



Economic Development Briefing Notes

2024 Spring Sitting

Premier and Minister of Economic Development

Honorable Ranj Pillai



The DEPARTMENT of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2024 Spring Session Briefing Notes

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Recommended response:

- The Department of Economic Development aims to be a dynamic partner to First Nations, municipalities and the private sector with responsive resources for targeted opportunities that have measurable impacts on economic growth and diversification.
- The department provides a wide range of programs and investments aimed at driving growth, diversification and market expansion across the Yukon.
- The department continues to support Yukoners and their businesses to innovate, adapt and thrive.

Mineral Exploration and Development:

- The department continues to promote responsible mining and investment to maximize benefits to the Yukon's economy by working collaboratively with mineral sector stakeholders and First Nations partners.
- By promoting the Yukon as a stable investment jurisdiction for mineral development, First Nations governments, communities and families will continue to benefit from investments in the industry.
- The department has continued to promote the Yukon's investment potential at mining conferences in 2024 and hosted one of the most extensive Yukon Property Tours with YMA in July 2023.
- The department provides the Yukon Chamber of Mines and YMA with annual funding to support efforts to enhance Yukon's geological and investment potential.

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Investment Attraction:

- In 2024, the department has continued to promote investment in the territory to national and international audiences at events such as AME Round Up, the Vancouver Resource Investment Conference, and the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada annual conference.
- The department also provides funding support to organizations to promote the Yukon as an attractive jurisdiction in which to start a business, work, and grow.
- The 2023 Asia Trade Mission focused on attracting foreign direct investment, promoting economic immigration and addressing the Yukon's health human resource challenges.
- From September 11-19, 2023, a five-person business delegation consisting of Tourism Industry Association of Yukon, Screen Production Yukon Association, Tech Yukon, and the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce joined government officials and traveled to Japan and India.
- The delegation promoted the Yukon's critical mineral potential, as well as the territory's burgeoning tourism, film and media, and technology and innovation sectors.
- The delegation met with over 25 entities, including universities, tech hubs, businesses, commissions, chambers of commerce, and other industry and government representatives.
- In October 2023, the Yukon joined the Team Canada mission to Japan with a Deputy Minister-led delegation consisting of:
 - Yukon Chamber of Commerce;
 - Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce;

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- Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce; and
- Yukon Chamber of Mines.
- Topics of interest for the Yukon delegation during trade missions included mineral development, renewable energy, clean technology, agriculture and agri-foods, export development, immigration and labour market issues and opportunities to advance economic reconciliation.

Port of Skagway:

- The Yukon is negotiating with Skagway to construct a marine services platform capable of supporting ore loading equipment in the Port of Skagway.
- The Government of Yukon supported the Municipality of Skagway from 2022-23 with \$739,266 for design work and permitting requirements for the design of a Marine Services Platform.
- A non-binding terms sheet was signed on September 7, 2023.
- Negotiations toward the binding agreement have not yet concluded.
- Yukon and Skagway are working together to determine the best pathway forward for the project, and negotiations are continuing as we work to reach a binding agreement.

Labour Market Development:

- To support strategic alignment and economic recovery, Economic Development became the lead department for Labour Market Development on April 1, 2022.
- Based on current estimates, Labour Market Development invested over \$6.8 million in administering programs and services in 2023-24 to help individuals meet their labour market goals and help employers

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recruit, train and retain the staff they need for their businesses to thrive.

- Within that budget, Labour Market Development committed support for:
 - 11 organizations and institutions to provide training, employment services and work placement opportunities for approximately 1,000 Yukon First Nation members;
 - 19 organizations and service providers to provide help with employment assistance services and/or foundational skills to approximately 7,000 individuals to obtain employment. This category includes needs determination, employment counselling and job search training and providing labour market information; and
 - 30 employers for training, hiring, and retaining employees.
- The department **is undertaking** public engagement on the development of a future Yukon labour market strategy between March and September 2024.
- With the support of the Government of Canada (ESDC), Economic Development, along with a number of other Yukon government departments and external stakeholders, is developing a process to support internationally trained health care workers to be recruited to available positions in the Yukon.
 - Economic Development secured a \$3.6 million funding agreement with ESDC to deliver a four-year pilot initiative called the Foreign Credential Recognition Project.

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Immigration:

- The department provides economic immigration programs to help businesses across the territory meet their labour needs.
- We anticipate releasing a new immigration strategy in 2024. This strategy will guide us for the next decade, ensuring our immigration programs are responsive to the evolving needs of the Yukon's economy, employers and communities.
- In 2022, YNP utilized its full annual allocation of 300 spaces for the second time since the program was established in 2007.
- The department successfully worked with the federal government to raise the YNP allocation for 2023 to 430 people.
 - On November 16, 2023, as a result of our ongoing dialogue and advocacy with IRCC, the YNP received an additional 150 base allocations during the fall redistribution of allocation exercise.
- Between January 1 and December 31, 2023, 581 applicants were nominated.
- Between January 1 and March 31, 2024, 91 applicants were nominated; 64 Critical Impact Workers, 11 Skilled Workers, 12 Yukon Express Entry and 4 Yukon Community Program.
- Since 2001, 52 candidates have been nominated for permanent residence through the YBNP, establishing 32 businesses and investing \$25.3 million into their businesses.
- The governments of the Yukon and the Philippines signed a memorandum of understanding on March 18, 2022, to make it easier for Filipinos to immigrate to the Yukon under the territory's YNP. The MOU will make it easier for Filipinos to come to the Yukon while reducing costs and red tape for employers.

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- The Department of Economic Development is working to finalize the Implementation Guidelines for the MOU with the Philippine Department of Migrant Workers.
- In 2020, the department launched a new stream, the Yukon Community Program (YCP), specifically designed to support employers and nominees in rural communities. The pilot project has been extended until June 2025.

Technology and Innovation:

- The department is committed to building a thriving innovation economy by supporting technological growth and entrepreneurship.
- The department is collaborating with business, industry and First Nations partners to make strategic investments and promote an entrepreneurial culture that attracts and supports start-ups.
- The strategy, *Innovation Yukon: Bringing Northern Ingenuity to the World*, was released on November 9, 2023 and outlines the Yukon's unique strengths and identifies actions to help Yukoners create, grow, and mature their business ideas in the Yukon.
- An Innovation Commission was established between August and November 2021 to advise on the development of the five-year innovation strategy that will attract technology start-ups and grow the Yukon's digital ecosystem.
- We partnered with the Government of Canada to support the implementation of the Canada Digital Adoption Program for the Yukon. This program will help up to 140 small and medium-sized businesses to go online. Eighteen Yukon businesses have completed the program, with an additional 26 Yukon businesses currently enrolled.

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- Throughout the second half of 2022 and early 2023, we partnered with Yukon University and ComIT to deliver the first coding training for Yukon First Nations. 15 students completed stage one of the training.
 - We are now working with ComIT, Yukon University, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate and Tech Yukon to customize the offering for the next round based on the needs of our local tech businesses. A new intake is expected in 2024.
- We continue to partner with the innovation ecosystem to deliver on programs such as:
 - Yukonstruct's 12-week training program called Startup Bootcamp and its Pathfinding services, Yukon innovation week and the Hall of Innovators;
 - TechYukon's North of AI [Artificial Intelligence] program which had three startup companies accepted into the Scale AI program in 2022 and is accepting additional companies in 2023;
 - Investment readiness workshops for entrepreneurs and angel investors through a partnership between Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship and Vancouver-based Spring;
 - Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship's innovation grant;
 - Sponsoring the Mitacs Accelerate Research and Business Strategy Internship Program;
 - ElevateIP [Intellectual Property] program; and
 - Continued support for Yukon University's IncubateNorth program to provide space, tools and services to help market-ready startups grow faster.

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Media Development:

- Four new media funding programs and their administrative business guidelines were announced on January 10, 2022, to support the production of professional film, television and digital media projects.
- Between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024, we have approved 24 film applications for \$1,719,999, with total anticipated spending in the Yukon of approximately \$5.5 million, creating local jobs, building capacity while supporting Yukon businesses and entrepreneurs, and contributing to economic diversification.
- The Performing Musicians Fund approved 25 applications between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024, providing funding of \$211,908 to seven established musicians and 18 emerging musicians.

Trade:

- The internal trade regime set out in the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) supports the growth of local businesses beyond our territory, while ensuring the flow of goods and services from other parts of Canada into the Yukon.
- A Second Protocol of Amendment to the CFTA entered into force on January 16, 2024, resulting in the inclusion of cannabis within the scope and coverage of the agreement.
- Prince Edward Island is planning to host the next Committee on Internal Trade meeting in September 2024. The last meeting was chaired by the Yukon in 2022.
- We continue to engage with our federal, provincial and territorial counterparts in consultations related to Canada's international trading relationships and agreements.

