing of rate cuts.
- The Bank's efforts to tame inflation look to have set the stage for a soft landing for Canada, as inflation is trending down without an accompanying sharp downturn in economic activity. Weaker energy prices and improving supply chains have also helped contribute to a much-improved national inflation picture.
- Prior to the recent period of elevated inflation, prices in the Yukon had generally tracked close to the national trend. After averaging 3.9 per cent in 2023, the Bank expects national inflation to fall to 2.8 per cent in 2024 and 2.2 per cent in 2025. As price pressures continue to recede, a similar story is expected locally with growth of the Whitehorse CPI forecast to fall from 4.9 per cent in 2023 to 3.0 per cent in 2024 and 2.5 per cent in 2025.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Spring 2024
Finance

PROGRAMS AND OTHER MEASURES THAT SUPPORT AFFORDABILITY

Projects under the Five-Year Capital Plan supporting housing affordability (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The **Old Crow 10-Plex Mixed-Use Housing** facility will be completed and will be ready for residents to start moving in by March 2024.
- Construction of the **10-plex Housing First Project in Watson Lake** began in the summer of 2023. It is scheduled to be completed in the fall 2024.
- Construction of the **Faro and Dawson Duplex** projects started in summer 2023 and are scheduled to be complete in early 2024.
- The **Korbo Multiplex in Dawson** is in the design phase. This project will deliver approximately 34 new housing units.
- The old **Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse** was demolished in December 2023 and plans are underway to replace it with a new multi-family affordable housing complex. The project is in the design phase and is anticipated to deliver over 45 new units.

Universal Child Care Program (Education)

- Universal child care is available to all Yukon families using licensed child care spaces. The universal child care program has reduced fees to less than \$10 per day on average for families across the Yukon.

Dental Care program (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon's Dental Program was launched in 2023 and provides \$1,300 per year in dental benefits to Yukoners without dental coverage. The program will cover dental treatments necessary to relieve pain and infection, prevent disease, treat cavities, and restore chewing and social function. It will also offer full coverage for preventive care, such as routine dental cleaning.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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Paid sick leave program (Economic Development)

- On April 1, 2023, Economic Development launched the Paid Sick Leave Rebate. The program will run for two 12-month blocks:
 - April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024; and
 - April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025
- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate is a temporary program that offers up to 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees and self-employed Yukoners that earn less than the average private-sector wage of \$33.94/hour. The program includes all illnesses (and injuries not covered by any other Act, benefit, or program). The program is available to employees regardless of whether their employer offers paid sick leave, though employees must use all paid sick leave available to them through their employer before they are eligible for the Paid Sick Leave Rebate.

Yukon Child Benefit (Finance)

- The Yukon Child Benefit provides monthly payments to modest and low-income households who have children under 18. The maximum benefit per child is now tied to inflation, starting in the 2023–24 budget year.

Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement provides a monthly income supplement for eligible Yukoner senior's receiving Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from the federal government. This amount is adjusted for inflation in October each year.

Inflation Relief Rebate and Interim Electrical Rebate (Yukon Development Corporation)

- The Inflation Relief Rebate, a \$50 rebate that is automatically applied to electrical customers' bills, was a temporary measure to address inflation. The Inflation Relief Rebate was most recently applied to all ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy bills for November and December 2023 and January 2024.

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Inflation and Affordability

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- The Interim Electrical Rebate continues to provide residential electrical customers with a maximum rebate of \$22.62 per month based on the electricity they consume, up to 1,000 kilowatt hours (up to \$271.44 per year). This affordability measure has been extended to March 2025.

Other Government initiatives

Initiatives under Health and Social Services:

- Engagement on the Yukon's Social Assistance rates started in late summer 2023 with clients on Social Assistance.
- While the review is underway, the department is providing a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.
- To offset inflationary cost of living increases and provide sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of children placed in their care, the department is providing a 10 per cent increase to monthly payments to caregivers of children in out of home care, on top of the annual indexed increase.
- During the 2023-24 fiscal year, a 16.46 per cent rate increase for community and extended family caregivers was provided. The rates are as follows:
 - o Whitehorse: \$46.86 per day
 - o Rural Communities: \$50.16 per day
 - o Old Crow: \$86.40 per day

Comprehensive Municipal Grant (Community Services)

- The Comprehensive Municipal Grant is how the Government of Yukon directly funds municipal governments. This core funding supplements municipal resources and pays for vital services, like the provision of fresh drinking water, the collection of solid waste and recycling, recreation programming and other services as required under the Municipal Act and other legislation.

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Inflation and Affordability

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- The high inflation seen in 2022 (6.8 per cent) will increase the grant payments to be provided in April 2024. This will result in a \$2.3 million increase for Yukon municipalities with overall contributions of over \$24.5 million for fiscal year 2024/25.

Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency and offset costs (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- Our energy programs are successfully encouraging Yukon residents and local businesses to reduce their energy use, save money and choose low carbon options to live and move.
- Energy efficiency rebate programs are available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, and the construction sector focusing on high efficiency buildings.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy rebate program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows, and high-performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money on their energy costs.
- Between January 1, 2018, and December 31st, 2023, 221 high-performance retrofits to residential, commercial and institutional buildings have been completed across the territory.
- Innovative programs like the Better Buildings Program that offer up-front funding, combined with our Good Energy rebates, make energy retrofits more accessible and affordable for Yukoners.

Support to the forestry industry (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- To help increase the supply of firewood, over the past two years the Yukon government has offered an incentive to timber harvesters. In 2022-23, the Government of Yukon distributed \$315,000 to 33 Yukon businesses. The program has contributed to an increase in timber harvest volumes.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

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- In fall 2023, the Government of Yukon and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency combined financial contributions to launch the \$200,000 Forestry Support Program. The program is helping to enhance operational safety and resilience by allowing commercial harvesters and retailers to purchase or repair things like harvest equipment, vehicles, trailers, and personal protective equipment.
- We have distributed over \$170,000 through this program and anticipate exhausting the funds by the application deadline of March 31, 2024.

Temporary Landlord Assistance Program (Economic Development)

- Vacancy rates in the local rental market remain very low. The Government of Yukon is committed to encouraging landlords to remain in the residential market. To help support this, the department of Economic Development introduced a temporary Landlord Assistance Program in November 2023.
- The program is available to all Yukon residential landlords who rent out accommodations to which the Yukon's Residential Landlord and Tenant Act applies and who rented out accommodation in 2023. The program provides a one-time, per-unit payment of \$338 for 2023.

Government initiatives indexed to inflation

- Higher inflation impacts various Government of Yukon programs through indexation, (indexation is updated each April unless otherwise noted), including:
 - o Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation (with a one-year lag)
 - o The minimum wage
 - o Subsidies for medical travel
 - o Pioneer Utility grant
 - o Residential rent caps
 - o Seniors benefits (updated each October)
 - o Social Assistance Payments (updated each November)

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

Finance

- o Student Financial Assistance (updated each school year)
- o Tobacco Tax is updated each January
- o Yukon Child Benefit (July)

Covid-19 and other temporary inflation relief measures no longer in place:

Tourism and Culture:

COVID-19 Business Relief Programs

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Yukon acted quickly and decisively by implementing one of the most robust business relief programs in the country. This began with the Yukon Business Relief Program (YBRP) in 2020, which was open to any business from any sector that experienced at least a 30 per cent revenue loss due to the pandemic.
- In that same year, Tourism and Culture (T&C) also launched the Tourism Relief and Recovery Plan (TRRP), which was reviewed and endorsed by the Yukon Tourism Advisory Board (YTAB) and industry.
- The Tourism Relief and Recovery Plan committed \$15 million over 3 years to support the tourism sector and was focused on 4 key themes:
 - o Providing tourism sector leadership;
 - o Rebuilding confidence and capabilities for tourism;
 - o Supporting the recovery of tourism industry operators; and
 - o Refining the brand and inspiring travelers to visit.
- Through the TRRP, various financial support programs were rolled out during the course of the pandemic to sustain the tourism industry and prepare it for the eventual reopening of borders, including:
 - o Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement (TASS);
 - o Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement (TNASS);
 - o Culture and Tourism Non-profit Sector Supplement;

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- Great Yukon Summer (GYS) program;
- Great Yukon Summer Freeze program;
- ELEVATE program; and
- A top-up to the Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund (TCMF).

Health and Social Services:

- a one-time \$150 payment to social assistance recipients;
- a one-time payment of \$150 to Yukon Seniors Income Supplement recipients;
- a one-time 10 per cent additional payment to Pioneer Utility Grant recipients;
- a 6-month extension of \$500 per month to caregivers of children in out of home care; and
- a commitment of \$100,000 to Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition to continue to support food security across the territory.

Approved by:

March 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

Approved

Session Briefing Note
Our Clean Future
Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- We recognize the urgency of the climate emergency and launched Our Clean Future in September 2020 to map our route forward.
- The Government of Yukon continues to make significant progress on implementing Our Clean Future. In December 2023, we released the third Our Clean Future annual report outlining the progress we made responding to climate change in 2022.
- The report announced the addition of 42 new actions to help us reach our climate goals. These new actions are a product of the important work of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change, Navius Research and the findings in the Climate Risk Assessment report.
- The 42 new actions implement 15 recommendations from the Yukon Climate Leadership Council and three recommendations from the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change.
- Additionally, several of the new recommendations put forward by the Yukon Climate Leadership Council align with existing Our Clean Future actions.
- We will continue to work together to advance our efforts to reduce emissions as we assess our progress year-to-year, consider new research and the input of others, and increase our resilience to climate change.
- We have also revised 19 existing actions to better align with our efforts to reduce the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and build a climate resilient territory.

Session Briefing Note
Our Clean Future
Implementation

Spring 2024
Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

Additional response:

- As we continue to address climate change it is important for us to look back on our progress as we diligently work towards our objectives.
- We legislated greenhouse gas emissions targets and associated reporting through the Clean Energy Act in 2022.
- We installed electric vehicle chargers in every road-accessible community in the Yukon, enabling zero-emissions travel throughout the territory. (See EMR BN #29)
- We launched the five-year Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership in 2023 which will enhance the agriculture sector's resiliency and adaptation to climate change.
- In collaboration with the Yukon's public utilities, we met our target to install seven megawatts of renewable electricity capacity through the Micro-Generation program by 2030. (See EMR BN #38)
- We launched the Better Buildings Program to offer affordable financing for energy retrofits to Yukoners' homes and buildings in 2022.
- We established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks from climate change to the Yukon's transportation corridors.
- We advanced emergency preparedness as we progressed the Community Wildfire Protection Plans for Dawson City, Mayo, Watson Lake, Beaver Creek, the Town of Faro and the Kluane Lake Region.
- We have begun work to develop flood hazard maps for all flood-prone Yukon communities. We expect to release flood maps for the Southern Lakes, Carmacks, and Teslin in 2024. Flood hazard mapping

Session Briefing Note
Our Clean Future
Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

for Old Crow and Dawson and the Klondike Valley will begin in 2024 and 2025.

- In May 2023, we completed the installation of a biomass heating system at Elijah Smith Elementary School in Whitehorse.
- In January 2024, we passed an electric vehicle charging station regulation under the *Public Utilities Act* to allow First Nation governments, private businesses and municipalities to sell electricity through electric vehicle charging stations.

Third response:

- Of the original 136 actions released in Our Clean Future in 2020, we have completed 45 actions. Eighty-seven actions are in progress and four are yet to begin.
- The ambitious addition of 42 new actions in 2023 puts us on track to reduce the Yukon's emissions by 30 per cent by 2030; however, there is still significant work required to meet our target reduction of 45 per cent by 2030.
- We are working with industry to establish a path to implement the mining intensity target of a 45 per cent reduction in emissions per unit of production by 2035.
- We will continue to build on Our Clean Future as we learn more and implement new actions. This will be reflected in future annual reports.
- We will continue to find opportunities to reach our targets as we work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond.

Context — this may be an issue because:

ENV #1 / EMR #33

Spring 2024

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- Climate change is of high interest to Yukoners and the government's progress in delivering on Our Clean Future commitments will be of interest.

Background:

- Our Clean Future was released on September 14, 2020 and now has 178 actions, of which 136 are original actions and 42 are new actions. These actions seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030 (see Appendix A).
- The Government of Yukon reports annually on progress for the implementation of Our Clean Future. Three Annual Reports have been published to date, with the latest report released on December 20, 2023.
- The Our Clean Future website was launched in December 2023, which shows our commitments and successes towards fighting climate change.
- On February 16, 2024, the Government of Canada released an update on design options being considered for the upcoming Clean Electricity Regulations. This regulation is one of the Government of Canada's central commitments towards transitioning Canada towards a net-zero electricity grid by 2035.
- Yukon will be exempted from the Clean Electricity Regulations as the territory's electricity grid is currently not interconnected with any other region and is therefore not regulated by North American Electric Reliability Corporation.

Approved by:

March 19, 2024

Deputy Minister
Department of Environment

Date approved

March 19, 2024

Deputy Minister
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission
– Update on Calls to Action**

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in our society.
- Our government is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Indigenous governments.
- While there is still work to do, our efforts are resulting in meaningful change and creating better programs and services for all Yukoners.
- In 2023, on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we shared our progress toward addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action through the release of the Pathways magazine and an accompanying report.
- The magazine and report provide an update on the actions being taken across the Yukon government and in close collaboration with First Nation governments and organizations in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including through work on the Yukon Forum joint priorities and by implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023 mandate letters include a commitment to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action.

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission
– Update on Calls to Action**Executive Council
Office**Background:**

- The TRC report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, was released in June 2015. It contains 94 Calls to Action focused on redressing the harms resulting from Residential Schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. Thirty-two of the Calls to Action relate directly to YG.
- YG and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- YG has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
 - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

Approved by:_____
Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office2024.02.02

Date

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Five-Year Capital Plan**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Five-Year Capital Plan for 2024-25 builds on the Government of Yukon's commitment to communicate capital spending intentions to Yukoners, municipalities, the private sector and First Nations governments.
- It provides greater certainty and promotes a strategic approach to the forecasting and timing of procurement.
- Our government will continue to issue tenders as early as possible to help vendors prepare for upcoming work and be prepared for the short construction season.

Additional response:

- The Five-Year Capital Plan continues to evolve as priorities, circumstances and needs change over time.
- Our government will continue to provide Yukoners with updated information on the government's planned capital investments over the next five years.

Third response: Sharing the Capital Plan with Yukon First Nations

- The Five-Year Capital Plan also supports the implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy through information sharing on capital spending directly with Yukon First Nations.
- Each year the Department of Highways and Public Works reaches out to every Yukon First Nation to share the current capital plan and to discuss upcoming procurement opportunities within each First Nation's traditional territory.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Five-Year Capital Plan**Highways and
Public Works

- At the First Nation's request, department officials set up in-person meetings during the spring to discuss the capital plan and look for opportunities for cooperation and coordination.
- On March 27, 2024, the department invited all Yukon First Nations to meet to discuss the 2024-25 Five-Year Capital Plan.
- As of April 26, department officials will have met with three First Nations with more meetings scheduled for May.

Fourth response: Skagway Marine Services

- While the Skagway Marine Services Platform is not specifically highlighted in the 2024-25 Five-Year Capital Plan document, \$44.7 million in funding is included in the Fiscal and Capital Plans in 2025-26 through 2027-28.
- The funding for this project is included within the Real Property and Asset Management category in the table titled "Total planned capital spending by investment category" on page 8 of the 2024-25 Five-Year Capital Plan.
- This project's funding is being reprofiled into future years and was also highlighted in this year's budget address.
- The majority of construction spending is planned for the first two years, 2025-26 and 2026-27.
- The Yukon government will continue to work with the Municipality of Skagway to progress the project.
- We will continue to provide updates as milestones are reached, including highlighting this project in the Five-Year Capital Plan and budget documents once an agreement is in place.

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Five-Year Capital Plan

SPRING 2024

Highways and
Public Works

Additional response: Items not Highlighted in the Capital Plan

- The Five-Year Capital Plan provides Yukoners with updated information on planned capital investments so that First Nations governments, Yukon residents, organizations, businesses and municipalities have a greater sense of certainty with respect to government plans and procurement.
- There are some smaller projects and programs that are not highlighted in the Capital Plan, which include things like operational support equipment, minor work on specific highways such as erosion control, and infrastructure planning and engineering work.
- Some capital estimates have also been rolled up under simplified headings, such as demolitions, equipment, and building maintenance as found in the building maintenance and recapitalization table at the top of page 25.
- However, all projects are included and accounted for in the table titled "Total planned capital spending by investment category" on page 8.
- The budget estimates for individual projects and programs in the plan can range in value from tens of thousands of dollars to more than a hundred million dollars, and everything in between.
- A recent scan of other provincial and territorial jurisdictions shows the Yukon is a leader in the level of detail provided to the public in the release of the annual budget documents, including the Five-Year Capital Plan, which provides a long-term window into the Government of Yukon's investment plans and also shares the estimated investment levels and ranges for individual projects and programs.

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SPRING 2024

Five-Year Capital Plan

Highways and
Public Works

- Our government will continue to provide Yukoners with updated information on the government's planned capital investments over the next five years.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Five-Year Capital Plan lays out the Yukon government's long-term capital investment strategy.

Background:

- 2024-25 marks the seventh year that a detailed Five-Year Capital Plan has been tabled in the Legislative Assembly.
- The Five-Year Capital Plan benefits Yukoners, municipalities, the private sector, and First Nations governments by providing a forward-looking, and transparent, view into the Yukon government's infrastructure development plans.
- 2023-24 was the sixth year that Highways and Public Works led the update of the Five-Year Capital Plan. We worked closely with the Department of Finance and all other departments to develop the plan.
- By combining more detailed and comprehensive Five-Year Capital Plans with tendering forecasts, the Yukon government is working to meet the commitment made to Yukoners to have major, seasonally dependent construction contracts tendered at the right time.
- While the Skagway Marine Services Platform is not highlighted in the Five-Year Capital Plan document, \$44.7 million in funding is included in the fiscal plan in 2025-26 through 2026-27.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****HPW Accomplishments since 2021**Highways and
Public Works

Departmental Accomplishments:

- At Highways and Public Works, our core mission is to make a meaningful and positive impact on the lives of Yukoners.
- We have made significant progress on projects that will not only improve the well-being of residents but will set up our territory for success in the future.

Our Clean Future

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for 34 commitments in Our Clean Future, also referred to as OCF.
- Since the launch of OCF, we have completed many initiatives including:
 - reduced work travel by installing new teleconferencing systems in 48 board rooms and implementing a new remote work policy;
 - invested \$46 million in capital expenditures toward building energy retrofits and renewable energy projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Government of Yukon buildings. Of this, \$35 million of energy retrofit projects were 75 per cent recoverable from the federal government through the Small Communities Fund;
 - being recognized by Natural Resources Canada in February 2024 for the launch of an ISO 50001-based energy management system. This is an internationally recognized voluntary standard that gives organizations a structured framework to manage energy. This achievement showcases the Government of Yukon's commitment to sustainable practices and efficient energy use in accordance with industry best

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

HPW Accomplishments since 2021

Highways and
Public Works

practices. We are the first government jurisdiction to achieve ISO 50001 Ready Canada recognition and are also the organization with the most buildings under this program;

- completed energy assessments for 81 high-emitting Government of Yukon buildings in Whitehorse and communities;
- awarded the tender in February 2024 to Dune Engineering Inc to conduct energy assessments for the remaining 36 high-emitting buildings;
- completed a total of 31 energy retrofits to Government of Yukon buildings that reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 225 tonnes per year;
- completed 12 renewable energy feasibility studies to evaluate biomass, geothermal, and other renewable heating options at 66 sites across the territory;
- constructed a biomass energy system at Elijah Smith Elementary School to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 153 tonnes per year
- entered into a heat purchase agreement with Teslin Tlingit Council to begin heating Khatinasaxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School with biomass heat, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 106 tonnes per year;
- completed eight climate risk assessments for major construction projects happening across the Yukon;
- completed an assessment of our highway's current exposure to climate related geohazards and forecasting where they might occur over the next 50 years; and

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****HPW Accomplishments since 2021**Highways and
Public Works

- invested \$2.7million in electrifying Government of Yukon's fleet vehicles, including acquiring 2 battery-electric cars, 12 plug-in hybrid-electric SUVs, 3 battery-electric cargo vans and 13 gas hybrid-electric pickup trucks and most recently 2 battery-electric pickup trucks and 15 full battery-electric compact SUVs. More are on order and are expected to arrive this spring.

Infrastructure investments

- Our department recognizes the importance of investing in infrastructure that supports and connects Yukoners, including our buildings, roads and airports.
- We are working with the Department of Education to build three new schools in the territory. We are making sure they reflect a modern learning environment and meet the needs of their communities.
- In Whistle Bend, the new elementary school is well underway and is expected to welcome students this fall.
- In Burwash Landing, we are beginning substantial work on the Kêts'ádań Kù (Ket-zah Done-COO) school starting summer 2024.
- As well, the École Whitehorse Elementary replacement school is currently in the early planning phase.
- The Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre and 10-plex housing complex is nearing completion. These buildings will improve services in Old Crow by providing much-needed housing, and a modern health centre.
- We have also made major investments in our transportation infrastructure.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****HPW Accomplishments since 2021**Highways and
Public Works

- In Carmacks, the Carmacks Bypass project under the Yukon Resource Gateway Program was successfully finished a year ahead of schedule and within budget. This project included building a new road and bridge to divert large mining trucks away from the community and increase safety.
- At the Erik Neilson Whitehorse International Airport, we completed upgrades to the parallel runway and will be reconstructing the main runway, as well as making various upgrades to airport facilities and infrastructure over the next few years. These improvements will support critical medical services, tourism and resource sectors, and contribute to arctic security efforts.
- We have also made significant progress on upgrades to critical sections of the North Klondike Highway. Approximately 57 kilometres have been reconstructed so far, the most recent of which is the completion of a 10-kilometre section near the Dempster Highway.
- These upgrades will increase safety, improve driving conditions, better connect the Yukon's resources to markets, and increase resiliency of the highway to the impacts of climate change.
- Last summer we also started replacing one of the longest bridges in the Yukon, the Nisutlin Bay Bridge. This project will help ensure that this key gateway to the Yukon remains safe and reliable for the travelling public.

Improving services for Yukoners

- While it may not be the first thought for Yukoners when they think of Highways and Public Works, our department offers important online services to our citizens.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****HPW Accomplishments since 2021**Highways and
Public Works

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- We have modernized many of our existing services, moving them online to the MyYukon portal. Yukoners can now access government services such as renewing their vehicle registration or applying for a commercial driving permit through one single log-in. This platform will continue to expand over the coming year to offer more services.
 - The Dempster Fibre Project is well underway, and construction is anticipated to be finished in 2024. Following construction, Northwestel will commission the line. This project involves creating a new fibre optic line from Dawson City to Inuvik, which will provide Yukoners with more reliable internet and cellphone services in the event of a disruption to our current fibre line.
 - Lastly, in 2021 the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* came into force which was designed to make government more transparent and accountable to the public and protect the personal information of Yukoners.

Advancing reconciliation

- A priority for our government is to advance reconciliation through our everyday work.
- The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy is a great example of this commitment - designed to bring more economic opportunities to First Nations across Yukon.
- Highways and Public Works introduced the Indigenous Training Program in 2023. The goal of this program is to help young Indigenous people gain experience, learn about the work the department does, and help them in pursuing their career goals.

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SPRING 2024

HPW Accomplishments since 2021

Highways and
Public Works

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- Highways and Public Works has worked with six Indigenous youth in two branches of the Department through the Indigenous Training Program.
 - Another way we are advancing reconciliation is through our Yukon Resource Gateway Program. This program requires all projects to have Project Agreements with affected First Nations before work can begin. The intent of these agreements is to provide opportunities that benefit local First Nation citizens and governments.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Minister may wish to highlight departmental accomplishments since the last election.

Approved by:

April 2, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson
Lake Airports**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: General

- Yukon's aviation system is essential for connecting our communities, building our economy, and linking the Yukon with the rest of the world.
- The Government of Yukon continues to make strategic investments to keep our aerodromes and airports safe and open for business.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works has made significant investments in aviation over the past few years, including upgrades to equipment and facilities.
- We are committed to future investments to grow and develop Yukon's aviation system.

Dawson City Airport**Recommended response: Improvements to the Dawson Airport**

- The Dawson City airport is a hub for many important operations including Air Ambulance, Wildland Fire, mineral exploration, tourism, and outfitting.
- Over the past few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has made several improvements to the Dawson City Airport, including paving the runway, building a second apron, constructing a new maintenance facility, upgrading operational areas, and relocating the Canadian Border Services Agency building to better support airport operations.
- Work is also underway at the Dawson City Airport to develop additional surface water management improvements such as ditching

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson
Lake Airports**Highways and
Public Works

all around the airport to ensure it remains operational during potential local flood events.

Additional response: Scheduled Service to Dawson

- Transport Canada does not allow larger aircraft (such as a Boeing 737-500) to have a scheduled service at the Dawson City Airport.
- However, larger aircraft can operate as a charter service.

Mayo Airport**Recommended response: Improvements to the Mayo Airport**

- The Mayo Airport provides a transportation link for important services such as Air Ambulance and mineral exploration.
- The Government of Yukon has made several important investments at the airport in the last few years including runway reconstruction, lighting upgrades, installation of a heated equipment storage facility and the purchase of maintenance equipment.
- Air North is currently providing charter service to and from Mayo Airport.

Watson Lake Airport**Recommended response:**

- In 2021 and 2022, \$4 million was invested in the Watson Lake Airport to resurface the runway and portions of the taxiway.
- Engineering design is currently underway for significant airfield lighting and electrical upgrades.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson Lake Airports**Highways and
Public Works

- We are working closely with departments and agencies that provide essential services from the airport to ensure the continued availability of emergency services throughout construction.
 - These investments will maintain the critical aviation infrastructure that serves the community of Watson Lake and surrounding area.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukon's community airports are essential to all travellers.
-

Background:**Dawson City Airport:**

- The Dawson City airport was built in the 1930s.
- Currently, under Transport Canada rules, only aircraft like the ATR 42-300 or smaller are permitted to offer scheduled service at the airport.
- Aircraft such as the Boeing 737-500 are only able to operate at the airport for charter service under Transport Canada.

Mayo Airport:

- A \$2.7 million runway lighting upgrade project was completed in August 2021.
- On November 1, 2019, the Mayo Airport was certified by Transport Canada and became the fifth certified airport in the territory.
- There was a spike in activity at Mayo Airport from 2017 to 2019. Aircraft movements increased by 14 per cent from 2017 to 2018, and by another 35 per cent from 2018 to 2019.

Watson Lake Airport:

- Watson Lake Airport was originally slated for critical improvements starting in 2022, but improvements began in 2021. This project was advanced by a year to ensure completion before the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport (ENWIA) reconstruction projects started.
-

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Dawson City, Mayo and Watson Lake Airports

Highways and Public Works

- The Watson Lake Airport supports ENWIA by providing redundancy and backup services should they be needed.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works prioritizes operations, maintenance and capital spending based on several factors, with safety being the most important. Regulatory requirements, costs, traffic volumes, impact on communities and impact on industry are also considered.

Approved by:

April 17, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Erik Nielsen Whitehorse
International Airport
(AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel
Runway, Taxiway G, Leasing)**

Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is making crucial investments in Yukon's infrastructure to enhance safety.
- To support current and future airport operations, a number of improvements to Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport are underway to replace aging infrastructure and keep the airport up to current standards.
- Improvements completed to date include upgrades to:
 - the parallel runway;
 - the taxiways;
 - apron panels; and
 - developing airport land for institutional and commercial uses.
- The main runway replacement project is also well underway and expected to be complete by 2026.
- We will continue making needed upgrades to the Whitehorse airport to meet the needs of travellers now and into the future.

Additional response: Future Airport Development and Service Levels

- Airports are complex systems, designed to accommodate a variety of aircraft with different physical dimensions and operational needs.
- Airport design and operations are built around the Aircraft Group Number, also referred to as an AGN system, a classification scheme that categorizes airports based on the type of aircraft they can support.

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International Airport
(AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel
Runway, Taxiway G, Leasing)**

Highways and
Public Works

- This system, which considers an aircraft's wingspan, outer main gear wheel span, and approach speed, has significant implications for everything from the size of runway to the design of the terminal buildings.
- There are six AGN classifications, ranging from I to VI, or smallest to largest.
- Airports classified as AGN V in Canada typically support significant metropolitan area populations and have passenger volumes in the millions.
- The Whitehorse Airport supports about 400,000 passengers per year and a relatively small surrounding population, less than 40,000 people.
- The Government of Yukon continues to evaluate the opportunities for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport to increase its service levels and accommodate larger passenger planes.
- For this service level increase there are a number of program and infrastructure investments that would need to be made.
- These additional investments would include increasing:
 - aircraft rescue firefighting resources;
 - aircraft maneuvering surfaces;
 - space and processing capacity for Canadian Border Services; and,
 - passenger processing and screening facilities.

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International Airport
(AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel
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Highways and
Public Works

- While additional investments are required to support moving from a category 4 airport (AGN IV) to a category 5 (AGN V) airport, the length and width of the existing and new main runway does not limit the Whitehorse Airport from supporting larger aircraft.
- Service level increases at Yukon airports and aerodromes require a clear business case to ensure informed investments in our infrastructure.
- The Yukon government will continue to work with industry and the Department of Tourism and Culture to inform future planning for Yukon airports and aerodromes.

Additional response: Condor

- During the reconstruction of the main runway, the parallel runway will be used as the primary runway.
- However, Condor currently operates a widebody aircraft that requires the main runway for service. Condor will be unable to operate a widebody aircraft at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport during the summer until the main runway replacement construction is complete.
- Of note, this year, Condor has changed aircrafts from the Boeing 767 to an Airbus 330 model, an AGN V aircraft.
- While the new main runway and taxiway dimensions will be able to accommodate larger aircraft such as those found in AGN V, overall, the Whitehorse Airport including the air terminal building, fire hall, etc. is designed to support AGN IV aircraft and would require significant investments to support a larger AGN V aircraft.

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International Airport
(AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel
Runway, Taxiway G, Leasing)**

Highways and
Public Works

- To accommodate Condor's aircraft change a service level increase would be required at the Whitehorse airport. The Yukon government will assess the cost, value, feasibility and sustainability of this service level increase.
- In the meantime, Air North has secured interline agreements with Condor that allow travellers to connect to the Yukon through Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.
- The parallel runway will continue to support all other domestic traffic regularly operating at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.

Additional response: Parallel runway upgrades

- The construction tender to upgrade the parallel runway was awarded to Terus Construction Ltd and Skookum Asphalt for approximately \$21 million. Construction began in spring 2023 and was substantially completed in late 2023.
- To meet Transport Canada regulations, last summer, we extended the runway safety area of the parallel runway. This required an infill of some of the Puckett's Gulch area, which involved relocating the airport fence line, clearing trees, and removing some vegetation to build a stable slope. This work is expected to be completed in summer 2024.
- The parallel runway was closed in September 2023 to allow the contractor for the main runway replacement to complete site preparation work for the main runway project in the vicinity.
- The work on the parallel runway and upcoming work on the main runway preserve the existing Active Transportation trail owned and

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024**

**Erik Nielsen Whitehorse
International Airport
(AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel
Runway, Taxiway G, Leasing)**

Highways and
Public Works

operated by the City of Whitehorse, which is routed around the north end of the airport.

- The Yukon government will continue to engage with the City of Whitehorse as they develop their trail and active transportation links near the airport.

Additional response: Taxiway and Tenant Lease Area Upgrades

- The construction tender for the realignment, paving and lighting of Taxiway G, and associated improvements to lease parcel servicing was awarded in early 2022, and work started in spring 2022.
- This work will extend services to tenants and create new lease lot opportunities at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.
- These improvements are ongoing and expected to be substantially complete in 2024.

Additional Response: YG v. Norcope Enterprises Ltd. Judgement

- The previous apron replacement project completed in 2014 has been the subject of legal proceedings between the Yukon government and the contractor, Norcope Enterprises Ltd. since 2017.
- On November 14, 2022, the Supreme Court of Yukon released its decision: Norcope was ordered to pay the Yukon government \$2.3 million in damages.
- Norcope Enterprises Ltd. appealed the November 14, 2022, decision. The appeal was argued on November 20 and 21, 2023, and the Court of Appeal has reserved its decision.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Erik Nielsen Whitehorse
International Airport
(AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel
Runway, Taxiway G, Leasing)**

Highways and
Public Works**Additional response: Maintenance Facility**

- Planning work is underway for the replacement of the airport maintenance facility, which is critical to the operation of the airport.
 - The new facility is being considered in a location on the east side of the airport to maximize the land available for commercial aviation operators on the west bench of the airport.
 - Construction is taking place this year for utility upgrades needed for development of the east bench of the airport. Timelines for construction and demolition of the maintenance facility will be announced in a future capital budget.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There are numerous airside projects happening at the Whitehorse Airport over the coming years.
-

Background:

- There are relatively few airports in Canada classified as AGN V, and those airports support significant metro area populations and have passenger volumes in the millions.
 - **Canadian Airports classified as AGN V (Aircraft Group Number):**
 - Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) - Toronto, Ontario
 - Annual average 34.7 million passengers in 2022.
 - Vancouver International Airport (YVR) - Vancouver, British Columbia
 - Annual average passengers 18.6 million passengers in 2022.
 - Montréal–Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport (YUL) - Montreal, Quebec
-

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Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport (AGN Classification, Condor, Parallel Runway, Taxiway G, Leasing)

Highways and
Public Works

- Annual average passengers 15.3 million in 2022.
- Calgary International Airport (YYC) - Calgary, Alberta
 - Annual average passengers 13.9 million passengers in 2022.
- Edmonton International Airport (YEG) - Edmonton, Alberta
 - Annual average passengers 5.85 million passengers in 2022.
- Ottawa Macdonald–Cartier International Airport (YOW) - Ottawa, Ontario
 - Annual average passengers 2.99 million passengers in 2022.
- Winnipeg James Armstrong Richardson International Airport (YWG) - Winnipeg, Manitoba
 - Annual average passengers 3.03 million passengers in 2022.
- Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ) - Halifax, Nova Scotia
 - Annual average passengers 3.12 million passengers in 2022.
- St. John's International Airport (YYT) - St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
 - Annual average passengers in 1.09 million passengers in 2022.
- More than 400,000 passengers fly in and out of Whitehorse every year.
- There have been inquiries from the tourism industry on the demand and opportunity to increase the service level at Whitehorse Airport to accommodate larger planes.

Approved by:

March 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Pelly Crossing Aerodrome –
Air Ambulance**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Providing Emergency Medical Services is a priority for the Government of Yukon throughout the territory.
- Decisions as to where and when Air Ambulance flights land are at the discretion of Emergency Medical Services on a case-by-case basis.
- Pelly Crossing is a registered aerodrome and can accept air ambulance flights during daylight hours.
- Mayo Airport is approximately 120 kilometres away from Pelly Crossing, and has additional infrastructure supporting Air Ambulance services with timely, efficient movement of patients and enroute medical care.

Additional response:

- The Yukon's Emergency Medical Services utilizes local transportation infrastructure to ensure the highest level of care.
- The service levels at Yukon airports and aerodromes are reviewed at regular intervals to align with airport and aerodrome user demand, including the requirements of the Yukon's Emergency Medical Services.
- The aerodrome at Pelly Crossing has fewer than 200 aircraft movements annually and in 2023 EMS responded 38 times for air ambulance requests.
- To date a service level change has not been identified as required at the Pelly Crossing Aerodrome.

Session Briefing Note**Pelly Crossing Aerodrome –
Air Ambulance**Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Air Ambulance use at Pelly Aerodrome is only available during daylight.

Background:

- The Aerodrome in Pelly Crossing was constructed in 1986 to support light and medium-sized aircraft for use on gravel runways.
- The gravel airstrip at Pelly Crossing is 3,300 ft. long and is primarily used by small private and charter aircraft, the RCMP and Air Ambulance flights.
- NavCanada does not have certified weather observers or automated weather observation equipment available to provide aircraft with weather data normally available at fully supported medevac sites like Mayo. Mayo has a 24-hour human weather observation program and staffed presence that can support aircraft activity.
- The Air Ambulance requires runway surface condition reports before they consider using the runway. Presently there is no program or trained staff available to provide inspection services on a routine basis in Pelly.
- Snow removal standards would also have to change to accommodate Air Ambulance requests. It is not yet known if the site could support night operations and currently there is no runway lighting.
- The runway was resurfaced in 2016 and was widened from 75' to 100'.

Approved by:_____
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

January 23, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Whitehorse Airport Food Services**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport is the aviation gateway to the Yukon, welcoming passengers from across the country and around the world.
- In late 2019, the Government of Yukon began working on securing a new agreement for food services at the airport.
- In late 2023, an agreement was signed with Air North to open a new restaurant.
- Due to unforeseen delays in receiving kitchen equipment supplies, the new Black Wolf Bistro is now set to open on May 15, 2024.
- Our goal is to provide quality food services for Yukoners and the thousands of passengers who pass through the airport every year.
- Soon travellers will be able to not only enjoy Air North's delicious warm cookies and meals 30,000 feet in the air, but also in the Whitehorse terminal.
- Until then, food and beverage options will continue to be available within the airport gift shop, vending machines and at nearby hotel restaurants.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Airport users may be interested in when they can expect food service providers in the airport.

Background:

- The opening date has been postponed due to unforeseen delays in receiving kitchen equipment supplies. We are in close contact with Air North and will keep the public updated.

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Whitehorse Airport Food Services

Highways and
Public Works

- In June 2019, the last operator requested release from their agreement to provide food services at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. The Yukon government took this opportunity to remove obsolete and non-functional equipment and upgrade the former restaurant and lounge areas and kitchen space.
- Unfortunately, active negotiations for the primary food services agreement were paused in March 2020 due to pandemic-related public health directives, a decrease in passenger traffic and a decrease in airport terminal use in general.
- In August 2021, discussions resumed on the food services agreement. Discussions were placed on hold again in October 2021 when the food services space was temporarily repurposed as a COVID-19 testing facility to satisfy Transport Canada regulatory requirements.
- The department resumed engagement with Air North, the highest ranked proponent in the Negotiated Request for Proposals process, in March 2022.
- The airport hosts approximately 400,000 passengers a year, and food services are an important part of the service offered at the airport.