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Collaborative Initiatives with First Nations:

- Yukon First Nations governments and their respective development corporations are critical in the growth and diversification of the Yukon's economy.
- The department supports the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce and their membership in Trade Mission activities such as the recent trip to Asia.
- Through trade missions and utilizing funding platforms such as the Economic Development Fund and Community Development Fund, the department continues to support First Nations governments and development corporations as they grow capacity, invest in new ventures, strengthen their communities and plan for the future, including:
 - Building governance institutions through capacity development such as:
 - Supporting the Council of Yukon First Nations to hire an Economic Development Analyst to meet Yukon Forum priorities and address the Government of Yukon's commitment to the 1993 Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) – Chapter 22 – Economic Development Measures.
 - Supporting strategic and economic planning efforts such as:
 - Supporting the Kluane Community Development Limited Partnership to explore opportunities for diverse activities that will promote the local use of resources and consider the viability of investing in wood product manufacturing based in Burwash Landing.
 - Identifying and supporting projects that will provide lasting benefits to Yukoners such as:

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- Supporting the Liard First Nation to restore the Dena Cho Trail from Watson Lake towards Ross River to preserve traditional knowledge;
 - Providing support to First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun to create an all-inclusive multi-platform Northern Tutchone Language App that can be used to support language revitalization programming for all citizens; and
 - Supporting and developing feasibility studies, and establishing business ventures such as:
 - Supporting Kluane Community Development Limited Partnership to upgrade the Dalan Campground to promote tourism activities in the community; and
 - Providing support to Yukon First Nation Wildfire LP to purchase equipment that will help them improve operational efficiency at scale and expand services to Atlin, BC.
-

Funding Supports:**Temporary Landlord Assistance Program:**

- The department introduced the Temporary Landlord Assistance Program (TLAP) in October 2023.
 - TLAP provided Yukon residential landlords with a one-time, per-unit subsidy of \$338 to bridge the 1.8 percentage point gap between how much landlords were expecting to be able to raise rent in 2023 (6.8% based on 2022 inflation) and the new cap of 5.0% imposed in January 2023.
 - The program **was** intended to provide an incentive for residential landlords to keep their units as rentals.
-

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- As of close of program, 520 applications were received, which include 2,577 units. As of April 18, 2024, 2,532 units were paid or were in process, representing \$855,816:
 - Whitehorse: 2,458 units.
 - Dawson: 58 units.
 - Other Communities: 16 units.

Paid Sick Leave Rebate:

- The department introduced the Paid Sick Leave Rebate (PSLR) program in 2023 that provides 40 hours of leave per 12-month period to eligible workers.
- No other jurisdiction in Canada has a government-funded paid sick leave program for the private sector.
- PSLR started on April 1, 2023, and will run until March 31, 2025.
- As of April 23, 2024 (applications to March 31, 2024), 902 employees from 146 businesses have been approved for \$525,011 in rebates through PLSR.

Klondike Valley Flood Program:

- Yukon government launched the Flood Recovery Funding Program in June 2023, to provide financial assistance to Yukoners for uninsured damages to their property and possessions caused by the flooding in the Klondike Valley and the Klondike area.
- The funding program had three streams: housing, agriculture and small business.
- Under the small business stream administered by Economic Development, eligible businesses could reclaim damage costs up to a maximum of \$500,000.

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- The department has received five applications, and works with applicants to process their submissions.

Economic Development Fund:

- The Economic Development Fund supports initiatives that benefit Yukon communities, help to pursue economic reconciliation by supporting Indigenous programs, communities and organizations, and improve our entrepreneurial ecosystem. These projects make our territory a better place for all to live, work and experience.
- During the 2021-22 fiscal year, EDF supported 54 projects with a total contribution commitment of over \$1.4 million.
- During the 2022-23 fiscal year, 52 projects were approved through EDF with a total contribution commitment of \$2,263,118.
- From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, 65 projects have been supported through the EDF, with a total contribution commitment of \$2,672,420.

Community Development Fund:

- Projects funded by the Community Development Fund (CDF) have continued to support events and initiatives that provide long-term, sustainable economic and social benefits to communities across the Yukon.
- From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, 68 projects have been supported through the CDF, with a total contribution commitment of \$3,304,856.
- During the 2022-23 fiscal year, 65 CDF projects were approved for a total of \$3,200,369.
- During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the CDF supported 59 projects year with a total contribution commitment of \$2,931,497.

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Covid 19:

- *The Economic resilience plan: Building Yukon's COVID-19 economic resiliency* was released to the public on March 10, 2021, to guide the Yukon's economy back to pre-pandemic levels of productivity, and to chart a path beyond in a way that is consistent with our environmental and socio-economic commitments.
- Throughout the pandemic, we monitored and tailored our supports to meet Yukoners' changing needs, from immediate relief to adaptation and investment. The department delivered a range of nine (9) programs to help with effects.
- We continue to respond to the needs of business as recovery from the pandemic progresses.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in the tangible outcomes resulting from the work of the department across its various branches.

Background:

- Economic Development's current Strategic Plan (2022-23 to 2024-25) identifies a vision of:
The Department of Economic Development aims to be a dynamic partner to First Nations, municipalities and the private sector with responsive resources for targeted opportunities that have measurable impacts on economic growth and diversification.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| <u>Approved</u> | <u>April 25, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

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Recommended response:

- The Yukon's economy continues to perform well with positive indicators in many areas.
 - The Yukon's revised real GDP growth rate was a very solid 5.8% in 2022, with continued growth expected for 2023.
 - In 2023, the Yukon's labour market (labour force participation, job vacancies and average pay) continued to outpace Canadian averages, and we continue to have among the lowest unemployment rates in Canada.
 - The population continues to grow, average weekly earnings are up, and retail sales are still strong and rising.
 - Despite the abrupt closure of the Minto mine, the mining industry continues to be a significant contributor to the Yukon's economy. Victoria Gold continues operations and the Keno Hill silver mine resumed milling stockpiles of ore in June 2023. This means more mining jobs in the Yukon, more money for local businesses and more partnerships that bring jobs and training to our communities.
 - The latest year-over-year monthly inflation number for Whitehorse is 2.4% for March 2024, continuing its downward trend, and lower than the 2.9% Canadian CPI:
 - Increases in mortgage interest cost, food purchased from restaurants and rent are the biggest current drivers of the Yukon's inflation; and

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- Telephone services, fuel oil and video subscription services have seen price decreases.
- For all of 2023, inflation averaged 4.9% in Whitehorse, down from 6.8% in 2022.
- Key points:
 - After dramatic real GDP growth of 8.4% in 2021, the Yukon's GDP growth slowed to a still robust 5.8% in 2022, the second highest in Canada;
 - The Yukon continues to have among the lowest unemployment rates in Canada, averaging 3.6% in 2023, and 4.3% for March 2024 (well under the Canadian average of 6.1%);
 - There are many available jobs in the Yukon, 1,035 in the fourth quarter of 2023.
 - The average wage offered for vacant jobs in Q3 2023 was \$28.45 per hour. Particularly encouraging is that the average wage offered for the 410 vacant jobs in sales and service occupations in Q3 2023 has risen to \$20.15 per hour; and,
 - Construction, particularly residential construction, is a sector showing significant strength.

Additional response:

- Tourism, in the Yukon as in the rest of Canada, has been rebounding strongly but Yukon border-crossing data shows visitor numbers have not yet fully returned to pre-pandemic levels.
 - For 2023, crossings are up by 166% over 2022 to just over 454,000. This is approximately 90% of crossings in 2019.

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Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is always a high degree of interest in the state of the economy.
 - The issue has been raised in the house that more should be done to help mitigate inflationary pressure for individuals.
-

Background:

Real GDP:

- For 2022, the Yukon's GDP growth rate was 5.8%, the second highest in the country.
- Statistics Canada's revised GDP numbers show the Yukon's economy grew by 8.4% in 2021, while Canada's GDP grew by 5.2% over the year.

Population:

- The Yukon's population has continued to grow, reaching a new high of 45,597 estimated at the end of September 2023.

Labour Market:

- The Yukon continues to have one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada (averaging 4.5% in 2022, and 3.6% in 2023).
- The size of the Yukon's labour force grew to 24,900 in 2023, there was further growth in the average number of employed, and a significant drop (-14.2%) in the average number of unemployed compared to 2022.
- The Yukon's average weekly earnings increased by 2.8% in 2022 and again by 3.0% in 2023.

Retail Sales:

- In 2022, the Yukon's retail sales topped one billion for the first time at \$1.03 billion, an increase of 16.4% over 2021.
- 2023 showed retail sales continuing their upward trend, rising 7.8% over 2022 to \$1.17 billion.

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Real Estate:

- The value of real estate transactions and the average price of homes were on a steep upward trend to a peak in Q3 of 2022. However, the value of transactions and average home prices began declining in 2023.
 - For 2023, the value of transactions fell by 12.4% from 2022;
 - In 2022, the average weighted price of a single-detached house in Whitehorse was \$676,700, up from \$645,000 in 2021 and \$564,700 in 2020; and
 - In 2023, the average weighted price of a single-detached house in Whitehorse dropped to \$640,600, down by 5.3% from 2022.
- Residential construction remains strong.
 - In 2022, the number of permits for new or converted dwelling units fell sharply from the peaks in 2020 and 2021, down 35% to 415 (about the average level in 2018 and 2019); and
 - For 2023, the number of residential permits has rebounded somewhat, up 3.4% over 2022 to 429 units.

Mining:

- The Yukon's mining sector continues to contribute significantly to the economy:
 - Victoria Gold's Eagle Gold Mine, the largest gold mine in the Yukon's history, achieved full commercial production as of July 1, 2020:
 - Total gold production in 2020 was 116,644 ounces;
 - In 2021, production rose to 164,222 ounces;
 - Production in 2022 fell to 150,182 ounces due in large part to a 4.5-week pause in milling in the first half of the year due to excess water in the mine due to a heavy spring thaw, along with a 2.5-week shutdown of the mine's conveyer system in the fall; and
 - Production rose again to 166,730 ounces of gold in 2023.
 - The Minto Mine, under the ownership of Pembridge Resources, resumed producing copper concentrate in late 2019. Ownership was transferred to Minto Metals Corporation:

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- Copper production rose from 17.8 million pounds in 2020 to 25.6 million pounds in 2021;
 - Copper production rose to 28.9 million pounds in 2022 and the mine produced 5.7 million pounds in Q1 2023;
 - The company abruptly ceased production and abandoned the property in May 2023; and
 - Minto Metals is now in receivership, the site is under the care of the Yukon government and various creditors claiming millions in unpaid bills.
- Alexco Resource Corporation resumed production at Keno Hill in late 2020 and production levels ramped up sharply in 2021, with annual production of 621,601 ounces of silver.
 - Keno Hill continued to produce in the first half of 2022 but suspended mining and milling in June 2022.
 - Alexco was officially acquired by Hecla Mining Company in early September 2022, and Hecla has announced plans to keep operations at Keno Hill suspended for 18 months, as they work to redesign the mine plan, accelerate development, and open up sufficient working faces.
 - Milling operations were restarted in June 2023, and the mine produced 1,502,577 ounces of silver by the end of the year.
 - Newmont's proposed Coffee Creek mine has cleared its initial environmental assessment, a significant advance for the project. However, Newmont has announced that it is looking for a buyer for the project.
 - 2022 data shows that the industry spent \$186.8 million on exploration and deposit appraisal, up from the \$153.9 million spent in 2021.
 - The industry expects exploration and deposit appraisal spending of \$162.7 million in 2023.

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Economic Overview

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| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--|---------|---------|------------------|
| Real GDP | | | |
| Annual per cent change | 8.4 | 5.8 | |
| Population | | | |
| Population (annual average) | 43,263 | 44,028 | 45,597 (to Sept) |
| Annual per cent change | 2.2 | 1.8 | N/A |
| Labour Market | | | |
| Average labour force, annual | 24,000 | 24,500 | 24,900 |
| Average employed, annual | 22,600 | 23,400 | 24,000 |
| Average annual unemployment rate (percent) | 6.3 | 4.5 | 3.6 |
| Consumers | | | |
| Average annual inflation (percent) | 3.3 | 6.8 | 4.9 |
| Annual retail sales (\$millions) | 1,011 | 1,085 | 1,170 |
| Real Estate (Whitehorse) | | | |
| Total sales (\$millions) | 386.9 | 403.4 | 368.8 |
| Average detached house price (\$) | 645,000 | 676,700 | 640,600 |

Approved by:

A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Mandate Commitments

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Recommended response:

- The Department of Economic Development is advancing its mandate commitments to support local jobs and diversify our economy.
- These initiatives will create opportunities for innovation in the Yukon and support economic development and diversification.
- Priority initiatives include continuing to support community and economic development initiatives and addressing the Yukon's workforce needs through immigration and labour market development programs.
- We anticipate releasing our new Immigration strategy in 2024. It will guide policy and program development over the next decade to be responsive to the needs of Yukon employers.
- Economic Development will continue to align the department's work with the needs of the business community and strive to help address the labour challenges facing sectors across the territory. This includes the development of a Yukon labour market strategy and by supporting immigration of francophone and skilled workers.
- On November 9, 2023, we released our Innovation Strategy, *Innovation Yukon: Bringing Northern Ingenuity to the World*, to support and drive innovation forward.
 - The Innovation Commission played a key role in the development of the strategy.
- These commitments focus on supporting local entrepreneurs and innovators and providing Yukon businesses with the assistance they need now and into the future.

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Mandate Commitments

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Additional response:

- Other commitments include: exploring the feasibility of commercial and passenger rail in the Yukon, and; ensuring the Port of Skagway remains a viable export option for the Yukon's mining industry.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions may arise about the timing for completion of commitments already underway and funding and resources for new commitments.
-

Background:

Key mandate commitments:

Complete an **Innovation Strategy** that will guide our work in creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs:

- The five-year strategy that was announced on November 9, 2023, outlines the Yukon's unique strengths, and identifies actions, programs and services that will achieve our vision of attracting technology start-ups and growing the Yukon's digital ecosystem.
- Development of the Innovation Strategy considered and incorporated the input provided by the Innovation Commission.
- Engagement for the development of the innovation plan was completed and the *What We Heard* report was issued in August 2021.

Introduce a new **Immigration strategy** to address labour challenges facing the private sector and our healthcare and education systems:

- We anticipate releasing this strategy 2024, and it will guide policy and program development over the next decade to be responsive to the needs of employers.
 - The *What We Heard* report on the engagement for the Immigration Strategy was released to the public in July 2021.
-

Session Briefing Note

Mandate Commitments

Spring 2024**Economic
Development**

Work with the French Language Services Directorate to support **Francophone Immigration**:

- We will work to support francophone immigration to meet the needs of Yukon employers and communities.

Begin consultation on a **Labour Market Strategy**:

- The previous *Yukon Labour Market Framework* was a 10-year initiative that expired in 2020.
- The department has developed an engagement plan for a Yukon labour market strategy.
- The department **has been approved to begin public engagement on a future Yukon labour market strategy between March and September 2024.**

Work in partnership with other levels of government and Yukon University to identify opportunities to streamline and support **recognition of foreign credentials**:

- Foreign credential recognition is key to meeting labour needs, particularly in skilled trades, education and health care.
- Our government is taking steps to streamline FCR in the Yukon, particularly for foreign-trained healthcare workers.
- On January 30, 2023, Labour Market Development, in consultation with Health and Social Services, submitted an application to Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) for funding to support the integration of internationally educated health professionals into the Yukon's labour force.
- Government of Yukon **signed** a \$3.6 million funding agreement with ESDC **in February 2024** to deliver a four-year pilot initiative called the Foreign Credential Recognition Project.
- Economic Development will work with federal, provincial and territorial partners to identify ways to streamline licensing processes, create work opportunities and provide tailored employment services to internationally educated healthcare professionals.

Session Briefing Note

Mandate Commitments

TAB 3

Spring 2024

Economic Development

Investigate the feasibility of **commercial and passenger rail** in the Yukon:

- The department is working with partners, including the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway, to evaluate the feasibility of bringing back commercial and passenger rail to the Yukon.
- Reopening the railway to regular freight and passenger service would provide an alternative supply chain route in the event of a closure of the Alaska Highway south of Whitehorse.
- Economic Development has held two meetings with White Pass and Yukon Route and one meeting with Blackstone Infrastructure Partners for high-level conceptual discussions.
- Follow up discussions have resulted in information sharing with a view to developing a terms of reference for a feasibility study.

Ensure the **Port of Skagway** remains accessible as an export option for the Yukon mining industry:

- The Port of Skagway is the closest ice-free, deep-water port to most of the Yukon. Skagway demolished its existing ore loader as part of a port redevelopment project in fall 2023, eliminating its ore export capability. The Government of Yukon is negotiating the inclusion of a marine services platform capable of supporting replacement ore loading equipment.
- In the Fall Session 2023, the Legislature appropriated \$21.36 million to support this potential pathway to bundle the project with Skagway's main redevelopment project. This pathway would have required the Export Cooperation Agreement to be finalized in fall 2023.
- A non-binding terms sheet was signed by Yukon and Skagway on September 7, 2023, but the binding Export Cooperation Agreement has not yet been finalized. Consequently, the appropriation **has lapsed**.
- The Department is continuing negotiations toward a final agreement and is working with Skagway to determine the best path forward.