Approved by:

April 2, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Whitehorse Airport - Snow Clearing and Drainage

Highways and Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works carefully manages snow removal and water drainage at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.
- Long-term forecasts are predicting increased precipitation and potentially higher drainage flow rates in the coming years due to climate change.
- The department is planning to upgrade surface water drainage infrastructure as part of the main runway replacement project and make further improvements to drainage at the airport for the long term.
- We work closely with the City of Whitehorse on these plans and will continue to collaborate on these issues.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Slope instability on the escarpment adjacent to ENWIA caused a large slide that closed Robert Service Way for a month in the spring of 2022 and again in spring 2023. The City of Whitehorse continues to monitor the stability of their land in the area and respond as required as their planning for longer-term mitigations continues.

Background:

- Changes in historic ground and surface water levels due to increased precipitation have been observed at the regional level in recent years.

Approved by:	January 25, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

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Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Dempster Fibre Line project will extend a high-speed fibre line from Dawson City, Yukon, to Inuvik, Northwest Territories.
- The project will benefit communities in both territories by providing a backup line in the event of an internet service disruption.
- Construction initially began in July 2021, and the majority of the physical installation along the 800-kilometre route is now complete.
- This is primarily a seasonal project; the contractor's crews are preparing to return this May to complete the installation work.

Additional response: Construction Activities and Project Schedule

- As of the end of the 2023 construction season, the majority of the conduit and fibre has been installed along the route.
- During the past year, the contractor completed approximately double what was originally planned for the 2023 construction season.
- The warm and dry summer, combined with sandier soils in the NWT section of the line, allowed for crews to install the conduit and fibre much faster than originally anticipated.
- The project's construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2024.
- This includes completing the remaining work in the communities of Dawson, Fort McPherson and Inuvik, along with connecting Northwestel buildings found along the route.
- Clean up and ground remediation has been and will continue to be a high priority for this project as it nears completion.

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Public Works

- As is usual for projects of this size and complexity, clean up activities and remediation and monitoring will also be required after construction is completed.
- Upcoming work for the 2024 season also includes splicing (or joining) of the installed fibre cables and commissioning of the line.
- Testing, signal checks, and other aspects of networking will be conducted simultaneously as the project construction nears completion.
- Our emphasis is working with the contractor to get construction completed on schedule and handing the line to Northwestel to get the network online as soon as possible.

Additional response: First Nation Participation

- First Nations participation was a large component of this value-driven tendering process.
- The Government of Yukon is actively engaged with three Yukon First Nations and five Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories whose traditional territories the project passes through.
- Under a First Nations and Indigenous Participation Plan for the project, 20 per cent of the contract value is allocated toward subcontracting, employment and training for First Nations in the Yukon and Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories.
- In spring 2023, we supported the contractor in holding open houses and job fairs in the communities of Dawson City, Old Crow, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik, and Fort McPherson. These events were well attended.

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Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and
Public Works

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- At the end of 2023, the project successfully achieved its First Nation and Indigenous Participation targets of 20 per cent of the construction cost by way of training, employment hours and subcontracting.
 - We continue to engage with First Nations and Indigenous governments to ensure the success of this project. We regularly meet to ensure that economic opportunities are made available to local businesses and citizens.

Additional response: Environmental Protection

- Environmental protection is a key value of this project. Stantec and Tetrach are subcontracted to mitigate the impacts of this project on the environment, particularly on permafrost.
- Input from Yukon University scientists, as well as First Nations traditional knowledge keepers, was incorporated to inform various environmental components during the design of the project.
- There is an extensive monitoring and inspection program being implemented as part of the project, as well as by multiple regulatory agencies, to help ensure that impacts are mitigated or minimized as much as possible. This includes:
 - three to five environmental monitors on site each day providing daily reports and guidance to the work crews;
 - weekly environmental reports and recommendations submitted by Environmental Dynamics Inc, the company overseeing the environmental monitors;
 - two Stantec field inspectors providing daily reports;
 - monthly inspections by Stantec and Tetra-tech's lead project engineers; and

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Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and
Public Works

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- regular inspections by the Government of Northwest Territories environmental compliance team.
 - The contractor follows an environmental plan with specific directions that were approved through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board process to protect values such as flora and fauna, wetlands and water bodies, and other sensitive environments.
 - A second round of environmental monitor training was provided to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and Gwich'in Tribal Council citizens. Sixteen participants successfully completed the training and are eligible to work on the Dempster Fibre project as Environmental Monitors.

Additional response: Alternate Installation Methods

- Construction of the fibre line takes place in challenging terrain which requires the use of specialized equipment and construction methods to minimize impacts to the environment.
- The preferred installation method is plowing cable into the ground — this method offers the greatest protection to the cable.
- Specialized equipment is used while plowing conduit into the ground to exert minimal ground pressure to create a shallow trench where the conduit is laid and immediately buried.
- In areas where this equipment cannot be used, such as waterways, we use horizontal directional drilling.
- For this method, a small hole is drilled below the surface where the fibre conduit is placed, with the longest bore hole going approximately 1.3 kilometres under the Mackenzie River

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Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and
Public Works

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- The horizontal directional drilling method was used to assist in crossing under three major rivers – the Arctic Red, the Peel and the Mackenzie River – without disturbing the flow of the waters. This can only be done in suitable soil and not through rocky areas.
 - The least preferred method is the installation of new poles for an aerial installation, which is only used when we encounter hard rock or unstable clay-like soil. Aerial installation methods are commonly found outside of riparian areas, bodies of water and small rivers.
 - Aerial installations are the least preferred option and are only used in rare instances when all other installation methods are not possible due to existing ground conditions.

Additional response: Installation Facts

- For the Dempster Fibre Line:
 - 89 percent was buried below the surface using plows;
 - 7 per cent was installed using horizontal directional drilling. This was mostly used to go under wetlands and rivers.
 - 1.7 per cent was installed on existing power poles, mostly in and around communities.
 - 1.2 per cent was installed on new poles in areas where horizontal directional drilling or other methods were not possible due to environmental conditions or subsurface geology.
- The line is installed inside a buried flexible conduit which allows the fibre line itself to move freely. There is also additional fibre line coiled in each maintenance box which leaves additional slack for any movement.

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Dempster Fibre Line

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Additional response: Construction Contract and Budget

- ROHL Global Networks, in partnership with Dagoo Services, was awarded the construction contract in May 2021.
- The federal government is contributing \$59 million to the project. Northwestel is contributing \$15 million as an upfront payment on a 20-year lease with exclusive rights to operate the line.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This is a major infrastructure investment that is necessary to create a backup fibre connection for the territory.

Background:

- Northern communities currently depend on a single fibre optic line. When that line goes down, the region is largely cut off from the digital world. Once in Inuvik, the fibre line will connect to the existing Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link. Together, the new line will complete a 4,000-kilometre network. That network will provide communities with a backup line in the event of a service disruption and provide more reliable internet and cellphone services.
- Regulatory permits for the project were issued after approval by the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board in the Northwest Territories and a recommendation was received from the Yukon Socio-Economic Assessment Board in the Yukon.
- Scientists and highway engineers from Yukon University and the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories have participated in several design reviews.

Environmental Incident and Remediation – August 2023

- At the end of August 2023, it was discovered that the clearing and brushing work had been performed with machinery closer than planned to some watercourses.
- Highways and Public Works, the contractor and the environmental consultant investigated all incident locations to provide remediation recommendations.
- The assessment of incident locations was completed in October 2023, and identified:

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Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and
Public Works

- 19 locations of disturbance near water;
- 13 of 19 locations requiring reseeding the riparian area with native plant species; and
- 2 of the locations require the covering of any exposed soil with nearby woody debris, while the existing vegetation regrows.
- There is no remediation work being recommended in 4 locations as the impact was minor and anticipated to recover naturally in a short time period.
- Highways and Public Works is working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to review the proposed remediation work.

Heritage Disturbance – June 2022

- In June 2022, the contractor’s vehicles entered an area of potential heritage significance along the shoulder of the Dempster Highway and installed conduit for the fibre line. Upon discovering this error, the vehicles were removed, and the site was marked off.
- The Yukon government commissioned independent assessment reports and provided recommendations for remediation to Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun.
- The Yukon government has offered a Transfer Payment Agreement to the First Nations to undertake separate studies to verify the assessment.

Approved by:

March 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Nisutlin Bay Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: General

- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a critical link along the Alaska Highway and is an important landmark for Teslin.
- The bridge is nearing the end of its life and requires replacement.
- In spring 2019, the Government of Yukon and the Teslin Tlingit Council signed a project charter to work together to design and build a reliable structure that accommodates more traffic, while also improving access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- This project provides a significant positive economic outcome for the territory, local businesses, and the community of Teslin.
- The existing bridge will be replaced by constructing a new bridge, which will span 483 metres across the Nisutlin Bay, and have a scheduled service life of 100 years.

Additional response: First Nations Participation

- At a high level, it is important to reiterate that there can be no meaningful growth in Yukon without First Nation participation in our territory's economy. The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy is a vital step towards creating a better and more fair Yukon.
- The project was tendered just after the introduction of the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy. The intent of the policy is to provide Yukon First Nations people with opportunities to participate in the Yukon economy.
- The Government of Yukon continues our commitment to continuous improvement and incorporating the lessons learned from all projects into recommendations to strengthen the policy moving forward.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Nisutlin Bay Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

- The Government of Yukon is grateful to Teslin Tlingit Council and the Contractor for their ongoing participation in the implementation of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project.
- Teslin Tlingit Council is working with the Yukon government to make improvements to the implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy so that it meets its original intent.

Additional response: First Nation and Community Engagement

- Highways and Public Works continues to work collaboratively with the Teslin Tlingit Council and engage with the Village of Teslin, the public and specific stakeholders on this project as it moves forward.
- The project team meets with Teslin Tlingit Council monthly to discuss the project and troubleshoot challenges together.
- As well, the Government of Yukon, Teslin Tlingit Council and the primary contractor meet on a monthly basis to review the project and discuss potential community issues and solutions.
- The department is currently planning to hold an open house in Teslin in early summer to update the community on the progress of the project.

Additional response: Benefits for Local Businesses (Sub-contracting)

- As per the terms of the construction contract, the contractor, Graham infrastructure LP, is responsible for the hiring of sub-contractors for the project. The Government of Yukon does not direct the contractor, Graham Infrastructure LP, on any sub-contracting opportunities.

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- Sub-contractors perform work including electrical, logistics, earthworks, quarry development, materials procurement, and environmental monitoring.
 - There are several Teslin businesses and other Yukon businesses that are working as sub-contractors on the project.
 - A list of sub-contractors exists for the life of the project, and the contractor can hire from this list at any time. They can also add to this list if the need arises.
 - If there are subcontractors working on the project who have concerns about their contract with the General Contractor, I encourage them to reach out to the Procurement Support Centre to see what their options are.

Additional response: Community Wellness

- The contractor has staffed a community wellness team that includes a liaison for their workers to contact, and a separate liaison for community members to contact, with any health and wellness issues pertaining to the project they may have.
- The contractor has developed policies for all staff regarding drugs and alcohol, and a respectful workplace including equity and inclusion and diversity.
- The Community Wellbeing Working Group, with representatives from Teslin Tlingit Council and the Government of Yukon will meet regularly to work through issues of wellbeing that might be arising for Teslin Tlingit citizens, and community members in general, from the project.

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Nisutlin Bay Bridge

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Additional response: First Nations Participation **Commitments**

- Both Teslin Tlingit Citizens and Yukon First Nations participation hours are tracked throughout the project.
- They are submitted monthly by Graham Infrastructure LP to the Government of Yukon.
- [There is a target \$3.7 million in employment opportunities available for First Nations Citizens on the project. As of March 2024, 64.9 per cent of that target has been met.]
- As part of the monthly progress claim submission process the contractor also provides a summary of the progress on the Bid Value Reduction commitments.
- This summary includes the subcontract values and subcontract payments to date.
- [All progress claims are accompanied by a statutory declaration.]
- The Department of Highways and Public Works reviews the monthly submissions to confirm the contractor is making best efforts to meet their commitments.
- Beyond the commitments made by the contractor for employment and training for First Nation Citizens, and the Bid Value Reductions received to hire Yukon First Nation Businesses, the Government of Yukon has provided a number of Transfer Payment Agreements to the Teslin Tlingit Council to as part of this project. Examples of these include:
 - o funding for project planning and implementation support;
 - o environmental and socio-economic baseline studies;

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Public Works

- aquatic and terrestrial baseline studies;
 - cultural infrastructure support;
 - a community liaison position;
 - funding to develop a Teslin resource inventory and source list;
 - the salmon sonar project; and
 - workforce development.
- There are further planned Transfer Payment Agreements with Teslin Tlingit Council as the project continues.
 - Teslin Tlingit Council also received funding from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to assist with the removal of vegetation from the gravel pits developed for the project.

Additional response: Work Inspections - Quality Control and Quality Assurance

- As with any large infrastructure project, frequent inspections are a regular part of construction monitoring.
- Throughout the project, the Contractor is responsible for developing and following an approved Quality Control plan.
- The Government of Yukon has a fulltime team of onsite technicians and engineers who are based in Teslin to provide Quality Assurance, which means checking quality control.
- Inspections are happening at every step of the project and as defects or non-conformances are found they are rectified following an approved protocol to ensure compliance with the project specifications.

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- It is also important to note that repairs during the work are a normal part of large construction projects.
- When defects are discovered the Contractor, Government of Yukon and consultants work collaboratively to find an effective solution to ensure the quality of work.
- So far, 2000 cubic metres of concrete have been successfully poured.
- To visualize, this is equivalent to approximately the amount of concrete from 182 concrete mixer trucks.

Additional response: Project Schedule

- The contract was awarded on May 3, 2022, to Graham Infrastructure LP.
- Project work began in the summer of 2022 and is now heading into its third year of construction.
- The contractor continues to adapt the work program to respond to construction needs as they arise. During the mild winter weather, the contractor was able to continue working and has been focused on completing the project to meet their scheduled timelines.
- The substantial completion date is November 5, 2025, and the total completion date is April 6, 2026.

Additional response: Contractor's 2024 Work Plan

- To date, the contractor has completed both abutments for the new bridge, as well as four of the six piers.

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- Work is ongoing on the next pier and on the temporary bridge, of which 80 per cent has been installed. Piling works on the last pier will start in April.
 - Steel girders for the new bridge have been fabricated, and deliveries for the precast panels for the deck are ongoing.
 - Granular pit development and rock production near Teslin and environmental measures such as hydroacoustic monitoring, fish salvage and water sampling are ongoing.
 - During the upcoming construction season, the contractor plans to have the temporary bridge and all piers for the new bridge completed, steel girders and precast panels installed and both new fish habitat areas created.

Additional response: Project Cost

- The construction contract with Graham Infrastructure LP was awarded for \$159.96 million. The contract is now valued at \$183.8 million.
- Infrastructure Canada will contribute \$41.25 million through the *Building Canada Fund* and Transport Canada will contribute \$52.5 million through the *National Trade Corridors Fund*.
- The Five-Year Capital Plan indicates that approximate spending in 2023-24 is \$40 to \$45 million, for fiscal year 2024-25 it is \$45 to \$50 million, and for fiscal year 2025-26 it is \$25 to \$30 million. These numbers are subject to change as the work progresses.

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Additional response: Fisheries Act Authorization Change Order

- Change orders, both large and small, are a regular part of contract management.
- To date there has only been one change in the contract value resulting from a change order.
- This change order stemmed from unexpected and restrictive terms and conditions in the *Fisheries Act Authorization* and Water Licence required for the project.
- When the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project was tendered, there was no reason to expect any significant deviation from similar, previous *Fisheries Act* authorizations from the regulator, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- The department planned according to the historical trend of stable and consistent terms and conditions in other *Fisheries Act* authorizations and water licences received from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Yukon's Water Board.
- However, in this case, the Government of Yukon received a *Fisheries Act* authorization in October 2022 that had new, restrictive limits to cumulative noise impacts on fish beyond what was expected and a Water Licence with additional scope.
- Working together, the Government of Yukon, Teslin Tlingit Council and Graham Infrastructure LP applied to amend both the Water License and the authorization to ensure the project could move forward.

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- The variance to the Fisheries Act Authorization was received in March 2023, at which point negotiations began between the Government of Yukon and Graham Infrastructure LP about a new schedule and work plan reflective of the authorization and ensuing additional work.
 - The additional work required by the terms and conditions of the *FAA* and Water License included:
 - increased water sampling requirements;
 - additional hydroacoustic monitoring;
 - design and management of bubble curtains – used to manage underwater noise;
 - additional fish salvage in isolated areas;
 - third party environmental monitoring;
 - a salmon sonar enumeration project to monitor salmon migration through the work area;
 - a fish movement research project to monitor impact of the construction work and change in habitat on the aquatic life in the Bay; and,
 - Resequencing the contractor's works schedule, as certain activities could only be authorized during a certain time of year to not disrupt fish migration and spawning.
 - The amended *FAA* resulted in a change order that increased the construction contract by \$23.89 million to a total of \$183.8 million to accommodate for additional work and services required. It also

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compensated the contractor for a delay in construction commencement and a 6-day extension to complete the project.

- With creative adaptations designed by the contractor, the Yukon government, and Teslin Tlingit Council to ensure the requirements of the *Fisheries Act* Authorization and Water Licence are met, all remain committed to delivering the construction of a new Nisutlin Bay Bridge.

Additional response: Fisheries Act Authorization and Water Licence Timeline

- The Water Licence for the project was issued on August 31, 2022.
- The *Fisheries Act* Authorization was issued on October 17, 2022.
- We received the amendment to the Water License on February 24, 2023, and a variance to the authorization on March 8, 2023.
- Due to the collaborative work undertaken by the contractor, YG and TTC to address the unforeseen restrictions of the FAA and Water Licence, the project is progressing well, and 88 piles have been installed in compliance with the *Fisheries Act* Authorization and Water Licence.

Additional response: Environmental Protection

- From the outset, environmental protection has been a major component of the project.
- Prior to construction commencing, Transfer Payment Agreements were signed with the Teslin Tlingit Council to undertake Environmental Baseline Studies in the area.

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- Under the project's *Fisheries Act* Authorization, we are required to establish a sonar enumeration project to make sure that the construction work is not negatively impacting fish populations or migrations.
 - A Transfer Payment Agreement was signed with Teslin Tlingit Council that provides funding to support this sonar project, which will last until the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project is finished.
 - The project helps researchers with Teslin Tlingit Council count Chinook salmon passing through the Nisutlin River Delta National Wildlife Area.
 - This important natural area is along the migration route for Chinook salmon returning to the Nisutlin and Wolf rivers and their tributaries.
 - The sonar covers a relatively narrow and shallow section of river. Like a police officer measuring cars' speed with a radar gun, the sonar "pings" various objects, in this case salmon, as they go by the sonar. The result is translated into a daily count of the salmon.
 - This work is essential to monitoring salmon migration numbers and making sure the fish reach their spawning grounds while a new bridge is being built in Nisutlin Bay.
 - Beyond the requirements set out in the regulatory approvals for fish habitat, the contractor is required to perform their construction activities to a high degree of environmental protection and reporting.
 - The contractor and the Yukon government meet weekly to discuss any environmental issues on the project, where underwater noise,

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water quality or spill reports are addressed, and mitigations are confirmed.

- Environmental site inspections with the contractor, the Yukon government and environmental consultants are also conducted weekly to provide a high degree of environmental oversight.
- In addition, the Yukon government has retained an environmental consultant based onsite to monitor construction activities.
- An Environmental Technical Working Group meets every two weeks, composed of representatives from Teslin Tlingit Council, the Yukon government and the contractor to review plans in advance of work commencing.
- Through this working group, we are able to address many environmental concerns of Teslin Tlingit Council and the community before they arise during construction.

Additional response: Granular Material

- This project will use over 100,000 cubic metres of aggregate for the various components.
- Almost all of the granular material for roadwork is locally sourced.
- However, the Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project will require approximately 2,400 m³ of coarse aggregate for the cast-in-place concrete being used.
- This small amount of coarse aggregate for concrete work is coming from Whitehorse.

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- The aggregate being used in the concrete has specific requirements to ensure the structural integrity of the bridge.
 - There are very limited sources of aggregate in the Yukon that meet these requirements, which is why aggregate from the Whitehorse area will be used for this specific portion of the project, which equates to less than 2.5 per cent of the aggregate needed.

Additional response: Granular Material at Ten Mile Pit (km 1258)

- A granular pit located at kilometer 1258 of the Alaska Highway, near Teslin, also called Ten Mile Pit, was developed to supply the project with granular-E material as described in the construction contract.
- However, after further testing, it was decided that granular sources for the project, including granular-E, will be sourced from the gravel pits located at kilometre 1184 and kilometre 1238.
- The granular resources from Ten Mile Pit will be used by the Government of Yukon for other projects or construction activities in the surrounding area.
- 50 per cent of the Ten Mile Pit area is shared with the Teslin Tlingit Council. The First Nation manages the development of their half of the Ten Mile Pit.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a landmark feature in Teslin and a key part of the Alaska Highway transportation infrastructure.

Background:**Existing Nisutlin Bay Bridge**

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- The existing bridge crosses the Nisutlin Bay at kilometre 1,243 on the Alaska Highway and was constructed in 1953 by the Department of National Defence.
- The current bridge is the longest on the Alaska Highway within the Yukon Territory, spanning 584 metres.
- Maintenance costs of the existing bridge are between \$0.5 to \$1 million per year.

Historic Public Engagement

- In early 2020, we engaged with residents and business owners of Teslin, the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Village of Teslin to discuss potential options for the bridge.
- In January 2021, we hosted an open house in Teslin to present the design of the bridge to the community.
- In August 2021, during Teslin Tlingit Council's Annual General Assembly, Highways and Public Works had an information booth for citizens to learn more about the project.
- In October 2021, another open house was held in Teslin to provide a project update and introduce the community to the two contractors so they could learn of potential employment opportunities.
- A ground-breaking celebration was held on October 21, 2022, with Teslin Tlingit Council, Village of Teslin, the contractor and officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works.

Approved by:	April 23, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Whitehorse Airport - Main Runway Replacement Project**Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is making crucial investments to the Yukon's infrastructure to provide Yukoners with safe and reliable aviation infrastructure for years to come.
- The main runway at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport was last resurfaced in the late 1980s. In order to meet requirements set out by Transport Canada and industry best practices, a reconstruction of the runway surface and lighting system is now required.
- The \$160.7 million contract to reconstruct the main runway was awarded to Flatiron Constructors Canada Limited on May 19, 2023.
- This work is part of a \$258 million program to improve Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.
- The federal government is contributing \$186 million through the National Trade Corridors Fund with the Yukon government funding the remaining \$72 million.
- Work started in the 2023 construction season and will continue in the 2024 and 2025 construction seasons. The project will be completed by 2026.
- Once completed, the new runway and taxiway dimensions will be able to accommodate larger aircraft such as those found in Aircraft Group Number V (AGN V).
- While this is a large project, we expect there to be minimal disruptions overall for the travelling public and we will be working closely with aviation stakeholders to minimize impacts on their operations during the construction period.

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- Condor will not be able to offer direct service to Whitehorse while the main runway is closed during the 2024 and 2025 construction seasons. This is because their aircraft is too large to use the secondary runway.
- However, Air North has secured interline agreements with Condor that allow travellers to connect to the Yukon through Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

Additional response – YESAB Assessment

- During the initial planning phase Highways and Public Works reviewed the project scope and determined that the planned activities did not require a water licence or to undergo the YESAB process. As part of this review, Highways and Public Works received advice from the Department of Justice that confirmed that YESAB was not required.
- Most of the work associated with the Main Runway Replacement Project was categorized as falling under the “repair and maintenance of an aerodrome.” As such, the work fell outside of the scope of projects requiring a YESAB assessment as outlined in Schedule 1 of the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*.
- After careful project assessment it was also determined that there would also be no interaction with or potential impacts to visible or identifiable watercourses that would trigger a YESAB review or to apply for a water licence.
- However, during preparatory construction work in the Baxter’s Gulch area, an underground stream was encountered near where the existing north approach lighting towers were planned to be replaced.

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- The department has removed the replacement of these lighting towers from the contract's current scope of work in order to assess the possible impact of this work on the underground stream. A YESAB submission is expected in the future for this specific work.
 - In addition, once the stream was found, existing erosion and sediment controls were increased to avoid any deposit of silt or waste into the stream during construction work.
 - No work will happen in the area near the stream until a separate project has been planned and the YESAB process has been completed for it.

Additional response: Drainage work and sediment control

- The Main Runway Reconstruction Project is underway and has the Contractor's Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in place to mitigate environmental concerns.
- The EMP outlines the Contractor's plans for sediment controls, monitoring requirements, and reporting requirements for all planned work on site.
- Highways and Public Works and their Consultant, Associated Engineering, regularly review the implementation of this plan and report any issues to the Contractor.
- The drainage work planned for the airport is simply replacement of existing drainage systems, some of which date back in to the 1950s.
- These revised systems are intended to meet current Transport Canada best practices and do not increase the overall drainage footprint of the site.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Whitehorse Airport - Main Runway Replacement Project**Highways and
Public Works**Additional response: Impacts to Trails**

- Puckett's Gulch is currently undergoing active construction as we work on developing a new airside access road.
- For safety reasons, this has led to a temporary closure of the area.
- We anticipate completing construction in this section by the end of summer 2024, at which time the construction fencing will be replaced with regular airport fencing.
- It is important to note that the footpaths in this area, including those along the escarpment around the airport, fall under the jurisdiction of the City of Whitehorse.
- That being said, Highways and Public Works is working on alternative options for the use of certain footpaths, like the footpath connection up to Puckett's Gulch. At present, we are encouraging cyclists to use the trails on two-mile hill if they wish to avoid the Black Street stairs.
- We are dedicated to continuing an open dialogue with the City of Whitehorse as they continue to develop their trail and active transportation infrastructure near the airport.

Additional response – Impacts to Air Carriers

- The main runway is closed as of April 15, until mid-October, and all aircraft will be using the parallel runway during this time.
- There will be similar closures of the main runway during the 2025 construction season.
- As part of the overall project plan, in 2022 the parallel runway was lengthened and strengthened to allow 737 type aircraft to use the runway. Edge lights were also installed to allow it to be used at night.

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- These improvements mean that most aircraft of a 737 size or smaller will be able to use the airport as normal all year round.
 - However, the parallel runway is still shorter than the main runway which means that during the construction seasons, diverted aircraft larger than a 737 will not be able to land.
 - In addition, depending on weather and environmental conditions, the shorter runway may impact the total landing and takeoff weight of certain aircraft.
 - We have been and will continue to work with air carriers to plan for and minimize any impacts while we reconstruct the main runway.

Additional response: Project Rationale

- As asphalt ages, the ability for the mix to hold together degrades and the surface loses its flexibility. The lower flexibility results in increased cracking and produces foreign object debris, which can be detrimental to aircraft.
- Since 2017, the department has been regularly patching and rehabilitating the runway to extend the runway's life, but it was no longer economical or practical to continue with this approach.
- There are existing concrete panels under the asphalt surface of the runway which were originally installed when the airport was first built in 1943.
- These panels are approximately 20 cm thick and lie under 15 cm of asphalt.
- The panels are cracked throughout due to age and the cracks are reflecting through the asphalt layers causing the top layer of asphalt to also break down.

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- Large cracks on runways are a major source of foreign object debris (FOD) and pose potential dangers to aircraft.
 - These existing layers of concrete will undergo rubblization to be used as base material in the new runway structure.
 - Where poor quality materials are found, below the existing concrete, they will be removed and replaced with new aggregates to ensure there is at minimum 1.5 metres of quality materials under the new asphalt surface.
 - In addition, over the past few years the existing electrical infrastructure, including runway and taxiway edge lights, has required more frequent repairs to keep the lighting system operational. This project will solve these problems.
 - Each end of the current runway has portions that are not usable. The project will lengthen the usable portion of main runway by fixing the 257 metre portion on the north end, and the 427 metre portion at the south end of the main runway.
 - Part of the reconstruction work will allow the use of the full paved surface, which will go from being 2,216 metres of usable runway to 2,900 metres of usable runway.
 - Reclaiming the displacements requires changes be made to existing paint markings, signs, edge lights, approach lighting towers, and NavCanada publications.
 - It also requires a relocation of NavCanada's glide path for the instrument landing system.
 - In addition, part of the reconstruction also includes raising the elevation of the runway in order to install new drainage infrastructure.

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- This will help minimize the impact of frost below the runway and also help keep subbase soils dry and solid to prevent movement and cracking of the asphalt surface.
 - This change in elevation will also allow more structural fill to be used within the base of the runway, further increasing the lifespan of the asphalt on top.

Additional response: Construction Activities

- In 2023, progress to the main runway included:
 - preparation for the main runway reconstruction, including airfield drainage improvements;
 - water and sanitary line extensions;
 - fencing to secure the worksite; and
 - construction of two access roads to the parallel runway in preparation for the 2024 construction season.
- Major reconstruction work will begin on the main runway this upcoming 2024 construction season. Work is expected to include:
 - reconstruction of the north half of the runway surface which will include rubblization of the existing asphalt and concrete surface, placing new base material, and placing new asphalt pavement;
 - installation of new edge lighting;
 - installation of a storm drainage system;
 - construction of a new taxiway F; and,
 - adjustments to the north perimeter service road.

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- Over the coming years, the main runway will be fully replaced with additional features, such as increased lighting and improved drainage.

Additional response: Flatiron Constructors Canada Company Profile

- Flatiron delivers infrastructure projects across the U.S. and Canada. for public and private clients– including highways and bridges; aviation, rail, and transit projects; dams and water treatment facilities; and underground projects.
- Flatiron has recently been involved with the Vancouver Airport North Runway Rehabilitation Project and was also involved in the construction of portions of Anthony Henday Drive in Edmonton.
- Flatiron’s Project Manager, Cody Wiles and his family have relocated to Whitehorse for his work on this project.
- In early March, I met with the Vice President of Operations of Flatiron’s Canadian Division, the main contractor for the airport runway reconstruction project.
- We discussed the project schedule and how Flatiron is building strong relationships with local partners.
- We also talked about how the company is taking steps to fulfill its commitments under the Community Development Agreements with Ta’an Kwäch’än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
- I was pleased to learn about some of the successes Flatiron has had with other Indigenous groups with their other projects across Canada and the United States and about the value Flatiron places on economic reconciliation.
- Highways and Public Works will work with Flatiron to enhance the public communication around the construction site so that Yukoners

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can learn more about the project and get information about trail detours.

- I look forward to continuing to engage with the company to see the progress made over the summer this year and into the next construction season.

Additional response: Community Development Agreements

- We have entered into two Community Development Agreements for work on the main runway, one with Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and one with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- Both agreements are tailored to maximize socioeconomic benefits that are important to each community such as employment, subcontracting, training and workforce and business development.
- An example of the implementation of these agreements is the subcontracting work performed by First Nations businesses.
- Additionally, the contractor held a job fair in August 2023 targeted at employment for First Nations citizens. Another job fair will be held on March 27, 2024, prior to construction season start-up.
- Community Development Agreements are government-to-government agreements, and the content is confidential.
- The framework for these agreements was developed as part of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy. We are working closely with both First Nation governments to implement these two agreements.

Additional response: Engagement

- The department is working closely with aviation stakeholders to minimize impacts on their operations during the construction period.

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- On August 3, and September 28, 2023, information sessions were hosted for aviation and tourism stakeholders, respectively, about the project.
 - Both sessions were well attended and provided the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
 - There will also be a public information session this spring informing the public about the planned construction activities they might observe around the airport.
 - Along with this information session, there will be posters at the Whitehorse airport communicating information about the project and upgrades. This information will also be found on Yukon.ca.
 - We continue to work with tourism and industry stakeholders to inform them of the project's progress.
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Context—this may be an issue because:

- This is a major infrastructure project happening in the territory.
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Background:

- A major patching program was undertaken in 2017 for the main runway, which was primarily aimed at reducing potential foreign object debris.
 - A Hot-In-Place asphalt recycling rehabilitation was completed in 2018, which was estimated to extend runway life by an additional five years. This allowed time for the options analysis and planning of a more robust surface treatment, including subsurface drainage and lighting.
 - In summer 2022, pavement friction results for the main runway began to decline to levels which triggered remedial action.
 - In 2022, a surface texturing treatment was performed to restore the main runway to an acceptable condition.
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- Pavement friction numbers declined again, and the surface texturing treatment was repeated in September 2023.

Fast Facts

- The total quantity of electrical cable required for the project could reach from the airport in Whitehorse to Carcross, and back.
- The total volume of aggregates required for the project could fill 85 Olympic sized swimming pools.
- There are 40 kilometres of paint markings on the main runway alone.
- The project requires 73,000 tonnes of asphalt, that's about the weight of approximately 145,000 moose. This is double the total population of moose in the Yukon, that's a lot of freezer space!

Runway Length Comparison

ENIWA (Parallel runway)	Watson Lake	YVR's (largest)	Canada's largest runway (Calgary)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6600' long • 100' wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5500' long • 150' wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,800' long • 200' wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14000' long • 200' wide

Approved by:

April 24, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Active Transportation
OCF Action Item T13 & T35**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Highway and Bridge Design

- Investing in active infrastructure is an Our Clean Future commitment for the Highways and Public Works, under Action T13.
- Promoting active transportation is important as it not only helps support healthy living, but also moves us toward a cleaner and more sustainable future for the Yukon.
- The tender to develop Yukon-specific guidelines to align the department's planning and design of active transportation facilities with national best practices closed on April 22, 2024. This work is expected to be completed by March 2025.
- Currently, Highways and Public Works is also actively incorporating active transportation options into our highway infrastructure projects wherever possible.
- In January 2024, two push-button pedestrian crossings were activated along the Alaska Highway at Birch Street and 17th Avenue in Porter Creek, in order to increase safety for active transportation commuters.
- In July 2023, the department completed construction of a paved, multi-use trail between the Lodestar Lane and the intersection of Robert Service Way and the Alaska Highway.
- We are planning on extending this active transportation trail from the Robert Service Way intersection to Philmar RV, as the reconstruction of this section of the Alaska Highway occurs.

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OCF Action Item T13 & T35**Highways and
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- The department is also in the process of developing options to enhance the safety of active transportation on the Klondike Highway's Takhini River Bridge.
 - \$8.5 million is budgeted for upgrades to the existing bridge, of which the Government of Yukon will receive over \$6 million in federal funding through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
 - We are looking into options for these upgrades which could include adding a sidewalk to the bridge, and the necessary modifications to improve the structure and increase the bridge's lifespan.
 - Another example where we have incorporated active transportation into a project is the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project which will include a pedestrian walkway across the bridge and a trail underneath the bridge that will provide all-season access.

Additional response: 20-year Transportation Plan (Action T35)

- Highways and Public Works is making progress on an Our Clean Future commitment to develop a 20-year transportation plan by the end of 2025.
- The 20-year transportation plan includes both climate change and active transportation in the planning process.
- The plan will prepare our territory's transportation system for future opportunities and challenges and will guide infrastructure investment and policy development initiatives.
- This will be the Yukon's first long-term, system-wide transportation plan, that will consider how various drivers of transportation demand,

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Public Works

such as population growth and economic conditions, are likely to change over the long-term.

- This will help the Yukon government set objectives for how to best manage during those emerging trends.

Additional response: Building and Parking Lot Design

- Active Transportation planning is incorporated into how we design and construct new buildings.
- For example, the new Whistle Bend School will have a widened sidewalk to accommodate children riding bikes in front of the school, and the trails behind the school will be integrated into the Whistle Bend trail system to allow students to commute to school.
- Construction of a new staff parking area behind Selkirk Elementary School started last summer. The design has allowed for the addition of a trail alongside the parking lot to connect with the City of Whitehorse's active transportation plan.
- We are working closely with the City of Whitehorse on these projects and are committed to incorporating active transportation options as much as possible.

Additional response: Community-Led Study

- A citizen-led study the feasibility for two active transportation underpasses beneath the Alaska Highway within Whitehorse was recently completed by the Cycling Association of Yukon, residents of Takhini North and the Hillcrest Community Association.
- The study was funded by the Government of Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

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- The study has been provided to both Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse for information and is also available publicly on the Cycling Association of Yukon's website.
- On April 23, study leads will be meeting with Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse to present the findings.

Additional response: HART Combined Intersection Upgrades

- The Government of Yukon has also partnered with the City of Whitehorse on the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill intersection project, and the Range Road, Combined Intersection Upgrades project.
- This joint initiative, which is currently in the public engagement phase, will focus on developing designs to improve the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill intersection, and the Range Road-Two Mile Hill intersection, with an emphasis on making travel more efficient for all transportation modes.
- In addition to the ongoing active transportation initiatives, representatives from the departments of Highways and Public Works, Community Services and Environment will be meeting with the City of Whitehorse on April 24 to discuss the active transportation priorities and to identify potential opportunities for collaboration.

Additional response: Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements:

- We are also making pedestrian safety improvements in Watson Lake.
- The safety improvements include:
 - the addition of streetlights along the Robert Campbell Highway, which was completed in November 2023;

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- the planned upgrade of two existing pedestrian crossings with pedestrian-activated flashing beacons along the Alaska Highway in 2024; and
- four new pedestrian crosswalks along the Alaska and Robert Campbell Highways in 2024.
- \$1.5 million is budgeted for the Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements. Approximately \$1.1 million of that is funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

Additional response: Developing a One-Government Approach to Active Transportation

- Highways and Public Works has been working with Community Services and Environment to develop a collaborative structure to work seamlessly together on active transportation initiatives.
- This initiative was developed from a recognition that multiple departments have a role to play in advancing active transportation initiatives.
- Our goals are to enable continuous and seamless working relationships across relevant departments, to support active transportation initiatives, and to make it easier for communities to access support for their active transportation priorities.
- As a recent example, Highways and Public Works introduced an active transportation option by providing an eBike for employees living in rural communities. Now, Health and Social Services employees who are working in Old Crow have an option to access their home care programming via active transportation.

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Active Transportation OCF Action Item T13 & T35

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Government of Yukon is incorporating active transportation in the design of highways and other transportation infrastructure near communities. This will help meet the commitments of Our Clean Future.