Session Briefing Note

Mandate Commitments

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

2021 Mandate Commitments:

For reference purposes, the following items were identified in the 2021 Mandate Letter for Minister Pillai and were actioned as follows:

COVID support programs:

- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate program was extended to March 31, 2023.
- The Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement (TASS) and the Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement (TNASS) were transferred from Tourism to Economic Development. Both programs have ended (TASS ended on March 31, 2022, and TNASS ended on July 31, 2022).
- The Vaccine Verification Rebate program and the Yukon Emergency Business Relief program were developed in response to CEMA that was declared on November 8, 2021. Both programs have ended.

Establish an **Innovation Commission** to attract new technology start-ups and grow the Yukon's digital ecosystem:

- The Innovation Commission was established and met six times between August and November 2021. The work of the Commission has now concluded.

Foster the growth of the **Yukon's film industry**:

- Four new media programs, including administrative business guidelines, were announced on January 10, 2022, to support the production of professional film, television and digital media projects.
- The new budget to support the four funds within the program (Predevelopment, Development, Media Production and Training) totals \$1,160,000.

Working with Yukon University to investigate the feasibility of a **varsity sports program**:

- The department worked on this project in collaboration with the Department of Education, Yukon University, Sport Yukon and Aboriginal Sport Circle.
- A feasibility study and roadmap for how YukonU might develop a varsity sports program including estimated costs for each stage was completed.
- Department of Education is now considering next steps for this program.

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Mandate Commitments

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Creating a **Mineral Exploration Fund** to support junior mining companies operating in the Yukon:

- The department completed a preliminary review for a number of fund models and tendered a contract for fund design in February 2022. Three proponents submitted bids by April 2022, but only one bid met the technical requirements for the project. The bid was rejected due to a substantially higher cost than the RFP budget.
- The department will remain open to potential opportunities related to the establishment of a Mineral Exploration Fund.

Investigating, in partnership with the private sector, the potential to develop a **flexible fieldhouse complex** for athletes and large public conferences and events:

- Preliminary scoping and background research was completed on the feasibility of building a flexible fieldhouse complex for athletes and large public events.
- The research considered inflatable dome, insulated fabric building structure, and standard building designs. For various reasons, including cost and lack of suitability to the Yukon's climate, all options posed significant challenges to implementation.
- The Department is not moving forward with further research at this time.

Working with the **non-profit sector** to ensure that this important industry is able to recover from COVID-19 by enhancing opportunities for collaboration and shared services:

- This was a shared mandate commitment with Community Services.
- The department designed a short-term COVID response and recovery program in collaboration with the non-profit sector, which was administered by Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon. This program provided a fund of \$250,000 to help address the impacts of Covid-19 that are still having an effect on Yukon's NGOs.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 25, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Skagway Port Redevelopment Project**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is negotiating for secure tidewater access in the Port of Skagway for the Yukon mining industry.
- Our objective is to secure waterfront space to ensure that Skagway remains an export option for Yukon industry in the future.
- Yukon is proposing that Yukon and Skagway collaborate to build a marine services platform to enable ore export.
 - The platform would be a 227-foot, T-shaped, fixed concrete dock. It would be able to support multiple ore loading methods, as well as loading and unloading of other heavy goods.
- Skagway's port redevelopment project eliminated its ore export capability in fall 2023.
- Yukon has funded the design for the platform, totaling \$739,266 CAD.
- The Department considered bundling Skagway's port redevelopment with the marine services platform. This option would have required that a binding agreement be finalized in fall 2023.
- A non-binding terms sheet was signed on September 7, 2023.
- Negotiations toward the binding agreement have not yet concluded.
- We are working towards finalizing the Export Cooperation Agreement, under which Yukon would fund the construction of a marine services platform in exchange for preferential access and fee discounts for Yukon mining companies using a future ore terminal.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Skagway Port Redevelopment
Project**Economic
Development

Additional response:

- We respect the priorities and responsibilities of the Municipality of Skagway as they plan for the future of the ore peninsula post-2023, including the need to modernize the port for cruise ship traffic.
- We believe that we are working toward a solution that will secure long-term tidewater access for Yukon's industry and work for the community of Skagway.

If asked about the \$21M appropriation in supplementary estimates #1 (2023):

- As we indicated during the supplementary estimate process, the appropriation was based on an estimate for a possible pathway under which Yukon's proposed marine services platform would be bundled with Skagway's main redevelopment project.
- That pathway would have incurred significant mobilization and procurement costs in 2023-24 and would have required that a final binding agreement be completed in winter 2023-24.
- No funding was to be expended without that legally binding agreement with Skagway.
- As negotiations towards a binding agreement are ongoing, and were not finalized by fall 2023, the appropriation could not be spent.
- Yukon and Skagway are working together to determine the best pathway forward for the project, and negotiations are continuing as we work to reach a binding agreement.

If asked why the Marine Services Platform isn't in the 2024-25 capital plan:

- While the Skagway Marine Services Platform is not specifically highlighted in the 2024-25 Five-Year Capital Plan document, \$44.7

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Skagway Port Redevelopment Project

Economic Development

million in funding is included in the fiscal plan and in the Capital Plan in 2025-26 through 2027-28.

- The funding for this project is included within the Real property and asset management category in the Capital Plan, in the table titled "Total planned capital spending by investment category" on page 8.

If asked about economic rationale for the initiative:

- Mining remains an important part of Yukon's economy. In 2021, it constituted 13.9% of GDP and provided significant indirect benefits to other sectors. In 2020, for example, 5.1% of the gross revenue of Yukon's retail sector was attributable to mining.
- Reliable access to Skagway's port helps attract investment, supports mine development and encourages mineral exploration in the Yukon.
- **Mine Development.** The nearest alternative export option to Skagway is Stewart, BC. For many potential mine projects in the Yukon, this would greatly increase trucking costs and directly impacts mine viability.
 - For Minto, shipping to Stewart instead of Skagway would have increased its trucking expenses by roughly 327%.
- The lack of an export option in Skagway would have a similar impact on the proposed Casino project given its location. This would directly affect the project's viability.
- **Should** Casino **be** unable to be developed due to the lack of an export option, Yukon could lose out on significant benefits. The estimated nominal impact on Yukon's economy of a single year of construction for Casino is:
 - Average annual spending on construction of \$723.5 million;
 - Total (direct, indirect and induced) GDP impact would be \$455 million; and

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Skagway Port Redevelopment
ProjectEconomic
Development

-
- The total (direct, indirect and induced) jobs impact would be 3,316 jobs for that year.
 - **Investment and Exploration.** The lack of a secure export option in Skagway could make our jurisdiction less attractive and make it more difficult for junior companies to market their projects.
 - This could have a significant impact on the sector's contribution to the economy:
 - Exploration spending makes up a significant part of total mining activity in Yukon. In 2020, exploration spending was at \$75.8 million and in 2021, it totaled \$113 million.
 - For 2018-22, mineral exploration and development appraisal expenditures averaged \$154.2 million annually in the Yukon.
 - This represents a total (direct, indirect and induced) GDP impact of \$128 million and 893 jobs.
 - **Critical Minerals.** Yukon benefits from a wealth of critical mineral resources. Losing secure tidewater access could directly impact our ability to contribute to the national critical minerals strategy or to develop our own.
 - Yukon has known occurrences of 25 of the 31 critical minerals on Canada's critical minerals list, including known primary deposits of copper, zinc, molybdenum, tungsten, tin, nickel and platinum group elements.
 - These minerals are essential for the green and digital economy, and support key technologies like clean energy zero emission vehicles, and advanced manufacturing.

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Skagway Port Redevelopment Project

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- Yukon's ability to contribute to this generational transition will require us to better integrate our upstream mining production in the national value chain for critical minerals.

If asked about ore loading methods:

- The selection of loading method depends on both acceptability in Skagway and industry needs. To maximize flexibility, this is best determined by future conversations between Skagway and specific users.
- On October 5, 2023, the Municipality of Skagway passed an ordinance mandating that any ore shipped out of Skagway must be transported in sealed containers and loaded using a containerized bulk-ore handling system.
- Our work aims at creating a footprint that can support and enable whatever ore loading method best meets stakeholder interest.

Industry Engagement:

- We have regularly engaged industry throughout the process, and have repeatedly been informed by stakeholders that they view access to the port as critical to the future of Yukon's mining industry.
- Most recently, the Department held three meetings on Skagway with Industry stakeholders on April 3, 2024, including with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Joint Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and with Western Copper and Gold.
- Economic Development has met regularly with the Joint Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (JTIC), which represents Chambers and mining companies' interests, to provide updates and seek input on platform design.
- Since February 2023, we held the following meetings with JTIC:

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Skagway Port Redevelopment Project**Economic
Development

- Feb 7, 2023 - a briefing was provided to the Joint Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (JTIC) on the 60% design.
- March 1, 2023 - a follow up meeting took place to answer industry questions.
- April 12, 2023 - a scheduled briefing to JTIC with a commitment to move to quarterly meetings.
- September 22, 2023 - a presentation to JTIC on Terms Sheet and update on negotiations.
- October 4, 2023 - a presentation to JTIC on Terms Sheet and update on negotiations.
- October 23, 2023 - a meeting with JTIC took place to discuss the Term Sheet and MSP design.
- December 6, 2023 - a meeting with JTIC to update it on the MSP and Yukon Resource Gateway.
- February 7, 2024 – meeting with JTIC.
- April 3, 2024 – meeting to discuss Skagway and MSP status, including budget

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Skagway's planned port redevelopment project eliminated its ore export capability in fall 2023. Yukon is negotiating with Skagway to secure replacement infrastructure in the port.
- The tender process undertaken by Skagway for its project was public. This includes the bid price and other references to the proposed marine services platform.
- The Fall Session 2023 appropriation of \$21.36 million for the project lapsed and there is no appropriation in Budget 2024-25, with the project budget instead moving to the capital plan.