Background:

- Reducing emissions from the transportation sector is a critical element of Our Clean Future.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to making our roads more accessible for active transportation so that Yukoners have the option to walk, bike or even kick-sled to their destination, whenever possible.
- In general, it is best practice to build active transportation infrastructure at the same time as highway reconstruction so the two assets can be designed to work together.
- Construction of both assets at the same time is also cost effective as materials from the highway reconstruction can be reused for the active transportation trail and contractor costs are reduced as they are already on site.

Approved by:

April 23, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**CASA Commitments
- GHG Reductions**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- As part of the Confidence and Supply Agreement between the Yukon NDP and Yukon Liberal caucus, our government has committed to investing an additional \$5 million per year into renewable energy infrastructure projects.
 - In 2023, we invested \$3 million in the Whitehorse Battery Project and \$2 million in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre district biomass system, which is expected to be completed this summer.
 - This year the Government of Yukon is meeting this \$5 million commitment by installing two off-grid solar systems at the Blanchard and Tuchitua highway maintenance camps.
 - These solar energy projects are anticipated to offset approximately 98,000 liters of fuel and reduce emissions by 260 tonnes per year.
 - This government continues to invest in renewable energy infrastructure across the territory from solar energy systems in remote locations to biomass heating systems in our schools.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The CASA has been extended until 2025. One commitment is to increase funding for renewable energy infrastructure by \$5 million per year.
-

Background:

- In November 2022, a design-bid-build contract was awarded for the Whitehorse Correctional Center biomass expansion project.

Session Briefing Note
CASA Commitments
- GHG Reductions

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- The project will connect underground piping from Takhini Haven and the Young Offenders Facility to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre that has an operational biomass boiler with additional capacity.
- The system currently uses low-carbon wood pellets made from the waste of a sawmill in Northern Alberta.
- The number of wood pellet deliveries will increase from 5 to 10 per year for this project. The emissions from these trips will be primarily offset by the corresponding reduction in heating oil and propane deliveries from Northern BC and Alaska.

Approved by:	
	January 26, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**
OCF Action Items L14, L15, H15, T25, T28Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The impacts of climate change are evident in the north, whether it be wildfires, flooding, landslides, increased precipitation, permafrost thaw or avalanches.
- The Yukon is changing quickly, and we need to be prepared for more changes to come.
- It is important that the infrastructure we build today will withstand the climate impacts of tomorrow.
- To support our understanding of how climate change is impacting our infrastructure, the Government of Yukon completed its first territory-wide climate risk and resilience assessment.
- “Assessing Climate Change Risk and Resilience in the Yukon”, the report from the assessment, was released in September 2022 and can be found on Yukon.ca.
- The Yukon-wide climate risk assessment had three main objectives:
 - build an understanding of climate resilience across the Yukon;
 - highlight the priorities for reducing risks; and
 - identify the factors that contribute to resilience.
- This report outlines the impacts of climate change that pose the highest risk to Yukoners and will be a key resource for the government to assess, adjust and accelerate climate actions under Our Clean Future.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**
OCF Action Items L14, L15, H15, T25, T28Highways and
Public Works**Additional response:**

- Currently, we are conducting climate risk assessments of all major transportation and building infrastructure projects over \$10 million, under OCF Actions T28 and H15.
- Unlike the Yukon-wide climate risk assessment that looks broadly at the climate hazards of the territory, these project-level assessments influence the design of new infrastructure so they can better withstand climate hazards over the next several decades.
- Climate risk assessments consider the potential damage, how likely it is to occur, and what options exist to mitigate that threat.
- The department has completed climate risk assessments for the following eight major construction projects since 2019:
 - Dempster Fibre Line;
 - Carmacks Bypass;
 - North Klondike Highway reconstruction;
 - Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements;
 - Alaska Highway safety improvements through Whitehorse;
 - Takhini Thaw Slump;
 - Dawson City Yukon River crossing; and
 - the new school in Burwash Landing - Kêts'ádań Kù (Kay-et-zah-Done-coo), under OCF Actions H15 and T28.
- The assessments were conducted during the design stage of these projects, helping the department predict climate change impacts to inform decisions.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**
OCF Action Items L14, L15, H15, T25, T28Highways and
Public Works

- For example, for the Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing School) project, the foundation of the building was modified due to presence of permafrost, and the overall building shape was designed to address changing weather patterns.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is also improving the effectiveness of future project-level climate risk assessments by developing new processes and tools to consider climate risk in new and existing infrastructure across the Yukon. These tools will help connect complex climate change data and project-level requirements.
- In March 2024, department officials completed a climate change vulnerability study of the road transportation network. This study is the first step to understand where our roads are most exposed to long-term climate related risks (OCF Action T25).
- This assessment looks at our highway's current exposure to climate related geohazards and forecasts where they might occur over the next 50 years.
- The results of this study will target areas of interest for monitoring, support requests for capital funding applications, and include a mitigation and adaptation package to support our project prioritization for capital planning and asset management.
- We will use the information from these projects and studies to help build safer and more resilient infrastructure for years to come.

Third response:

- In summer 2023, the team completed a Yukon-wide climate risk assessment with Yukon University that focused on the technical risk

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Climate Resilience in Infrastructure
OCF Action Items L14, L15, H15, T25, T28

Highways and
 Public Works

climate change poses to Government of Yukon buildings throughout the territory.

- This project identified the type and severity of climate change hazards our buildings are facing, such as floods, wildfires, and thawing permafrost. This is an OCF commitment for the department (Action L14).
- We are expanding on this work by developing guidelines that address the risks identified in new and existing infrastructure.
- In October 2023, we issued a request for information asking for feedback to align our approach with current industry best practices and to determine the next steps.
- The information was then incorporated into the tender published in January 2024 and then closed on February 21, 2024. **We awarded the contract to Morrison Hershfield in April 2024** and plan to complete the project by March 2025.
- Conducting project-level climate risk assessments during the conceptual design stage for all infrastructure projects will help us build safer, longer-lasting infrastructure that is prepared for future climate events.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Climate change impacts continue to be felt throughout the territory.

Background:

- Climate risk assessments focus on determining risk for permafrost, fire, flood, and other environmental factors.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**
OCF Action Items L14, L15, H15, T25, T28Highways and
Public Works

- We continue to build on the findings of the Climate Risk Assessment report. The report was published in 2022 and is a summary of the input received from First Nations, municipalities, various departments, and subject matter experts.
- We are also working with the Government of Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut to inform best practices and lessons learned from each other's projects.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Electric Fleet Vehicles
OCF Action T2**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to electrifying its vehicle fleet to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is leading by example by adding zero-emission vehicles to the fleet and promoting sustainable and suitable vehicle options that meet requirements.
- The department will continue tendering electric trucks, vans, and SUVs to replace gasoline vehicles as appropriate. This goes well beyond the target for cars that was originally set in Our Clean Future.
- These tenders show climate leadership by signaling the government's intended direction for emission reductions and clean transportation options.

Additional response:

- The updated Our Clean Future Action T2 commits Highways and Public Works to continue the electrification of the Government of Yukon's fleet and incorporate emissions reductions into vehicle replacement decision-making as available and suitable.
- Progress on this commitment includes:
 - in early 2021, the Government of Yukon purchased two battery-electric passenger cars from local dealerships. The cars were delivered in April 2021;
 - in late 2021, 12 plug-in hybrid SUVs were ordered and delivered in 2022;
 - in 2023, 13 gas hybrid pickup trucks and the two full battery-electric pickup truck were delivered and are in use across the

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SPRING 2024

Electric Fleet Vehicles OCF Action T2

Highways and
Public Works

fleet; three battery-electric cargo vans were delivered and are being are used by our mail and courier services and education facilities support, and 15 full battery electric compact SUVs were delivered and are now in use;

- in April 2024, one more battery-electric cargo van and one battery-electric pickup truck were delivered to the fleet.
- An additional 15 battery-electric cars will be delivered and deployed to program areas based on the best use for these vehicles by mid-July.
- In 2023, 4 per cent of the light duty fleet were electric vehicles – 28 vehicles in total. By the end of the 2024 fiscal year, we aim to double the total to 70 electric vehicles, or 10 per cent of our light duty fleet with scheduled replacements for aging equipment.
- Highways and Public Works continues to meet with local dealerships to build relationships and understand market conditions so that we can maximize the number of electric vehicles in the government fleet.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This is a commitment in *Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy*.

Background:

- Zero-emission vehicles include both battery-electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid-electric vehicles.

Total Electric Fleet Vehicles		
Type	Number	Acquired
Plug-in hybrid SUVs	12	2022
Hybrid pick-up trucks	13	2023

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Electric Fleet Vehicles OCF Action T2

Highways and
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Full battery-electric cars	3	2021+2024
Full battery-electric vans	3	2023+2024
Full battery-electric trucks	2	2024
Full battery-electric compact SUVs	15	2023
TOTAL	48	

- In 2016, the Yukon government purchased its first zero-emission vehicle as a pilot project: a Chevrolet Spark compact passenger car that was studied for northern climate use by the Energy Solutions Centre.
- Two Chevy Bolt electric vehicle cars and twelve Ford Escape electric hybrid SUVs are available for government use from Fleet Vehicle motor pool services. Other vehicles will be assigned to specific users for testing utilization, range and suitability for different scenarios on purchase.
- Local dealerships can currently supply battery-electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid-electric and gasoline hybrid vehicles in most vehicle categories. Highways and Public Works is staying in touch with local dealerships about supply and government's anticipated demand.
- Market supply chains continue to experience delays and disruptions in the motor vehicle sector but are returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works published a tender closing in March for 38 additional level 2 chargers to support electric vehicles in the government fleet. This will support zero-emission vehicle deployments in Whitehorse and other communities.

Fleet-owned EV Range estimates

Make	Model	Summer Range +20	Winter Range -20
Ford	Lightning	480 kms	300 kms
Ford	E-Transit MR	186 kms	100 kms
Ford	Escape PHEV	60 kms (battery)	40 kms (battery)
Chev	EV Bolt	416 kms	250 kms
Kia	Niro	407 kms	300 Kms

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Electric Fleet Vehicles OCF Action T2

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- Market stabilization and transition to electric vehicle production for battery-electric trucks and SUVs is evident with the recent bid(s) from suppliers of electric vehicles. Effort is still required to align procurements with production schedules.
- 6.1 per cent of light duty sales in the Yukon last year were ZEVs, while 33 of FVA's 54 purchases were EVs (including 13 hybrid trucks) from local dealerships.
- The Our Clean Future target for 2030 is to have 4,800 light duty Zero Emission Vehicles registered in the Yukon. The Yukon is currently on track to meet the target. according to data collected by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (which started in Q1 of 2023). The department is collecting data on the number of zero emission vehicles registered in the Yukon at the end of each quarter and applying that data to a statistical model that predicts ZEV uptake over time. The most recent figure is 344 zero emission vehicles registered as of December 31, 2023, which is 6 per cent ahead of the model's trajectory.
- The federal program for zero-emission vehicles provides incentives of up to \$5,000 for the purchase or lease of eligible zero-emission light-duty vehicles and up to \$10,000 for medium or heavy-duty vehicles, such as full battery-electric vans.
- Procurement of zero-emissions vehicles will follow the federal rebate standards set by Natural Resources Canada to determine vehicle eligibility. Federal rebates will be applied to the Yukon government purchases through the procurement process.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
OCF Action T4**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- One of the ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to meet *Our Clean Future* goals is by switching to electric vehicles.
- In the Yukon, on-road gasoline and diesel vehicles accounted for 39 per cent of our territory's 2021 greenhouse gas emissions.
- Under Action T4 of *Our Clean Future*, the Government of Yukon has committed to making it possible for electric vehicles to reach all road accessible communities in the Yukon, by 2027.
- To do this, the Department of Energy Mines and Resources has installed 19 fast charging stations available for public use within the following Yukon communities and Whitehorse:
 - Beaver Creek – Visitor Information Centre;
 - Burwash Landing – Kluane Energy Café;
 - Carcross – Carcross/Tagish First Nation Learning Centre;
 - Carmacks – Tantalus Community Centre;
 - Dawson City – Visitor Information Centre;
 - Faro – Campbell Region Interpretive Centre;
 - Haines Junction – Da Kų Culture Centre;
 - Marsh Lake – Army Beach water treatment plant;
 - Mayo - Government of Yukon Administration Building;
 - Mendenhall Subdivision – Mendenall Road;
 - Pelly Crossing – School Avenue;
 - Ross River – by the Ross River School;

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Electric Vehicle Charging Stations OCF Action T4

Highways and
Public Works

- Stewart Crossing – Rest Stop at kilometre 213;
- Teslin – Boat Launch;
- Watson Lake – Northern Lights Space and Science Centre;
- Whitehorse – Yukon Centre Mall, Yukon Transportation Museum, Yukon Visitor Information Centre (x2);
- Drivers can now check 511 to determine where charging stations exist along the highway network.

Additional response:

- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Energy, Mines and Resources are working closely to install a total of eight additional electric vehicle fast charging stations along the Alaska, North Klondike and Robert Campbell Highways.
- These new stations will provide charging opportunities in between community charging locations to ensure that electric vehicles can safely travel the long distances between communities along the highways.

Sites	Rest Stop	Expected Completion Year
Alaska Highway and South Canol Road intersection;	Yes	2024
Alaska Highway Swift River	Yes (New)	2025

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Electric Vehicle Charging Stations OCF Action T4

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Robert Campbell Highway's Drury Creek	Yes (New)	2024
North Klondike Highway Gravel Lake, at kilometer 622;	Yes	2026
North Klondike Highway Braeburn, at kilometer 281	No	2024
Dempster Highway and North Klondike Highway intersection;	No	2024
Jake's Corner;	No	2024
Alaska Highway and Highway 37 intersection	No	2024

- Installing electric vehicle charging stations along highways between communities requires additional time to plan and implement as they are dependent on the availability of power and communications infrastructure, which is limited along some areas of the highway network.
- Installation timelines are dependent on necessary electrical and communications infrastructure for each site that requires coordination

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Electric Vehicle Charging Stations OCF Action T4

Highways and
Public Works

with Yukon Energy Corporation, ATCO Electric Yukon and Northwestel.

- We anticipate up to 6 installations will be completed in 2024, and for the entire project to be completed by 2026.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The initiative to electrify Yukon's highway network is a commitment in Our Clean Future (OCF Action T4).

Background:

- Investing in the Yukon's roadways to support low carbon transportation, such as electric vehicles, is a Government of Yukon commitment under Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy.
- Energy, Mines and Resources installed Yukon's first Level 3 electric vehicle fast-charging in 2019.
- Electric vehicles can now fast-charge in 19 locations across the territory including the communities of Beaver Creek, Burwash, Carcross, Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Haines Junction, Marsh Lake, Mayo, Mendenhall, Pelly Crossing, Stewart Crossing, Teslin, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse.
- This spring, Highways and Public Works is planning a tender for the installation of 38 additional level 2 chargers to support electric vehicles in the government fleet. This will support zero-emission vehicle deployments in Whitehorse and other communities.
- Energy, Mines and Resources is working to reduce long gaps between charging stations in the communities by installing additional fast-charging stations along the highways, where feasible. Highways and Public Works is supporting this work by modifying existing highway pullouts to support the electric vehicle charging infrastructure where needed.
- The different types of charging stations are:

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Electric Vehicle Charging Stations *OCF Action T4*

Highways and
Public Works

- Level 1 – a common household outlet (120 volts) that can charge a vehicle overnight;
- Level 2 – similar to a household outlet for ranges or clothes dryers (240 volts) that can charge a vehicle in a few hours; and
- Level 3 – specialized units (DC chargers) that can charge a vehicle in 30-60 minutes, also known as fast charging stations.

Approved by:

April 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Energy Retrofits and Assessments
OCF Actions H1, H2, H30 and L4**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Energy Assessments (OCF Action H2)

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is making significant progress toward reducing the energy use of our public buildings and meeting the greenhouse gas reduction commitments in Our Clean Future.
- The department is continuing to complete energy assessments of Government of Yukon buildings to identify energy retrofits that reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from buildings (OCF Action H2).
- To date, we have assessed 81 high-emitting Government of Yukon buildings. These assessments identified more than 600 possible building energy retrofit projects.
- Of these projects, 116 have been selected based on our prioritization methodology that looks at greenhouse gas emissions, business case, and operational improvements (OCF Action L4).
- In February 2024, the department awarded a project to conduct energy assessments on the 36 remaining buildings that are currently classified as high-emitting government buildings. We expect this work to be completed by December 2024.
- Highways and Public Works is also partnering with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and Vuntut Gwitchin Government to improve the energy use data in Old Crow.
- In Summer 2023, fuel and electricity meters were installed in all 11 Government of Yukon buildings in Old Crow. This information will

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Energy Retrofits and Assessments OCF Actions H1, H2, H30 and L4

Highways and
Public Works

allow us to further identify energy conservation and renewable energy opportunities in Old Crow.

Additional response: Retrofits (OCF Actions H1 +L4)

- Highways and Public Works is investing in retrofits to government buildings to reduce energy use and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Since the launch of Our Clean Future, 31 building energy retrofits have been completed using the Small Communities Fund. These projects are estimated to reduce 225 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year.
- Yukon University roof replacement is also underway, which is anticipated to be complete in 2026. This project is estimated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 137 tonnes per year.
- As we complete the remaining energy assessments, we will incorporate the resulting projects into the existing project list and adjust the priority and sequencing as required.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Energy retrofits and assessments are action items under Our Clean Future.

Approved by:

March 21, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Our Clean Future – HPW Actions**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Under the commitments outlined in Our Clean Future, Highways and Public Works is succeeding in the actions to improve energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen our resilience to the ongoing impacts of climate change.
- Some of the actions include:
 - energy retrofit projects and renewable energy projects in government buildings;
 - increasing the number of electric vehicles in the current fleet;
 - project specific climate risk assessments and permafrost monitoring to improve climate resilience of infrastructure construction projects;
 - developing procurement guidance to better support sustainable practices and local businesses; and
 - modernizing heavy equipment in the government fleet.

Additional response:

- When Our Clean Future launched in 2020, Highways and Public Works had 23 specific actions.
- In 2022, the department added six actions to address climate change through government infrastructure and operations.
- In 2023, the department introduced five more actions:
 - T31 - Initiate a set of pilot projects by 2025 to test the use of renewable fuels for transportation, electricity generation, and heating in private and Government of Yukon assets.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Our Clean Future – HPW Actions**Highways and
Public Works

- T34 - By 2025, undertake a climate adaptation study to understand the risks imposed on the Yukon's aviation infrastructure, operations, and maintenance from climate change.
 - T35 - By 2025, develop a 20-year transportation network plan that incorporates emissions reductions and resilience in planning for future changes in transportation demand.
 - H31 - Develop and implement a recommissioning program by 2025 that focuses on energy efficiency and staff education for lasting performance improvements in Government of Yukon buildings.
 - L18 - Incorporate climate change considerations throughout Government of Yukon's asset management process for buildings by 2025.
- These new actions were finalized in late 2023 and are currently being mapped out by the department.
 - Highways and Public Works is now responsible for 34 actions in Our Clean Future. I am happy to report that many of these are progressing ahead of schedule and 10 have already been completed.

Additional response: Green investment and planning

- The Yukon government is committed to achieving the goals set out in Our Clean Future by investing in the Yukon Green Infrastructure Program.
- This program supports a diverse range of decarbonization projects such as building energy retrofits, solar installations, biomass and other alternative renewable energy projects.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Our Clean Future – HPW Actions**Highways and
Public Works

- Earlier this year, we became the first government jurisdiction in Canada to achieve ISO-50001 Ready Canada recognition by Natural Resources Canada. We are also the organization with the most buildings under this program.
- ISO-50001 Ready Canada program is an internationally recognized voluntary standard that gives organizations a structured framework to manage energy use in buildings.
- This achievement showcases Government of Yukon's commitment to sustainable practices and efficient energy utilization in accordance with industry best practices.
- To date, we have completed 81 energy assessments in high-emitting Government of Yukon buildings. These assessments are used to identify opportunities for building energy retrofits.
- This year, we are conducting energy assessments for the 36 remaining government buildings that are identified as high-emitting buildings. This work is expected to be completed by December 2024.
- We have also completed 12 renewable energy feasibility studies to evaluate biomass, geothermal, and other renewable heating options at 66 sites across the territory. These studies have identified several renewable energy projects that could be constructed over the next several years.
- Based on these studies, the department is moving ahead with more renewable energy heating projects. The next project will be the installation of a biomass heating system in Haines Junction. Engineering design work for this project is in progress, with construction planned for 2025.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Our Clean Future – HPW Actions**Highways and
Public Works

- We are also reducing our reliance on fossil fuels by installing renewable power systems in four highway maintenance camps currently powered by diesel-generated facilities. These sites are in off grid, isolated locations.
- The construction of the solar power systems at Klondike and Ogilvie highway maintenance camps will be complete in June 2024, when the batteries are installed.
- The recently advertised tenders for the installation of a solar power systems at Blanchard and Tuchitua highway maintenance camps have closed and are currently being evaluated.
- In March 2024, department officials completed a climate change vulnerability study of the road transportation network. This study is the first step to understand where our roads are most exposed to long-term climate related risks.

Additional response: Key accomplishments

- We are exceeding our commitments for incorporating zero emission vehicles into the government fleet. Through the addition of electric cars, plug-in hybrid SUVs, hybrid pick-up trucks and battery electric cargo vans, we are reducing the carbon footprint of our fleet vehicles.
- We are coordinating with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to install a total of 10 public charging stations at the Jim Smith south parking lot for Yukoners to access. This is in addition to the four public charging stations that already exist in the north parking lot. Each charging station can charge two vehicles.
- We also have climate change adaptation pilot projects underway. For example, thermosyphons have been installed at Dry Creek along the

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Our Clean Future – HPW Actions

Highways and
Public Works

Alaska Highway. These could stabilize permafrost thaw by running cool air beneath the surface of the road.

- Climate risk assessments are being conducted on an ongoing basis for major building and road infrastructure projects above \$10 million.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Climate action is a high-profile topic that is a priority for governments and businesses across the country.

Background:

- Highways and Public Works is investing in energy retrofits to improve building envelopes, lighting, heating and ventilation equipment, and in renewable energy systems such as biomass and solar.
- Renewable energy systems are a significant component of the department's strategy to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets in Our Clean Future.
- In 2021, a feasibility study was performed to look at the value of installing solar arrays at eight diesel powered grader stations, resulting in four projects moving ahead.
- The Yukon government and the Government of Canada have worked together through the Northern Transportation Adaptation Initiative to invest in climate change adaptation projects in Yukon.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Renewable Energy Projects (Biomass and Solar) OCF Actions H17 and E4

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: General

- Investing in renewable energy projects is one of the many initiatives that the Yukon government is undertaking to meet the goals of Our Clean Future.
- In 2023, we completed construction of the Elijah Smith Elementary School biomass system and partnered with Teslin Tlingit Council to heat the Khàtìnas.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School with biomass heat.
- These biomass systems have been operational since October 2023 and are anticipated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 259 tonnes per year.
- We are also excited to be nearing completion of the expansion of Whitehorse Correctional Centre's district biomass system, and the completion of two solar and battery systems in off-grid highway maintenance camps on the Dempster Highway.
- These projects together will offset a total of 541 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually, with 271 tonnes for the biomass project and 270 tonnes for the solar projects.
- We have completed 12 renewable energy feasibility studies to evaluate biomass, geothermal and other renewable heating options at 66 sites across the territory.
- These studies will identify several renewable energy projects that could be constructed over the next several years.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Renewable Energy Projects
(Biomass and Solar)
OCF Actions H17 and E4**

Highways and
Public Works**Additional response: Biomass (H17)**

- Biomass systems use renewable fuels to displace the use of fossil fuels and reduce our overall emissions.
- Installing renewable heat sources in government buildings is one of our commitments under Our Clean Future (Action H17). The Yukon government has, and is continuing to make significant investments in renewable energy like biomass.
- This past August, the new biomass heating system was completed at Elijah Smith Elementary School in Whitehorse. Planning for this project began in 2020 after engagement with the local biomass industry.
- Based on industry feedback, we used a build-operate-maintain model to leverage expertise from the biomass experts. Overall project costs were \$2.6 million, and it has been providing most of the heat for the building since October 2023.
- Highways and Public Works is expanding the biomass heating system at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. This project is partially supported by federal funding, with up to 75 per cent of the project costs to be recovered from the Low Carbon Economy Challenge Fund.
- The project expands the existing wood pellet heating system at Whitehorse Correctional Center to heat two more buildings: Takhini Haven and Young Offenders Facility.
- We are expecting it to be substantially completed this summer, with overall costs estimated to be around \$4.4 million.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Renewable Energy Projects
(Biomass and Solar)**Highways and
Public Works***OCF Actions H17 and E4***

- These projects are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 424 tonnes per year.
- We have partnered with Teslin Tlingit Council to begin heating the Teslin Khàtinas.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School with biomass in October 2023, which will reduce emissions by 106 tonnes each year.
- We are purchasing biomass heat from the biomass system owned and operated by Teslin Tlingit Council to offset heating oil consumption at the school.
- This project directly reduces greenhouse gas emissions and supports the community's renewable energy initiative.
- Highways and Public Works is moving ahead with projects based on the completed renewable energy feasibility studies. The next upcoming project will be the installation of a biomass district heating system in Haines Junction.
- This project is partially supported by federal funding, with 75 per cent of the project costs to be recovered from the Low Carbon Economy Challenge Fund.
- Engineering design work for this project is in progress, with construction planned for 2025. Preliminary calculations estimate this project will reduce emissions by 73 tonnes each year.
- These four biomass systems combined will reduce emissions by over 603 tonnes each year.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Renewable Energy Projects
(Biomass and Solar)
OCF Actions H17 and E4**

Highways and
Public Works**Additional response: Renewable Electricity (E4)**

- One of the commitments of Our Clean Future is to install renewable energy systems in off-grid government buildings to reduce reliance on diesel-generated electricity (OCF Action E4).
 - In June 2024, we will be installing batteries at the Klondike and Ogilvie highway maintenance camps to complete the two solar array system projects. These two projects will offset approximately 103,000 litres of diesel fuel each year and reduce emissions by 270 tonnes.
 - We are also moving forward with solar energy projects at the Tuchitua and Blanchard highway maintenance camps. The tenders for these projects have recently closed and are currently being evaluated. These projects will offset approximately 98,000 liters of fuel and reduce emissions by 260 tonnes per year.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Renewable energy systems are an important way for the Yukon government to reduce emissions from its buildings. They are also an OCF commitment.
-

Background:

- The majority of greenhouse gas emissions in Yukon Government buildings come from the combustion of heating fossil fuels such as heating oil and propane.
- Heating oil has the highest environmental impact compared to other heating fuels. Highways and Public Works is reducing heating oil consumption with cleaner fuels such as propane and renewable fuels such as biomass.

Biomass systems:

- We have listened to the Yukon's biomass industry. We have numerous biomass projects in design and construction stages.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Renewable Energy Projects
(Biomass and Solar)**Highways and
Public Works***OCF Actions H17 and E4***

- The systems constructed are designed to use either local wood chips or imported wood pellets. This provides the service provider with the flexibility to ensure reliable and sustainable operations of the biomass heating system.
- Locally and sustainably harvested wood chips are a good option for renewable heating in the Yukon.
- In 2023, wood pellets were 100 per cent sourced from waste wood or from a byproduct of lumber mills that is diverted from landfills.
- Although the use of biomass fuel will require more frequent deliveries compared to fossil fuels, the increased emissions from transportation are very small compared to the greenhouse gas emission reductions achieved from switching to a cleaner fuel source.

Biomass – Elijah Smith Elementary School

- In July 2021, we engaged with biomass contractors to discuss our plans for the Elijah Smith School biomass project and to listen to their suggestions and feedback.
- Construction of the Elijah Smith biomass system was completed by Budget Plumbing and Heating for \$2.5 million. The contractor is providing operations and maintenance services for the system going forward.

Biomass – Whitehorse Correction Centre

- In November 2022, a contract was awarded for the Whitehorse Correctional Center biomass expansion project.
- The project will connect underground piping from Takhini Haven and the Young Offenders Facility to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre that has an operational biomass boiler with additional capacity.
- The system currently uses low-carbon wood pellets made from the waste of a sawmill in Northern Alberta.
- The number of wood pellet deliveries will increase from 5 to 10 per year for this project. The emissions from these trips will be primarily offset by the

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Renewable Energy Projects
(Biomass and Solar)
OCF Actions H17 and E4**Highways and
Public Works

corresponding reduction in heating oil and propane deliveries from Northern BC and Alaska.

Biomass – Teslin Khatlins.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School

- The Teslin Khatlins.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School biomass heating system will help reduce emissions by an additional 106 tonnes each year.
- This renewable energy partnership will help to support a green economy in the community.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**AI and ChatGPT**

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Artificial Intelligence

- Artificial Intelligence, also known as AI, is being incorporated rapidly into services, platforms and tools to improve productivity.
- Services such as ChatGPT are emerging quickly and have generated a significant amount of interest and use.
- The Yukon government is engaged with other governments across Canada through the Chief Information Officer Council, as we collectively seek to understand more about these new and emerging platforms.
- It is important to find a balance between the potential benefits and risks of these platforms, as well as address the concerns of citizens and businesses.
- In the meantime, the Yukon government has provided initial guidance to all employees to never upload any personal or confidential information into these AI platforms.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Canadian Privacy Commissioners launched investigations into the use of personal information to ‘train’ AI large language models like ChatGPT. The federal government announced the drafting of legislation concerning AI.

Background:

- ChatGPT is one of many manifestations of AI that are and will continue to emerge in the coming months and years.
- These platforms can provide seemingly factual or authoritative information that can be erroneous and must be independently verified.

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- The basic ChatGPT is free to use, making it widely accessible.
- The federal government’s proposed Artificial Intelligence and Data Act (Bill C-27) is in the committee stage and is Canada’s first attempt to regulate AI.

Approved by:

January 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Cyber Security

SPRING 2024

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- A key objective of our government is keeping information systems and government-held information secure.
- Over the last decade the number of cyber attacks around the world affecting governments and private companies has increased.
- This trend is also consistent for the Yukon. In recent years, the Yukon government, like other governments across Canada, has experienced an increase in cyber attacks and risk.
- We take cyber security seriously, and in an effort to counter cyber threats, Highways and Public Works is:
 - continuously evolving our security threat monitoring and detection solutions to repel attacks;
 - improving the government's resiliency by taking new approaches to the ways in which we protect information;
 - conducting security threat risk assessments on systems and regularly mitigating vulnerabilities;
 - working with a security operations centre service contractor to monitor our IT infrastructure 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and
 - actively collaborating with the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security and provincial counterparts to share information on threats and activity.

Additional response: September Distributed Denial of Service Attack

- On September 14, 2023, the Yukon government experienced a distributed denial of service attack. The attack resulted in the inability

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Cyber Security

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Public Works

to access Yukon.ca web sites and disrupted access to cloud services for internal government employees.

- This type of attack is designed to disrupt access to services by overwhelming the online systems with a massive load of requests. The attacks are not designed to gain access to internal information.
- This was not a ransomware attack.
- We were able to introduce new cyber security measures to minimize the impacts of the attack and make services available again within the same day.
- The measures that were put in place to mitigate the impacts of distributed denial of service attacks will help in any future attacks.
- Highways and Public Works officials worked with the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, other impacted provinces, and territories and the RCMP cybercrime division to investigate the attack.
- There is no evidence that any unauthorized access to private citizen data, government systems or government files took place.
- As with all cyber security related incidents, we conducted a post-incident review to capture what we learned from this incident.
- Highways and Public Works is introducing new cyber security measures to reduce the impact of future denial of service attacks into our improvement process.

Third response: Approach to Ransomware

- The Government of Yukon has robust security systems in place to monitor, detect and repel cyberattacks.

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- There are numerous measures in place to ensure that our systems protect government data in the case of a potential ransomware attack. We are confident that these measures will continue to protect government data.
- The Government of Yukon's position on paying ransom for a cyberattack is confidential as it is part of our security approach to protecting government data.
- As such, we do not disclose our approach to protecting government data, including ransom attacks, as it is essential that this remains confidential to best protect our systems.

Additional Response: Working with Partners

- The Yukon government is an active member of the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security. We attend weekly briefings with the centre about emerging threats and receive all security alerts and recommendations for actions to be taken.
- We are also active members of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Committee on cyber security, where governments share information about threats, advice and best practices. The Yukon government also provides input into cyber security position papers that are produced by this committee.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- People are aware of security breaches in other governments and in the private sector.
-

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Cyber Security

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Background:

- State-sponsored cyberattacks are on the rise due to global geopolitical tensions. Foreign interference through misinformation campaigns intended to interfere with elections and influence policy decisions is a growing concern.
- In early 2019, the Government of Nunavut had a significant ransomware attack that crippled their government's services for weeks. While capabilities were re-built and re-deployed, ultimately some data was never recovered.
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Health Authority experienced a significant attack in 2021 that exposed sensitive personal information for ransom resulting in impacts to delivering health care.

Approved by:

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Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****MyYukon (Digital Identity)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- We are advancing our ability to deliver a wide range of highly secure government services online by developing a digital trust program, known as MyYukon.
- MyYukon was incorporated into several public online services in January 2023 to provide a single Yukon government login.
- Services available on the platform include renewing your vehicle registration and applying for student financial assistance.
- More services and additional capabilities will be added over time.
- The goal is to allow Yukoners and businesses to use one secure log-in, similar to online banking, to access a wide range of government services online. This will reduce the number of passwords and logins citizens require.
- Future steps include establishing a verified account that will provide enhanced convenience for citizens and businesses to access online government services.

Additional response:

- We are taking all the necessary steps to ensure the protection of Yukoner's personal information. An extensive privacy impact assessment was completed prior to the launch of this service.
- MyYukon does not store any information about the specific services a citizen may receive from the Yukon government. It does not track where, when, or why the citizen makes use of the online login.
- Highways and Public Works explicitly listed this type of service in its new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to ensure the highest degree of transparency, and considerations for privacy were built into this service.

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MyYukon (Digital Identity)

Highways and
Public Works

-
- The department continues to engage with the Information and Privacy Commissioner to confirm the appropriate procedures are in place to protect the privacy of Yukoner's personal information.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some Yukoners may be worried about their personal information being misused or hacked. They may also be concerned that their access to in-person services will be replaced with an online alternative.
-

Background:

- Historically, governments have issued paper or plastic cards or certificates for citizens to prove who they are.
- Most provinces and territories in Canada are working on digital identity services for their citizens.
- The goal is to create a service which ensures the citizen is in control of the use of their personal information for their needs.
- The Yukon is an active contributor to the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework, which maintains a set of standards to ensure consistency of digital identities across Canada.
- The Yukon government will continue to invest in updating systems to provide the highest level of functionality, security and privacy while increasing efficiencies and providing better ways for citizens and businesses to interact with us.
- The *Digital Identification Regulation* was approved in September 2022 under the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Some older online services, launched before MyYukon, may not yet make use of the MyYukon program. However, we are growing the services accessible through MyYukon as quickly as possible.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

January 19, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Privacy Breaches**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Protecting the personal information of Yukoners is important to our government.
- The *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* contains provisions that outline what personal information may be collected, how it is managed, who has access to it, and how privacy breaches must be reported.
- Privacy training is available for all employees and contractors to learn about the protocol to follow to report a privacy breach.
- Privacy Impact Assessment Training is also available to help foster awareness and understanding of personal information and its protection in the public service.
- The department has also created an oversight and advisory resource for departments and has ensured that all government departments have a designated privacy officer.

Additional response:

- All privacy breaches with a risk of significant harm must be reported to the Corporate Privacy Office in the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- Privacy breaches with a risk of significant harm are also reported to the Information and Privacy Commissioner by the department where the significant breach occurred.
- Privacy breaches include issues such as loss of paper or digital records, inadvertently providing information to the wrong person,

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Privacy Breaches**Highways and
Public Works

inappropriate access to information by employees, as well as phishing or hacking.

- For privacy breaches of this nature, we notify those individuals who may have been subject to a privacy breach so that they are aware and can take further action to mitigate any potential impacts.

Third response:

- The Government of Yukon has procedures in place to mitigate the impact of a privacy breach on people whose personal information has been compromised.
- Each department has its own designated privacy officer who will take immediate action when there is a suspected breach.
- If there is a suspected privacy breach, staff have the following resources to use:
 - a privacy officer toolkit;
 - a privacy breach assessment form for the designated privacy officer of each public body;
 - a privacy breach reporting form for employees; and
 - privacy breach procedures to follow.
- The privacy breach procedures and resources listed above are found on Yukon.ca.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Handling privacy or security breaches appropriately is an important activity to contain the breach, make any appropriate changes to reduce or eliminate the chance of it occurring again as the public's trust in government can be impacted.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Privacy Breaches**Highways and
Public Works**Background:**

- Significant harm includes bodily harm, humiliation, damage to reputation or relationships, loss of employment, business or professional opportunities, financial loss, identity theft, negative effects on their credit record, and damage to or loss of property.

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Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Access To Information and
Protection of Privacy**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response

- In 2018 our government introduced an amended Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act and in 2021 both the Act and Regulations came into force.
- As part of our commitment to increase government transparency, this legislation represents one of the strongest access to information regimes in the country.
- As we work through ATIPP requests, both the departments and the ATIPP officers are always balancing privacy with access to information and transparency. This is a particularly relevant balancing act in a small jurisdiction like ours.
- The ATIPP office handles on average 660 access to information requests each year. While the data for 2023-24 is still being compiled, I can say that in 2022-23 97% of access requests paid no fee for access to the information and 95% of access requests in 2022-23 were completed within the legislated deadline.

Additional response: Review of the Act

- In section 127 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy, there is a legislated commitment that the Minister must undertake a review of the Act within six years of it coming into force, and that within a year of the review a report must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.
- The Act came into force in 2021, the department is aware of this legislated commitment and is planning to table a report within this timeframe.

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Public Works

Additional response: IPC Recommendations

- If an applicant has a concern about an ATIPP response or anything related to it, they can exercise their right to make a complaint to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (the IPC) and the IPC will launch an Informal Investigation resolution process with the department involved.
- The Yukon government releases all un-redacted records responsive to the ATIPP request and complaint to the IPC for their review.
- The government's Access and Privacy Office and the Departmental Access Officer meet with the IPC to answer any questions they may have.
- If the resolution process with the Information and Privacy Commissioner doesn't resolve the concern, it can be escalated by the IPC to a formal investigation process – which results in the IPC making formal recommendations to the department.
- Those recommendations are reviewed by the Departmental Access Officer and Senior Management in the appropriate department.
- Often these recommendations ask departments to release some of the information that has been redacted.
- Departments often release much of the information requested by the IPC in these cases. However, if a department releases anything less than 100 per cent of all the information the IPC recommends, it is deemed to be a recommendation that is "rejected".

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Protection of Privacy**Highways and
Public Works

- In addition, the IPC does not always have the same context and understanding of the information that senior management has within their responsibilities in running the department.
- Ultimately the Deputy Minister of the department or President of a government corporation must make a decision to release more information or reject the IPC's recommendation. Reasons for rejecting the IPC recommendation may include:
 - that the information is harmful to a third party for example information that would be harmful to the competitiveness of a business as it may be used by their competitors;
 - information that was part of an internal process of investigation, for example the Respectful Workplace Office; and,
 - information related to policy advice and recommendations.
- The head of the public body, such as a Deputy Minister or President of a government corporation, can then accept the recommendations in full, partially or accept none of them.
- The Information and Privacy Commissioner holds a valuable role in the Yukon and we take their recommendations seriously.
- And at the end of the day each department head must decide what will be released based on a variety of factors, such as potential harm to private sector companies by releasing information they view as harmful should their competitors have access to it.
- Of note, in early 2024 the Globe and Mail did an investigation into governments and departments across the country to understand how they handle access requests. The project is called "Secret Canada."

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The investigation found that the Yukon was in the top three of all provinces and territories in terms of the percentage of records released which indicates a high level of transparency.

- According to the investigation, the Yukon released 78% of its records in response to access to information requests. Only Northwest Territories and BC had higher response rates.

Additional response:

- Through the new ATIPP legislation we are also being more transparent by proactively releasing information that was previously unavailable.
- This includes making public all of the session notes after a sitting has finished, the organizational charts of how departments work and their associated policies.
- This summer our ATIPP office is also doing a review of all departments to ensure that anything that we should be proactively publishing is being done.
- This action demonstrates that our government is committed to transparency and accountability to Yukoners.

Additional response: ATIPP Office and Training for YG Employees

- The ATIPP Office is continually monitoring their procedures to make sure they are meeting timelines and responding as required under the legislation.
- Since it came into force in 2021, the ATIPP Office has made many updates to processes, templates and how a final response is

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presented. Much of this has been as a result of the complaint resolution process – as complaints have guided improvements.

- The Designated Access Officers in each department are continually improving in how they gather information and respond to requests.

Additional response: Training for YG employees

- When the ATIPP legislation was implemented in 2021 the ATIPP Office created a lot of training materials for YG staff.
- ATIPP training is mandatory in all government departments.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- ATIPP requests being denied despite the IPC’s recommendations have been in the news several times in the last few months.

Background:

Recent High-Profile ATIPP Cases:

- **Yukon Sawmill** - In 2022, a value-driven tender was awarded to Wildstone Construction Ltd. to complete building upgrades and renovations to the Yukon Sawmill Company office. In January 2023 an Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) request was submitted for more information related to how the proposals were evaluated, and in March 2023 the ATIPP office released a portion of the requested information. In November 2023 the OPIC recommended a further release of records however the department determined that releasing further information could harm the commercial and financial interests of the contractors.
- **VIN Audit** – In 2021 VinAudit Canada requested data around vehicle accident information in the territory. The department of Highways and Public Works redacted much of the information based on the determination that sharing this type of data was an “unreasonable invasion of a third party’s privacy.” The case

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was eventually brought to the Yukon Supreme court that ruled in favour of the applicant requesting the records in December 2023. The Yukon government has not appealed this ruling.

ATIPP Process

- Requests come in from requestors (applicants).
- The ATIPP Office then determines which public body would have responsive records and sends the request to the Designated Access Officer (DAO) of that public body.
- The DAO is a role under the ATIPP Act. That role is responsible for gathering, preparing and reviewing the records for the head of the public body. They have 30 business days to gather the records and respond to the request. In some cases, extensions may be granted by the IPC or the Access and Privacy Officer.
- The Access and Privacy Officer is the role under the ATIPP Act responsible for ensuring public body responses are made to the applicant, within the legislated timelines.
- The head of the public body is a role under the ATIPP Act. The head is typically designated as the Deputy Minister or equivalent – for government departments or other public bodies. The head is responsible for the response to the request for access to information.
- The response goes back to the ATIPP Office to send to the applicant.

Complaint Resolution

- The OIPC complaint resolution process starts with an attempt to address the concern through an early case resolution process where the public body and the applicant respond to the OIPC queries in an attempt to resolve the issue with the applicant. If there are any changes to the response from the public body, they are sent as an amended response to the applicant via the ATIPP Office.
- If that early case resolution process cannot resolve the complaint within 60 calendar days, the complaint process is escalated to a more formal

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inquiry/investigation of the complaint. That process typically results in an inquiry or investigation report from the OIPC making recommendations to the public body.

- The head of the public body must respond to those recommendations within 15 days.
- The response can be one of the following: accept all, accept some or accept none of the OIPC recommendations.
- If the head rejects a recommendation, they must provide a reason. If the head does not respond, then by day 16 they are deemed to have rejected the recommendations.
- Any response to the OIPC must be sent to the applicant by the head of the public body.
- If the applicant is still not satisfied with the process, they have the right to go to the courts to make an appeal within 30 calendar days.
- We are not aware of any court proceedings related to this issue.

ATIPP Information

- Since April 1, 2021, there have been approximately 1,950 ATIPP access requests processed.
- On average there were 661 access requests processed annually from 2018 to Mar 31, 2023.
- 24% of access requests in 2022-23 were granted in full, with no information withheld.
- 97% of access requests in 2022-23 paid no fee for access to the information.
- 602 or 95% of access requests in 2022-23 were completed within the legislated deadline.

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- 41% of access requests in 2022-23 had information withheld to protect the privacy of individuals.
- Since August 2021, 480 access requests have been posted to the Access to Information Registry. Most include the actual records in addition to the request and outcome.
- The registry can be found on [Open.Yukon.ca](https://open.yukon.ca).

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Maintaining strong working relationships with First Nations for the benefit of all Yukoners is a key priority of the Yukon government.
- In keeping with our commitment to reconciliation and honouring the spirit and intent of the Final and Self-Government Agreements, we are fully committed to working with First Nation governments to create a brighter future for the territory.
- As such, Highways and Public Works has several types of agreements with Yukon First Nations.

Yukon Resource Gateway Program Project Agreements:

- The Yukon government is committed to having project agreements in place with affected Yukon First Nations where a project falls within their Traditional Territory.
- The agreements are designed to support meaningful and beneficial participation by Yukon First Nation governments, citizens and businesses in the program.
- To date, six project agreements have been signed for seven Gateway components.
- The agreements align with or refer to the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.

Yukon First Nation Community Development Agreements:

- The framework for Yukon First Nation Community Development Agreements was developed as part of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.

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Public Works

-
- The agreements are designed to be flexible and collaborative, maximizing business and employment benefits for Yukon First Nation citizens and communities.
 - A Yukon First Nation may formally request a Community Development Agreement at any time, for any size or type of project.
 - To date, Community Development Agreements have been created with three First Nations for two projects: one with Kwanlin Dün First Nation, one with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and one with Liard First Nation.

Yukon Asset Construction Agreements:

- A Yukon Asset Construction Agreement is a legal obligation that the Yukon government must fulfill under Chapter 22 of certain Final Agreements.
- Yukon Asset Construction Agreements only apply to Kluane First Nation and Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
- It is an agreement between a Yukon First Nation and the Yukon government about a major construction project happening in a Yukon First Nation Traditional Territory.
- The purpose is to provide business, employment and training opportunities to First Nation citizens and businesses for a specific construction project.
- A Yukon Asset Construction Agreement is in place with Kluane First Nation for the construction of Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing School).

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Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations

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Public Works

Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project Charter

- Currently the Yukon government has a signed project charter with Teslin Tlingit Council for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement.
- The project charter is a unique type of agreement that outlines the objectives of the process, and the roles and responsibilities of the Yukon government and Teslin Tlingit Council in implementing the bridge replacement project.
- The project charter and its implementation plan elements were developed before the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy came into effect. Now that the policy is in place, it is unlikely that project charter agreements like this will be needed in the future.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may be interested in agreements with Yukon First Nations.

Background:

- Yukon Resource Gateway Program Project Agreements and signing dates:
 - First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun
 - Silver Trail – February 2021
 - Liard First Nation
 - Nahanni Range Road Phase 1- January 2020
 - Robert Campbell Highway kilometer 114 to 171 - June 2020
 - Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
 - Carmacks Bypass – March 2019
 - Freegold Road Phase II – November 2020
 - Ross River Dena Council
 - North Canol Phase I - April 2020
 - Robert Campbell Highway kilometer 354.9 to 414.4 – April 2020

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Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations

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- Yukon Asset Construction Agreements (YACA)
 - The ability for the Carcross/Tagish First Nation to request a YACA under their Final Agreement expires in January, 2026.
 - The ability for Kluane First Nation to request a YACA under their Final Agreement expires in February, 2024.
- Community Development Agreements (CDA)
 - Kwanlin Dün First Nation – CDA created October 2022 for Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport project.
 - Ta'an Kwäch'än Council – CDA created October 2022 for Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport project.
 - Liard First Nation – CDA created with Yukon Housing Corporation February 2023 for Watson Lake Housing First Project.
- Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project Charter
 - Project Charter signed in spring 2019.

Approved by:

January 26, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Contract Management**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon strives to create tenders and contract documents that clearly outline the requirements and deliverables for contractors.
- When a contractor bids on a tender, their bid will include certain commitments such as pricing, delivery of the project and Yukon First Nation participation.
- Our government expects that contractors fulfill all commitments they make in the tendering process during contract delivery.

Additional response:

- During the tender period, contractors can ask for clarification of the expectations in the tender documents.
- Once the tender closes, a post-tender review meeting is often held where the contractor who is eligible for the award confirms that they will meet the commitments in their tender.
- After the contract is awarded, the Government of Yukon's role during contract performance is to actively manage the contract to verify that all deliverables and commitments are being met. This can include the schedule, the price, or Yukon First Nation participation.
- To have effective contract management, there must be continuous communication between the government and the contractor. Our project managers have regular check-ins throughout a contract to track the progress of commitments.

Third response:

- If a contractor is not meeting their commitments, there are both formal and informal mechanisms for engaging with the contractor.

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Highways and
Public Works

- It is important to note that these mechanisms are also available to the contractor if they feel they are not being treated appropriately.
- When issues cannot be resolved through these conversations, the dispute resolution processes outlined in the contract documents are triggered. Depending on the type of contract, this can include mediation or arbitration.
- If the Government of Yukon and the contractor cannot resolve the performance issues, legal action is sometimes required.
- In addition, the Vendor Performance Review program gives Yukon government a chance to take performance into account in future procurements.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Contract management is a component of the Vendor Performance Review Program

Background:

- With the approval of the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy, the Yukon government incentivizes contractors to make commitments around Yukon First Nation participation that form part of their contractual responsibilities.
- Through the bid value reduction process, there is an incentive for contractors to make Yukon First Nation participation commitments in the tendering process, as these commitments can impact the bid rankings and change award outcomes.
- Yukon First Nation participation commitments are contract deliverables in government contracts and are being managed as any other deliverable would be.

Approved by:

January 26, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****King's Printer and Central Stores**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is improving service delivery and providing better value for taxpayer dollars by modernizing the way government does business.
- This includes eliminating printing and long-term warehousing of a wide variety of centrally distributed supplies through the closure of Queen's Printer and Central Stores.
 - For example, we no longer stock supplies such as high-visibility vests that could become outdated with changes in safety regulations, or products with expiry dates.
- We have also expanded the involvement of the private sector in the provision of printing and commonly used supplies.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is pleased to report that we have modernized many processes through these changes and will continue the process of modernization as we roll out the Online Marketplace.
- The Online Marketplace is a new ordering platform intended to simplify the purchase of and payment for commonly used supplies for government programs.

Additional response: Private Sector Opportunities

- Since the closures, we have been looking to continuously improve how we deliver services.
- To support the private sector, we have transitioned away from having staff manage printing tasks in-house and instead, they facilitate printing contracts with local printing companies.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****King's Printer and Central Stores**Highways and
Public Works

-
- There have been no concerns raised from government departments, that we are aware of, regarding the use of the private sector printing services.
 - This month, we are also introducing the new Online Marketplace which will replace Central Stores and streamline the procurement and payment process for commonly used supplies in government programs.
 - This is another example that demonstrates our effective collaboration with the private sector, enhancing efficiency within government operations.
 - Through this new platform, staff can conveniently make purchases online that will then be delivered by local suppliers.

Additional response: Cost Savings

- In recent years, the Yukon government's annual spending on printing has been just over one million dollars. Despite rising per-unit printing costs, that total has decreased by approximately 10 per cent since the closure of Queens Printer Agency in 2020.
- Previously, the Queen's Printer Agency had an annual budget of approximately \$600 thousand while the Central Stores had an annual budget of approximately \$570 thousand.
- With the closures of both entities, their budgets are no longer in effect resulting in the saving of \$1.2 million.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In fall 2023, the Minister was asked to report on the impacts of the 2019 changes to Supply Services at a future date.
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Background:

- The Central Stores warehouse closed on January 31, 2020, and Queen's Printer Agency officially closed on March 31, 2020.
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Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

King's Printer and Central Stores

Highways and
Public Works

- The central purchasing unit in the Supply Services Branch remains a key department function and continues to serve the Yukon government by facilitating procurement, pricing and order management for supplies and printing as it always has.
- Printing equipment from the old print room at the Supply Services Branch was sold publicly or disposed of by the fall 2022.
- Moving printing services fully to the private sector was a logical step for the department as 90 per cent of printing was already being done by private companies. In 2020 and 2021 confidential printing was completed by casual employees. Since 2022, confidential printing has also been contracted to the private sector through public tender.
- The print version of legislation, regulations and the Yukon Gazette continue to be the official version that the Kings Printer position is responsible for. These documents are also published online for easy access on laws.yukon.ca.
- Not a single employee lost their job when Queen's Printer Agency and Central Stores were closed. All employees affected were reassigned to other areas in Highways and Public Works or other departments filling vacant positions. Some employees also retired.
- 17 employees were affected by this change.

King's Printer

- In Yukon's legislation, there is reference to the King's Printer, a position held by the Director of Supply Services Branch. This role is singular, and there is no separate King's Printer Agency.
- The King's Printer position is responsible for ensuring official versions of legislation are accessible to those who request them.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 15, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Posting Tender Bid Prices

SPRING 2024Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon posts construction bid prices as quickly as possible to provide transparency in our procurement process.
- Prior to September 2023, once a tender closed the Department of Highways and Public Works would conduct a compliance review and then confirm that the project could proceed within budget prior to posting the bids.
- We heard feedback from the business community that it was taking a long time to post the bid prices, and we have responded and made a change to our process.
- Beginning in September 2023, the department started posting all bid prices on Yukon bids&tenders right after the compliance review stage.
- This has addressed industry's concerns because prices are being posted much faster and vendors know where they stand.
- This new approach, however, presents some risk in that by posting bid prices before the project's budget is confirmed the government cannot cancel and then repost immediately as doing so would undermine the competition.
- Prior to this change, approximately 45 per cent of price-based tenders had their prices posted within 6 days after the tender closed.
- Since September 2023, 85 per cent of bid prices are posted within 3 days after the tenders closed, and 95 per cent are posted within 6 days of closing.
- We are committed to transparency and posting bid prices online right after the compliance stage helps to make sure the Government of Yukon is sharing accurate information that our bidders can rely on in a timely manner.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Posting Tender Bid Prices

Highways and
Public Works

- All bidders have the same access to the results in a convenient and modern virtual platform via Yukon bids&tenders.
- The department will continue to meet with the Yukon Contractors Association and review these changes with the business community.

Additional response: Compliance, retendering and cancellation

- The Department of Highways and Public Works values the integrity and consistency of the procurement process by reviewing all public tenders for compliance before sharing bid prices. This protects supplier pricing and maintains effective competition.
- All bids and proposals are electronic. The prices are posted once we have done our due diligence.
- If a tender is cancelled and the bid prices have not been posted, the Government of Yukon can re-tender as needed.
- If a tender must be cancelled and the bid prices have already been posted, the government cannot re-tender the same project with the same scope right away. Doing so would undermine competition as bidders would know what low price to beat in the re-tender.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works connects regularly with the Yukon Contractors Association and has shared information about the new timelines for posting prices with them.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Sharing bid pricing quickly is important to industry as it gives them an indication as to whether they are to be successful in getting the proposed contract. This allows them to make business decisions about other potential opportunities and tenders.

Session Briefing Note
Posting Tender Bid Prices

SPRING 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- From April 1, 2019, bid prices must go through a compliance review and be verified before they can be posted. Bid prices have not been posted in situations where all bid responses are non-compliant, or the project has been cancelled.

Approved by:	March 7, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Procurement and Advertising**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon exclusively advertises tenders using the Yukon bids&tenders platform.
- Advertising tender opportunities in the local newspapers is no longer required because potential bidders automatically receive email notifications about upcoming tender opportunities through Yukon bids&tenders.
- We value the important services provided by news organizations and remain committed to working with Yukon media organizations.
- The Government of Yukon still uses newspaper advertising for topics related to procurement such as training opportunities, new initiatives, events such as the Reverse Trade Show and the Industry Conference.
- We also use local newspapers for other types of advertising and communication, such as road safety campaigns, public engagements, and important safety messaging like seasonal weight restrictions for roads.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works spends approximately \$60 thousand per year advertising through local newspaper companies.

Additional response:

- While there are over 8000 suppliers currently registered in Yukon bids&tenders, we realize that not every potential bidder in the Yukon may be registered on the platform.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Procurement and Advertising

Highways and
Public Works

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- That is why this winter the department led a promotional campaign to invite new bidders who may be interested in bidding on government contracts to join the online platform.
 - The January 2024 advertisement campaign promoted the Yukon bids&tenders platform and provided information on how to sign up. This campaign used a variety of different formats including print and digital ads.
 - At the same time Highways and Public Works also ran a significant campaign for the 2024 Industry Conference and advertised with Yukon media organizations.
 - These campaigns cost approximately seven thousand dollars total with over 90 per cent of this amount going to local media organizations.
 - In the fall of 2023, Highways and Public Works also ran an advertising campaign for the Reverse Trade Show which also cost approximately seven thousand dollars, the majority of which was spent with local media organizations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of advertising procurements in newspapers has been raised in the Legislative Assembly.

Background:

- In August 2020, we replaced the Tender Management System with a new, more efficient online platform called Yukon bids&tenders.
- The new, modern system moved our bid system fully online and enhanced bid compliance by flagging most errors automatically.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Procurement and Advertising

Highways and
Public Works

- Moving the tender system online provided many benefits including: the efficiencies gained by moving away from a paper system; letting government be a smarter buyer and make more informed decisions by providing more detailed data around government spending; making it easier to meet certain reporting requirements related to trade agreements; and giving us the tools to reward good vendor performance.
- Moving the tender system online was also a request of the business community and it reduced the number of bids rejected by compliance issues by half. This change has meant that fewer bids are rejected in the tender process and has made our procurement system more accessible.
- It also made advertising tender opportunities in the local newspapers largely redundant because potential bidders would automatically receive email notifications about upcoming tender opportunities.
- Prior to Yukon bids&tenders, departments paid for their own tender advertising which is estimated to have cost approximately \$120 thousand per year.
- As of September 1, 2021, the Department of Highways and Public Works stopped advertising tender opportunities in the local newspapers.
- This decision was made after careful consideration, and tender advertising was slowly phased out, to allow newspapers time to adapt.
- To assist local newspapers with this transition we issued a year-long contract in 2021 to provide some stability and predictability to their businesses.
- This funding commitment was used to advertise public engagement activities, information sessions, large project activities and other events.

Approved by:

April 10, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Regional Economic Development
Exceptions (10x\$1M)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Yukon government is helping boost economic development across the territory through trade agreement exceptions.
- The exceptions allow us to restrict procurement competitions to invited, qualified Yukon businesses for up to ten projects per year to keep government dollars in the territory and support local businesses.
- Over the past six years, manufacturing, construction, and consulting contracts have been awarded for work in communities across the Yukon.
- Since 2018, Yukon businesses have competed for and secured 59 Yukon-exclusive government contracts worth \$28.8 million.

Additional response: This year's projects

- Over the last year, we have awarded six projects to Yukon businesses, totalling \$1.9 million.
- One tender for the PA system project at Hidden Valley Elementary School is currently live.
- The Yukon government strives to maximize its allocation of 10 projects every year.
- We post details of awarded contracts on Yukon.ca.
- When selecting Regional Economic Development Exceptions, we consider many factors including the dollar value of economic opportunities created in the Yukon and whether the project supports the territory's industries and suppliers.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Regional Economic Development
Exceptions (10x\$1M)**Highways and
Public Works

- At the end of a project, suppliers are now required to report on the total dollar value spent on Yukon labour and materials to quantify the positive impact these projects have on Yukoners.
 - Since the new reporting requirement came into effect in fiscal year 2019-20, suppliers have reported on 15 completed contracts. Eight of these projects used 100 per cent Yukon labour and Yukon materials.
 - These reports also confirm that over \$1.1 million was spent on employing Yukoners, through those 15 projects.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Regional Economic Development Exceptions are important tools to support the Yukon's economy.
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Background:

- The contracts that were awarded in the last year are:
 - Village of Carmacks – Rowlinson/Prospector Lot Development;
 - Northern Digital Message Sign Realignment along the North Klondike Highway and Dempster Highway;
 - Ghùch Tlâ (Gooch Tlaw) Community School- Asbestos Containing Material Abatement; and,
 - Upgrade of drop link repeaters used to increase the service area for emergency communications throughout Yukon.
 - Painting corridors and lounge areas at Yukon University residence in Whitehorse.
 - Survey services for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project in Teslin.
 - The total value of the contracts is \$1.9 million.
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Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Regional Economic Development
Exceptions (10x\$1M)**Highways and
Public Works

- It can be challenging to find tenders to maximize the use of these exceptions. Issues such as inflation, supply chain shortages and a tight labour market can impact the use of exceptions.
- It should be noted that over this six-year period, there have been significant changes to the project landscape and fewer projects fall under the \$1 million threshold.
- Highways and Public Works continues to work alongside departments to find projects which are suitable for the exception.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note
Sustainable Procurement**SPRING 2024**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has established a number of goals within *Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy*.
- Sustainable procurement is one tool to bring social and ethical procurement to the forefront of government purchasing.
- This type of procurement focuses on purchasing products and services with the lowest possible environmental impact.
- It is about integrating sustainability into existing and evolving processes to complement our current procurement guidelines.

Additional response:

- Three categories of sustainable procurement include:
 - environmental or green procurement:
 - for example, supporting clean, renewable industries.
 - ethical procurement:
 - for example, setting workplace standards for suppliers and subcontractors.
 - social procurement:
 - for example, purchasing from suppliers that offer social value, such as non-profits, social enterprises, and diverse suppliers.
- In the future, vendors who make commitments in line with sustainable, social, and ethical practices will have the opportunity to increase their evaluation points by describing those corporate initiatives, policies, products, or programs.

Session Briefing Note
Sustainable Procurement

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Public Works

Third response:

- Currently, in line with the *Our Clean Future* action plan item I2, the Procurement Support Centre is planning to have tools and resources available to government purchasing staff in 2024.
- The first phase will begin focusing on sustainability in Government of Yukon tender documents.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Our government is committed to greening its operations and supporting Yukon’s transition to a cleaner economy. *Our Clean Future* action plan item I2 states: Develop procurement guidance, operational requirements, and a collection of evaluation criteria to better support sustainable and local procurements by 2024.

Background:

- The Procurement Support Centre created a sustainable procurement working group to develop ideas and tools, and a strategy document to provide direction and implementation plans.
- An external collaborative group, the Canadian Collaboration on Sustainable Procurement assists in the understanding of sustainable procurement practices and the initiatives other jurisdictions are implementing.

Approved by:	
	January 26, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Timing of Tendering and
Forecasting**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon remains committed to the continuous improvement of our procurement processes.
- We understand the importance of public procurements and provide advance notice of upcoming projects by posting planned procurements to the *Yukon Bids and Tenders* website and sharing information through our Five-Year Capital Plan.
- When planning the timing of our tenders, we recognize that many projects are seasonally dependent. When deciding when to post tenders, we consider factors such as project type, location and market availability.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon forecasts and issues tenders as early as possible to help vendors prepare for upcoming work and be prepared for the short building season.
- We also stagger closing dates to make it easier for contractors to bid on several tenders and to encourage price stability.
- When planning and tendering projects, we aim to tender well in advance of the time when physical work needs to start.
- This timing allows contractors to plan their season, place orders and hire staff.

Third response:

- The department has engaged with the Yukon Contractor's Association on the timing of tendering in recent years, and the association has noted improvement in the timing of tenders.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Timing of Tendering and Forecasting**Highways and
Public Works

- We have many examples of tenders that were posted early so contractors could prepare in advance for the work. Some examples include:
 - The Request for Bids for the Village of Mayo – Supply and Installation of Solid Waste Facility Weigh Scale was tendered late fall 2023 with a substantial performance date of July 31, 2024.
 - The Request for Bids for Johnson Elementary School HVAC and Controls Upgrade Construction Contract was tendered in fall 2023 with a contract mobilization date of April 1, 2024.
 - The Request for Bids for Ghùch Tlâ (Gooch Tlaw) Community School- Asbestos Containing Materials Abatement was tendered late fall 2023 with a mobilization date in June 2024.
 - The Request for Bids for the Yukon University Domestic Hot Water Tank and Domestic Hot Water Line Replacement was tendered in fall 2023 with a mobilization date of June 2024.
- This is just a short list of some examples that demonstrate how we are issuing tenders early to help vendors prepare for the short construction season.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Industry has historically requested more advanced notice regarding the timing and tendering of forecasts to ensure they can make the most of the Yukon's short building season.
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Background:

- Tender forecasts are posted as “Notice of Planned Procurements” within the Yukon Bids and Tenders eProcurement platform.
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Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Timing of Tendering and Forecasting

Highways and
Public Works

- Emails are sent to bidders with accounts when new planned procurements are added.
- The Yukon government right-time tendered 117 projects totalling \$113 million before March 31, 2024.

Approved by:

April 3, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Vendor Performance Review Program**Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Vendor Performance Review Program is a mechanism used to recognize and encourage vendors who deliver good performance on contracts and provide a way to give feedback for those contractors who do not.
- The program evaluates and scores vendors on their performance while delivering a government contract.
- The program provides an incentive to vendors that provide good performance. For example, vendors with higher scores could receive a competitive advantage during future tender evaluations, ultimately increasing their chances of securing future government contracts.
- The program will help improve services to Yukoners by incentivizing the highest level of service from contractors during government contracts.

Additional response: Implementation

- Implementation of the program has been phased to ensure that both the Yukon government project managers and vendors have sufficient time to become familiar with the new process.
- The first phase was between October 2021 and October 2022 where scores were collected but not kept.
- The second phase was between October 2022 and October 2023, which collected scores from vendors but did not apply them to procurements. This allowed us to create an overall score for a vendor.
- The final phase was implemented in October 2023. The Yukon government can begin using the vendor's overall scores from the previous year and apply them during a procurement evaluation.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Vendor Performance Review
Program**Highways and
Public Works

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- If a procurement authority wishes to use a vendor's overall score in the procurement process, they need to contact the Procurement Support Centre.
 - The Procurement Support Centre reviews any available data to help the procurement authority determine whether or not there is sufficient data in the industry to use a vendor's overall score in the procurement.
 - Any procurements that are using a vendor's overall score will include details about the bidding impacts in the tender documents.
 - We will be monitoring the effects of this program moving forward and consulting with industry on any unanticipated effects, which could lead to further changes if necessary.

Third response: Engagement

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is actively engaged with industry through the Yukon Contractors Association and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce's Procurement Committee to assist in vendors becoming accustomed to the new program and to hear feedback about improvements.
- Before launching the first phase of implementation, we spoke to industry at a Procurement Business Committee meeting in September 2021 and received input.
- The Procurement Support Centre has engaged with industry through live sessions throughout the phases of implementation to provide training, and has provided an online training course available on YGLearn for government staff.
- In 2023, the Procurement Support Centre met with industry representatives on May 17, June 28, and November 2.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Vendor Performance Review
Program**Highways and
Public Works

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- On July 19, 2023, the Procurement Support Centre met with First Nation representatives to provide an update on the program's progress and will continue to meet as needed.
 - Highways and Public Works is committed to listening to industry's feedback and considering adjustments to the program that advance shared interests.
 - In January 2024, the Procurement Support Centre developed a working group with industry members and Yukon government project managers to work through some of the detailed feedback that industry has provided on the program.
 - This new working group met on February 1, March 13, and April 19, 2024.
 - The Procurement Support Centre will continue to meet with industry to provide updates on progress and discuss potential adjustments to the program.

Additional response: Scoring

- When a vendor receives their scores, they can either accept, contest, or not respond.
- If a vendor contests their score, it will initiate the contestation process. The first step will be the project manager and vendor working together to come to an agreement.
- If no agreement is reached, the Procurement Support Centre will review and submit a recommendation to the Deputy Minister of Highways and Public Works for a final decision.
- One of the criteria that a vendor can be scored on is the fulfillment of their tendering commitments to Yukon First Nation participation.

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Vendor Performance Review Program

Highways and Public Works

- Based on the tender type, there are up to seven key performance indicators that are assessed for each contract, which creates an overall performance score. The key performance indicators are:
 - Cost Control
 - Health and Safety
 - Quality Assurance
 - Schedule and Time Control
 - Staff and Administration
 - Yukon First Nation Participation (if applicable)
 - Functionality and Training (for goods contracts)

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Suppliers are interested in being rewarded for good performance on government contracts. Industry has been supportive of the concept program and want to make sure the implementation of the program delivers the anticipated results.

Background:

- Currently, due to technical issues, Vendors cannot see their overall scores. The Procurement Support Centre is working on a solution to ensure transparency and allow Vendors to access their overall vendor score.
- The design of the Vendor Performance Review Program is based on other jurisdictions which have had similar successful initiatives, such as that from the federal government and Alberta.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 29, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy helps level the playing field for First Nations people and businesses and promotes a more inclusive economy.
- This policy positions the Yukon government as a leader in Indigenous procurement and has been widely praised as a model for other jurisdictions to follow.
- It has opened the door for larger conversations between the Yukon government, First Nations, and industry on how we can make government procurement benefit everyone.
- This policy represents a positive step toward advancing reconciliation, and it has been done in collaboration with Yukon First Nations partners.
- It has been more than three years since this policy was implemented, and the Yukon remains ahead of other jurisdictions when it comes to commitments and actions on Indigenous procurement.
- We are advised that many Yukon First Nation partners remain strongly supportive of the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy and remain committed to collaboratively implementing the policy.
- There is agreement among our working groups that the level of collaboration between Yukon First Nation governments and the Procurement Support Centre is robust and demonstrates the Yukon government's commitment to achieving policy outcomes while enhancing the relationships.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- Other Canadian provinces and territories, and the federal government are looking to the Yukon to understand how they can leverage our experience to advance their own journeys toward reconciliation.
- For example, the department participated in recent meetings to share lessons learned and best practices with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Businesses on January 26, 2024, with the City of Toronto on January 29, 2024, and with the City of Edmonton on March 7, 2024.
- We also presented information about the policy and its implementation to a Federal-Provincial-Territorial Procurement Sub-Committee in December 2023, and to the Canadian Collaboration for Sustainable Procurement in October 2023.
- Indigenous procurement policies are becoming more common in Canada and around the world. Other jurisdictions that have implemented or are actively working on implementing Indigenous procurement policies include: British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and the federal government.
- This is the type of bold leadership required to acknowledge the injustices of the past and commit to doing better moving forward.

Yukon First Nation Business Registry:

- On December 1, 2021, verified Yukon First Nation businesses started to be listed on the Yukon First Nation Business Registry.
- Over 125 verified Yukon First Nation businesses are currently listed on the registry.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- To be verified and listed on the registry, the business must meet the definition of a Yukon First Nations business.
- The Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce administers the registry.
- Over the past year, the Yukon government has received feedback from industry and Yukon First Nation partners on the Yukon First Nation business definition.
- The feedback focused on ensuring that Yukon First Nation businesses were being properly designated, and that the definition of a Yukon First Nation business aligned with the policy's intent.
- Through a minor policy change on May 1, 2023, and in collaboration with our First Nation Partners, we have been able to continue processing applications to the business registry.
- As we learn more through implementation, we will continue to review and refine the verification process and the business registry as needed with our First Nation partners, and the Monitor and Review Committee, to ensure we are meeting the intent of the policy.

Contractors Proof of YFN (Yukon First Nations) Involvement:

- The Yukon government is committed to ensuring the benefits from the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy flow to the intended recipients.
- It is extremely important for contractors to know that when they place bids, they are then responsible for upholding the commitments within their bid.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- This is why we require contractors to provide sufficient proof that they met their Yukon First Nation Participation Plan commitments, which includes the submission of a statutory declaration.
- This applies to all contracts where a bid value reduction was earned for Yukon First Nation participation.
- Vendors will also be evaluated on how well they fulfilled their Yukon First Nation commitments through the Vendor Performance Review program.

Monitor and Review Committee:

- With Yukon First Nation and industry representatives, we co-developed the terms of reference for the Monitor and Review Committee.
- This committee meets monthly and is responsible for monitoring outcomes of the policy and for providing recommendations to the Yukon government to improve the policy.
- The **Monitor and Review Committee's** role is vital to ensuring that the policy measures are contributing to advancing the policy's objectives and principles.
- **The committee provides both data and recommendations through reports**, with the first annual report released on March 15, 2023. The report is available online at Yukon.ca/growing-together and provides over one year's worth of data on the outcomes of the policy.
- Some of the data highlights include:
 - 6.2 per cent of awarded contracts went to Yukon First Nation businesses.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- 17 tenders were re-ranked due to the application of bid value reductions.
- The total dollar value of the contracts awarded to Yukon First Nation businesses was \$48 million.
- Some of the recommendations from the first annual report included advancing workforce development, improving data collection, and raising awareness among businesses, Yukon First Nations about the policy, and strengthening relationships, confidence and buy-in among First Nations and industry in YFNPP implementation.
- Progress has been made on each of these items since the recommendations were made by Monitor and Review Committee.
- For example, following a recommendation by Monitor and Review Committee, the Yukon government agreed to supply funding for a First Nations workforce development program to support and enhance the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy implementation.
- Following the Monitor and Review Committee's recommendation to improve data collection, a concerted effort has been made to improve data collection on the policy, and the upcoming annual report will include data on additional indicators from the Performance Measurement Framework.
- Efforts to raise awareness about the policy have continued. This has included community visits by the Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce to promote the Yukon First Nations Business Registry, and Five-Year capital planning meetings with Yukon First Nations governments.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- Finally, a consultant working on behalf of industry is now collaborating with the consultant hired on behalf of Yukon First Nations and government to work on shared priorities.
- Moving forward, the committee will continue to conduct regular data analysis and to monitor for any market disruption.
- The next reporting cycle will switch to a fiscal year report and will be released in summer 2024.

Bid Value Reductions:

- Bid value reductions are an important way to meet the objectives of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
- They are accessible to all businesses and increase the competitiveness of bids that include Yukon First Nation participation.
- As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, an independent contractor was hired to conduct a two-year review of the bid value reduction measure.
- The consultant produced a report, which was published on Yukon.ca/growing-together on October 18, 2023.
- The key findings are that:
 - bid value reductions are resulting in an increase in the number of contracts awarded to Yukon First Nation businesses and an increase in bids from Yukon First Nation businesses;
 - data does not indicate evidence of unintended negative consequences for bid value reductions such as large market disruptions;

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- there is a perception that people could be using loopholes in the way bid value reductions are administered to benefit from the policy; however, there were very few specific examples of potentially problematic procurements brought forward; and
 - socio-economic and cultural changes are long-term endeavors that require ongoing relationship building, education and communication.
- Using the information from this report, the Monitor and Review Committee has made recommendations to Highways and Public Works on improvements to the bid value reduction process.
- Some of those recommendations include:
 - providing better communication of how the policy is meeting its outcomes;
 - combatting misinformation and misunderstanding;
 - better data collection; and
 - increasing accountability for all parties involved and contract enforcement of commitments made.
- The report and its recommendations have helped us to understand that our approach is reasonable and fair while creating positive change for our Yukon First Nation partners.
- The recommendations are published on yukon.ca/growing-together.
- The Technical Working Group is currently working to create an action plan in response to the recommendations that is anticipated to be ready this summer.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works continues to work closely with First Nation and industry partners to ensure that the outcomes of the policy are met, partly through the bid value reduction measure.
- A recent data compilation shows that between April 1, 2023, and January 31, 2024;
 - 490 tenders have closed that included bid value reduction measures.
 - 178 tenders have closed with bid value reductions applied.
 - This includes:
 - 44 goods tenders;
 - 85 tenders for services; and
 - 49 construction tenders.
 - 19 tenders with bid value reductions applied resulted in re-ranking.
 - \$30.2 million has been awarded through contracts to Yukon First Nation businesses.

Workforce Development:

- Workforce development is critical for First Nations to fully participate and benefit from the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
- We have been working with the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy working groups and the Council of Yukon First Nations on a path forward to support workforce development.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works

- The Yukon government will supply funding for a First Nations workforce development program to support and enhance the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy implementation.
 - It is important that this initiative is led by Yukon First Nations. The Council of Yukon First Nations have taken the lead engaging Yukon First Nations governments and citizens with this program.
 - We are committed to working with the Technical Working Group and industry to further refine and implement the workforce development components of the policy.
 - We expect the workforce development program design to be complete in 2024.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This is an important policy shift in the Yukon government's procurement system. It demonstrates a tangible commitment to reconciliation.
-

Background:

- The policy was developed through partnership with First Nation Governments. All 14 Yukon First Nations were invited to contribute, and most collaborated on its development. This level of collaboration on a policy was a first for our government and has been a key feature of this policy to this day.
 - The Yukon government listened to the public and took a phased approach to the implementation of this important policy to ensure that Yukon businesses, Yukon First Nations and Yukon government employees had adequate time to prepare for and understand the policy.
 - The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy was approved on December 9, 2020, and endorsed through a joint announcement with Yukon First Nation leaders at the Yukon Forum on December 11, 2020. The policy came into effect on February
-

Session Briefing Note

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Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy

Highways and
Public Works

22, 2021, with added measures being implemented on April 26, 2021, and October 4, 2021, with the latest revisions made May 1, 2023.