- The Port of Skagway is the closest ice-free, deep-water port to most of the Yukon. Skagway demolished its existing ore loader as part of a port redevelopment project in fall 2023, eliminating its ore export capability.
- The Government of Yukon is negotiating the inclusion of a marine services platform capable of supporting replacement ore loading equipment.
- The marine services platform was included as an additive alternative in the bid documents for Skagway's port development project. This provided a pathway to bundle the platform with Skagway's main redevelopment project. In the Fall Session 2023, the Legislature appropriated \$21.36 million to support this potential pathway to bundle the two projects. This pathway would have required the Export Cooperation Agreement to be finalized in fall 2023.
- A non-binding terms sheet was signed by Yukon and Skagway on September 7, 2023, but the binding Export Cooperation Agreement has not yet been finalized. Consequently, the appropriation **was not spent and funds were moved to the capital plan.**
- The Department is continuing negotiations toward a final agreement and is working with Skagway to determine the best path forward.

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|---|-----------------------|
| <u>Approved</u> | <u>April 25, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Security Contract of the Alexander Street Area**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- 405 Alexander Street provides essential life-saving services for members of our community.
- Our government is also taking action to address immediate safety and security concerns for businesses and citizens in the Alexander Street area.
- One of these actions included contracting a private security service, Sirius Security, to patrol the area immediately surrounding 405 Alexander, providing a visible deterrent to behaviors and incidents that have created insecurity and safety issues in the neighbourhood.
- Economic Development's contract with Sirius Security ended December 31, 2023. The Department of Health and Social Services has since taken the lead on security services in the downtown core.

Additional response:

- From November 1 to December 31, 2023, Sirius:
 - Directly dealt with 11 incidents;
 - Completed close to 1000 tours; and
 - Reported suspicious activities to the RCMP.
- The total cost to Economic Development for the two-month pilot project was \$50,000.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Safety and security of businesses and citizens in the area surrounding 405 Alexander has received significant attention in the media and Legislative Assembly during the 2023 Fall Session.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Security Contract of the Alexander Street Area**Economic
Development

- On November 2, 2023, the Premier delivered a Ministerial Statement that referenced the security services in the area surrounding 405 Alexander.
-

Background:

- On October 12, 2023, the Government of Yukon hosted a Downtown Whitehorse Community Partners Roundtable Discussion.
- Following this discussion, on October 20, 2023, Premier Pillai issued a statement committing to a number of actions, including increased oversight and outreach presence in downtown Whitehorse through hiring private security services for businesses in proximity to Alexander Street.
- The Department of Economic Development, working in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services, signed a contract with Sirius Security to deliver security services for a specified area of downtown Whitehorse during the hours of concern for businesses and citizens.
 - This pilot contract lasted November 1 to December 31, 2023.
 - Health and Social Services has since signed a new contract with Sirius Security. Economic Development is not involved in the new contract.
- Sirius Security staff (patrol guards) conducted over 1000 patrol tours of the area during November 1 to December 31, 2023. Between that time, they directly dealt with 11 incidents and reported suspicious activities to the RCMP.
- Sirius Security's patrols were intended to act as a visible deterrent against loitering on private property, vandalism, and illegal drug use.
- Patrol guard received the following training:
 - Completion of a 40–60-hour Basic Security Training course through the Canadian Academy of Guard Training (based on the standard in Ontario).
 - Initial and ongoing training on, and adherence to, the company's Social Safety Mandate, including Mental Health Awareness and De-escalation Training.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Security Contract of the Alexander
Street Area**Economic
Development

- Yukon-specific de-escalation training developed by Sirius Security and based on ten years of Yukon experience, including history and culture of Yukon First Nations, as well as strategies to ensure that all security guard interactions and engagement with First Nations individuals is done with respect and acknowledgement of their traditional territories and way of life.
- The total cost to Economic Development for the initial two-month pilot project contract with Sirius Security was \$50,000.

Approved by: Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development February 1, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Program Red Tape Reduction**Economic
Department

Recommended response:

- We continue to focus on improvements that make departmental services easier to access. We know this is key to ensuring that the Yukon remains a competitive place to work and do business.
- The department is working to reduce barriers encountered by Yukon businesses and individuals who wish to access our programs.
- Since 2020, the department has undertaken a number of initiatives to reduce red tape and improve program accessibility:
 - Amalgamated three prior funds into the Economic Development Fund in March 2021.
 - Modernized funding support for the film industry.
 - Modernized funding supports for Yukon's performing musicians.
 - Delivered COVID-19 support programs using online application forms and a merged application form for multiple funds.
- In the past year, the department has continued efforts to improve accessibility through:
 - A new annual Funders Meet and Greet, which was held in March 2023 and February 2024. The event connects individuals, businesses and other organizations with programs and improves accessibility.
 - This year, the event involved 37 organizations, enabling the public to connect with numerous Government of Yukon departments and branches, federal government departments, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the City of Whitehorse

Session Briefing Note

Program Red Tape Reduction

Tab 6

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and Yukon U, along with many NGOs that provide funding for Yukoners.

- Ongoing delivery and review across department programs to improve clarity and accessibility
- Holding two smaller versions of the Funders Meet and Greet in Dawson City and Pelly Crossing to provide information about funding programs tailored to each community.
- Delivering six “Lunch and Learn” events for community organizations to better understand how to access and apply to the Community Development Fund and the Economic Development Fund.
- In addition, we are working on a number of new initiatives to further reduce red tape and streamline access to our programs:
 - We are conducting a review of the Economic Development Fund to support clarity and accessibility;
 - We are working to finalize a new immigration strategy, which will aim to streamline and improve our immigration supports;
 - We are beginning public engagement for a new labour market strategy, to identify current barriers and align programming with client needs; and
 - We have signed an agreement with the Government of Canada to launch a foreign credentials recognition pilot project, which will explore ways to reduce barriers to labour mobility for internationally educated health professionals.

Session Briefing Note

Program Red Tape Reduction

Tab 6 Spring 2024

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Department

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in the ways the department is working to improve service and program accessibility to Yukoners, including for small businesses and non-governmental organizations.

Background:

- Examples of departmental initiatives undertaken since 2020 include:
 - Amalgamated the Enterprise Trade Fund, Regional Economic Development Fund and Strategic Industries Development Fund to launch the new Economic Development Fund on March 9, 2021. This reduced red tape for clients by implementing a standardized application process;
 - Modernized the funding supports for the film industry;
 - Modernized the funding supports for Yukon's performing musicians;
 - While COVID-19 programs were active, applications were available for download and submission online; and,
 - While the programs were active, we merged the application forms for the Yukon Business Relief Program, Tourism Accommodation and Non-Accommodation Sector Supplements into one form to apply for financial assistance.
- Ongoing initiatives include:
 - Economic Development delivers and reviews its funding programs to ensure they continue to meet the needs of Yukon businesses and communities. For example, the Media Development Branch continues to refine the policies and guidelines for its revamped programs introduced in 2022.
 - The Labour Market Development Branch continues to provide extensive hands-on assistance to its clients particularly to ensure that they can and do meet the program reporting requirements.

Session Briefing Note

Program Red Tape Reduction

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- The Immigration Branch continues work on implementing an online data base that will improve access and reduce administrative burdens to employers who use the Yukon Nominee Program (YNP). The branch approved a record number of YNP applications in 2023 and there has been a significant number of first-time employer users of the program in the past year.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 7, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Innovation, Industry and Business
Development Branch**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- As of April 1, 2024, the department's Business and Industry Development Branch and Technology and Innovation Branch will merge to form the new "Innovation, Industry and Business Development Branch".
- This change is designed to enhance service efficiency and to embed innovation into our core operations.
- The Department of Economic Development is committed to innovation and continuous improvement and will continue to serve and support the needs of Yukoners and the Yukon's business community, including Chambers of Commerce and the technology and innovation sector.

Additional response:

- The number of bargaining unit employees within the department will not change. However, merging the two branches will create efficiencies and reduce the department's management team by one position.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The change in departmental structure will be identified in the Budget Speech for the 2024 Main Estimates.
- There has been an ongoing interest in the number of Full Time Equivalent positions within the Government of Yukon.