- The Council of Yukon First Nations hired a consultant to design the workforce development program with direct engagement with Yukon First Nation governments.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

YG Local Food Purchases

#59
Spring 2024
Energy, Mines and
Resources
and Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- In 2021 we launched the Local Food Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA). Since then, the Government of Yukon grocery purchasers have supported local farmers and food producers by committing to purchase locally grown products.
- The Government of Yukon also purchases local products directly through retailers and catering services.
- The Departments of Energy, Mines and Resources and Highways and Public Works are working together to find more ways to procure local food.

Additional response:

- The current Local Food Standing Offer Arrangement [is being reviewed now. The Government of Yukon is exploring options to increase Government of Yukon purchases.](#)
- We are reaching out to farmers and food producers to better understand their perspective and explore other procurement options.
- We are working with local food producers and institutional and program services to address supply challenges and make purchasing easier.
- In addition to the Standing Offer Agreement, the Departments of Justice and Community Services have draw-down contracts with local

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YG Local Food Purchases

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Public Works

food sellers, such as Stacey's Butcher Block and ColdAcre Food Systems.

- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Community Services include local food preferences in the catering contracts issued for camp food services.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Local farmers and food producers recognize the Government of Yukon as a major food purchaser in the territory and may wish to see improved options to support increased government purchase of local food.

Background:

- The Local Food Standing Offer Arrangement is a multi-departmental effort to increase the use of locally produced foods in government-run facilities, to support local farms and other Yukon food producers and keep money in the territory.
- Increasing government purchase of local food aligns with the vision and objectives of Cultivating Our Future: 2020 Yukon Agriculture Policy; actions identified in the Our Clean Future strategy; and was identified as a key priority in the 2016-2021 Local Food Strategy for Yukon.
- Through a publicly advertised tender, the Government of Yukon contracted with Takhini River Ranch in 2021 to create a government ordering portal through their existing website. This portal allows any Government of Yukon facility to order from participating Yukon food producers.
- Following the launch of the Standing Offer Agreement, the Government of Yukon departments ordering food were identified and contacted to introduce them to the Standing Offer Agreement, set up accounts and walk them through the new ordering process.

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YG Local Food Purchases

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- The Departments of Health and Social Services and Education have draw-down contracts with Takhini River Ranch under the local food Standing Offer Arrangement.
- Two Whitehorse continuing care centres and one Whitehorse student residence have ordered through the Standing Offer Agreement.
- The 2021 SOA set expectations with the following estimate in the tender "...the total spend for the period of the SOA will be a maximum of \$1,000,000.00, with \$200,000.00 estimated for each year. This is an estimate only, and there is no guarantee of spend for the term of the SOA."
- To date, the Government of Yukon has committed over \$325,000 in purchases under the Standing Offer Agreement, with eggs and meat making up most of sales to date.
 - 2021-22 – Health \$125,000; Education \$10,000
 - 2022-23 – Health \$115,000
 - 2023-24 – Health \$65,000
- Total spending related to this Standing Offer Agreement (estimated):
 - Year 1 (2021-22): \$44,026.88
 - Year 2 (2022-23): \$51,195.46
 - Year 3 (2023-24): \$27,546.40
 - **Total: \$122,768.74**
- The Government of Yukon spends approximately \$3,000,000 per year on food.
- The Government of Yukon food purchasers surveyed in March 2022 reported that issues limiting the use of the local Standing Offer Agreement include budget

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concerns, limited selection of local food, and a preference to use one ordering tool for simplicity.

Approved by:

May 2, 2024

Deputy Minister,
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

May 2, 2024

Deputy Minister,
Department of Highways and Public Works

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Third Party Heavy and Light Equipment Rentals

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works regularly requires third-party heavy and light equipment rentals for various short-term projects.
- The department received constructive feedback and suggestions from industry for improvement to how we could improve the tendering process for third party equipment rental and is piloting a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to establish a qualified source list as part of a two-stage procurement process.
- Contractors were invited to submit their equipment lists for various groups and locations by March 19 on Yukon bids&tenders.
- 62 submissions were received in April.
- The new, simpler one-window approach has reduced the risk of rejections.
- Following the establishment of the qualified source list, the second stage for this type of procurement will be either:
 - a direct award to a contractor on the qualified source list;
 - an invitational tender – which requires a minimum of 2 contractors; or,
 - an open tender to only the qualified source list contractors from the equipment group who have indicated they can work in the project area.
- The RFQ will be published again in May and then every month through the summer to allow additional contractors or equipment to be added to the qualified source list throughout the year.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Third Party Heavy and Light
Equipment Rentals**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response:

- The RFQ will accept online submissions on the Yukon bids&tenders platform only. Highways and Public Works proactively informed contractors of this change prior to posting the RFQ.
- The department hosted two information sessions on February 22 and March 5, 2024, during the tender period to allow contractors to ask questions and understand this revised approach.
- The Yukon government wants as many contractors applying to the list as possible to increase access to equipment and operators in all areas of the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Standing Offer Arrangements for third-party heavy equipment rental are of interest to many Yukon contractors, and the Yukon government is piloting a new approach with a Qualified Source List and second stage procurements.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon has historically issued an annual call for equipment with operators, usually as a Standing Offer Arrangement with prices bid in early February or March.
- The new Qualified Source List approach allows for regular additions of contractors and equipment to the list. Supply Services plans to have monthly openings during the summer season.
- Supply Services has met with the Yukon's industry group (Yukon Contractors Association) to get input on the process revisions.
- Department officials have acknowledged the challenges with the previous system that required submissions through both MyYukon and Yukon bids&tenders and

Session Briefing Note

Third Party Heavy and Light Equipment Rentals

Spring 2024

Highways and Public Works

are hopeful this one-window approach will reduce rejections of contractor submissions.

- Typically, around 80 Yukon-based contractors submit, and recent years we have had to reject around 10 of those submissions due to non-compliance.
- In April, 62 contractors and their equipment were added to the first-round qualified source list. For those who did not make the opening or did not qualify for the first round, the next opportunity will be in early May.
- A few pieces of equipment in various categories were non-compliant, due to data entry errors or incomplete information, and contractors received notifications regarding those. They will be able to resubmit those pieces for inclusion during an upcoming opening.
- The Yukon government has identified that approximately 80 per cent of contracts under the Third-Party Equipment Rental List last year were direct awards below the current services threshold of \$50 thousand.
- Based on the location and project, contractors will be asked to provide an all-inclusive, real-time estimate for the job as outlined in a scope of work.
- The Yukon government's procurement policies are mandated by various trade agreements such as the Canada Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) and Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).
- Contractors have asked for more transparency for planned opportunities, increased bid information sharing through posting online on Yukon bids&tenders, and more information regarding awarded contracts.
- The new approach is being rolled out with these goals in mind and are highlighted within the instructions for project managers. Specifically, the project supervisor must ensure written documentation is kept using the "Contract Tracker" which records a number of items related to these contracts. The contract tracker can be found on the Third-Party SharePoint Site in the documents section.

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Third Party Heavy and Light Equipment Rentals

Spring 2024
Highways and
Public Works

- The QSL allows for flexibility and competition to increase opportunities for community-based contractors while ensuring Yukon government’s responsibilities are met.
- Awarding contracts to local community providers is a main consideration for contracts below the direct award threshold, balanced with seeking a fair price for those services.

Approved by:	
	April 29, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City Museum (Old
Territorial Administration Building)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Old Territorial Administration Building in Dawson City is a designated National Historical Site of Canada due to its architecture and because it was the territory's administrative building from 1901 to 1952. It is also the oldest building insured by the Government of Yukon.
- The building now houses the Dawson City Museum, Dawson City Court, and Environment Yukon offices.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is undertaking a project to revitalize the Old Territorial Administration Building.
- This project will improve the energy performance of the building and extend the life of this important asset.
- In addition, the Dawson City Museum Society has received federal funding to upgrade its exhibits. The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Tourism and Culture are working collaboratively with the society to plan the exhibit project and expand exhibit space to the second floor.

Additional response:

- The project is progressing in phases to minimize disruptions to the museum's operations.
- Phase 1 was completed in September 2021. This included flooring and structural work that allowed the Dawson City Museum to install new display cabinetry.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Dawson City Museum (Old Territorial Administration Building)

Highways and
Public Works

- Phase 2 was completed in July 2023. This included a new roof, a new sprinkler system, exterior painting, and structural upgrades within the attic.
- Phase 3 will involve a re-constructed and heated crawlspace, exterior ramps and stairs, landscaping, drainage work, a revitalized parking lot, and a new water service. The tender and construction is anticipated to take place during 2025-26.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Old Territorial Administration Building is a well-known historic landmark in Dawson City.

Background:

- The government purchased the property in 1976 and undertook a major renovation including some exterior work in the 1980s.
- There is a co-management agreement in place between Highways and Public Works and Tourism and Culture to preserve heritage properties such as this one.
- Phases 1 and 2 were both completed by Wildstone Construction Ltd. Phase 1 construction cost was \$1,119,127.77. Phase 2 construction cost was \$6,589,311.85.

Approved by:

February 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Marwell Grader Station - Relocation**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is assessing the possibility of relocating the Marwell Grader Station.
- The current location is on land that may be better suited for other types of development.
- The existing buildings have high energy and maintenance costs and replacing them may be the most economical long-term option.
- We have identified land along the Alaska Highway as a possible site for future replacement.

Additional response: Kwanlin Dün First Nation

- Under the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement, the First Nation has the right of first refusal to purchase, lease or otherwise acquire the existing Marwell site should the grader station be relocated.
- The Government of Yukon and Kwanlin Dün First Nation government will be collaborating as this project moves forward.

Additional response: Assessment Remediation

- The Department of Environment's Site Assessment and Remediation Unit is carrying out groundwater monitoring and completing an initial Phase 2 environmental site assessment. Final reporting for this work is expected in spring 2024.
- The Marwell Grader Station is a heavily contaminated site that will require more assessment work. The Site Assessment and Remediation Unit will be working to better understand site cleanup requirements and associated costs over the 2024 field season.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Marwell Grader Station - Relocation**Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Minister Clarke’s March 2, 2023, mandate letter includes: “Advance early work alongside Kwanlin Dün First Nation to determine the process for relocating the Whitehorse Grader Station, including the identification of a location and a review and initiation of the remediation work required. This work will be led by the Department of Highways and Public Works with support from the Department of Environment.”

Background:

- In 2015, Highways and Public Works completed initial planning for a replacement grader station. These plans were updated with new cost estimates in 2021.
- The future planned site is located at Robert Service Way and the Alaska Highway and requires water and sewer services. The Yukon government has been working with the City of Whitehorse and Kwanlin Dün First Nation to promote development of the area.
- Kwanlin Dün First Nation has right of first refusal should the Yukon government dispose of the Marwell site; however, the Yukon government is not obligated to dispose of the land.

Approved by:	
_____	January 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Old Crow Health and Wellness
Centre and 10-Plex**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- This spring, the Old Crow community will have access to their very own new Health and Wellness Centre and 10-plex.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works and the Vuntut Gwitchin Government continue to work closely to complete the new facilities.
- The 10-plex was substantially complete at the end of January, and the Health and Wellness Centre is expected to be completed in April.
- Full use of the facilities could take up to two months following substantial completion. Activities completed during this time include move-in, set-up of utilities, technology systems, and operational training for staff.
- Construction on these facilities between March 2021 and January 2024 enabled the Vuntut Gwitchin community to benefit from \$12.5 million in employment, training, and business opportunities related to these projects.
- The Government of Yukon and Vuntut Gwitchin Government are excited to see the two beautiful facilities constructed in the Yukon's only fly-in community.
- Both buildings were designed and built to high standards, including air tightness, insulation, energy efficient heating, ventilation, and lighting.
 - Both buildings are designed to exceed our energy performance target of 35 per cent below the 2017 National Energy Code standard.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Old Crow Health and Wellness
Centre and 10-Plex**Highways and
Public Works

-
- The Health and Wellness Centre's energy performance target was 37 per cent.
 - The 10-Plex's energy performance target was 41 per cent.
 - As a result, greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced in the Health and Wellness Centre by 40 per cent and the 10-Plex by 37 per cent.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Health and Wellness Centre and 10-plex housing unit is an important project for the community of Old Crow.
-

Background:

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for the procurement and management of the Health and Wellness Centre and the 10-plex housing unit design and construction.
 - A combined procurement was used for the two facilities to simplify construction resource demands in this small community and decrease the cost of both projects by realizing the benefits of economies of scale and shared resources.
 - Stantec Architecture and Engineering completed the conceptual design and is staying engaged during the final design and construction of both facilities.
 - The design-build contract for the project was awarded to Ketza TSL Construction in March 2021, for \$44.8 million. Higher shipping costs and a greater number of air freight loads, changes in market conditions have resulted in an increased contract amount of \$53.5 million.
 - The design-build procurement was value-driven to look beyond the price to make sure the project brought as much value as possible to the community and to the territory. In this case, the winning proponent received points for the schedule, training plans, subcontracting plans, northern and Old Crow specific experience, and First Nations participation.
-

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre and 10-Plex

Highways and
Public Works

- A 60-year land lease to accommodate both facilities on one site was signed in spring 2021 with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government.

Shipping

- To assist with this project and other projects in the community, a winter road was constructed during the winters of 2021-22 and 2022-23 between Eagle Plains and Old Crow.
- In 2022, 67 truckloads of material were transported to and from Old Crow.
- In 2023, a total of 54 truckloads were shipped to Old Crow on the winter road, including:
 - 41 for Vuntut Gwitchin Government; and
 - 13 for the Yukon government and other parties.
- The first loads arrived in the community on February 22, 2022, and the last convoy left Old Crow on March 13, 2023.
- The winter road was used to haul 13 loads out of the community on behalf of Yukon government and other parties.
- These loads included construction equipment, old and outdated machinery, vehicles, and equipment no longer needed in the community, waste oil, batteries and other miscellaneous materials.
- Air North Partnership has transported materials by air for the Old Crow Health and Wellness Center and 10-Plex project. Air North is a Yukon company, partly owned by the Vuntut Development Corporation, and is helping to keep the benefits of this project flowing within the Yukon.
- As of January 2024, direct air freight costs totaled approximately \$9.1 million.

Approved by:

March 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2023****Parking Lot at the Jim Smith Building (MAB)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works invested in improvements to the parking lot at the Jim Smith Building to make it more inclusive, and welcoming.
- We made grading, drainage, and resurfacing improvements to the south parking lot and addressed flooding and pooling previously experienced during heavy rainfall and spring snow melt.
- This project also incorporated sustainability features including a new bicycle shelter to support active transportation, as well as the infrastructure to provide electric vehicle chargers two of which are now operational and eight that will be installed this spring.
- Resurfacing of the parking lot was completed in October 2022. Electrical work, bike shelter construction, and landscaping were completed in summer 2023.

Additional response: Assessment

- The main defect with the old parking lot was the consistent flooding after large rain events and fast snow melts, and the deterioration of the concrete curbs.
- To address these issues, the old asphalt was removed, new gravel was added, and the parking area was re-graded.
- Safety upgrades were also an essential piece of the project, and included the removal of trees to improve sightlines, both for vehicles and people's security. Tree leaves would also block the storm drain causing ponding.
- Lighting upgrades eliminated low lit or dark sections of the parking lot to help improve energy efficiency and security.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2023****Parking Lot at the Jim Smith Building (MAB)**Highways and
Public Works

- The trees closest to Rotary Park have been replaced, while the trees that were in the middle of the parking lot have been replaced with planter boxes.

Third response: Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

- This spring, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will be installing eight electric vehicle charging stations at the Jim Smith Building parking lot to be available for public use.
- The Jim Smith south parking lot will have a total of 10 electric vehicle charging stations for Yukoners to access as we continue to see ownership of electric vehicles increase in the Yukon.
- The electric vehicle charging stations will include accessible parking spaces and a variety of stalls, including ones long enough to accommodate commercial and fleet vehicles.
- The existing government-owned chargers in the City of Whitehorse are consistently used and we anticipate that the new charging stations at Jim Smith Building will see consistent use as well.
- As of November 2023, there are 265 zero emission vehicles registered in the Yukon, approximately half of these are plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, and the other half are total battery electric vehicles.
- The location of all public electric vehicle charging stations throughout the territory can be found on the Flo app, and also on 511 Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The parking lot construction at the Jim Smith building has high public visibility, and questions have been raised as to whether these improvements should be prioritized.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2023****Parking Lot at the Jim Smith
Building (MAB)**Highways and
Public Works**Background:**

- This is the first major regrading and repaving of the parking lot since its initial construction in 1976, 46 years ago.
- Norcope Enterprises Ltd. was awarded the construction contract for \$2.7 million.
- Southpaw Construction, a local contractor, installed a concrete ramp for the bike shelter to improve access and accessibility, and replaced a section of the sidewalk at the exit of the parking lot adjacent to 2nd Avenue.
- In addition to the 10 EV chargers in the south parking lot, there are 4 EV chargers for public use in the north parking lot. Two of these chargers are reserved for overnight use for the mail room EV cargo vans.

Approved by:

February 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

School Maintenance

TAB# 70
SPRING 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon prioritizes safety and continually undertakes routine and preventative maintenance work across Yukon's school facilities.
- Our proactive maintenance plan aims to address infrastructure service needs and create a safe learning environment for all students and staff.
- Recognizing the importance of maintaining robust educational facilities, the Departments of Education and Highways and Public Works undertake a range of maintenance activities in Yukon school facilities.
- The preventative maintenance plan includes regular maintenance activities such as:
 - backup generator testing;
 - fire alarm and fire extinguisher testing;
 - emergency light testing and maintenance;
 - overhead door servicing;
 - boiler cleaning and servicing;
 - air system cleaning and air filter changes;
 - propane appliance servicing; and
 - irrigation system start-up and shut-down.
- Larger maintenance projects and school upgrades are typically planned for when the school is vacant. This includes the holiday season, spring break, and the summer when heating systems are not in use and the ground is not frozen.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****School Maintenance**Highways and
Public Works

- This work focuses on:
 - refurbishment, such as flooring and painting improvements;
 - exterior maintenance, such as updates or repairs to paint and siding, exterior doors, and parking lot maintenance;
 - interior maintenance, such as repairs to plumbing infrastructure, boiler replacements, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) repairs, and lighting upgrades;
 - summer cleaning program delivered by custodial teams; and
 - reconditioning sports fields and upgrading irrigation systems.
- Every effort is made to minimize disruptions and inconveniences to building occupants.
- If any of the summer projects impact users returning to school at the beginning of the school year, the affected school community is notified by email in advance of classes starting.

Additional response: Pest control

- The Yukon government's response to pests depends on who owns the building. If pests are discovered in a leased building, the response is coordinated through the landlord.
- If pests are discovered in a Yukon government-owned building, the Department of Highways and Public Works collaborates with the building occupant to ensure an immediate response.
- Highways and Public Works identifies potential improvements to buildings, such as installing new door sweeps or patching holes that might help address pest issues in the long term.

Session Briefing Note
School Maintenance

TAB# 70
SPRING 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions are sometimes raised about maintenance practices in schools and how we minimize impact to building occupants.

Approved by:	
	January 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Seismic and Schools

SPRING 2024Education /
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The safety of people accessing Yukon schools is a priority to the Government of Yukon, as such we work to proactively address safety issues.
- We ensure our schools undergo regular inspections, and if any structural issues are identified, precautionary action is taken, and mitigation work is prioritized based on a risk assessment.
- Every school was built to the standard of the day and inspected to ensure they met all relevant codes at the time of construction.
- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Education are reviewing all Yukon school facilities and planning for the future of those facilities.
- Seismic mitigation is one of the many factors considered in new school design.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon continues to perform seismic and structural assessments on Yukon schools as required, to ensure the safety of staff and students.
- We have undertaken several mitigation measures, by addressing structural issues identified during assessments – for example, repairs on roofs, floors, and walls – and many non-structural issues such as duct work, furniture upgrades and shelving.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public is interested in seismic mitigation in Yukon schools.

Session Briefing Note

Seismic and Schools

SPRING 2024Education /
Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- The Yukon's last major seismic event was in 2017 and the mitigations we had in place proved effective during that event.
- Yukon schools were built to the building code in place at the time of construction and modern building code requirements contain increasingly stringent structural requirements.
- The type and severity of seismic issues varies from building to building and can be categorized into:
 - structural components - roof, floors, walls, foundations; or
 - non-structural components - suspended ceilings, water piping, ductwork, furniture upgrades and shelving units.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

March 7, 2024

Date Approved

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Education

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

École Whitehorse Elementary Replacement School

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is investing in the Yukon's education system by building new schools or renovating existing ones to meet the needs of Yukon students for years to come.
- École Whitehorse Elementary school needs to be replaced due to the age and condition of the building, its energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and the need for significant seismic upgrades.
- The replacement school will be much more energy efficient and could see a reduction of up to 260 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year compared to the current school.

Additional response: Replacement school

- The new school is currently in the early planning phase, being led by the Department of Education.
- The exact location of the new school on the Takhini Education Land Reserve has not yet been determined.
- A Test Fit and Site Analysis meeting was held on March 27 with stakeholders to share three options for the location of the school on the Takhini educational land reserve and receive feedback. Kobayashi and Zedda Architects presented the options to the stakeholders.
- The Project Advisory Committee and stakeholders will provide input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can meet community needs through functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- The Government of Yukon will continue engaging with the First Nation School Board, the Project Advisory Committee, and Softball Yukon to

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****École Whitehorse Elementary
Replacement School**Highways and
Public Works

determine the best plan for moving forward on the site. This will include implications for the existing Takhini Elementary School and the softball fields.

- Kobayashi + Zedda Architects, the company hired to plan the design of the replacement school, completed the first phase of the project – a site analysis and test fit, for a total cost of \$272 thousand.

**Additional response: Seismic concerns with the current École
Whitehorse Elementary School**

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was built in 1950 in accordance with the building codes and construction practices of the day.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works regularly assesses schools and, if potential structural issues are identified, we immediately address them.
- We have taken important mitigation measures at École Whitehorse Elementary School to properly secure the building and its contents in the event of seismic activity.
- Until École Whitehorse Elementary School is replaced, we will continue to make sure the current school remains safe.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The announcement to replace École Whitehorse Elementary School has received significant media attention.

Background:

- The building itself is over 70 years old and nearing the end of its useful life.
- The size of the current Whitehorse Elementary School lot would make it extremely difficult to build a new school on the current lot. Working around the existing

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

École Whitehorse Elementary Replacement School

Highways and
Public Works

building would heavily impact design decisions and would mean loss of school parking and playgrounds for a minimum of 2-3 years during construction.

- We also want to increase students ability to learn and participate in experiential opportunities outdoors which the downtown site makes more difficult.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve will be ideal to accommodate French Immersion students from around the city and has a number of other advantages, including better access to green space.
- We will have plans in place to manage noise, traffic and dust during construction.
- A traffic study was included in the scope of the Kobayashi + Zedda contract to be completed as part of Phase 2, the pre-design portion of the contract. We anticipate that Phase 2 will be completed this winter.
- Costs to renovate the existing school would be roughly 1.4 times more than building a new identically sized school, in large part due to the estimate of \$15-20 million needed to complete seismic upgrades.
- Following construction of the replacement school, an assessment will be performed on the existing building downtown to determine whether to move forward with a demolition. Highways and Public Works will consider factors such as public health and safety, ongoing maintenance costs and the value of the land for potential development in making such a decision.

Approved by:

April 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing School)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has closely engaged with Kluane First Nation to plan the design and construction of a new school in Burwash Landing.
- The new school will be called Kêts'ádań Kù (Ket-zah-Done-coo) - which means “house of learning” in Southern Tutchone.
- The school will provide a new learning and community space that meets the needs of residents in the surrounding area.
- A site for the new school has been selected by the project team comprised of representatives from Highways and Public Works, the Department of Education and Kluane First Nation.
- Funding has been allocated to support the planning and construction of the school. We look forward to working together – government to government – on this important project.

Additional response:

- On May 31, 2023, a land clearing ceremony was held on the site to celebrate the partnership between the Yukon government and Kluane First Nation.
- Construction of the road and parking lot, as well as drainage improvements were completed in 2023 under the Kluane First Nation Yukon Asset Construction Agreement.
- The Request for Bids for the Kêts'ádań Kù School in Burwash Landing Construction Services was issued on April 4 to secure a contractor.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Kêts'ádañ Kù (Burwash Landing School)

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This project is important to the Kluane First Nation and is a high-profile school project that is mentioned in the Minister's mandate letter.

Background:

- Kluane First Nation has long requested a new K-12 school in Burwash Landing.
- The Department of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Kluane First Nation in June 2020 committing to build a school and establish an Oversight Committee.
- The contract for Consultant Services was awarded in April 2021.
- The community was consulted on the conceptual design in 2022 and the best options were moved forward.
- In July 2022, a Yukon Asset Construction Agreement was signed with Kluane First Nation that will provide benefits to the community from the construction of the school.
- Funding is provided in part by both the Government of Yukon and Infrastructure Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- Officials have been meeting regularly with the Kluane First Nation to discuss the design and construction of the school.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 5, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Ross River School**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Ross River community is built on changing permafrost that has contributed to the need for structural assessments and repairs to the Ross River School.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works continues to make sure the school is kept safe by mitigating structural movement, and by performing repairs to lessen the effects of building movement.
- The Ross River School is inspected quarterly by a multi-disciplinary team that includes an architect, a structural engineer, a geotechnical engineer and a surveyor.
- The latest building condition inspection report, received on April 2, 2024, confirmed the school remains safe for occupancy. The next inspection report is expected to be received in July 2024.

Additional response: Challenges with Discontinuous Permafrost

- The Yukon is experiencing many climate impacts that affect our buildings.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is implementing a routine structural monitoring program for Yukon government buildings that are vulnerable to foundation and structural distress through permafrost degradation caused in part by climate change. The program is expected to be operational by the end of 2024 (OCF Action –H10).
- Building on permafrost is challenging as the degradation to the permafrost destabilizes the structure. As temperatures continue to

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024**Ross River School**Highways and
Public Works

warm, these buildings will likely continue to be affected in the future by permafrost thaw created by climate change.

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is working to minimize the impact of climate change on our building infrastructure in the long term by investing in adaptation and planning. For example, we are conducting climate risk assessments on current government buildings and when planning for new builds.

Additional response: Status of current projects

- Last spring, over 200 permanent jacks were installed underneath the Ross River School. The new releveling system can be re-used in the future to address any further movement of the school.
- The project provided significant Yukon First Nation Participation Plan opportunities for the Ross River Dena community.
- The construction of a new modular mechanical room to replace the existing mechanical plant was completed during the 2023 summer break and was operational for the start of the school year. The heat emitted from the old mechanical plant was contributing to the deterioration of permafrost under the school.
- Additional work related to the releveling, such as fixing the building skirting, siding, drywall cracks and door frames was completed at the end of January 2024.
- During 2024, the school will undergo a major roof repair and a new septic field, as well as design for remote level and temperature monitoring systems.

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SPRING 2024

Ross River School

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Ross River School has been undergoing quarterly inspections to monitor for any structural issues because of changing permafrost.

Background:

- Permafrost conditions at the school have resulted in many structural assessments and repairs over the years.
- The contract for the installation of the relevening system, awarded to T. Moon Construction in July 2022, was \$3.55 million.
- The contract for the new mechanical room, awarded to Cube Construction in June 2022, was \$1.29 million.
- Other maintenance works projects at the school in the last 5 years include:
 - 2023 – Lighting Upgrade (Gymnasium and Library) - \$59 thousand
 - 2023 – Passive Crawlspace Cooling – \$66 thousand
 - 2023 – Domestic Hot Water Tank Replacements - \$25 thousand
 - 2021 – Water Trough Installations – \$44 thousand
 - 2020 – Structural Upgrades – \$82 thousand
 - 2019 – Structural Upgrades – \$268 thousand

Approved by:

April 25, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Parking Lot

- With a growing population, the Government of Yukon is also growing our infrastructure and making improvements.
- During the last few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has ensured upgrades were made to Holy Family, Golden Horn, Christ the King and Hidden Valley school parking lots.
- Construction of a new staff parking area behind Selkirk Elementary School started in summer 2023.
- The majority of the earthworks, such as underground utilities, have been completed. Construction paused at the end of October for the season.
- The department and the contractor, Castle Rock, worked together to make the parking area available for use by the public during the winter.
- Once the construction season starts, work will include paving, electrical equipment installation and landscaping. The parking lot is scheduled to be completed this summer, prior to the start of the school year.
- Until the new parking lot is completed, parking for staff at Selkirk Elementary School will remain at the front of the school.
- The design of the new parking lot has allowed for the future installation of electric vehicle charging stations at parking stalls. The design has also included bike parking stalls for active transportation users.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and
Public Works

- To date, the project is on budget and on schedule.

Additional response: Selkirk storm water project

- The tender for the storm sewer replacement and connection and road improvements was awarded to Norcope Enterprises in 2022. This project has been managed by Community Services in 2022 and 2023.
- The project is operational and is complete. The new storm water line will carry run-off from the future parking lot offsite.
- The new storm water line reduces the risk of flooding in Riverdale and protects the drinking water aquifer in the area.

Additional Response: WSCB Investigation

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is aware of a Workers' Safety and Compensation Board investigation regarding Selkirk School in Whitehorse and has actively participated in the response.
- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board provided the Department of Highways and Public Works with an investigation report dated September 7, 2023.
- The report relates to an incident that occurred at Selkirk School in April 2023 when a Highways and Public Works employee was working with a potentially hazardous building material.
- The report contained eight orders for Highways and Public Works relating to the investigation as well as a levy to the department.
- We are complying with the orders and have paid the levy.

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Selkirk Elementary School

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Selkirk Elementary School parking lot project has been deferred until now, as the City of Whitehorse identified a need to install new storm water infrastructure to carry run-off from the future parking lot offsite.

Background:

- The proposed parking lot is within the City of Whitehorse’s aquifer protection zone, and existing storm water infrastructure in the area is at capacity. The new storm water infrastructure was required before any further construction in the area.
- The City of Whitehorse has developed an Active School Travel design for Selkirk Street to encourage active transportation, enhance road safety, and improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Construction of an addition to the school was completed in April 2023.
- This addition has allowed for the expansion of the French Immersion Program and freed up a classroom that is needed for Grade 7 students.
- Two modular classrooms were previously completed for Selkirk Elementary School in 2020 and 2021.

Approved by:

January 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Whistle Bend Elementary School

TAB# 72e
SPRING 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Building a new school for the community of Whistle Bend is a great and necessary addition to a fast-growing neighbourhood.
- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Education, as well as the Project Advisory Committee have collaborated throughout the project to achieve a school design that incorporated important community elements.
- The construction of the school building is expected to be completed this spring, however work on the school grounds will not be complete until this summer.
- The school will be open for the start of this coming school year.

Additional response: Cost increase

- The contract was awarded to Ketz Construction Corporation for \$42.8 million.
- Inflation, supply chain issues and price escalations in lumber, wood products, steel and labour have led to cost increases in projects across the territory.
- The design-build tender closed when prices for lumber and steel were close to their peak; these were key materials for the project.

Additional response: Active transportation

- Active transportation infrastructure is an important component of reducing emissions and fostering healthy communities.
- We are investing more in active transportation by widening the sidewalk to accommodate cyclist traffic in front of the school.

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Whistle Bend Elementary School

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Public Works

- In addition, trails behind the school will be integrated into the Whistle Bend trail system to allow students to commute to school.
- We will also include traffic lights at Olive May Way and Casca Boulevard for pedestrians and cyclists.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This will be the first school in the Whistle Bend community.

Background:

- The contract amount reflects increased costs for building materials such as lumber and steel.
- The design-build contract was a value-driven procurement. Value-driven procurements help ensure that the project brings as much value as possible to the community and the territory.
- In this case, the winning bidder earned points for their schedule, training plans, subcontracting plans, northern experience, and First Nations participation.
- A contract for Owner’s Advisor services was awarded to Colliers Project Leaders in January 2020.
- A Project Advisory Committee was established in summer 2019, as a commitment made by Education to the Whistle Bend Community Association.
 - Members of the Committee include: Ta’an Kwäch’än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, City of Whitehorse, and the departments of Community Services, Education and Highways and Public Works.

Approved by:

February 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Mould in Nelnah
Bessie John School**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Ensuring the health and wellness of Yukoners is a priority for our government.
- On April 2 Highways and Public Works received a Hazardous Building Materials Assessment and Air Quality test results for the Nelnah Bessie John School in Beaver Creek which indicated the presence of mould.
- Government of Yukon officials immediately reviewed the findings of the report and developed options for remediation, keeping in mind the safety of staff and students and educational requirements.

Additional response:

- The departments of Highways and Public Works and Education met with the First Nations School Board and parents of students attending the school on April 8 to discuss the report and remediation options.
- The chosen option was to remain in the school, with restricted access to the most impacted areas, which is not anticipated to impact educational programming.
- A vapour barrier has been installed to seal off an area on the main floor.
- The Yukon government will plan to remediate the mould over the summer break to not disrupt school operations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On Tuesday April 2, 2024 Highways and Public Works received a Hazardous Building Materials Assessment and Air Quality test results for the Nelnah Bessie John School in Beaver Creek which indicated the presence of mould.
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Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

**Mould in Nelnah
Bessie John School**

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- On February 20, 2024 Highways and Public Works staff were advised of a leak from an upstairs bathroom into a bulkhead space in the basement of Nelnah Bessie John School.
- Upon further investigation it was found that there was significant moisture and staining, so full air quality testing and hazardous building materials testing was conducted throughout the school on March 1, 2024.
- There are no legislated national guidelines for exposure limits to mould.
- It is not currently possible to establish safe mould exposure thresholds due to the wide variation in naturally occurring mould spores in the outdoor environment which varies due to factors such as ecological zone, temperature and time of the year.
- The level of concern depends on the extent of mould, how long it has been present and the sensitivity and overall health of the occupants. Some people such as infants, children, elderly and those with breathing difficulties are more susceptible than others.
- The Beaver Creek Community Hall also recently underwent mould remediation and is now back in use.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 15, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Water Quality at Del Van Gorder School

Tab# 76
Spring 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works takes the safety of students and staff of our schools very seriously.
- In late March, we learned that students of Del Van Gorder School completed a science project that included water sampling across a variety of fixtures in the school.
- Lead in drinking water is a serious issue and we want to ensure that the public knows that any time there is a concern about lead in drinking water we act quickly to verify and address the issue.
- Due to changes in quality standards some fixtures in Yukon schools do not meet the new safety standards for lead, and as such the Department of Education is hiring a contractor to test the drinking water in all Yukon schools.
- Highways and Public Works will then make any required repairs to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our school communities for the long term.
- In the interim we have begun shutting off drinking water fixtures.

Additional response:

- On March 28, Government of Yukon officials found out about the school project which found lead in the water and reached out to school officials to find out more about the testing the students did.
- On April 2, school employees confirmed that the students tested various water sources in the school and identified the presence of

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Water Quality at Del Van Gorder School

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lead. The testing kit did not provide any information on levels of lead, but only indicated that there was a presence.

- On April 5, Highways and Public Works travelled to Faro to conduct testing of all affected water fixtures using a three-tier test:
 - Tier 1 was a stagnant test;
 - Tier 2 was a thirty second flush; and
 - Tier 3 was a two-minute flush.
- The science fair students were invited to participate in this testing process, and had an opportunity to learn more about our methodology, and the reasons why we follow this testing regime.
- On April 11 initial results were received and one of three water fountains tested was over the acceptable limit for Tier 1 and Tier 2 tests.
- A water specialist travelled to Faro to conduct further targeted testing into the root cause of these elevated levels. The specialist also looked at the school as a whole to gain as much information as possible and ensure there are no other anomalies.
- The testing process involved isolating the fixture and branch line from the main plumbing line to confirm if it is the fixture or certain sections of piping.
- This additional testing was completed on April 19. The Yukon government has received the results and consulted with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and Environmental Health to develop a plan for next steps.

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Water Quality at Del Van Gorder School

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- On May 1, the Yukon government sent a letter to update parents and families about immediate actions, testing and remediation.
- Drinking fixtures continue to be shut off, and bottled water is being provided to students.
- The science fair students were able to participate in the second round of testing so they could see the difference using a targeted test. This also allowed the students to update their findings to better form a conclusion for their science project.

Additional response:

- The Del Van Gorder School uses municipally sourced water that is supported, monitored and tested by the municipality. There is no requirement to test water in buildings unless there is a reason to suspect a problem.
- Because the lead containing fixtures were removed in 2020, and further testing confirmed the water was meeting federal guidelines, we did not anticipate any further testing or remediation work was required in the school.
- The Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality have since introduced stricter standards regarding lead levels so we have developed a plan to test and ensure all of our schools meet these new standards.
- The testing and remediation plan has been shared with experts including the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and Environmental Health to determine next steps.

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Water Quality at Del Van Gorder School

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- We are working closely with the Department of Education on the testing and remediation plan.
 - Education is responsible for the testing of fixtures, and Highways and Public Works will perform any further remediation work that is required.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- As part of a science project students at the Del Van Gorder school found the potential presence of lead in the school's water system.

Background:

- The Del Van Gorder School uses municipality-sourced water. The Water Treatment Plant is responsible for water quality monitoring and testing for the community.
- Delivered water and municipal systems do not require testing by facilities staff or end users, as these systems are supported, monitored and tested by officials, depending on location.
- In government buildings, that are on well systems we follow the Environment Canada Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. This means we complete:
 - Quarterly bacteria testing at all locations on well systems that are secure.
 - Monthly bacteria testing at all locations on well systems that are groundwater under the direct influence of surface water, and therefore more vulnerable to contamination.
 - Testing for minerals in well systems when a new well is developed.
 - Annual cleaning of holding tanks.

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Water Quality at
Del Van Gorder School

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Public Works

- In 2019 the Department of Highways and Public Works and the Department of Education worked collaboratively to test for lead in the water supply for all Yukon schools and then remediated where required.
- In 2020 we completed remediation work in the Del Van Gorder School in Faro, which included replacing all fixtures and piping known to contain lead.
- Following the remediation, further test results confirmed the drinking water was safe to consume and met federal guidelines.
- The school also has a flushing system that circulates the water to avoid stagnation in the pipes.
- The Canadian Drinking Water Guideline limits changed since we last completed testing across schools. The acceptable limit changed from 0.020mg/l to 0.005mg/l.
- We are working with the Department of Education to review the data from our previous testing in order to confirm if any other schools across the territory will require testing.
- If lead is confirmed in any drinking water, we disconnect the affected water fixture and post signage to not drink the water.
- Remediation work including replacement of the fixture and/or replacement of piping is then completed, and another test conducted.
- Only once test results indicate safe drinking water is the fixture reactivated and signs removed.

Approved by:	
	May 2, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Abandoned Vehicles**

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is responsible for the safe and efficient movement of travellers and goods over Yukon highways.
- The department is also responsible for maintaining the highway system so that it is safe, clean and free from roadside obstructions.
- Abandoned vehicles pose a potential safety risk to the travelling public and can impede the efficiency of our crews to maintain parts of our roadway.
- At times, vehicles are left abandoned and can interfere with the flow of traffic, impede visibility, prevent proper snow removal and present an environmental hazard.
- Last year, the department renewed its efforts to identify and remove abandoned vehicles in key highway corridors as quickly as possible.
- In summer 2023 the department made a concerted push to identify and remove vehicles from key Highway Corridors; namely the Alaksa Highway and North Klondike Highway. Approximately 48 vehicles were removed during this time.
- So far in 2024, Highways and Public Works has been notified of 34 abandoned vehicles along highways, within municipalities and on private property.
 - 31 vehicles have been towed;
 - 2 vehicles are waiting to be towed; and
 - 1 vehicle is located on private property and cannot be towed.

Session Briefing Note**Abandoned Vehicles**

Highways and
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works, in conjunction with peace officers, towing operators, impound yards and disposal facilities are working together to ensure all vehicles declared as abandoned in the Yukon are removed in a timely manner.

Additional response: Reporting Abandoned Vehicles

- On average every week 2-3 vehicles are abandoned somewhere in the Yukon.
- We encourage members of the public to report any abandoned vehicles they see to the local RCMP.
- As designated peace officers under the *Motor Vehicles Act*, the RCMP are the public's primary point of contact for reporting abandoned vehicles on the Yukon's highways.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works continues to work with the RCMP and local towing companies to facilitate the removal of abandoned vehicles in the right-of-way as quickly as possible.
- Our highway crews have also been tasked with the identification of abandoned vehicles so that removal can be actioned quickly.
- Towing companies are selected based on their proximity to the abandoned vehicle, the services that each company can provide and their respective availability.
- In some cases, it may take longer for the vehicle to be removed due to tow operator availability and space at secure storage facilities.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Abandoned Vehicles**Highways and
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works is continuously working to improve processes to provide a more efficient and timely removal of abandoned vehicles within the highway right-of-way.

Third response: Removal Process

- To remove abandoned vehicles from the right-of-way, a standard process is followed.
 - First the RCMP, or other designated officers, will investigate reports of abandoned vehicles. Designated officers include Highways and Public Works National Safety Code officers who are also working to address issues with these vehicles.
 - If an abandoned vehicle presents an immediate safety concern, the RCMP or designated officer will order the vehicle towed to a storage facility.
 - If there is no immediate safety concern, the vehicle will be towed when there is a tow truck available and stored in a towing facility.
 - Once a vehicle is ordered to be towed, the RCMP or designated officer will notify the Government of Yukon via an abandoned vehicles form.
- The Government of Yukon sends a registered letter to the last registered owner, notifying them that their vehicle has been towed with instructions on how to claim their vehicle.
- Once towed, unclaimed vehicles are stored at towing facilities and may be ordered for disposal after 30 days.

Session Briefing Note
Abandoned Vehicles

- In the event their vehicle has been towed, registered owners are advised that:
 - they are responsible for all costs associated with the towing and storage of the vehicle;
 - vehicles must be removed from the storage facility within 30 days; and,
 - they will be unable to renew any vehicle registration until the debt to government has been paid.
- The Government of Yukon compensates the tow operators for any costs associated with towing, storing and disposing of the vehicle and works to recover these costs from the last registered owner.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The incidence of abandoned vehicles along Yukon highways has been noticed and several letters were received by the department during summer 2023.

Background

- Vehicles must first be reviewed before they are towed to ensure the vehicle is not part of an active investigation nor is stolen.

Approved by:	April 23, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Thaw Slump**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The safety of the travelling public is a priority of the Department of Highways and Public Works. As such, the department is making substantial investments in roads across the territory.
- In 2023, we invested in a section of the Alaska Highway that is facing increasing risk of damage due to permafrost thaw.
- Active thawing permafrost is causing the ground to slump in the Ibex Valley and the slump expanded into the highway right-of-way.
- We are addressing sections of the highway near the Takhini River in the Ibex Valley, approximately 5 kilometres west of, and outside of, Whitehorse city limits.
- The highway is now realigned, away from the active thaw area. The YESAB Recommendation was issued in July 2023. The project was tendered in June 2023, and awarded to Cobalt Construction Inc. on July 23, 2023, for \$3.95 million.
- Construction started early August 2023 and the new alignment for the highway is now open to the travelling public. Minor clean-up work and placement of BST will happen in spring 2024, when weather permits.
- We will work to ensure that this reconstruction project is completed as quickly as possible.

Additional response:

- The permafrost underlying the highway is thawing at an increased rate and has resulted in differential settlements and cracking in several areas that affect highway safety and performance.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Thaw Slump**Highways and
Public Works

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- Highways and Public Works is working in collaboration with Yukon University to develop options to make the highway more resilient against future climate impacts.
 - After this project is completed, we will continue to monitor this area for a number of years.

Third response:

- Long tension cracks formed between the thaw slump and the highway, as close as 20 metres from the road embankment.
- The Alaska Highway has now been moved further away from the active thaw slump caused by thawing permafrost that is located between the Takhini River and the existing highway in the vicinity.
- The realignment is to protect highway infrastructure and public safety by increasing the buffer between the active thaw slump and the highway.
- The department has been working with Yukon University to understand thaw slumps and to develop options for mitigation, including installation of ditches, spring water diversion, consolidation of the sediment, and realignment of the highway away from the thaw slump.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of thaw slumps reaching the Alaska Highway has been of media interest in the past, with several articles focusing specifically on this section of road.

Background:

- The thaw slump was first identified in April 2019, and since then it has advanced significantly and is now within the highway right-of-way.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Thaw Slump**Highways and
Public Works

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- Thawing permafrost causes the ground above it to slump, which could cause significant damage to the road surface if corrective actions are not taken.

Approved by:

January 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is making several safety improvements along the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse.
- These improvements include removing uncontrolled highway accesses and installing pedestrian-controlled traffic lights at crossings. This will help increase public safety and reduce the risk of collisions.
- The department has already completed several projects along the Alaska Highway, including:
 - installing a left turn light at the Robert Service Way intersection;
 - major reconstruction at both the South and North Klondike Highway intersections;
 - improvements to the Range Road intersection, including traffic lights with pedestrian-controlled lights and a paved multi-use trail;
 - improvements at the Hillcrest Drive intersection, including acceleration and deceleration lanes and traffic lights;
 - improvements between Hillcrest Drive and Burns Road, including the addition of:
 - streetlights;
 - two crossings with pedestrian-controlled traffic lights;
 - a paved multi-use trail connecting to trails going into downtown; and
 - upgrades to the multi-use trail adjacent to the highway.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and
Public Works

- The department has also begun an in-service road safety review that will identify measures that would improve road safety and operations for all users and support future Alaska Highway planning through Whitehorse.
- Public engagement for these projects happened at various times over the last few years, and included open houses, pop-up information booths, an interactive website, and expert panel discussions.
- In addition, the project team has engaged with First Nations governments and a variety of stakeholder groups, such as the City of Whitehorse community associations and local businesses.

Additional response: Upgrades between Lodestar Lane and the Whitehorse Weigh Station

- The safety upgrades between Lodestar Lane and the Whitehorse weigh station started in 2022 and were completed in July 2023.
- Upgrades included:
 - upgrading the streetlights;
 - creating two lanes on each side with acceleration and deceleration lanes;
 - adding durable, high-visibility road paint markings;
 - building a new multi-use paved trail that is maintained by the City of Whitehorse; and
 - improving access to the Whitehorse weigh station.

Third Response: Upcoming Work – Porter Creek Area

- The Department of Highways and Public Works met with affected businesses and residents in fall 2020 to discuss the plans for this

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and Public Works

project. The project was also opened for public comment on YESAB's project registry site in 2021.

- The department met with the City of Whitehorse and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council in September 2022, to discuss the impacts of the frontage road connecting Birch Street with the Wann Road Intersection and McDonald Road Intersection.
- No significant work will happen at this location before 2025. Letters were sent to residents and businesses in Porter Creek to inform them of the change in the project timeline.
- Before construction proceeds, Highways and Public Works staff will hold information sessions with the Porter Creek community.
- In the meantime, we have advanced work in this area to improve safety, including:
 - installing a new left hand turn traffic signal at the Alaska Highway and Wann Road intersection in November 2022; and,
 - upgrading the crosswalks at Birch Road and 17th Avenue with pedestrian-activated flashing beacons. The project was completed in January 2024.

Fourth Response: Upcoming Work – Robert Service Way Intersection

- We are continuing to plan for the upgrades between Robert Service Way intersection and Philmar RV. This work will include the consolidation of uncontrolled highway accesses and the construction of new frontage roads.
- Two design options for this portion of the project are being considered to determine which option will allow for the safest and most efficient

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and
Public Works

intersection operation, including an option for an improved four-way traffic light intersection or a roundabout.

Fifth Response: Two Mile Hill Intersections

- The City of Whitehorse and Government of Yukon have partnered on the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway, Range Road, Two Mile Hill intersection (HART), upgrades project.
 - This joint initiative is focusing on developing designs that will improve the Hamilton Boulevard and Alaska Highway / Two-Mile-Hill Road and the Range Road / Two-Mile Hill Road intersections with an emphasis on making travelling safer and more efficient for all transportation modes.
 - In June 2023, the City of Whitehorse started the first round of public engagement for the project, which included an online survey that received 455 responses.
 - The proposed intersection designs were shared with the public in April 2024 at the second round of public engagement.
 - Following this, a preferred option will be determined, and a project report will be developed and shared during a third round of engagement, which will include a project information session and a stakeholder workshop.
 - The anticipated timeline to complete the design project is by fall 2024.
 - More information can be found online at engagewhitehorse.ca.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The safety improvements through Whitehorse will affect many road users.
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Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse

Highways and Public Works

Background:

Robert Service Way Intersection

- Highways and Public Works held meetings in 2021 with local business owners, adjacent property owners and the City of Whitehorse to share conceptual designs.
- The Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board has completed its review and issued their recommendations. The Yukon government issued the decision document. The water licence and DFO Letter of advice have been issued for this project. The initial desktop heritage assessment and detailed heritage assessment have been completed.
- Based on comments received, the department is reviewing design options that would best address public concerns, while still upholding highway safety priorities and limiting environmental impacts to McLean Lake Creek.
- The final design plans will be communicated to the public once they are complete.

Porter Creek

- Public notification of the proposed intersection modifications and lane configurations occurred in fall 2020.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Big Creek Bridge Replacement**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Big Creek Bridge is located approximately 65 kilometres west of Watson Lake on the Alaska Highway and is an important part of Yukon's transportation network.
- In 2020, the tender to construct a replacement bridge was awarded to Julmac Contracting Ltd. and the original planned completion was in 2022.
- However, in 2022 defects within the concrete deck were discovered during inspections of the new bridge.
- The contract with Julmac Contracting was terminated in May 2023, on the basis of a breach of contract.
- On August 11, 2023, Julmac Contracting Ltd. Filed a Statement of Claim with the Yukon Supreme Court.
- The Government of Yukon has counterclaimed for the as-yet-undetermined costs to complete the project and repair the deficient work.
- Legal proceedings are continuing, and we will be looking to recover the costs of fixing the deficient work through the litigation process.
- Because the matter is now before the courts, further comment would not be appropriate.

Additional response: Work for 2024

- In 2023, we worked with the project engineer to perform a full assessment of the bridge. The assessment provides details of what additional work is required to allow the bridge to be open for public use.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Big Creek Bridge Replacement**Highways and
Public Works

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- The Government of Yukon is planning to complete the Big Creek Bridge project in 2024.
 - To procure a contractor to repair the bridge's concrete deck and complete the outstanding bridge work a Request for Qualifications closed on March 25.
 - The next step is the Request for Bids.
 - Road work will also be conducted this summer and include excavation, ditching, construction of sub-base and base coarse aggregates, supply and installation of a structural plate corrugated steel pipe, paving, supply and installation of guiderails and demolition of the existing bridge.
 - We anticipate the work on the bridge will start in June and be completed before the end of the construction season.
 - Because we are in the process of tendering, we cannot give an estimate of the costs so as to not influence the bidding processes.
 - Until the new bridge is ready, we will continue to perform regular maintenance and inspections of the existing bridge to verify that it remains safe for the travelling public.

Additional response: Exclusion of Contractors

- The Big Creek Bridge is a critical piece of infrastructure for the Yukon as it connects the Alaska Highway to Northern BC and the rest of Canada.
- The contract with Julmac Contracting Ltd. was terminated due to poor performance.
- As we go forward, we are taking into account prior performance and deficiencies on the past Big Creek project.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Big Creek Bridge Replacement**Highways and
Public Works

-
- The live procurement is underway, and the department is managing the process in accordance with our policies.
 - One of the purposes of Yukon's procurement system is to procure services using public money, efficiently, economically, effectively, and in a fiscally responsible manner.

Fourth response: Big Creek Bridge Accident in February

- On Sunday February 11, 2024, at 9 am, a vehicle struck the Big Creek Bridge.
- There were no reported injuries and the road remained open to one-lane traffic.
- The bridge was fully assessed for damage and deemed safe for travel with speed restrictions.
- Those travelling in the area should be prepared to slow down to 40 kilometres per hour and drive to the weather conditions.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions may be raised about what progress has been made on the bridge and when the bridge replacement will be completed.

Background:

- The project to replace the existing bridge started in 2020.
- The Yukon government paid approximately \$6,000,000 to Julmac.
- Payment of subcontractors is generally a private commercial matter between the general contractor and subcontractor as per their individual subcontracts.
- In the event of a subcontractor claim, the process is administered by the Department of Highways and Public Works' Procurement Support Centre and the Department of Justice. This process and its requirements are laid out in the Contract and Procurement Regulation.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Big Creek Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

- For the procurement to complete the project, language is included in the tenders to restrict parties that previously performed deficient work from bidding.
- As this project is fully funded by the Yukon government, there are no applicable federal recoveries.

List of projects awarded to Cobalt in the last four years:

- 2024 Contract:
 - Highway Construction km 542.3 to km 558.6 Klondike Highway #2, awarded for \$28.94 million.
- 2023 Contracts:
 - Highway Realignment km 1455.4 to km 1457.1, Settlement Rehabilitation at km 1446.5 and Culvert Replacement at km 1444.8 of Alaska Highway #1, awarded for \$3.95 million.
 - Culvert replacements and road construction, km 371.7 Klondike Highway, awarded for \$0.95million.
- 2022 Contracts:
 - Dawson Ice crossing Construction, awarded at \$265,000.
 - Highway Right of Way Vegetation Control Carmacks and Pelly Crossing Areas km 388.0 to km 468.0 Klondike Highway #2, awarded at \$4.01million.
 - Highway Construction, km 1419.6 to km 1422.1, Alaska Highway #1, awarded at \$6.88million.
 - Highway Construction km 613.3 to km 623.4 and km 632.1 to km 636.4, Klondike Highway #2, awarded at \$8.67million.
- 2021 Contracts:
 - Dawson Ice Crossing Construction, awarded for \$198,422.00.
 - Klondike Highway Pit Clearing at km 414, 431, 508, 518, and 529, awarded for \$494,850.00.
 - Roadway Restoration at Various Locations on the Alaska Highway, awarded for \$365,507.88.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Big Creek Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

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- o Highway Construction, km 616.3 to 618.9 Klondike Highway, awarded for \$2.18million.
 - o Roadside barrier, various locations, Yukon, awarded for \$388,200.00.
 - Total of past four years: \$57.3 million

Approved by:

May 1, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Roadway Safety Improvement Program

- The safety of the travelling public is a priority of the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- Throughout the year our crews are out brushing, improving lane markings, removing hazards in the right-of-way, and installing and maintaining roadside barriers.
- Since 2019, under the Roadway Safety Improvement Program, the department has installed over 9 kilometres of new barriers, painted over 3,000 kilometres of highway lines, and cleared approximately 3,400 kilometres of vegetation in the right-of-way.

Additional response: Wildlife considerations

- Wildlife interactions represent a real danger for drivers in the Yukon.
- Frequent brushing allows drivers to better see wildlife and prevent collisions.
- Vegetation Control also helps keep signs visible, decreases snow accumulation and drifting snow on the road, and improves roadway drainage.

Third response: Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

- The Government of Yukon put out a Request for Qualifications in 2022 for contractors interested in bidding on vegetation control tenders to establish a Qualified Source List of pre-vetted contractors.
- The RFQ was re-released for an annual onboarding process during the month of February. This year eight proponents applied and are now being evaluated to be added to the existing list of 26.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Brushing and Roadway Safety
Improvements**Highways and
Public Works

- We will tender for a new multiyear RFQ this fall.
- The Request for Qualifications is a more efficient way to quickly and effectively tender contracts.
- The Government of Yukon awarded \$3.3 million in vegetation control contracts in 2023 to clear 940 kilometres of vegetation.
- The total length of completed clearing in 2023 was 258.6 kilometres of brushing, and 515.3 kilometres of mowing. There is one 30-kilometre winter project on the Klondike Highway between the Dempster Highway junction and Dawson City that was completed in March 2024.
- Depending on size, projects are offered by direct award, invitational, or open tenders to the full list of qualified companies.

Fourth response: Engagement and online portal

- Prior to each field season, letters are sent to property owners who live close to planned projects to inform them of upcoming brushing and mowing work.
- The letters direct owners to an online platform that outlines the locations where vegetation control is anticipated to be taking place, share the specifications of planned vegetation control and explain the benefits.
- The online platform is live, and letters were sent to property owners on April 5.

Fifth response: Judas Creek vegetation control

- A meeting was held on January 11, 2023, between Highways and Public Works and the Marsh Lake Local Area Council.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements**Highways and
Public Works

- Due to public concerns and snow conditions, work in the area was paused.
- The Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council is meeting with Wildland Fire Management in April to discuss scope options based on fire risk. The scope of the work will be finalized after this meeting. The Judas Creek brushing is planned to take place in 2024.

Sixth response: Barrier program increase

- Roadside barriers are an important safety feature along our roads.
- Starting in 2021, Highways and Public Works increased the spending for roadside barriers to \$800,000 per year.
- An information session was held on February 23, 2023, to inform the contracting community of this opportunity and seek feedback on tendering options.
- The session was attended by approximately 20 contractors, and a total of 25 contractors requested more information on the program. The session led to 7 bids on a Request for Bids tendering process.
- In 2023, 1.3 kilometres of barriers were completely replaced and four had partial replacement work completed, meeting the total annual budget for the program.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is often public interest in brushing in the right-of-way.
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Background:

Roadway safety improvement

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements

Highways and Public Works

- In 2018, Yukon's primary highways were assessed for vehicle hazards. This assessment led to the development of a Yukon Roadside Barrier Guideline, which includes a system to identify hazards across the highway network.
- The Roadway Safety Improvement Program will schedule maintenance using the Highway Classification Framework. This framework classifies Yukon highways based on traffic volumes, type of use and other socioeconomic factors.

Vegetation Control

- Since the beginning of the program in 2019, we have brushed 2,646 kilometres and mowed 1,529 kilometres of vegetation. This totals approximately 4,150 kilometres cleared by the department. Under the new program, we are now clearing approximately 900 kilometres of right-of-way vegetation every year.
- Vegetation control is completed through contracts and through Memoranda of Understanding with First Nations and municipalities.
- Each contract contains detailed specifications for vegetation control that include stem height, clearing widths, steep slopes, riparian zones, inside curves for sight line distance, and salvageable wood, which is available for the public.
- Brushing must meet or exceed specification set out in "*Preventing Wildlife Injuries from Right-of-Way Vegetation Control*." These specifications were recommended by the Yukon Department of Environment, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Southern Lakes Caribou Steering Committee.

Approved by:

April 8, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City Ice Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon understands the importance of the ice bridge to Dawson residents and continues to monitor the status of the Yukon River.
- This past winter has proven challenging for the residents of West Dawson as the ice has not formed to a thickness that is safe enough for the construction of an ice bridge.
- The safety of Dawson City residents and the travelling public is our government's priority when considering the timing and construction of the ice bridge.
- In 2011 the Transportation Association of Canada released guidelines for the construction and operation of winter roads. The Yukon government participated in developing these guidelines and utilizes them in the construction and operation of the ice bridge.
- The ice bridge is dependent on several environmental factors, including river hydrology, ice conditions, and temperature.
- Typically, each year, the ice bridge opens in December or January, and closes mid-April.
- A tender for ice bridge construction closed in November and was ready to be awarded to the lowest bidder as soon as ice conditions allowed.
- Unfortunately, due to unfavourable conditions this season including fluctuating temperatures, an upstream ice jam, and the persistence of open water, construction of an ice bridge in Dawson City could not proceed.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City Ice Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

- The decision to cancel the ice bridge construction was made following close monitoring of the river by the Department of Highways and Public Works and in consideration of public safety.
- The government understands the importance of the ice bridge for the Dawson community and is actively exploring options to improve its success in future years. A consultant has been hired to examine possible alternative route options in preparation for next winter.

Additional response:

- We recently underwent a series of engagements with Dawson City residents to get more information about their views on the Yukon River crossing and to help inform solutions for a year-round crossing.
- It was clear from the discussions that further, more in-depth engagement with Dawson residents and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government is necessary to ensure that the community's needs will be addressed in our future plans.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The ice bridge is an important transportation route for West Dawson residents in the winter months.

Background:

- Once an ice bridge is constructed and in use, Highways and Public Works staff monitor the condition of the ice bridge to determine when to close and decommission it for the season.
- Light traffic includes vehicles that are up to 5,000kg in weight. Heavy duty vehicles include vehicles up to 40,000kg.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Dawson City Ice Bridge

Highways and
Public Works

- The City of Dawson was without an official ice bridge in the winters of 2016-17 and 2017-18. This was because environmental conditions did not allow for a safe crossing to be constructed.

Past bridge opening and closing dates:

Year	Opening Date	Closing Date
2022-23	Jan 5, 2023 – Light Duty Vehicles (5,000 kg) Feb 2, 2023 – Heavy Duty Vehicles (40,000 kg)	April 20, 2023
2021-22	Dec 13, 2021 – Light Duty Vehicles (5,000 kg) January 8, 2022 – Heavy Duty Vehicles (40,000 kg)	April 20, 2022
2020-21	Dec 14, 2020 – Light Duty Vehicles (5,000 kg) January 6, 2021 – Heavy Duty Vehicles (40,000 kg)	April 15, 2021

Approved by:

March 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****George Black Ferry**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: General

- The George Black Ferry typically operates between mid-May and mid-October, depending on water levels, which must be high enough that the ferry can be safely launched.
- The safety and well-being of Yukoners and visitors is always our first consideration when operating the ferry.
- The crew conducts weekly and annual maintenance on the George Black Ferry to ensure appropriate upkeep is performed and to account for any unforeseen impacts to ferry operations.

Additional response: Expected start for the 2024 season

- Highways and Public Works expects to launch the George Black Ferry around May long weekend. This is dependent on local conditions over the next few weeks.
- Before launching, a significant amount of work is required to prepare for the ferry for the upcoming season. This includes:
 - onboarding ferry staff and providing extensive mandatory training;
 - painting and cleaning the ferry; and
 - ensuring necessary supports are in place.
- Mechanical systems are reviewed and repaired as necessary, and stock inventory is reviewed to ensure essential spare parts are on hand.
- Additionally, the ferry is inspected by Transport Canada to ensure compliance with federal legislation.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****George Black Ferry**Highways and
Public Works

- We are assessing river conditions over the next few weeks to ensure that water levels are high enough, and that there is no risk of major ice impacts.

Additional response: Ferry Refurbishment and Replacement Evaluation

- While regular maintenance is ensuring the George Black Ferry can continue to operate as required, we recognize there is a need to be proactive to ensure continued operation for the next 10-15 years,
- Highways and Public Works has been working to identify and evaluate options for refurbishing or replacing the George Black Ferry.
- Refurbishment would involve installing more modern engines that meet more stringent emissions standards as well as corresponding upgrades to the engine systems.
- Replacement would involve commissioning a newly built ferry that would have more space and load-carrying capability than the current ferry.
- The department is exploring these options and I expect to see a recommendation this spring.

Additional response: Ferry Condition and Service Disruption Risk Mitigation

- Highways and Public Works has undertaken many activities to keep the George Black Ferry in the best condition possible to continue to provide river-crossing services in Dawson City.
- After an inspection in 2022, the engines were rebuilt in April 2023.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****George Black Ferry**Highways and
Public Works

- A lightship survey, which involves measuring the performance of the ferry while in the water, was completed in the fall 2023 and the ferry passed inspection.
- To mitigate against the risk of service disruption from a mechanical failure, Highways and Public Works maintains a supply of critical spare parts in Dawson City.
- This supply includes spare drivetrain parts like propellers and propeller shafts, couplings, and marine gears.

Additional response: Ferry Dimensions

- Full outside width of the ferry is 7.42 metres or 24 feet which measures the vessels' beam at its widest point.
- The width limit for loading is 5 metres or 16 feet.
- Deck space of the ferry is 25 by 5 metres or 125 metres square.
- The ferry can hold a maximum of 75 passengers, including 4 crew members.
- The ferry weights 33.6 tonnes.
- The vehicle capacity is dependent on size and weight of vehicles.
- The total vessel length is 25.3 metres or 83 feet.

Additional response: Statistics

- The crossing takes about 10 minutes, excluding wait times.
- Approximately 60,000-70,000 vehicles cross each season.
- During peak operating times the ferry may see an average of 1,208 passengers per day.

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SPRING 2024

George Black Ferry

Highways and
Public Works

- Routine condition inspections are conducted on the ferry.
- The latest inspection determined that overall, the hull is in good shape. Hull strengthening is completed based on inspection recommendations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The George Black Ferry is an important part of our transportation network.
- On April 25, it was announced that the border crossing at the Top of the World Highway would open on May 17 rather than on June 1.

Background:

- The ferry is over 50 years old and was transferred to the Government of Yukon by the federal government.
- Recent inspections indicate that it will need to be replaced in the next 15 years.
- The ferry can haul about 143 thousand pounds, is 83 feet long and 17 feet wide.
- In July 2022, the ferry was on a reduced schedule for one day due to staffing issues and in August 2022, ferry operations were temporarily halted due to a mechanical issue with the propeller and shaft.
- Our crews worked quickly to have the ferry operational within five days.
- During the service outage in summer 2022, the department was able to contract with a tourism operator to provide passenger service only across the river.
- During the 2023 season, the ferry ran well and there were no long stoppages in service.

Approved by:

April 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City Yukon River Crossing**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended Response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works empathizes with residents of West Dawson as they face seasonal challenges and uncertainty related to the crossing the Yukon River in winter.
- Conditions have, unfortunately, not materialized as they have in prior years to allow the construction of a sanctioned and safe bridge for light duty traffic.
- While the department had prepared to have a crossing constructed by securing engineers to design and issuing an RFP for construction, environmental factors, including water flows have not allowed this to happen.
- The department provides transportation across the Yukon River in Dawson City by operating the Geroge Black ferry during the summer months and constructing an ice bridge in the winter.
- The department is assessing potential options for the Dawson City Yukon River crossing over the long-term given the uncertainty around construction of an ice bridge over the past several years.
- In summer 2023, department officials met with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Dawson City residents to hear about their views on the crossing.
- Feedback on a crossing option is mixed and helps to guide discussions on what options may be feasible.
- Our government will continue to engage with Dawson City residents and businesses to identify plans for the future of the river crossing.
- This is why there is no reference to a bridge in Dawson City in any of the Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plans.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City Yukon River Crossing**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response: Prime Minister's Remarks

- In February 2024, the Prime Minister made reference to funding earmarked for a bridge in Dawson during question period.
- The Prime Minister's office later issued a statement clarifying that the funding had been reallocated for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project as it was in urgent need of replacement.
- The Government of Yukon's Department of Highways and Public Works continues to work with Transport Canada to ensure the Prime Minister's Office has the most up-to-date information on the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project and other Yukon-based infrastructure projects moving forward.
- In 2021, the department's application for funding was approved under the National Trade Corridors Fund for Phase 2 of the North Klondike Highway Reconstruction Project, which included the potential construction of a new bridge in Dawson City and an additional 110 kilometres of highway reconstruction.
- This Phase 2 project would build on the critical highway and bridge upgrades that are part of the ongoing North Klondike Highway Reconstruction Project originally approved by National Trade Corridors Fund in 2019.
- In 2022, Yukon requested that the National Trade Corridors Fund funding secured for the Yukon River bridge be instead allocated to the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project.
- This scope change was approved by Federal Minister Alghabra in June 2022 and formalized in updated agreements:
 - for the North Klondike Highway in May 2023; and

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dawson City Yukon River Crossing**Highways and
Public Works

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- for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge in September 2023.
 - The Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a valuable link along our busiest trade route, the benefits of which are seen by all Yukoners.

Additional response: 2023 Public Engagement

- Given the impacts of climate change along the Yukon River, we proactively started discussions with the residents of Dawson City on the future of the river crossing.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief and Council met in September 2022 to begin discussions on community engagement and the future of the river crossing in Dawson.
- On March 15, 2023, department staff travelled to Dawson City. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders Council hosted and invited Highways and Public Works to attend an engagement session with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Citizens.
- On March 16, 2023, Highways and Public Works hosted two engagement sessions for Dawson City residents.
- These sessions focused on what is important to residents when planning for the future of the crossing.
- The sessions were well attended, and we received a lot of helpful feedback from residents.
 - 462 Dawson City residents responded to the public survey and approximately 120 residents attended the open house sessions.
- A follow-up survey was sent to Dawson City residents in June 2023 to request further feedback.

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Dawson City Yukon River Crossing

Highways and
Public Works

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- A What We Heard report was shared with the public on Friday January 12, 2024.
 - The report provides valuable feedback that will serve as a resource for Government of Yukon staff and guide discussions on the future of the Yukon River crossing in Dawson.
 - Many Dawson residents had ideas for what the future of the crossing could look like. Ideas included: a vehicle bridge, a pedestrian bridge, an energy-efficient ferry, a cable car, and a gondola.
 - Department officials will be meeting with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief and Council **this spring** to discuss the findings in the report.

Additional response: River Crossing Alternatives

- The department has heard and evaluated many ideas for river crossing alternatives to the ferry and ice bridge, including through the Dawson City Yukon River crossing public engagement conducted in 2023. Some of these options include a gondola, an icebreaker ferry, and a tunnel under the river.
- We are continuing to evaluate potential alternative options for the Dawson City Yukon River crossing. No decisions have been made at this point.

Additional response: Seasonal Gaps in Service

- Currently, Yukoners rely on the George Black Ferry and the ice bridge to cross the Yukon River in Dawson City.
- The George Black Ferry typically operates between May and October. Ice bridge construction usually begins in mid-December, but timing is dependent on conditions.

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Dawson City Yukon River Crossing

Highways and
Public Works

- This means that twice a year there are gaps in service in the spring from mid-April to mid-May and in the fall from mid-October to mid-December.
- The gap in service, climate impacts, and understanding the needs of the community are the reasons we engaged with the residents of Dawson about the crossing.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Options for crossing the Yukon River in Dawson are being considered.

Background:

- In the winter of 2013-14, an alternate route for the ice bridge was necessary because the ice conditions did not allow it to be built at the usual location.
- In the winters of 2016-17 and 2017-18, the City of Dawson was without an official ice bridge due to a number of factors, including water levels and speed of flow, ice conditions and air and water temperatures.
- In the winter of 2023-24, the City of Dawson was without an official ice bridge.

Approved by:

May 2, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dempster Highway**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Dempster Highway is Canada's only all-season public road to cross the Arctic Circle. Starting near Dawson City, this 740-kilometre unpaved two-lane highway traverses northern Yukon all the way to Inuvik, Northwest Territories. 465 kilometres of the highway is in the Yukon.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is responsible for maintaining the Dempster Highway between the North Klondike Highway and the Yukon-Northwest Territories border.
- We prioritize the safety of travellers and continuously monitor the Yukon's highway network for potential risks and road safety hazards.
- Throughout the year our crews are out maintaining the highway daily, plowing, grading, blowing snow and fixing issues as they arise.

Additional response:

- The Dempster Highway sees shifting weather patterns that can pose a safety risk to drivers.
- Snow, rain, freezing rain, and major temperature fluctuations can make the highway conditions challenging.
- Between March 8 and March 15, the Dempster Highway was under a blizzard warning with extremely high winds and was closed due to an accumulation of blowing snow, and extremely icy sections.
- Our highways crews worked long hours to open the road and during the evening of March 15, five trucks were able to pass through before the highway closed again.
- The road opened again on the evening of March 18.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dempster Highway**Highways and
Public Works

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- I appreciate the staff who work long hours doing all that they can to reopen the road.
 - Highways and Public Works officials have been in contact with NWT throughout the closure to help keep travellers informed.
 - We urge all drivers to use caution when travelling along the Dempster Highway, to drive to the current road conditions, and to check 511 Yukon for the latest updates.

Third response: Engagement with the Government of NWT

- The Government of Yukon is actively engaged with the Government of Northwest Territories to find ways we can improve the Dempster Highway in the future.
- The Government of Northwest Territories has expressed interest in co-developing a functional plan, in collaboration with Highways and Public Works, for the section of the Dempster Highway that lies within the Northwest Territories. The purpose of the plan is to guide investments on this section of the highway.
- We have agreed to share planning, engineering and climate data related to the Dempster Highway and to work collaboratively with the Government of Northwest Territories to support this initiative.
- Once the plan is complete, we may submit a joint application to the federal government to support upgrades to the Dempster Highway over the next 10 to 20 years.

Fourth response: Road Washout

- In May 2023, there was a highway washout at kilometre 238 near the Oglivie River that required repairs, resulting in a highway closure lasting for several days.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Dempster Highway**Highways and
Public Works

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- During the 2023 construction season, gravel resurfacing on sections of the highway between Ogilvie and Eagle Plains was completed.
 - The department has applied to the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund to upgrade the highway to help mitigate flooding and is expecting a response this spring. If the application is successful, work would be conducted over a 7-year period.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Dempster Highway is part of the Yukon's transportation system and a critical link to the Northwest Territories.
-

Background:

- The Government of Northwest Territories operates ferries at the Peel and Mackenzie rivers, with ice bridges used in the winter.
- The Yukon section of the highway is supported by three grader stations located at Ogilvie, Klondike and Eagle Plains.
- The southern section of highway up to Tombstone Territorial Park receives moderate traffic volumes, about 80 vehicles a day, compared to the northern part of the highway, which receives about 50 vehicles a day.
- While traffic volumes for the 300-plus kilometres of the highway north of Tombstone are not significant, Highways and Public Works maintains this section of the highway to a set standard.
- The development of the Highway Infrastructure Improvement Plan for the Yukon portion of the Dempster Highway began in January 2024. It is planned to be completed in the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- The project team plans to work with the Northwest Territories on building this plan once the tender for the Eagle Bridge River rehabilitation is awarded. The tender is set to close on March 21, 2024.

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Dempster Highway

Highways and
Public Works

- The route roughly follows the traditional dog sled route from Dawson City to Fort McPherson.

Rock River, Yukon Weather Report from March 17

-25 (-25.2)	E 79 gusts 104	-46
-25 (-25.4)	E 79 gusts 103	-46
-26 (-25.6)	ENE 90 gusts 110	-47
-26 (-25.6)	ENE 88 gusts 110	-47
-26 (-25.8)	ENE 98 gusts 115	-48
-26 (-26.2)	ENE 89 gusts 112	-48
-26 (-26.3)	ENE 80 gusts 104	-47
-26 (-26.1)	ENE 92 gusts 119	-48
-26 (-26.2)	E 97 gusts 112	-48
-27 (-26.5)	E 93 gusts 116	-49
-27 (-26.6)	ENE 93 gusts 119	-49
-26 (-26.4)	E 91 gusts 114	-48
-26 (-26.4)	ENE 80 gusts 107	-47
-26 (-26.4)	E 77 gusts 100	-47
-27 (-26.5)	E 79 gusts 104	-47
-27 (-26.7) ↓	E 88 gusts 119	-48
-27 (-26.6)	E 73 gusts 106	-47
-26 (-25.8)	E 90 gusts 110	-47
-26 (-25.8)	E 82 gusts 106	-47
-26 (-26.2)	E 63 gusts 92	-45
-25 (-24.8)	ENE 58 gusts 92	-43

Approved by:

March 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Wait periods for Commercial and Class 5 Drivers Licence Road Tests**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Yukoners seeking any class of driver's licence must apply for and pass a written test, as well as a road test.
- Licence Classes 1 to 4 require a medical examination certificate in addition to a written and road test.
- We are currently experiencing a spring surge in demand for commercial licences and as a result, testing wait times for Class 1 to 4 licences are approximately 8 to 9 weeks at this time.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is working closely with industry to expedite road tests for their employees, to help meet their business needs.
- In April, 203 road tests were conducted, 55 of which were in the communities.
- The department is fully staffed with two Yukon examiners working full-time to perform tests for Class 5 and commercial licences.
- Additionally, the department has auxiliary on-call staff for conducting testing in communities.

Additional response: Class 5 Delays

- Reducing wait times is something the department is working hard to achieve.
- Wait times for Class 5 licences are currently approximately 8-9 weeks as well.
- We expect our wait times will decrease when the current surge in requests lessens.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Wait periods for Commercial and Class 5 Drivers Licence Road Tests**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response: Commercial licences for tourism operators

- The department is working with the tourism industry to explore initiatives to make it easier for tourism operators to secure licences. These include:
 - The redeployment of community driver examiners to communities of greatest need; and,
 - Increasing communications to the tourism industry on when examiners are in the communities.