Background:

- The Yukon's innovation strategy, "*Innovation Yukon: Bringing Northern Ingenuity to the World*" was launched on November 10, 2023.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 27, 2024

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Business Incentive Program**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Business Incentive Program (BIP) supports local economic activity by providing rebates to businesses working on eligible Government of Yukon contracts.
- Rebates are available for hiring Yukon youth, apprentices and adults and for Yukon-made goods and services.
- Since April 1, 2023, BIP has processed four applications totaling \$75,936 in rebates.
- The department is currently reviewing additional applications representing up to \$442,862 in rebates.

Additional response:

- BIP must comply with the procurement thresholds specified in the Yukon's domestic and Canada's international trade agreements.
- The department is looking to modernize BIP in response to changing labour market conditions and low unemployment.
- BIP paid \$39,779 in rebates in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Not all contractors are aware of the free trade threshold limitations on BIP which were introduced in 2017 with the signing of the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

Background:

- BIP provides two types of rebates for Yukon government procurements:
 - Construction rebates for labour and apprentice costs, youth employment, and Yukon materials; and

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Business Incentive Program

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- Goods and Services rebates for items produced locally and purchased by the Government of Yukon.

BIP and Trade Agreements:

- BIP's preference for local content discriminates against other Canadian and international jurisdictions.
- The Yukon has an exception for BIP in the Canadian Free Trade Agreement procurement obligations.
- There are no exceptions for BIP in Canada's international trade agreements, but two carve-outs do exist:
 - The Yukon does not include school boards or municipalities as covered entities in Canada's international trade agreements, so their procurement is not bound by treaty; and
 - The Yukon has access to ten regional economic development exceptions per year for contracts of up to \$1 million. The Yukon must formally notify Global Affairs Canada when it intends to use one of these exceptions.
- The Yukon cannot apply BIP to contracts exceeding \$238,000 for goods and services and \$9.1 million for construction.

Aboriginal Exceptions in Trade Agreements:

- Canada maintains Indigenous exceptions and reservations in all its major trade agreements to meet its constitutional and statutory obligations. BIP can be applied to favour Yukon First Nations over other Yukon, Canadian or foreign businesses without contravening trade obligations.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Approved | February 1, 2024 |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Economic Development Fund**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Economic Development Fund (EDF) is intended to support economic growth and diversification by providing funding for the broadest possible range of initiatives.
- From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, 65 projects were approved under the EDF, for a total of \$2,672,420 in funding. Several projects are multi-year initiatives.
- These projects are located throughout the Yukon and include, among others:
 - \$20,325 to St. Elias Chamber of Commerce to research and inventory abandoned, derelict, undeveloped, dormant, and tired properties in Haines Junction to make them available for community investment;
 - \$7,500 to Haldane Services Ltd to develop a business plan that will guide them on how to expand business services to and from the Mayo region to companies needing cost-effective transportation services; and
 - \$15,721 to Elements Esthetics Academy for brand and website development for its esthetics programs in rural communities.
 - \$7,038 to Kaylyn Baker Designs to participate in the PayPal Fashion Week in Melbourne, Australia.
 - \$5,000 to Dawson City Music Festival Association to develop marketing and asset development for the 2024 festival.
- Annual Reports for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 fiscal years are available on Yukon.ca.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Economic Development Fund**Economic
Development

Additional response:

- During 2022-23 fiscal year, 52 projects were approved for a total of \$2,263,118 in funding.
- Eligible projects under the EDF include those that:
 - support business innovation, sustainability and planning;
 - encourage economic diversification through market support; and
 - increase business competitiveness through capacity and capital development.
- All EDF applications are reviewed and assessed to ensure they meet fund eligibility and evaluation criteria.
- The program enables businesses to make improvements through capital purchases in order to enhance competitiveness.
- Capital investments will be considered where the applicant can show that the project has real potential for a positive long-term impact on the broader Yukon economy, not solely on an individual business.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The EDF is a competitive program that is often oversubscribed.
-

Background:

- The fund provides support to Yukon businesses, First Nations governments, First Nations development entities, municipalities, community societies or industry associations and non-profits. It invests in projects focused on local or regional economic and business development, job creation, or economic planning.
- The 2023-24 funding intakes for the following tiers:
 - Tier 1 – A rolling intake for applications up to \$30,000;

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Economic Development Fund

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- Tier 2 – Applications between \$30,001 and \$100,000 with intakes on April 15 and September 15; and
- Tier 3 – Applications over \$100,000 with a \$500,000 per project cap, with an intake on January 15.
- Contributions from all Government of Yukon sources for the same project may be up to 75% of the total project costs.
- Contributions from the EDF may not exceed 50% of eligible capital expenditures.
- The total allocation for the fund is \$1.96 million.

Examples of Supported Projects in 2023-24:

- **Business innovation, sustainability and planning:**
 - Kryotek was supported in testing an innovative monitoring system that will provide real-time alerts in the event of a shift or slippage in the land around vulnerable infrastructure.
- **Market support and diversification:**
 - Funding was provided to Anto Yukon to attend the One-of-a-Kind Winter Show in Toronto, Ontario to showcase their products to a new market and secure one-to-one sales and wholesale clients.
 - Yukon Brewing was supported to launch a targeting marketing campaign in Northern Albert and BC to regain market share.
- **Capacity and capital development:**
 - NGC Builders Ltd. was supported to purchase equipment to modernize pre-fabrication of panelized buildings/construction.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| _____ Approved | _____ April 23, 2024 |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Paid Sick Leave Rebate**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate (PSLR) program supports eligible Yukon workers (employees and self-employed) who earn less than the average private-sector wage of \$33.94 per hour.
- The program provides 40 hours of leave per 12-month period and includes all illnesses (and injuries not covered by any other Act, benefit, or program).
- PSLR started on April 1, 2023, and will run until March 31, 2025.
- As of April 23, 2024 (applications up to March 31, 2024):
 - 902 people from 146 businesses have been approved for \$525,011 in rebates.
- Over 80% of claimants are from front line occupations:
 - 57% retail, 17% accommodation and food services, and 9% from health and social assistance.
- Average hours per claim are 11.87 (approximately 1.5 days) while the average wage is \$22.06.
- Since April 2023, the program has received 2226 applications, or an average of 171 per month.
 - Employers may apply multiple times for a single employee provided they are under the cap.
- Approximately 11% of applications have been deemed ineligible.

Additional response:

- Employees must use all paid sick leave available to them annually through their employer before they are eligible for PSLR.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Paid Sick Leave Rebate**Economic
Development

- The program focuses on Yukoners making less than the average private sector wage because that demographic may otherwise choose to work while sick to avoid financial hardship.
 - That demographic also tends to interact directly with the public, which increases the risk of spreading illness.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in the performance of the program.
-

Background:

- On May 10, 2023, the Premier responded to a casework from a Yukon company who expressed concern that the program—which only offered sick leave to employees with less than 40 hours of leave through their employer—was unfair to employers with more generous sick leave programs.
 - In the Premier's response, he confirmed that PSLR would be amended to now offer 40 hours of sick leave to all eligible employers, regardless of how many hours they offer through their own program.
 - The program's budget is \$750,000 in 2023-24 and 2024-25, totaling \$1.5 million over two years.
 - No other jurisdiction in Canada has a government-funded paid sick leave program for the private sector. However, British Columbia does require employers to pay an annual maximum of 5 days sick leave to each employee, while Quebec and PEI require 2 days and 1 day paid respectively.
 - The department works with employers to ensure they understand the program and its benefits.
 - The department administered a COVID-19 paid sick leave rebate program for employees and self-employed Yukoners at the onset of the pandemic in March 2020. The program ran until March 31, 2023.
 - The original COVID-19 PSLR program offered 10 days of sick leave in accordance with self-isolation.
-

Session Briefing Note

Paid Sick Leave Rebate

Tab 17

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

- The Making Work Safe Panel (MWSP) conducted engagement on paid sick leave in the Yukon and published its findings and 22 recommendations in January 2022.

| Key MWSP Recommendations | Yukon's Paid Sick Leave Program |
|---|---|
| Cover employees and self-employed | Covers employees and self-employed |
| Provide 100% coverage | Covers those making less than the average private sector wage of \$33.94. |
| Provide equivalent to 10 days paid sick leave | Provides coverage for 40 hours per 12-month period. |
| Workers not experience a delay or disruption in their regular income. | Workers will not experience a delay or disruption in their regular income: employers continue regular pay and apply for a rebate. |
| That there be no qualification period for the benefit. | There is a 90-day qualification period but seasonal workers may count days from previous season toward the total. |
| That no medical notes be required. | No medical notes are currently required. |
| That options for a co-funded (employer and Yukon government) model be explored. | This is 100% funded by YG. |

Approved by:

 Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

 April 25, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Temporary Landlord Assistance Program**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Vacancy rates in our territory's rental market remain very low. We want to encourage landlords to remain in the residential market, continuing their valuable contributions to housing in our communities.
- To help support this, the Department of Economic Development introduced a temporary Landlord Assistance Program in November 2023.
- The program was 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 provided a one-time, per-unit payment of \$338.

Additional response:

- We are committed to supporting access to safe, affordable housing for Yukoners. As the cost of living rises, we want to ensure, as much as possible, that renters do not face unaffordable rent increases. The rental cap is one method to address housing affordability in our territory.
- Inflation in the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index has fallen below the 5% annual limit on the rent cap. As of May 15, 2024, a landlord may increase the rent up to the CPI, for an increase of 4.9 per cent.
- This rebate helped landlords respond to the 2023 change in rental cap regulations, giving them more space to plan for the future. Access to safe, affordable housing is essential to the well-being of Yukoners. Through measures such as these, we are striving to keep Yukoners in their homes.

Session Briefing Note

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Temporary Landlord Assistance Program

Economic
Development

- The program did not apply to units advertised and/or available as vacation or travel accommodation unless they had been rented to the same tenant for 6 months or more.
- As of the close of the program, 520 applications were received, which included 2,577 units.
- As of April 18, 2024, 2,532 units were either paid or being processed, representing \$855,816.
 - Whitehorse: 2,458 units.
 - Dawson: 58 units.
 - Other Communities: 16 units.
- Of the 520 total applications:
 - 290 were for one unit;
 - 201 were for 2 to 10 units;
 - 18 were for 11 to 50 units;
 - 8 were for 51 to 100 units; and
 - 3 were for more than 100 units.

If asked why the program will not be extended in 2024:

- The Temporary Landlord Assistance Program was not intended to become a recurring or permanent program.
- The program was a temporary measure intended to help landlords adapt to the 2023 change in rent cap regulations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Housing and homelessness are high-profile topics. Media coverage has focused on the lack of affordable housing in Whitehorse and communities, and the high average prices for rental units across Canada.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Temporary Landlord Assistance Program**Economic
Development

- There was a \$1.014 million budget allocation for the program in the 2023-24 Supplementary Estimates #1 (Tab 66).
-

Background:

- We launched an assistance program for Yukon landlords that provided a one-time, per-unit payment for 2023.
 - The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement (CASA) included a limit to rent increases that were linked to inflation (based on CPI for Whitehorse) with a minimum of 2% and a maximum of 5% annually for the duration of the CASA.
 - In 2023, regulation changes set the rent cap at a maximum of 5%. However, the 2022 CPI was 6.8%. Because this change in regulation was announced after 2023 had already begun, landlords were not able to include it in their planning and it affected their expected income for the year. Given that the 2022 CPI rose by 6.8 percent, some landlords feel they suffered a financial loss that they are unable to recover via rent increases.
 - This per-unit payment helps to cover the difference between the expected rental rate rise of 6.8% and the 2023 regulated cap of 5%.
 - Administration:
 - Applicants are required to submit proof of valid property insurance for each rental unit that covers at least part of the 2023 calendar year. If landlords do not hold rental property insurance, the department will work with the applicant to confirm their eligibility status.
 - Applicants are required to affirm that each unit meets the requirements of the minimum rental standards schedule to the Residential Tenancies Regulation.
 - Applications were accepted until February 29, 2024.
 - The program:
 - Was available to all Yukon residential landlords who rent out accommodations to which the Yukon's *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* applies;
-

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Temporary Landlord Assistance Program****Economic Development**

- Was not applicable to units advertised and/or available as vacation or travel accommodation unless they have been rented to the same tenant for 6 months or more;
- Excluded residential units owned by:
 - The federal government and its corporations;
 - The Yukon government and its corporations;
 - First Nation governments;
 - Municipal governments; and
 - Specifically exclude residential units to which the Yukon government provided operational subsidies in the 2023 calendar year.
- The program included units that have received capital subsidies in the past. Excluding these units would have introduced too much complexity to the program.
- The types of accommodation covered by the program are aligned with the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* and therefore the program will not cover:
 - a) living accommodation included with premises that,
 - (i) are occupied for business purposes, and
 - (ii) are rented under a single agreement;
 - (b) living accommodation owned or operated by an educational institution and provided by that institution to its students;
 - (c) living accommodation in which the tenant shares bathroom or kitchen facilities with the owner of that accommodation;
 - (d) living accommodation provided for emergency shelter or transitional housing if the person resides there for less than six consecutive months;
 - (e) living accommodation occupied as vacation or travel accommodation;
 - (f) living accommodation,

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

Temporary Landlord Assistance Program

Economic Development

(i) in a residential care and treatment facility or continuing care residential facility where 24-hour care, support or supervision is provided on-site to the residents,

(ii) in a community health centre or other facility for supplying medical or health services and programs that is owned and operated by the Government of Yukon, or

(iii) in a hospital or other facility for supplying medical services and programs that is established and maintained by the Yukon Hospital Corporation under the *Hospital Act*;

(g) living accommodation in a residence or other similar facility owned by the Yukon Hospital Corporation under the *Hospital Act* for persons involved in the provision of medical or health services and programs;

(h) living accommodation in a correctional institution, in a facility used for re-integrating offenders into the community or in a facility used to house persons on judicial interim release; or

(i) any tenancy agreement, rental unit or residential property prescribed in the regulations.

- Community Services has begun the mandated review of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* (RLTA). As part of this review, the department is working closely with over 15 community representatives. This one-time rebate does not affect the Act.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

April 25, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Investment Attraction**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Department of Economic Development's investment attraction efforts support the growth of Yukon businesses and can lead to opportunities for employment, diversification and market expansion.
- Department officials regularly attend trade shows and investment conferences to support the Yukon's potential for investors, particularly as a world-class mining jurisdiction.
- In 2024, the department has continued to promote investment in the territory to national and international audiences at events such as AME Round Up, the Vancouver Resource Investment conference, and the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada annual conference.
- The department supports initiatives aimed at broadening the Yukon's economic base and increasing competitiveness through two investment attraction funding programs: the Yukon Venture Loan Guarantee Program and the Yukon Business Investment Tax Credit.
- In addition, the department works to attract domestic and foreign direct investment through its mining investment attraction strategy and the Yukon Business Nominee Program.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Investment into the Yukon contributes to the territory's economic growth.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

Investment Attraction

Economic
Development

Background:

- The Department operates two principal investment attraction programs, in addition to its regular work on investment attraction.
 - **Yukon Venture Loan Guarantee Program (YVLGP):** A partnership between the Government of Yukon and participating financial institutions that encourages commercial lenders to invest in the local private sector by guaranteeing 65 percent of venture loans.
 - From January 1, 2023, to January 18, 2024, no applications were received for YVLGP support.
 - **Yukon Business Investment Tax Credit (YBITC):** A 25% individual tax credit for Yukon investors that allows Yukon entities to issue shares in exchange for an agreed upon return and the tax credit. The program supports Yukon-based businesses that are looking to raise capital.
 - Air North Charter and Training Limited raised \$4 million in the 2023 Tax Year by utilizing the YBITC program, which gave Yukon investors access to \$1 million in Yukon tax credits.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to attracting responsible mining investment that incorporates the views of local communities.
- The Department's mining investment attraction work includes:
 - relationship-oriented approach that emphasizes face-to-face attendance at mining trade shows and investment conferences;
 - supporting the Yukon Mining Alliance to promote Yukon;
 - supporting the Yukon Chamber of Mines for the Yukon Geoscience Forum, Yukon Mining & Geology Week, and the Association of Mineral Exploration Round-Up; and
 - expanding joint initiatives with federal partners such as: Invest in Canada to attract Foreign Direct Investment.
- In addition, delivery of the **Yukon Business Nominee Program (YBNP)** helps attract further investment into the Yukon.
 - Since 2001, 52 candidates have been nominated for Permanent Residence through the YBNP. As a result, 32 businesses were established and \$25.3

Session Briefing Note

Investment Attraction

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Economic
Development

million was invested in those new ventures. While no new business owners were welcomed to the Yukon through the YBNP in 2023, Economic Development continues to support foreign nationals who are interested in starting or obtaining a business in the territory through the program.

Approved by:

 Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

 March 26, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Japan Chambers Trade Mission**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- During the September 2023 mission to Japan, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) and organizers of the Team Canada Trade Mission (TCTM) recommended that the Yukon return with a trade delegation to participate in the October 2023 Team Canada mission in Japan.
- The October delegation, led by the Department of Economic Development, included four of Yukon's Chambers representing the business interests of their members. The Chambers were:
 - Yukon Chamber of Commerce (YCC);
 - Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce (WCC);
 - Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce (YFNCC); and
 - Yukon Chamber of Mines (YCM).
- The Yukon delegation also met with key Japanese organizations outside of the Team Canada Trade Mission program and participated in the Japan-Canada Chambers Council forum in Tokyo.
- Yukon's Chambers indicated that they had many productive engagements with chamber colleagues, Japanese companies and Team Canada Trade Mission participants, and exchanged valuable information to bring back to their members.