Additional response: Medical examination certificates

- Under the *Yukon Motor Vehicles Regulations*, applicants for class 1 to class 4 commercial licences must file a medical examination certificate at the time of their application.
- The medical examination certificate must have been completed within 180 days of the date of filing their application.
- The Yukon Motor Vehicles Office will accept medical examination certificates from any jurisdiction within Canada or the United States, so long as the medical examination certificate meets the driver and fitness standards established by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators.
- This allows individuals to complete these medical exams prior to leaving their home jurisdiction if they so choose.

Additional response: Reciprocal Agreements

- The Government of Yukon has agreements in place with other Canadian jurisdictions and the United States that allow drivers with

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SPRING 2024

Wait periods for Commercial and Class 5 Drivers Licence Road Tests

Highways and Public Works

existing class 1 to 6 licences, to exchange their licences for an equivalent Yukon driver's licence without further testing.

- At the time of exchange, applicants are provided with a Yukon driver's licence and a new expiry date of up to five years without the typical testing requirements.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There have been concerns around the lack of recognition of out-of-country Class 4 licences or their equivalent, medical exams, and the need to hire additional licensing examiners.

Background:

- The Yukon has seen a decrease in medical providers in the last few years that continues to be a compounding factor in delays to obtaining a Yukon class 1 to 4 driver's licence.
- In October 2022, the Yukon government entered into a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Yukon Medical Association to support existing physicians and to attract new physicians to the Yukon, and to increase access to primary care for Yukoners.
- Medical exams for driver's licences are not an insured service under the Yukon Health Insurance Coverage Plan.

Approved by:

May 2, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Digital Highway Signs**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Digital message signs are found along the Yukon's highways to advise travellers of road hazards, closures and construction activities.
- There are 53 digital message signs in use across the territory including:
 - 20 fixed signs, including the four cantilevered boards along the Alaska Highway near Whitehorse;
 - 27 portable message boards; and
 - 6 portable message boards that are primarily used for speed display feedback for drivers.
- The operational guidelines for the message signs are based on the *Transportation Association of Canada's Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada* and help determine what messages are displayed.
- Factors that affect the length and content of messages on digital signs include:
 - appropriate reading time for drivers passing signs based on the posted speed limit;
 - legibility and font size;
 - the number of characters that can be displayed based on font size; and
 - duration of display time for multi-screen messages.
- When there are no adverse conditions to report, the operational guidelines also help staff determine when lower-priority messages, such as public service announcements, should be displayed.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Digital Highway Signs**Highways and
Public Works

Additional Response: Intelligent Transportation System

- The digital message signs are part of the Yukon's Intelligent Transportation System. This system includes other devices along the highway that count traffic and collect road temperature data.
- Highways and Public Works uses this information to inform highway planning and design to improve safety for all road users.
- The 511 Yukon system provides Yukoners with the most up-to-date and accurate road condition information. Any time a digital highway sign displays a message, it is also displayed on 511 Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Travellers may want to know how the digital signs are used and what information they display.

Background: Yukon's Intelligent Transportation Systems

- Investment in the Yukon's Intelligent Transportation System, including digital highway signs, is supported by the federal government's National Trade Corridors Fund. The federal government is contributing \$6.9 million, and the Yukon is contributing \$2.4 million to the system between now and 2028.
- In 2023, there were approximately 1,425 messages displayed across all the fixed digital message signs in the Yukon, including any repeated messages. Of these, 401 were unique messages.
- That total includes the four cantilevered digital message signs near Whitehorse, which on their own displayed 172 unique messages, with a total of 453 messages displayed so far this year.
- In 2022, there were approximately 778 messages displayed across all the fixed digital message signs in the Yukon, including any repeated messages. Of these, 255 were unique messages. The total includes the four cantilevered digital

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Digital Highway Signs

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Public Works

message signs near Whitehorse, which on their own displayed 125 unique messages, with a total of 272 messages used throughout the year.

- The Yukon's Intelligent Transportation System helps the department by collecting, synthesizing, and disseminating traffic data to inform strategic investments in transportation planning.
- The 511 Yukon website provides up-to-date road information, digital highway sign messages and includes functions such as travel planning, a mobile app with a hands-free mode, and customizable real-time notifications.
- Speed radar boards have been deployed along primary highways in communities across the Yukon to provide visual cues for highway speed limit changes to help improve safety in those communities.
- Road Weather Information Systems located throughout the territory provide real-time information of meteorological and road conditions to help inform maintenance response and the Yukon's 511 traveller information system for safe trip planning.
- When there are no traffic or safety messages to display, the digital messages signs can be used for public service announcements. For example, during National Day for Truth and Reconciliation the signs displayed "Every Child Matters", and on Remembrance Day displayed messaging in support of veterans.
- In addition to commemorating important days, we can display general public safety messaging about topics like impaired driving.
- A contractor was needed to repair the northbound overhead digital message board, located south of Whitehorse, at the end of March 2023.

Approved by:

January 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Early Mining Road Opening

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Recommended response:

- Mining is an important economic driver for the territory, and to maximize the short mining season in the Yukon miners prefer early access to their claims.
- In 2023, the Department of Highways and Public Works opened certain roads ahead of schedule so that mining companies could better plan for their seasonal operations.
- The Government of Yukon recognizes the importance of early access to worksites for many in the mining industry which is why we have committed to a planned early season opening again in 2024.
- Opening the roads early allows industry to move materials to their worksites while the ground is still frozen and can take heavy loads.

Additional response:

- While the opening of any road is somewhat dependent on weather conditions, the department is working toward early openings.
- In fact, early road opening work began on February 22 this year, on the Hunker Bonanza loop, including Dominion Flats.
- As conditions allow, we will continue to open Quartz Road, followed by Upper Bonanza and Bonanza road, Clear Creek road and the Top of the World Highway.
- We are opening a detour from Hunker Creek Summit to All Gold road, Clinton Creek road, as well as 60 Mile.
- Beginning on March 11, we also began early road openings on the Freegold Road.

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Early Mining Road Opening

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- It does take time to open the roads, often days or weeks if it is a long road.
- Once the roads are open, regular maintenance occurs between May and October annually.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The mining industry is very interested in the department opening mining roads early.

Background:

- On March 10, 2023, the department opened the Hunker Loop, which includes Bonanza Creek and Hunker Creek Roads.
- On March 17, 2023, the department opened the Top of the World Highway.
- The crew continued clearing and maintenance on the Top of the World Highway to Sixty Mile in April.
- Specific dates are dependent on several uncontrolled variables including winter conditions, snowpack, and ground water. A date is communicated to Klondike Placer Miner’s Association each year as far in advance as possible to help with their planning.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 4, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: General program overview

- The Government of Yukon is committed to supporting critical mineral exploration and development in the Yukon.
- Improving infrastructure to Yukon's most mineral-rich areas will set us on course for a more prosperous future.
- The Yukon Resource Gateway Program has several infrastructure projects that take multiple years to go through various stages of planning, design, assessment, procurement and construction.
- Early project planning includes:
 - heritage assessments;
 - environmental baseline studies;
 - environmental assessment; and
 - planning for granular sources.
- All necessary to advance a project to procurement and construction phases.
- In the upcoming year, in collaboration with the First Nations in whose traditional territory the projects are planned, we aim to tender work for the Robert Campbell Highway and begin design work on the Silver Trail.

Additional response:

- Over the next year, the department will be focused on preparing for construction on the Silver Trail and the section of the Robert Campbell Highway between Ross River and Faro.

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Public Works

- In addition, preparation work is taking place to allow for the environmental assessment of the Robert Campbell Highway component, which runs just past the Tuchitua River Bridge to the Frances Lake campground, from kilometre 114 to kilometre 171.
- Simultaneously, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is working to advance the completion of a project agreement with Selkirk First Nation for the Freegold Road Phase 2 improvements.

Additional response: Program structure

- The Government of Yukon has committed to working with Yukon First Nations to build meaningful and collaborative relationships to support the Yukon Resource Gateway Program's success for all parties.
- For each component identified, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources negotiates a project agreement with the affected Yukon First Nation in whose Traditional Territory the project resides.
- These agreements provide a process by which the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments will work collaboratively.
- They also outline how we will structure procurements to align with the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy and to ensure there are benefits for each community.
- Once an agreement is signed, the Department of Highways and Public Works starts implementing the agreement.
- This process involves continued planning and collaboration with the affected Yukon First Nation. It encompasses key steps like project planning and design, YESAB assessment, regulatory review and permitting.

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- Implementation work is crucial. Once the foundational work is complete, project procurement and construction can begin.

Additional response: Yukon First Nations involvement

- The Government of Yukon is working in collaboration with Yukon First Nation governments to seek input and finalize Project Agreements for components of the Yukon Resource Gateway Program within their respective Traditional Territories.
- Six Project Agreements have been signed with Yukon First Nations for seven components to date.
- The program will provide opportunities to Yukon First Nations through short and long-term employment opportunities, training, and benefit agreements.

Additional response: Funding

- The Government of Yukon worked to increase the flexibility of the Gateway funding program with the Government of Canada. The funding program now includes additional flexibility to focus on projects that First Nations and communities have requested.
- This flexibility allowed us to include additional road components on the Silver Trail, North Canol, and sections of the Robert Campbell Highway.
- A Contribution Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada resulted in the Yukon Resource Gateway Program's completion date being extended from 2025 to March 2031.
- The program budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year is approximately 4.2 million and if project agreements are reached, spending is expected to

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increase in 2025-26 to 14.5 million and continue to grow in following years as construction advances.

Recommended response: Carmacks Bypass

- The Carmacks Bypass officially opened on Friday October 27, 2023. This project is the first to be completed under the Yukon Resource Gateway Program and is jointly funded by the Government of Canada.
- The new road connects the existing Freegold Road with the Klondike Highway.
- The project was a collaborative effort between Pelly Construction, the Yukon government and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation.
- Pelly Construction was awarded the \$29.6 million contract to construct the new road and bridge on November 3, 2021.
- The project was successfully finished a year in advance of the designated timeframe and within budget.

Additional response:

- In the spring of 2019, a Project Agreement for the Carmacks Bypass component was signed with Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation.
- This contract had specific commitments for total labour hours to be done by First Nations persons. I'm happy to report that the total labour hours performed by Yukon First Nations persons was 99,175 – three per cent more than the labour hour commitment made at the time of bid submission by the contractor.
- The construction of the new road and bridge allows industrial vehicles to bypass the community of Carmacks, creating a safer flow of traffic for residents.

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Public Works

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- The Carmacks Bypass will provide improved access to mining activities while enabling the Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation to benefit from contracting, education and training associated with the project.

Recommended response: Robert Campbell Highway km 354.9 to km 414.4 (Ross River to Faro)

- In April 2020, a Project Agreement for this component of the Robert Campbell Highway was signed for two projects within the traditional territory the Ross River Dena Council. The Project Agreement is for:
 - construction and resurfacing of the Robert Campbell Highway from kilometre 354.9 to kilometre 414.4; and,
 - bridge replacements, line of sight improvements and brush clearing on the North Canol Road.
- The department is working with Ross River Dena Council to advance the Robert Campbell Highway component of the project.
- Right-of-way clearing contracts have been awarded for this component of the Robert Campbell Highway. This was a direct award contract to a Ross River Dena Council citizen-owned company. This portion of clearing work has been completed.
- The YESAB assessment is complete and permitting is in place for a portion of the project near Ross River at kilometre 363.6 to kilometre 367.5, which will allow work to proceed for this section of the component.
- In 2023, the Yukon government continued to work with Ross River Dena Council to implement the Project Agreement and determine the next steps of this project together.

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- The aim is to tender work to advance the construction of this 4-kilometre component this year.

Recommended response: Silver Trail

- A Project Agreement for the Silver Trail component was signed with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun in February 2021.
- The Silver Trail component includes rehabilitation of the Mayo River bridge as well as road reconstruction and spot repairs from kilometre 0 to kilometre 110 between Stewart Crossing and Keno City.
- In the coming year, the department will be advancing the implementation of the agreement with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, with design and assessment activities planned to occur in 2024-25.
- Officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works are working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun through an implementation committee and are meeting monthly.

Recommended response: Robert Campbell Highway km 114 to km 171

- In June 2020, a Project Agreement was signed with the Liard First Nation for this section of the Robert Campbell Highway.
- This project, which runs from just past the Tuchitua River Bridge to the Frances Lake campground at kilometre 114 to kilometre 171, includes road reconstruction and sight-line improvements. It has an estimated capital construction cost of \$50 million.
- In 2022, we worked to develop the environmental baseline work plan and anticipate entering into a funding contribution with Liard First

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Public Works

Nation later this year. Additionally, we underwent preliminary project planning and developed the scope of work.

- The department is making progress on identification of granular resources, developing the work plan for the environmental assessment processes, as well as planning further phases of the project.
- Officials have been in regular contact with Liard First Nation on this component.

Recommended response: Freegold Road Phase II

- In October 2020, a Project Agreement with Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation for the Freegold Road Phase II component was signed.
- The Freegold Road Phase II component includes replacement of three bridges, which will replace aging infrastructure and ensure trucks carrying heavy loads are able to safely make it down the Freegold Road.
- Two of these bridges are in an area where the Traditional Territories of Selkirk First Nation and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation overlap.
- As such, a Project Agreement with Selkirk First Nation is required, and discussions are being led by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Recommended response: Nahanni Range Road Phase 1

- In January 2020, a Project Agreement with Liard First Nation was signed for the first phase of the Nahanni Range Road component.
- This work includes identifying clearing and brushing work, completing the draft environmental assessment, project planning and design work.

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- Clearing of the right-of-way to improve sight-lines began in 2020, with two direct-award contracts to First Kaska Limited, and work has continued with two additional contracts awarded in fall 2023.
- The Government of Yukon and the Liard First Nation entered into an additional agreement to provide heavy equipment operator training for Liard First Nation citizens.
- This training was completed in November 2021, and successfully certified eight Liard First Nation citizens. The training objective is to help increase the capacity for the Liard First Nation to participate in road construction projects in the future.
- Environmental baseline information for this project will be collected in collaboration with the Liard First Nation.
- We continue to engage on this project through the Yukon Resource Gateway Project Committee, which includes Liard First Nation and Yukon government representatives.

Recommended response: North Canol Phase 1

- In April 2020, a Project Agreement was signed with the Ross River Dena Council for the North Canol component of the Yukon Resource Gateway Program.
- This project includes bridge replacements, sight line improvements and vegetation clearing on the North Canol Road.
- We are working with Ross River Dena Council on advancing the agreement.

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- Officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works met with the Chief of Ross River Dena Council on January 26, 2024, to discuss the Gateway projects.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon Resource Gateway Program includes several high-profile projects with multiple stakeholders and First Nations involvement.

Background:

First Nation Involvement

- Implementation of Project Agreements is happening between the department's Major Programs Unit and the Yukon First Nations with Project Agreements.
- The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is leading the Project Agreement negotiations with Selkirk First Nation for the Freegold Road component. However, the Department of Highways and Public Works is involved in these discussions.
- Federal government support has been confirmed through the Contribution Agreement with the Government of Canada.

Robert Campbell Highway km 354.9 to km 414.4 Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timelines
Robert Campbell Highway km 354.9 to km 414.4 Project Agreement Implementation in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council	Ongoing
Design (km 363.6 to km 367.5)	Spring 2020 – Complete
YESAB Submission (km 363.6 to km 367.5)	Fall 2020 – Complete
Construction (right-of-way clearing) (km 363.6 to km 367.5)	Fall 2020 – Complete
Procurement (km 363.6 to km 367.5)	Anticipated in 2024. To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council.

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Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

Highways and Public Works

Construction (km 363.6 to km 367.5)	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council.
Silver Trail Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timelines
Silver Trail Project Agreement Implementation in collaboration with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun	Ongoing
Design, planning and assessment - first projects	2024-25
Construction of Silver Trail - first projects	2026-27
Robert Campbell Highway km 114 to km 171 Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timelines
Robert Campbell Highway km 114 to km 171 Project Agreement Implementation in collaboration with Liard First Nation	Ongoing
Preliminary Design	2021
YESAB Submission	To be determined in collaboration with Liard First Nation. Anticipate by fall 2025.
Procurement – sub project	2025
Construction of Robert Campbell Highway km 114 to km 171 – sub project	2026
Freegold Road Phase II	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timelines
A Project Agreement with Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation for the Freegold Road Phase II component was signed.	Fall 2020
Project Agreement negotiations are ongoing with Selkirk First Nation, led by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.	Ongoing

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Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

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Nahanni Range Road Phase 1 Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timeline
Nahanni Range Road Phase 1 Project Agreement Implementation in collaboration with Liard First Nation	Ongoing
Construction (right-of-way clearing)	October 2020
YESAB and other regulatory submissions – bridges at km 143 and Upper Frances River	Winter 2024-25
Construction of bridge replacement and rehabilitation	To be determined
North Canol Phase 1 Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timeline
North Canol Phase 1 Project Agreement Implementation in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council	Ongoing
YESAB submission	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dene Council
Procurement	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dene Council
Construction	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dene Council

Approved by:

April 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Highway Safety - 511 Yukon**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- 511 Yukon provides up-to-date road information to help notify drivers about road conditions before they encounter them.
- Information shared on 511 Yukon is based on data from monitoring devices along the highway and highway maintenance staff observations.
- We have 15 Road Weather Information Systems that provide real-time information on weather and road conditions, which informs maintenance response and helps citizens plan safe trips.
- 511 Yukon is updated daily to show road and weather conditions, as well as construction or unplanned incidents.
- The conditions displayed on 511 Yukon may also be coordinated with communications media, such as highway digital messages boards, text alerts and social media, as appropriate.

Additional response: Features of 511 Yukon

- Users can view roadside cameras to see what the road conditions are in real time in many areas of the Yukon, before heading to their destination.
- The 511 Yukon mobile app features a hands-free mode that uses voice recognition and provides important road condition notifications straight to your device. The app also features a drive-mode alert that provides an audio alert of any delays on the road ahead of you.
- Additional features are added to 511 Yukon as they are developed. Recent updates include:

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Highway Safety - 511 Yukon

Highways and
Public Works

- in spring 2022, weight restrictions for highways and bridges were added;
- in December 2023, Yukon’s electric vehicle charging stations were made visible; and,
- in February 2024, Yukon’s highway rest stops were included.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The improved 511 Yukon system is an example of how the government is making online services easier to access for Yukoners. Travellers look to 511 Yukon as a source of accurate and timely information about road conditions when planning their travel through Yukon.

Background:

- In October 2021, Highways and Public Works upgraded the 511 Yukon website and launched a new mobile app. The upgrades make it easier for users to navigate the system and provide more information to motorists.
- The website offers a user-friendly experience, including a Google Maps integrated interface and the ability to create a personal user profile.
- The mobile app can be downloaded for free from the Apple Store or Google Play Store.
- A Privacy Impact Assessment was conducted before 511 Yukon started using roadside camera images and no personal information is collected or provided to law enforcement.

Approved by:

January 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Lewes River Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works has identified opportunities to improve the safety of travellers on the Alaska Highway near the Lewes River Bridge.
- The bridge is located approximately 40 kilometres south of Whitehorse, close to the Marsh Lake Dam.
- The department is aiming to implement a project in 2026-27 that will focus on highway alignment improvements, particularly where there are limited lines of sight for traffic on the bridge and traffic approaching on Lewes Sawmill Road.
- On the west side of the bridge, planned work will include lowering the grade of the hill, adjusting the road alignment, re-locating the Lewes Sawmill Road access to a safer location with proper sight distances, widening the shoulder and installing new bridge approach guiderails.
- On the east side of the bridge, planned work will include relocating the pullout access to a safer location with proper sight distances, adding a right turn lane into the pullout and reducing the grade of the hill to improve sight lines.
- Along with improving the safety of the approaches to the bridge, the department published an RFP in January for engineering services specific to the bridge itself.
- The Request for Proposals is seeking a detailed site inspection of the central pier, followed by the creation of an in-depth repair strategy if needed, corresponding design drawings, supplemented with strategic recommendations.

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Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The bridge is close to the City of Whitehorse and is a critical link along the Alaska Highway.

Background:

- In 2020, a motorcycle rider was killed on the hill west of the Lewes River Bridge.
- Highways and Public Works completed a study in May 2021, to identify opportunities to improve the safety of the Alaska Highway near the Lewes River bridge.
- In 2022, a semi-truck overturned on the Alaska Highway west of the Lewes River Bridge.
- This summer the heritage work will be completed, at which point the YESAB submission will be filed.

Approved by:

February 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024*****Motor Vehicles Act Rewrite***Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works is rewriting the *Motor Vehicles Act* to improve road safety across the Yukon.
- The new, modernized Act will address longstanding safety and administrative issues and fill gaps that have arisen in the time since the existing Act was proclaimed in 1977.
- There are many outstanding issues with the existing Act and Regulations. Updates are required to:
 - improve road user and vehicle safety;
 - accommodate advances in technology;
 - adopt best practices; and
 - ensure consistency with other jurisdictions across Canada.
- Work on the new legislation and its accompanying regulations is ongoing. The goal is to table the revised Act in the fall of 2024 with the accompanying regulations to follow in short order.

Additional response: Stakeholder and public engagement

- Engaging with stakeholders, the public, Indigenous governments and organizations has been an essential part of the policy development process and has informed work on the new Act.
- In 2019, Highways and Public Works completed a public and targeted engagement to collect feedback on key issues.
- Since this engagement, the department has been diligently conducting research and analysis to address policy issues and move the Act forward.

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Motor Vehicles Act Rewrite

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- In summer 2023, there was an additional round of engagement with stakeholders and Indigenous governments to provide an update on the development of the Act and to give another opportunity for feedback.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The rewrite of the Motor Vehicles Act is a mandate letter item.

Background:

- Yukon's Motor Vehicles Act has not been significantly updated since it was first written in the late 1970s.
- This large, complex piece of legislation touches on a wide range of issues important to Yukoners.
- The government is working with stakeholders, municipalities and First Nations to ensure their interests are taken into consideration.

Timeline

- Public engagement took place in 2019, and more than 2,800 responses were received.
- In June 2023, Highways and Public Works conducted additional stakeholder engagement, reaching out to over 60 stakeholders and Indigenous governments and organizations.
- The current timeline is for the Act to be tabled in fall 2024 with the regulations to follow in short order.

Approved by:

January 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Nahanni Range Road
End of Federal Maintenance**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Nahanni Range Road begins at the Robert Campbell Highway and continues to the Northwest Territories, ending at the Cantung Mine.
- 182 kilometres of this road is within the Yukon. The Department of Highways and Public Works is responsible for maintaining the first 134 kilometres as per Schedule 1 of the *Highways Act*.
- Historically, the maintenance of the rest of the road has been funded by the mine's operator.
- In 2015 the mine closed, and the federal government took over responsibility for maintenance beyond kilometre 134.
- On October 1, 2023, the federal government decided to no longer provide resources for road maintenance beyond kilometre 134.

Additional response:

- Highways and Public Works installed signage to advise travellers that the highway is not maintained past kilometre 134 at the Robert Campbell Highway junction and at kilometre 134 itself.
- While the road is not closed, users are reminded that it is not maintained and there may be unidentified hazards.
- The department is also conducting a review of the road up to kilometre 134, including its current uses to inform maintenance standards.

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Nahanni Range Road
End of Federal Maintenance

Highways and
Public Works

- If it is determined that changes to service levels are required, Highways and Public Works will work with stakeholders and affected First Nations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There could be public interest about the end of road maintenance beyond kilometre 134.

Background:

- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada filed a care and maintenance licence application for Cantung Mine with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. Care and maintenance activities for the mine have been contracted to Parsons Inc. and as of December 6, 2023, the site will be accessed intermittently by fly-in workers only.
- The federal government, through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, consulted with the affected First Nations regarding this decision.

Approved by:

	January 26, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note
North Canol Road Upgrades**SPRING 2024**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Highway Maintenance

- Our highway crews continue to maintain the North Canol Road and have completed safety improvements over the past several years.
- This year, vegetation control will be completed on at least 14 kilometres of the Canol Road.
- During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the department spent \$190 thousand on safety improvements to the Pup Creek Bridge.
- During the 2022-23 fiscal year, the department spent \$71 thousand on safety improvements to the North Canol Road.
- In 2023-24, \$170 thousand has been spent on the North Canol Road for seasonal opening, maintenance and safety improvements.

Additional response: Gateway

- The North Canol Road and Robert Campbell Highway are included in the Yukon Resource Gateway Program's project agreement with Ross River Dene Council.
- This component is from kilometre 354.9 to kilometre 414.4, between Ross River and Faro.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works and Ross River Dene Council are working to advance the 2020 project agreement, in advance of groundwork beginning.
- Officials from the department last met with Ross River Dene Council Chief and Council on January 26, 2024, to discuss the gateway projects.

Session Briefing Note

North Canol Road Upgrades

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Highways and
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Additional response: Road Washouts

- In addition, the Department of Highways and Public is responding to road washouts each year. The following was spent on road washouts:
 - in 2021-22, the department spent \$164 thousand;
 - in 2022-23, it was \$122 thousand; and,
 - In 2023-24, \$205 thousand has been spent.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- North Canol Road maintenance was recently raised during the fall sitting.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon continues to work with First Nations on project planning and implementation related to the other project components. Implementation work for these projects may not be visible, however it is crucial. Once the foundational work is complete, project procurement and construction can begin.

Approved by:	
	April 4, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****North Canol Weight Restrictions**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Prior to opening the North Canol Road each year the Department of Highways and Public Works promptly conducts bridge inspections.
- All necessary repairs are completed as soon as possible following the inspections.
- To help keep the travelling public safe and to maintain the integrity of the structures, the department has applied weight restrictions on North Canol bridges since 2016.

Additional response:

- We prioritize bridge repairs based on several different factors, including safety, cost, traffic volumes and impacts to industry.
- Over the coming years, informed by inspection findings, bridge replacements along the North Canol Road and the South Canol Road may be required.
- We urge all drivers to use caution when travelling along the North Canol Highway, and to check 511 Yukon for the latest updates.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The North Canol has a number of bridges that are in variable states of repair. however, restrictions are important measures for ensuring the safety of infrastructure. Mining companies may be impacted by these weight restrictions.
-

Background:

- The bridge load rating on the North Canol Road remains 48 tonnes with speed restrictions of 30 km/hr.

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

North Canol Weight Restrictions

Highways and
Public Works

- Over the past few years there has been increased traffic in the area due to mining exploration.
- Inspection of the North Canol bridges took place on June 6 and 7, 2023. Of the 27 bridges inspected, 4 required minor repairs, including: Gravel Creek Bridge (km 279.7), Beaver Creek Bridge (km 287.9), MacMillan River #2 Bridge (km438.6) and Jeff Creek Bridge (km 421.5). All repair work was completed by June 14, 2023, and the road was officially opened to the public the next day.
- In addition to bridge work, road maintenance was performed to the road in advance of the contractor being able to access the bridges to perform repairs.

Approved by:

January 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The North Klondike Highway is a vital link for industry and a well-travelled route for Yukoners, and tourists from around the world.
- Through the federal government's National Trade Corridors Fund, a total of \$267.6 million will be invested to upgrade critical sections of the North Klondike Highway, including three bridge improvements and Intelligent Transportation Systems components, over a 10-year period.
- The federal government's contribution is \$200.7 million with Yukon contributing the remaining \$66.9 million.
- The project includes a total of 209 kilometres of planned highway reconstruction between Carmacks and the Dempster Highway, valued at approximately \$226 million, of which Canada will contribute \$177 million.
- Since 2020, a total of approximately \$57 million has been spent to reconstruct 57 kilometres of the highway, of which approximately \$42.7 million was recovered from Canada.
- These upgrades increase safety, improve driving conditions, better connect the Yukon's resources to markets, and increase the resiliency of the highway to the impacts of climate change, such as thawing permafrost.
- This will also provide economic opportunities for Yukon First Nations through the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and
Public Works

- The department will expand the use of technology that collects data on traffic, road conditions and weather – all of which helps to improve safety for road users.
- We are also planning to install additional electric vehicle charging stations along the North Klondike Highway to support the growing use of electric vehicles.

Additional response: Stewart Crossing to Dawson City

- Upgrades between Stewart Crossing and Dawson City involve the planned reconstruction of 65 kilometres of highway valued at approximately \$70.3 million.
- In 2023 a 10-kilometre section of highway was re-constructed approximately 20 kilometres south of the Dempster Highway. Over the 2023-24 fiscal year the department also completed:
 - 23.1 kilometres of Bituminous Surface Treatment, or BST;
 - 18 kilometres of revegetation between Stewart Crossing and Dawson City; and,
 - the Moose Creek Bridge rehabilitation.
- During construction work we installed digital message signs to make drivers aware of construction zones, cleared vegetation in the corridor and improved several culverts to assist with drainage.
- Upcoming work for this stretch of highway includes reconstruction of 16.3 kilometres between kilometre 542.3 and kilometer 558.6. A two-year, \$29 million construction contract has been awarded to Colbalt Construction Inc. for this work.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response: Carmacks to Stewart Crossing

- Upgrades between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing involve the reconstruction of 144 kilometres of highway between the communities of Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Stewart Crossing, valued at approximately \$155.7 million.
- Once complete, this reconstruction will allow the removal of seasonal weight restrictions for heavy trucks on this section of highway.
- The new Crooked Creek Bridge between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing was completed in summer 2023 for a total cost of approximately \$24 million.
- The rehabilitation of McCabe Creek Bridge is underway and will be completed this summer for a total cost of approximately \$1.5 million.

Additional response: 2022 Mudslide near Rock Creek and Flat Creek

- In September 2022, heavy rainfall affected slope stability in the Rock Creek and Flat Creek areas resulting in a number of landslides onto the highway.
- This area is highly susceptible to precipitation-induced slides due to the surface layer detaching from the shallow permafrost layer underneath.
- In this case, once the ground became too saturated, the upper layer of the slopes became unstable and resulted in landslides.
- Slide activity may continue in this area until all the detached surface layer above the rock face slides down.
- The department is working with the Yukon Geological Survey to study and monitor climate-driven slope movements near Rock Creek and in

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and Public Works

the Klondike valley to improve predicative capability and response times for mass movement events.

- The equipment for this slope-monitoring project with the Yukon Geological Survey was installed in fall 2023.
- It includes roadside cameras to remotely monitor the slide area along the highway, as well as thermistors and tiltmeters on the slope to measure ground temperatures and detect movements.

Additional Response: 2023 Washouts

- In spring 2023, there were multiple washouts along the Klondike Highway that caused traffic disruptions and some highway closures.
- Washouts happened near Dawson Airport, Henderson Corner and Clear Creek Bridge.
- In addition, a culvert washout occurred near the Dempster Cutoff at kilometre 670.
- Highways and Public Works crews repaired the washouts and opened the roads to traffic within a few days.

Additional response: Alternate access to Dawson

- Highways and Public Works has performed proactive summer maintenance activities on the All Gold to Hunker Summit Road, which allows alternate access to the City of Dawson, if required.
- This will provide emergency access for non-commercial vehicles to support the movement of supplies and support personnel in the event that additional slides occur in this area in the future, similar to those experienced in fall 2022.

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North Klondike Highway and Upgrades

Highways and Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The North Klondike Highway is an essential transportation corridor.

Background:

- In 2019, the governments of Yukon and Canada announced a total of \$157 million in funding over ten years to upgrade critical sections of the North Klondike Highway.
- In 2021, a further \$110 million in funding over seven years was announced to upgrade the North Klondike Highway between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing.
- The total project cost is \$267 million. The National Trade Corridors Fund will contribute \$200 million, and the Yukon government will contribute \$67 million.
- The proposed work will occur in the Traditional Territories of Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, First Nation of Na Cho Nyak Dun and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.

Approved by:

March 25, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Rest Area Strategy**

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Rest areas along Yukon highways are an important part of our transportation network and provide travellers with a safe and appropriate area to rest.
- The Government of Yukon is developing a rest area strategy to provide a consistent, high level of service for travellers.
- The strategy will include a standardized distance between rest areas, allowing highway travellers to predict and rely on the Yukon's rest areas for their travel plans.
- The rest area strategy will also include service standards that will guide future service changes on our highways including changes to amenities, changes in rest stop locations, and the inclusion of fast-charging stations for electric vehicles.

Additional response:

- As the department develops and implements the rest area strategy, we will continue to meet the needs of those travelling on our highways.
- For example, to assist travellers in knowing where rest areas are located and planning their trips accordingly, rest areas were added to the 511 Yukon platform in February 2024.
- One of the commitments of our government under Our Clean Future is to make it possible for electric vehicles to reach all road-accessible communities by 2027, and creating electric vehicle charging stations at rest areas in remote areas will help fulfill this goal.

Session Briefing Note**Rest Area Strategy**

Highways and
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works also released a Request for Information in March 2024 seeking an improved model of outhouse and to determine the level of market interest in supplying outhouse buildings. This tender closes April 10.
- Improved models of outhouses are being assessed due to safety concerns with the concrete outhouses. The deterioration of the metal screws joining the concrete segments leads to structural issues and potential collapse.
- If the Request for Information is successful, updates to outhouses across the territory may start as early as 2024.

Additional response: Criteria for new Rest Areas

- There are several criteria that go into creating new rest areas.
- First, a Safety Rest Area provides defined services; at minimum outhouses and garbage bins, at defined intervals to provide predictable, dependable service to highway users.
- Second, rest areas need to meet certain engineering standards, including the ability to have clear lines of sight, multiple accesses, sufficient turning radius, and space for amenities and large commercial vehicles.
- Third, new safety rest areas should minimize environmental impacts by using existing sites where possible.

Additional response: Drury Creek Project

- There is a need for a new rest area between Carmacks and Faro.

Session Briefing Note**Rest Area Strategy**

Highways and
Public Works

- This is a high-priority service gap as there are currently no outhouses between the two communities.
- The Drury Creek Safety Rest Area and electric vehicle charging station installation project was proceeding through the YESAB process.
- The public comment phase closed on April 12, 2024.
- The public comments phase during the YESAB process is a valuable component where comments are not just reviewed but carefully considered before any projects move ahead.
- Upon review of the comments received, it was determined that a more detailed assessment of options is required at this location before proceeding further.
- On April 15, department officials conducted a site visit to better understand the area given the feedback we received during the seeking views and information phase of the YESAB process.
- On April 19, Highways and Public Works requested that the submission be withdrawn from the assessment process pending more planning and assessment work.
- We remain committed to working with all partners and stakeholders to ensure that a consistent set of services, such as rest areas and electric vehicle charging stations, are available along Yukon roads.
- Highways and Public Works is committed to ensuring that our operations meet the highest standards for environmental and socio-economic responsibility and will resubmit an alternative proposal to YESAB.

Session Briefing Note**Rest Area Strategy**

Highways and
Public Works

- To sum up, Highways and Public Works has done the right thing for the proposed Drury Creek rest area project, and, based on feedback we received from Yukoners, we are reviewing the entire project to see how it could best be delivered. Stay tuned for more on this project.

Additional response:

- In fall 2023, three rest areas permanently closed on the North Klondike Highway:
 - The Conglomerates point of interest at kilometre 297.8.
 - There are outhouse facilities within 10 to 20 kilometers on either side of Conglomerates near Braeburn and Montague Roadhouse.
 - Yukon Crossing at kilometre 395.2.
 - There are outhouse facilities at Five Finger Rapids which is within 13 kilometres of Yukon Crossing.
 - Stewart River viewpoint at kilometre 551.
 - There are outhouse facilities in Stewart Crossing at kilometre 535 which is 16 kilometres away.
- The three outhouses were removed in October 2023 by Highways and Public Works.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The closure of outhouses has generated media attention.
-

Background:

- Some rest areas have outhouses, garbage bins, and interpretive messaging on the Yukon's history and environment.
-

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Rest Area Strategy

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Highways and
Public Works

- Most highway rest areas in the Yukon fall under the domain of Highways and Public Works. Forty-four of the 64 sites with outhouses are owned by Highways and Public Works.
- The 3 site closures in 2023 were in alignment with the development of the Yukon government’s rest area strategy.

Approved by:	
	April 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Rural Roads Program**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Rural Road Upgrade Program

- The Government of Yukon is committed to continuing our work to construct and maintain public infrastructure.
- The Rural Road Upgrade Program provides financial support to Yukoners for the improvement of maintained and unmaintained rural Yukon roads.
- Applications can be found on Yukon.ca.
- In 2023-24, 8 projects were completed for approximately \$300,000.
- In 2022-23, the program funding was reallocated to address flood mitigation requirements in various locations.

Additional response: Resource Access Road Program

- The Resource Access Road Program provides support for industry to develop transportation infrastructure to support commercial activity.
 - We know how important this is to industry as resource access roads enable exploration and extraction activities across the Yukon.
 - As in previous years, we will be allocating funds to both the Rural Road Upgrade and the Resource Access Road programs.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There were concerns over the lack of funding in 2022-23 for the Rural Road Upgrade Program.
-

Background:

- Rural Road Upgrade Program objectives:
 - to serve the transportation needs of Yukoners;
 - to upgrade non-industrial rural roads in the Yukon, whether currently maintained by the Yukon government or not;
-

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Rural Roads Program**Highways and
Public Works

- to upgrade rural roads based on requests and input from communities, property owners and other stakeholders;
 - to accomplish approved work with local contractors where available;
 - to evaluate projects on a geographical basis so that all regions of Yukon benefit from the program; and
 - to develop cost sharing arrangements for projects that are not in the Yukon government's current inventory of maintained roads.
- To be eligible, the road must be:
 - available for use by the public;
 - within a surveyed right-of-way where designated; and
 - located on public land or, if on private land, the road must be formally recognized as a highway, in other words a public road.
- This year we completed projects on 37 Mile Road, Guardian Trail, 3 Mile Road, Ta'an Village Road, Lewes Farm Road, Takhini Hot Springs Road, Fossil Point Road and Two Horse Creek Road,
- The Resource Access Road Program requires the same eligibility criteria, and the road must also provide an economic benefit to Yukon.
- This is a joint program that is facilitated through Energy, Mines and Resources, Highways and Public Works, and Economic Development. Highways and Public Works assists through planning, contracting and road upgrading work.

Approved by:_____
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works_____
January 22, 2024_____
Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Spring Weight Restrictions and Speed Reduction

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Every spring, weight restrictions are imposed to preserve the integrity of the road.
- Weight restrictions prevent heavy loads from travelling on specified Yukon roads during the vulnerable spring thaw period when they are more susceptible to damage.
- This is done by reducing allowable legal axle loading. The possible ranges include unrestricted, 100 per cent legal axle loading, 75 per cent legal axle loading, or 50 per cent legal axle loading.
- Weight restrictions are implemented and removed in phases depending on temperature and road conditions.
- Having weight restrictions in place is the most viable way to reduce the impact of heavy vehicles on the road surface during the spring melt.
- Other actions, such as lowering the speed limit, will not prevent rutting and damage to the road surface and may in fact make it worse.
- If we delay or do not implement weight restrictions, it can result in millions of dollars of damage to the road network and possible failure of the road surface.
- The two Yukon weigh stations have the most up to date information and can answer questions from the industry.
 - Whitehorse weigh station number is (867) 667-5729.
 - Watson Lake weigh station number is (867)-536-7400.

Additional response:

- This year the first phase of weight restrictions went into effect on March 28 and the second phase on April 2.

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Spring Weight Restrictions and Speed Reduction

Highways and
Public Works

- Restrictions are currently in place on portions of roads and on certain bridges on the Alaska Highway, Klondike Highway, Haines Road, Campbell Highway, Atlin Road, Tagish Road, Stewart Cassiar Highway and on several other roads across the territory. There are no current restrictions on the Silver Trail.
- We encourage drivers to check 511 Yukon for the most up-to-date road information about road conditions before they encounter them.

Additional response:

- The surface of many roads in the Yukon is more vulnerable during spring melt.
- This is particularly important for roads such as the North Klondike Highway with its minimal sub-base.
- In practice this means that heavy loads deflect the road surface creating rutting in the road and negatively impacting the resiliency of the road's surface.
- These repair costs take away from other projects or necessary upgrades to infrastructure, hence the need for seasonal weight restrictions.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Seasonal weight limits impact businesses and carriers as they cannot carry the legal loads.

Background:

- All primary highways include:
 - Alaska Hwy (Hwy 1), Klondike Highway (Hwy 2), Haines Rd (Hwy 3), Robert Campbell Highway (Hwy 4), Dempster Highway (Hwy 5), Canol Road (Hwy 6), Atlin Road (Hwy 7), Tagish Road (Hwy 8), Top-of-the-World (Hwy 9), Silver Trail (Hwy 11), and the Stewart Cassiar (Hwy 37).

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Spring Weight Restrictions and Speed Reduction

Highways and Public Works

- All other roads are considered secondary highways.
- Weight restrictions are implemented when the ground temperature reaches 0°C. The department provides the trucking industry with two days advance notice before imposing the restrictions.
- The temperature of the road surface is determined by in-ground sensors called thermistors placed in key locations, and observations from Transportation Maintenance staff. Thermistors measure temperatures at multiple depths in the ground.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works bases the decision for the entire highway segment from the warmest thermistors, as the one soft section in the segment may be impacted by heavy traffic.
- Weight restrictions change from 75 per cent to 100 per cent legal loads when the road surface is thawed within the top 1.0m of the road surface and over-weights are permitted when road surface is thawed below 1.4 metres.
- In 2020, the department delayed weight restrictions on the North Klondike Highway between Carmacks and Dawson. This delay resulted in several impacts to the road's surface. A follow-up evaluation estimated that this delay resulted in approximately \$1.1 million worth of damage to the road.

Highway Weight restrictions - Current status		Last updated: April 2, 2024
Highway	Section	Current Restriction
Alaska Highway	BC border to Haines Junction	100% legal axle loading
Alaska Highway	Haines Junction to AK Border (Beaver Cr)	No Restriction
Klondike Highway	Ak Border (Fraser) to Carcross	No Restriction
Klondike Highway	Carcross to Whitehorse	100% legal axle loading
Klondike Highway	Whitehorse to Carmacks	100% legal axle loading
Klondike Highway	Carmacks to Dawson	No Restriction

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Spring Weight Restrictions and Speed Reduction

Highways and Public Works

Haines Road	All	100% legal axle loading
Campbell Highway	Watson to Tuchitua (km 114)	100% legal axle loading
Campbell Highway	Tuchitua (km 114) to Ross River	75% legal axle loading
Campbell Highway	Ross River to Carmacks	100% legal axle loading
Dempster Highway	All	No Restriction
South Canol	Alaska Hwy to Campbell Hwy	75% legal axle loading
North Canol	Campbell Hwy to NWT border	75% legal axle loading
Atlin Road	All	100% legal axle loading
Tagish Road	All	75% legal axle loading
Top of the World Hwy	All	75% legal axle loading
Nahanni Range Road	All	No Restriction
Silver Trail	All	No Restriction
Takhini Hotsprings Road	All	No Restriction
Mitchell Road	All	No Restriction
Stewart Cassiar	All	100% legal axle loading
Secondary Roads (other than those listed above)	All	75% legal axle loading

Approved by:

April 3, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The North Alaska Highway from the Alaska border at Beaver Creek to Haines Junction, and the Haines Road from Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska is the stretch we often call “Shakwak”.
- The North Alaska Highway is essential for connecting mainland Alaska to Alaska’s southeast and to the lower 48. Maintaining this highway bolsters security, facilitates trade, promotes tourism, and supports other indispensable facets of daily life in the North.
- These sections of highway have not benefited from significant capital investment since 2015 when stable predictable funding under the U.S.-Canada Shakwak agreement ended, **until now.**
- **Alaskan’s Governor and Commissioner dedicated time to visit the Yukon on February 8, 2024, to discuss highway funding for the Shakwak corridor.**
- **In February 2024, a Memorandum of Understanding between Alaska and Government of Yukon was signed to create an official partnership with Alaska’s Department of Transportation to develop a project description that was included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) application.**
- **STIP is a comprehensive infrastructure program funded by the US Department of Transportation to the State of Alaska.**
- **In April, Highways and Public Works officials were informed that the State of Alaska confirmed that this funding was approved.**

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Shakwak – North Alaska Highway – Haines Junction to Beaver Creek – Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska

Highways and
Public Works

- The State of Alaska will provide the Government of Yukon with \$31.25 million USD in funding through STIP to allow the much-needed work on the North Alaska Highway to begin.
- Funding for this important work will be spread out over three years starting in 2025.
- As the Memorandum of Understanding states, the Yukon government and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities will collaborate on specific work plans and financial agreements for the project term.
- We have a strong relationship with our transportation counterparts in Alaska and look forward to working closely with them over the coming months as we refine the details of the funding transfer.
- With funding being secured, project planning can begin in earnest. Rehabilitation work on an existing highway within the right of way does not normally require a YESAB assessment.
- Department officials will however conduct a fulsome review of the project requirements to determine if there are assessable activities that will prompt a submission to YESAB.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon's continued work with U.S. and Alaskan Officials led to the inclusion of the north Alaska Highway in the 2021 *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*.
- While the Act does not commit any specific dollar amount to the reconstruction project, it allows the Yukon and Alaska to apply for U.S. funding for this part of the highway.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**Highways and
Public Works

-
- In December 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced a \$1.5 billion in funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity grant program, also referred to as the RAISE discretionary grant program for 2023.
 - The State of Alaska in collaboration with the Government of Yukon applied to the RAISE grant program on February 27, 2023, seeking approximately \$25 million USD for the north Alaska Highway. Unfortunately, our RAISE application was unsuccessful in securing funding.
 - On August 21, 2023, working with our Alaskan counterparts we submitted a similar funding request for \$31.25 million USD over six years to a different U.S. funding program, the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant. The application was not accepted.
 - In December 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced a second \$1.5 billion in funding through the RAISE grant program for 2024.
 - Highways and Public Works worked closely with our Alaskan counterparts to prepare a 2024 RAISE application, strengthened by the learnings from the 2023 RAISE application.
 - The application was submitted by February 28, 2024, with letters of support from Federal Minister of Transport Canada, Pablo Rodriguez and Yukon's Member of Parliament, Brendan Hanley.
 - An independent review of our application was complimentary and said it was a "strong application that was clearly written by a transportation expert".

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works

- STIP is a separate funding program than the RAISE discretionary grant program.
- RAISE is an individual competitive grant from the US Department of Transportation. STIP is a comprehensive infrastructure program funded by the US Department of Transportation to the State of Alaska.
- Our project is identified in the STIP and gives Alaska more discretion on how and when to fund the project.
- The decision on the 2024 RAISE application is still pending, expected in June.
- If the RAISE funding is approved, we will work with Alaska to ensure we maximize the benefits of having both the STIP and RAISE.
- If successful, this grant would be used to restore some of the worst sections of the north Alaska Highway into Alaska that is adversely affected by thawing permafrost and climate change.

Fourth response: Maintenance

- Until funding begins flowing in 2025, the Department of Highways and Public Works will continue to inspect and maintain segments of the north Alaska Highway.
- Each spring and fall, inspections take place to prioritize where maintenance is required. Some sections of road have been converted from Bituminous Surface Treatment, or BST, to gravel to mitigate the impacts of shifting permafrost.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works

- In 2023, the department rehabilitated 45 kilometres of BST, 27 kilometres of gravel road, and completed more than seven kilometres of gravel patching work on the north Alaska Highway.
 - Highways and Public Works' Transportation Maintenance Branch operates two camps that service the north Alaska Highway exclusively, one in Destruction Bay and one in Beaver Creek.
 - The Haines Junction maintenance camp also serves part of the north Alaska Highway as well as part of the Haines Road, while the Blanchard camp exclusively serves the Haines Road.
 - Operations and maintenance expenses for the Shakwak portion of the highway vary from year to year, but average approximately \$2 million per year over the past three years.
 - Capital expenditures for the north Alaska Highway are estimated to be nearly \$3.4 million for the 2023-24 fiscal year.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Since the Shakwak agreement has ended, no core funding has been allocated for the north Alaska Highway in the Yukon.
-

Background:**Funding Applications**

- The goal of the former Shakwak agreement was to upgrade 520 kilometres of highway comprising parts of the north Alaska Highway and the Haines Road to a modern, all-weather, two-lane highway.
 - The Yukon and Alaskan governments previously submitted joint applications for funding to the BUILD discretionary grant (similar to RAISE) in 2018, 2019 and 2020; however, none of the applications were accepted.
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Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Shakwak – North Alaska Highway – Haines Junction to Beaver Creek – Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska

Highways and
Public Works

- The specific mention in the U.S. *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* of the Yukon's Alaska Highway was expected to strengthen the merit of the RAISE grant application, compared to the previous BUILD applications.

Permafrost Issues

- Thawing permafrost causes severe distortions of the road surface and significant cracking along the road shoulders, creating issues for highway users.
- Highway maintenance costs in permafrost areas can be up to six times higher per kilometre than in non-permafrost areas.
- Inspections carried out in July 2020 confirmed significant distortions from permafrost degradations in the northern segments of the Alaska Highway.
- In 2020-21, we completed the installation of thermosyphons at Dry Creek located at kilometre 1,841 of the Alaska Highway near Beaver Creek. The thermosyphons will help cool the underlying permafrost foundation and stabilize the highway. The thermosyphon project is partially funded by Transport Canada under the Northern Transportation Adaptation Initiative.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is planning to present the findings from this project at the 12th International Conference on Permafrost, which will be held in Whitehorse from June 16-24, 2024. The Branch will jointly present a paper with Christopher Stevens who is the principal consultant of Northern Permafrost Consulting Eagle River, Alaska.
- In the fall of 2020 and 2021, we reverted several sections along the highway to gravel. This was done to help mitigate the severe permafrost damage impacting the road surface, and to make the road easier to maintain.

Approved by:

April 24, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Takhini River Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is in the process of developing options to enhance the safety of active transportation on the Klondike Highway's Takhini River Bridge.
- \$8.5 million is budgeted for upgrades to the existing bridge, of which over \$6 million will be federally funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- The improvements announced in January will not only add an active transportation route to the bridge, they will also include structural upgrades to increase the bridge's safety for everyone, whether they drive, walk, bike, ski or kicksled across the bridge.
- The department is currently reviewing options and estimated costs for the upgrades. Some of the options under consideration include:
 - widening the bridge;
 - adding a sidewalk to the bridge;
 - improving the sightlines for southbound traffic on the north side of the bridge;
 - excavating the embankment to the west to also improve sightlines; and
 - painting shoulder lanes on the approaches to the bridge.
- These improvements will benefit the bridge users both inside city limits and on the hill above the Takhini River Bridge.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Takhini River Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

- Once our engineers have fully assessed the options, department officials will share the final design with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and then the public at an information session.
- Highways and Public Works are still in the early planning design stage. If the plans do suggest improvements outside of the right-of-way, department officials will engage with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

Additional response: Bridge Safety Actions

- Highways and Public Works is aware of public concerns around crossing the Takhini River Bridge.
- This past fall, to reduce speed and help increase road safety the department installed a speed display sign on the north approach to the bridge. A "share the road" sign was also installed.
- The intent of the signs are to encourage drivers to be mindful of oncoming vehicle traffic and of other bridge users, such as cyclists.
- The final option chosen for the active transportation upgrades on the bridge itself will include improvements to the approaches to the bridge, which will improve sightlines for vehicle drivers.
- The condition of the bridge is also regularly monitored as part of our bridge inspection program.

Third response: Speed Radar Boards Vandalism

- The north approach speed radar system was found vandalized shortly after it was installed last fall.

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Public Works

- At the time of the vandalism, the ground was under freezing conditions and the system could not be replaced until the ground thawed.
 - Most recently, on the evening of April 8, the south approach speed radar system for the Takhini River Bridge was vandalized.
 - The speed radar board is missing, and the solar panel is damaged.
 - On the morning of April 9, department officials informed ATCO of the incident and they immediately secured the scene to eliminate any potential public hazards.
 - We encourage anyone that has information on these acts of vandalism to contact the RCMP.
 - The department is working to have the speed radar systems re-installed this summer.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Upgrades to the Takhini River Bridge were announced in January 2024.
-

Background:

- In July 2017, an engineering review of the structure was completed.
 - In September 2017, based on the engineering review, a strengthening project was completed to improve the bridge's capacity for supporting heavy loads.
 - The geometry of the highway curve north of the bridge and the posted signage meet the minimum standards outlined in the Transportation Association of Canada standard for a 90km/h speed zone.
 - With minor repairs, the bridge currently has a life expectancy of 5 to 10 years before it will need structural improvements.
-

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Takhini River Bridge

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Public Works

- However, depending on the structural improvements performed through this project, the life expectancy of the bridge could increase by as much as 30 to 40 years at a cost much less than a full replacement.
- The project will be submitted to YESAB and open to public comment on YESAB’s project registry site.
- As part of the options review, the consultant will be evaluating ways to increase safety for all users of the bridge.

Approved by:	
	April 22, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Takhini River Road and Gully Road**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The safety of travellers is a priority for the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- In 2023-24, the department has spent over \$62 thousand on maintenance and upgrades to the Takhini River Road.
- The Takhini River Road surface undergoes scheduled grading twice per year and more frequently as required to improve the road condition.
- Highways and Public Works completed repairs along the Takhini River Road in April and will continue monitoring the road.

Additional response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is working to improve drainage to address erosion issues on the Takhini River Road near its intersection with Gully Road.
- The department is conducting preliminary design work and looking at reconstruction alternatives to improve safety and drainage for the Takhini River Road beyond the Gully Road intersection area.
- The reconstruction design will include strengthening the road structure, improving drainage and alignment, widening the road at particular narrow sections, installing culvert markers and steam pipes, cleaning and adjusting existing culverts, and improving soft spots in the road.
- In the coming months, two packages will be submitted to YESAB for this area.

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Public Works

- The Gully Road YESAB submission will cover upgrades to the Gully Road intersection area.
 - Letters were sent to the Gully Road residents in fall 2023 and department officials heard directly from the residents.
 - These conversations are resulting in refining the design.
 - Once an updated design is completed, department officials will notify the residents again prior to submitting it to YESAB.
 - The Takhini River Road YESAB submission will be related to the reconstruction plans for the length of the maintained section of Takhini River Road.
 - The draft design plan is underway. Once it is ready, letters will be sent to affected residents that will include the design and the date for an information session which will allow department officials to hear from affected residents prior to submitting to YESAB.
 - Construction on the road will be prioritized in relation to our overall upgrade priorities. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor and provide maintenance to these roads as required.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Takhini River Road maintenance is a road that receives a lot of attention.
-

Background:

- In 2022, the department installed a wooden deck to allow traffic to cross a very soft spot at the far end of the road.
 - The Takhini River Road was built by local residents prior to the 1940s and development has increased over the years.
-

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Takhini River Road and Gully Road

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Public Works

- In the past decade, large spring runoffs have caused significant erosion to the Takhini River Road and the Gully Road.
- The Government of Yukon uses a road classification system that considers traffic volumes and socio-economic factors when determining maintenance schedules and planning upgrades.

Approved by:

April 18, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Watson Lake – Crosswalks and Lighting**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works prioritizes the safety of travellers. In Watson Lake, the department has been making several safety improvements within the community.
- Officials from the department engaged with Liard First Nation, the RCMP the Town of Watson Lake, and continue to meet with the town's Chief Administration Officer to discuss their priorities around road infrastructure in the Watson Lake area.
- Recent safety improvements include new streetlights along the Robert Campbell Highway and upgrades to pedestrian crossings along the Alaska Highway.
- \$1.5 million is budgeted for Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements, and approximately \$1.1 million is funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- In August 2023, officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works met with the Watson Lake Chief Administration Officer regarding a needs assessment for connecting pathways to the new crosswalks for construction in 2024.

Additional response:

- Construction of new streetlights along Robert Campbell Highway between Ravenhill Drive and Two and One-Half Mile Village were completed in November 2023.
- In 2024 the department will upgrade two existing crosswalks along the Alaska Highway, one near the Robert Campbell Highway intersection and the other in front of Andrea's Hotel.

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Watson Lake – Crosswalks and Lighting

Highways and
Public Works

- The addition of pedestrian-activated flashing beacons to the crosswalks will improve pedestrian safety and visibility and warn drivers when a pedestrian is using the crosswalk.
- We will also be installing four new pedestrian crosswalks along the Alaska and Robert Campbell Highways to provide safer connections between the school, local businesses, tourist attractions and walking trails on the opposite side of the highway.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Improving the crosswalks in Watson Lake has been a topic of discussion in the Legislative Assembly.

Background:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works conducted a preliminary assessment on pedestrian infrastructure in Watson Lake during summer 2021.
- Decisions to improve pedestrian safety features are based on a number of factors including the criteria outlined in the Yukon Street lighting Guidelines, traffic volume, operational factors, roadway design and collision history.
- On January 10, 2024 the Yukon government announced federal funding for active transportation being used for the Takhini River Bridge and Pedestrian Safety Improvements in Watson Lake. The \$1.5 million announced for Watson Lake pedestrian safety improvements was allocated towards the new streetlights and for upgrading crosswalks.

Approved by:

January 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Weigh Scale Exemption Permit
Redesign**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Monitoring commercial vehicles on Yukon's highways is important for the safety of the travelling public and the integrity of our highway infrastructure.
- Under Yukon's *Highways Act*, all commercial drivers are required to stop and be weighed every time they report to a weigh scale.
- Commercial carriers who operate within a 20-kilometre radius of the weigh station may apply for a weigh scale exemption permit to avoid having to stop at the weigh scales multiple times a day.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is updating the weigh scale exemption permitting process to reduce administrative obligations of carriers while continuing to prioritize safety.
- The proposed draft policy uses a risk-based approach to determine carrier reporting requirements.

Additional response: Engagement with Industry

- We continue to engage with industry to develop a safe, effective weigh scale permit exemption system.
- We have met with the Yukon Contractors Association, the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon and the Yukon Transportation Association several times this past year on this topic.
- As a result of this engagement, we created a What We Heard report and a draft policy that we shared with the associations in July 2023.
- The department will consider changes to the draft policy based on feedback received from the engagement with the goal of finalizing the policy for implementation in spring 2024.

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Weigh Scale Exemption Permit Redesign

Highways and
Public Works

- In the meantime, the existing policy remains in effect.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Changes to the weigh scale exemption permits affect various commercial carriers travelling through the Yukon.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon's approach to weigh scale reporting exemption permits was last reviewed in 2007.
- Local weigh scale exemption permits are currently provided to commercial carriers operating within 20 kilometres of the scales and allows them to legally bypass the weigh scales.
- Carrier Compliance vehicle checks help to protect the travelling public by ensuring commercial vehicles and drivers operating on highways are meeting our safety standards and licensing requirements, that their loads are secure, and drivers are operating within road tolerances to help minimize damage to road infrastructure.
- The department has met with the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, the Yukon Transportation Association, and the Yukon Contractors Association and continues to engage on this important topic.

Approved by:

January 26, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Electronic Logging Devices

SPRING 2024

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon prioritizes the safety of all drivers. To keep Yukon's roads and the travelling public safe, commercial drivers are required to operate only a certain number of hours per day. These hours must be tracked accurately.
- As of January 1, 2023, the *Canadian Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* requires drivers of heavy commercial vehicles to use automated electronic logging devices, also known as ELDs, certified and approved by Transport Canada.
- In concert with Transport Canada, the Yukon provided a 18-month education period prior to the adoption of ELDs.
- The Yukon used this time to assist carriers with this transition and to provide information and education to carriers.

Additional response:

- No other changes have been made related to driver hours.
- Currently, there are 96 different certified devices available across Canada at a variety of price points, that commercial vehicle drivers may use.
- The federal *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* have identified several scenarios in which carriers are exempt from the electronic logging device requirement, if certain conditions are met.

Third response: Exemptions for ELDs

- The Yukon provides an exemption from maintaining an electronic logging device for vehicles that carry commercial goods under 11,794kg and operate solely in the Yukon, as long as the carrier

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Electronic Logging Devices

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maintains a record-of-duty status, and drivers have 8 hours of rest between shifts.

- As per the federal regulations, drivers of commercial buses who carry 10 passengers or more, or drivers who carry commercial goods, do not need an electronic logging device if:
 - the model of their vehicle is made in 2000 or earlier;
 - the vehicle is being operated within a 160-kilometre radius of its home terminal and returns to its home terminal at the end of each day;
 - the vehicle is subject to a rental of no more than 30-days without extension or renewal;
 - the vehicle is being operated under a motor carrier permit, typically an oilfield exemption or emergency declaration; and,
 - the vehicle is operated by a motor carrier for which an exemption has been issued by Transport Canada.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some stakeholders have asked that the Yukon delay implementation along with certain provinces.

Background:

- There are delays in implementation in certain provinces. However, these are tied to delays in updating provincial regulations related to electronic logging devices for intra-provincial carriers. For inter-provincial carriers the new federal requirements are being enforced.
- In June 2021, Highways and Public Works began providing information on electronic logging devices and the new regulations to carriers and the public.
 - Handouts were given to carriers who passed through the weigh stations.

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- Information cards were distributed through Carrier Compliance at the following locations:
 - the Whitehorse Weigh Scales;
 - the Watson Lake Weigh Scales; and,
 - the National Safety Code Office via email requests.
- A website with information on the new regulations also went live.
- In November 2022, a Zoom presentation was provided to industry. This presentation was advertised, and industry was informed via email invite. The department has been meeting with industry regularly on this and other topics.
- Beginning on January 1, 2023, Carrier Compliance started issuing electronic logging device warnings. Just over 75 warnings had been issued between January 1 and July 31, 2023. As of August 1, Carrier Compliance has stopped issuing warnings and started enforcement. Carriers are allowed 14 days to become compliant if they are not operating with an electronic logging device.
- Beyond these educational activities, Carrier Compliance has provided electronic logging device handouts when performing Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance inspections. Over 1,300 inspections were completed in the last 24 months.
- Following best practices, the Yukon government has adopted the Federal *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* by reference in legislation. Adoption by reference helps the Yukon avoid implementation issues, and helps with ongoing alignment, while minimizing the necessity to update regulations when future amendments are made to the federal laws.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

January 26, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections (PMVIs)

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended Response:

- Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections, also referred to as PMVIs are the first line of defense when it comes to the safety of large commercial vehicles operating on Yukon's highways.
- To help keep our roads safe, the Yukon is aligned with other jurisdictions in Canada and the National Safety Code to require that all commercial vehicles undergo PMVIs conducted by certified inspectors.
- Regular, preventative maintenance of equipment catches small problems before they result in mechanical failure and increase the potential for collisions or vehicle breakdown.
- Operators are required to participate in a regular vehicle maintenance and servicing program for all commercial trucks, trailers and buses under their control to verify they are mechanically sound.
- The comprehensive maintenance program systematically identifies defects and allows an operator to undertake necessary repairs, while complying with the semi-annual requirements under the PMVI program.
- Certification for performing PMVIs is required for the inspections, not for performing the mechanical work.

Additional response: Licenced mechanics

- Commercial vehicles systems are becoming more complex. To become a certified PMVI inspector and perform PMVIs, a person must first be a certified mechanic.
- The inspections are performed by certified inspectors to ensure that commercial motor vehicles are mechanically sound and in safe working order.

Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections
(PMVIs)**Highways and
Public Works

- A certified mechanic includes both Journeyman and Red Seal mechanic qualifications.
- Non-certified mechanics can continue to challenge the Red Seal Mechanical Exam through the Yukon Apprentice and Trades Office.
- In October 2022, the Yukon government worked with the Yukon Apprentice and Trades Office to offer a free preparatory course to non-certified mechanics, so they can challenge the mechanics exam.
- Since November 2022, 16 local mechanics have completed the process of becoming a certified inspector.
- The Yukon now has a total of 311 certified inspectors in the following communities: Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Teslin, Watson Lake and Whitehorse.
- Non-certified mechanics can still perform work, however, only a certified inspector can complete the PMVI.
- A 15-month grace period was provided to allow industry to meet these new certification requirements. This grace period ended January 1, 2023.

Third Response: Tourism Operators

- The regulations regarding inspection requirements for passenger-carrying vehicles have not changed in the Yukon in over 20 years.
- The Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators' National Safety Code Standard 11b requires commercial transportation vehicles to undergo an inspection every 6 months. This is consistent across the country for passenger bus carriers.

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(PMVIs)**Highways and
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- Highways and Public Works officials have communicated these requirements to the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon.

Fourth Response: 6-month Renewal Cycle

- The Yukon adopts the National Safety Code, Standard 11 that requires that vehicles be inspected every 6 months. This standard is also followed by British Columbia and Saskatchewan for vehicles that carry commercial goods.
- While many jurisdictions require inspections on all vehicles over 4,500kg, this requirement only applies to heavy trucks over 11,794kg in the Yukon.
- The 6-month inspection frequency is appropriate for the Yukon because the weather and driving conditions in a northern environment are hard on commercial vehicles, and regular certified inspections provide an additional level of assurance that commercial vehicles are mechanically sound and safe for operation.
- Every jurisdiction in Canada requires passenger carrying vehicles that have a manufactured seating capacity of more than 10, including the driver, to undergo an inspection every 6 months.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be concerns related to the impacts on industry resulting from changes in the PMVI inspector qualifications requiring that only certified inspectors can perform these inspections.

Background:

- The Yukon was the only jurisdiction in Canada that allowed non-certified mechanics to perform PMVIs for the 10 years prior to January 1, 2023.

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(PMVIs)**Highways and
Public Works

- As of January 1, 2023, only certified mechanics can qualify to become certified inspectors and perform these inspections.
- Yukon's PMVI program had not been updated since the 1990s.
- The National Safety Code Office began work with industry on this issue in the summer of 2020.
- In the past, enforcement activities have identified numerous serious safety infractions with commercial vehicles that had passed inspection, which is why we are now requiring inspections to be done by certified inspectors.

Approved by:

January 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Haines Road Closures

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Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works prioritizes the safety of travellers and continuously monitors the Yukon's highway network for potential risks and road safety hazards.
- This winter's highway conditions through the Haines Pass have been particularly challenging with large amounts of snow, high winds, very cold temperatures and even rockslides that have all contributed at various points to the highway closures.
- The challenging conditions have also taken a toll on the required specialized graders and snowblowers needed for clearing the mountain passes.
- Our highway crews have worked significant overtime, including during the holiday season, to have the roads cleared and open again as soon as it was safe to do so.
- The department has also worked to keep the public and media informed through 511 Yukon and social media.

Additional response: December closure

- Beginning in late December the Haines Road was closed for almost two weeks.
- It started with a rockslide on the Alaska side of the border which resulted in the Haines Road closure.
- On the Canadian side, the road closed shortly after due to an abnormal accumulation of blowing snow, with snowbanks in some areas reaching 5 to 10 feet high.
- These two events combined with the narrow and extremely icy sections, made it unsafe for vehicles to travel.

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Haines Road Closures

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- Highways and Public Works officials kept in close contact with the US border control throughout the closure. As well as the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities so Haines residents and those travelling could be kept informed of the situation.
 - During this time the department offered pilot cars on December 29, January 2, 4, and 5.
 - With the hard work of our highway crews, many who were working overtime during the holiday season, the road opened again on January 6.

Third response: Early March Closure

- On March 1, the Haines Pass underwent extreme weather conditions.
- With very cold temperatures and high winds and drifting snow the Haines Pass quickly became unsafe and in some areas unpassable.
- Locations that see an excess of blowing snow are normally found between kilometre 86, just beyond the U.S./Canada Border, and kilometre 108, Haines Summit, and require particular equipment such as snow blowers and specialized front plows to clear.
- To help with this situation the department brought in extra specialized equipment from across the territory.
- We also provided a pilot car when it was possible to do so to help travellers reach their destination safely.
- One piloted vehicle convoy was made available on March 5 to allow travellers to navigate the section of closed highway.
- Twice daily pilots were made available on March 6 and 7, and morning pilots were offered on March 8 through March 10 before the highway was reopened the afternoon of the 10.

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Haines Road Closures

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- I appreciate the staff who have been working long hours doing all that they can to clear the highway.
- While we understand there may be frustration for the length of the closures, the amount of snow to be managed has been extremely challenging and the consistent demand has been taxing on our equipment and team.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Haines Road was closed a number of times this winter.

Background:

Unscheduled closures since December 2023:

- Closure March 1, still ongoing. As of March 6, two pilot cars were being offered between Haines Junction and Pleasant Camp.
- Closure February 10, with same day re-opening.
- Closure January 29 to January 31.
- Closure January 23 to January 24.
- Closure December 24 to January 6.
- Closure on December 13 and 14.
 - Total closure days: More than 27 days total since December
 - Shortest instance: One day on February 10.
 - Longest instance 13 days from December 24 to January 6.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

March 11, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Summary Conviction Regulation
Updates**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works takes the safety of those travelling on our highways very seriously and has taken steps to increase practical enforcement tools related to offenses such as right-of-way encroachments.
- To do this, the *Summary Convictions Regulation* was updated in March to include additional offenses under the *Highways Act*.
- By updating the *Summary Convictions Regulation* enforcement officers at the weigh scales can now issue a ticket immediately for all listed *Highways Act* offences.
- Some *Highways Regulation* fine amounts listed in the *Summary Convictions Regulation* have also been changed as they had not been updated since 2002.

Additional response:

- The offenses listed in the *Highways Act* are all either matters of public safety or are important to sustain the integrity of our transportation infrastructure.
- The prior method of serving a summons to appear in court was costly and inefficient for everyone, as it took up valuable court and officer time.
- The new approach of issuing a ticket will lead to greater enforceability, and modern fine amounts are more likely to act as deterrents.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Commercial carriers may perceive fine increases as increased cost pressure.

Session Briefing Note
Summary Conviction Regulation
Updates

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- A communications campaign regarding the changes to the *Summary Convictions Regulation* is expected to commence in April 2024.

Background:

- Some significant issues which the *Summary Convictions Regulation* update seeks to enforce include:
 - Unlicensed right-of-way encroachments that can create dangerous obstacles or obscure sightlines for the travelling public.
 - Damage to any of Yukon’s 15 bailey bridges due to overloaded vehicles.
 - Damage or removal of traffic control devices that can lead to avoidable collisions.
 - Abandonment of vehicles along roadways that can increase the risk to the travelling public and cause significant environmental damage.

Approved by:	
	March 26, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Standard Bus Testing

Tab# 106
Spring 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is working hard to support standard bus testing as well as other commercial licences.
- We've successfully tested and licensed eleven new bus drivers for their Class 2 licence since fall 2023. These drivers are now fully licensed and ready to support the safe transport of students.
- The Yukon government is currently fully staffed with two full-time driver examiners as well as auxiliary on-call staff for testing in the communities.

Additional response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works actively collaborates with Yukon Standard Bus to ensure drivers are tested in an expeditious manner.
- Early November 2023, department officials from Highways and Public Works reached out to the Standard Bus General Manager to determine needs for driver testing.
- Standard Bus confirmed that two drivers were currently on a waitlist. Department officials had the two bus drivers tested on November 14.
- Standard Bus requested two additional road tests for November 30 or December 1. They were offered a few options, and those two drivers were tested on December 4.
- Mid-December, three road exams were requested and were confirmed to take place on January 3. Only two were completed as one driver was unavailable.

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Standard Bus Testing

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- In January, four road tests were requested and two were completed by early February.
- On February 20, 2024, Standard Bus requested a road test for March 1 which was completed as requested.
- No further requests have yet been made. Transport Services last spoke to Standard Bus in person on February 1 and by e-mail on February 20, 2024. The lines of communication are fully open.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- While Yukoners currently experience significant wait times for driver tests, standard bus drivers are prioritized and tested soon after the demand is identified.

Background:

- The concern of a backlog in testing bus drivers was brought up by the Opposition in the fall session.
- Since fall 2023, 11 bus drivers have been tested within six business days with the majority of drivers being tested within three business days of their requested date.
- There is no backlog of school bus drivers awaiting testing and the current demand for school bus driver road tests has been met. Any requests continue to be actioned on a priority basis.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

March 27, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Flood Preparedness

TAB# 107
Spring 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Yukon is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate, whether it be wildfires, flooding, landslides, increased precipitation, permafrost thaw or avalanches.
- Since 1948, the average annual temperatures in northern Canada have increased by 2.3 degrees Celsius. This is close to three times the rate at which global temperatures are rising.
- The April 1 snow survey noted a record-setting snowpack in the Porcupine River basin suggesting that the highest flood risks are expected in Old Crow, the Klondike Valley and the Dempster Highway, and Highways and Public Works is preparing for possible flooding that could affect our transportation infrastructure in these areas.
- At the Dawson City Airport and other airports and aerodromes where flooding is a risk, we are continuing with our on-site mitigations such as digging new trenches to direct water away from critical site infrastructure while also protecting the environment.
- Work is also underway at the Dawson City Airport to develop additional surface water management improvements such as ditching all around the airport to ensure it remains operational during potential local flood events.
- We are closely monitoring the snowpack melt and have an engineering team assessing options for other measures we can take to prepare.
- Our highway crews are also continuously monitoring the Yukon's highway network for any potential signs of flooding and efforts are being made to proactively prepare.

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Flood Preparedness**Spring 2024**
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- For example, culverts are inspected daily as part of flood preparedness in the Klondike, and in some cases, culverts are equipped with heat tape and a beaver guard to ensure water continues to flow through.
 - The department has emergency contracts in place to ensure the availability of additional equipment to respond to flood events if needed.
 - If water begins to overflow onto a main road highway engineers will assess and decide whether the best approach is to close the road or operate pumps and lower water levels.

Additional response: Long-term planning

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is working to minimize the impact of climate change on our transportation infrastructure in the long term by investing in adaptation and planning along our transportation network. This is a priority to address the increasing impacts of climate change.
- For example, we are conducting climate risk assessments on all major transportation infrastructure projects over \$10 million. These project-level assessments influence the design of new infrastructure so they can better withstand climate hazards like flooding over the next decade.
- In March 2024, department officials completed a climate change vulnerability study of the road transportation network. This study is the first step to understand where our roads are most exposed to long-term climate related risks.

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Flood Preparedness

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- This assessment looks at our highway's current exposure to climate related geohazards and forecasts where they might occur over the next 50 years.
- The results of this study will target areas of interest for monitoring, support requests for capital funding applications, and include a mitigation and adaptation package to support our project prioritization for capital planning and asset management.
- In addition, the department has developed a new drainage program to assess the Yukon highway corridor vulnerability and to systematically prioritize the areas for improvement.
- Last, the department has applied to the Federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund to upgrade the highway to help mitigate flooding and is expecting a response this spring. If the application is successful, upgrading work would be conducted over a 7-year period.

Additional response: Hunker Creek

- Highways and Public Works is monitoring and maintaining drainage channels along the Hunker Creek area by removing debris from culverts as required to prevent overflow on the highways.
- Department officials have installed a berm-like mechanism to prevent water from flowing into the Bear Creek Subdivision.
- In the long-term, department officials will begin designing and permitting the replacement of culverts in the area this year, with construction planned to take place in 2025.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- A briefing from the Yukon government on April 10 suggests that the highest flood risks this spring are expected in Old Crow, the Klondike Valley and the Dempster Highway.

Session Briefing Note
Flood Preparedness

TAB# 107
Spring 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- 2023 Arctic Report Card confirmed that between October 2022 to September 2023 was the sixth-warmest year in the Arctic and the continues to exceed the 1991-2020 average.
- The Yukon is experiencing many climate impacts that affect our transportation network.
 - Spring 2023 brought multiple washouts along the Klondike Highway that caused traffic disruptions and some highway closures.
 - In May 2023, there was a highway washout near the Oglivie River that required repairs, resulting in a highway closure lasting for several days.
- We have also opened a seasonal bypass road to 4x4 light duty trucks around the area susceptible to landslides near Rock Creek on the North Klondike Highway.
- When conditions improve, the seasonal bypass road will be available to light duty traffic.
- Last summer, Highways and Public Works performed proactive maintenance activities on the seasonal bypass road from All Gold to Hunker Summit Road, which allows alternate access to the City of Dawson, if required.
- This was done to provide emergency access for non-commercial vehicles to support the movement of supplies and support personnel in the event that additional slides occur in this area in the future, similar to those experienced in 2022.
- We will monitor the seasonal bypass access road throughout the summer.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 17, 2024

Date Approved