Additional response:

- Japan is a priority international trade jurisdiction for Canada and the Yukon.
- The interest generated during the September trade mission to Japan supported another mission with greater representation to leverage

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Japan Chambers Trade Mission**Economic
Development

opportunities provided by the Team Canada Trade Mission and the Japan-Canada Chambers Council forum in Tokyo.

- The Yukon chambers were able to meet with Japanese counterparts to promote the Yukon and their member businesses.
 - Topics of interest for the Yukon delegation included mineral development, renewable energy, clean technology, agriculture and agri-foods, export development, immigration and labour market issues, and opportunities to advance economic reconciliation.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The mission may attract public attention.
-

Background:

- The Yukon delegation participated in the general program of the Team Canada Trade Mission, including the Team Canada Reception on October 31, the Japan-Canada Chambers Council forum on November 1 and other official events.
- Yukon Chambers represented the interests of their members (vastly SMEs) who were not ready to attend any Team Canada Trade Mission programming in 2023.
- In addition to the Team Canada Trade Mission programming, the Yukon delegation met with the following organizations to exchange information about their memberships and to promote the Yukon and its businesses:
 - Marubeni Corporation;
 - Japan Community Power Association;
 - Cambridge Innovation Centre (CIC);
 - Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI);
 - Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (CCCJ);
 - Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC); and

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Japan Chambers Trade Mission****Economic
Development**

- Japan Mining Industry Association, including representatives from DOWA Metals, JX Metals, Mitsubishi Materials, Nittetsu Mining, Sumitomo Metal Mining, and TOHO Zinc.
- The Delegation also met with the Federal partners organizing Canada's Pavilion for the Osaka Expo 2025.
- Each Chamber was provided a one-time \$10,000 contribution for marketing/promotion/travel.
- This was incorporated into their existing TPAs and could be used towards this mission or potential travel in the future.
- The cost for sending Economic Development staff on the mission was \$8,991.

Next Steps:

- Our government will continue to support Yukon businesses and the Yukon Chambers in developing their trade readiness as opportunities present themselves.
- We will continue collaborating with Japanese organizations, fostering information exchange to boost their interest in Yukon's sectors and projects.
- We will continue to explore opportunities with federal partners, especially regarding the Osaka Expo 2025.

Japan-Canada-Yukon Trade:

- Japan is the 6th-most popular export market for Indigenous small businesses in Canada.
- The share of women-owned SME exporters exporting to Japan has doubled – from 4.5% in 2017 to 9.6% in 2020.
- From 2018 to 2022, the export of copper concentrates from Yukon to Japan amounted to \$412,804,682.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

February 1, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Mining Sector Supports**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Government of Yukon is proud to attract mining investment and maximize benefits to the Yukon's economy by working collaboratively with mineral sector stakeholders and First Nations partners.
- By promoting the Yukon as a stable investment jurisdiction for mineral development, First Nations governments, communities and families will continue to benefit from investments in the industry.
- The department is working with industry partners to identify and undertake new initiatives for the upcoming 2024 season.
- We are in negotiations with the Municipality of Skagway, to secure tidewater access for Yukon's mineral sector by supporting the development of a marine services platform for industrial use in the Port of Skagway.

Additional response:

- The department continues to showcase Yukon's investment potential at events like AME Roundup, the Vancouver Resource Investment Conference (VRIC), the Prospector's & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) annual conference, and through the Yukon Property Tours.
- In addition to these annual events, over the past year the department boosted Yukon's profile through our attendance at Precious Metals Summit, Denver Gold Forum, German Gold Show, Mines and Money London and Critical Minerals Day hosted by the United Kingdom government in London.
- The department has actively engaged with various senior mining companies and fund managers and organized trade missions to Japan

Session Briefing Note

Mining Sector Supports

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

and India, which included components to promote Yukon's mining investment potential.

- Yukon Mineral Exploration Program (YMEP) provided \$1.4M to 44 projects for the 2023 field season. These projects are anticipated to generate more than \$4.6 million in exploration spending.

If asked about Regulatory Environment:

- Yukon is developing new minerals legislation and advancing land use planning that will further reduce uncertainties and assist in the Yukon's goal in becoming a global leader in sustainable mining.
- We are also working on wetlands policy and resource road regulation that will further enhance investor confidence.
- We are creating certainty and clarity for investors by identifying areas we mean to protect and those with opportunities for resource development.

If asked about Infrastructure:

- Yukon is actively investing in responsible infrastructure development to support the sector in achieving their project enhancement goals.
- We are negotiating with Skagway to secure tide water access for future projects, which would have a positive impact on the viability and attractiveness of junior mining projects.
- Yukon Resource Gateway Program has several projects underway that are going through various stages of planning, design, assessment and construction. Yukon is advocating to Canada to introduce flexibility to include additional roads that are important to mineral development.

Session Briefing Note

Mining Sector Supports

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

- We are considering what would be required to connect Yukon to British Columbia's electrical grid. This would be an opportunity to ensure long-term sustainability for the Yukon and its mining sector.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The mineral sector is a key contributor to the Yukon's economy and there is ongoing interest expressed in the level of government support to the sector and permitting delays are affecting industry certainty.

Background:

Yukon Mining Alliance (YMA):

- The department had a one-year TPA with YMA for \$300,000, which expired on March 31, 2023.
- For 2023-24 fiscal year, the department holds two TPAs with YMA:
 - \$176,200 exclusive to Property Tours that took place in July 2023;
 - \$177,200 exclusive to VRIC and PDAC for January and March 2024.
- The department is drafting a new TPA with YMA that will focus on Property Tours, and joint participation in the Vancouver Resource Investment Conference (through the Yukon Pavilion) and Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (through a core shack and breakfast/lunch investment sessions) for 2024-25 fiscal year.

Yukon Chamber of Mines (YCM):

- The department signed a three-year TPA with YCM for \$195,000 (\$65,000 annually).
- The TPA contributes \$50,000 annually towards the delivery of the 51st, 52nd, and 53rd Annual Yukon Geoscience and Tradeshow to be held respectively in November 2023, 2024, and 2025; and
- The TPA contributes \$15,000 annually towards the delivery of Yukon Night at AME BC Mineral Exploration Round-up in Vancouver, BC in January 2024, 2025, and 2026.

Session Briefing Note

Mining Sector Supports

Spring 2024

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Pan-Territorial Marketing Initiative:

- CanNor has approved the three territories for a three-year pan-territorial marketing initiative. Although the focus will be on mining investment and attraction for the North, the territories intend to develop a model that can be applied to other industries.
- An agreement for the project has not yet been signed. CanNor approved the project with a contribution of \$420,000, which would be supplemented by territorial contributions totaling \$210,000.

Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC):

- Economic Development and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources jointly coordinate participation in the annual PDAC convention. Activities include:
 - advertising and promotional material;
 - hosting events to generate interest in the Yukon; and
 - attracting resource-focused media interest in the Yukon.
- PDAC helps international investors learn about northern mining. It highlights competitive advantages in each jurisdiction including geological potential, political stability, Indigenous partnerships and leaders in exploration and mining.
- Yukon government will attend PDAC 2024, scheduled March 3-6 in Toronto.

Fraser Institute Rankings 2022:

- In 2022, Yukon ranked 7th in Canada and 20th globally for mining investment attractiveness, with a score of 73.26, albeit showing a decrease from the previous year's ranking.
- Specific strengths include rankings in Taxation Regime (8th), Geological Database (17th), and Labour Regulations (5th), while challenges are evident in Uncertainty Concerning Protected Areas (55th), Quality of Infrastructure (50th), and Uncertainty Concerning Disputed Land Claims (56th).

Session Briefing Note
Mining Sector Supports

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Development

- The Fraser Institute's methodology can result in significant variation in rankings, as different years can include or exclude certain jurisdictions and jurisdiction-specific rankings can reflect broader market conditions.
- In 2022, Yukon saw declines in the Policy Perception Index, from 23 of 84 in 2021 to 31 of 62 in 2022, and the Best Practices Mineral Potential Index, from 6 of 84 in 2021 to 10 of 47 in 2022.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| <u> Approved </u> | <u>March 25, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****First Nations Collaboration
Initiatives**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Yukon First Nations governments and their respective development corporations play a critical role in growing and diversifying the Yukon's economy.
- Through programs like the Economic Development Fund, Community Development Fund and Labour Market Development programs, we are supporting First Nations governments and development corporations as they grow their capacity, invest in new ventures, strengthen their communities, and plan for the future.
- First Nations governments and development corporations are pillars of the Yukon's economic and social development.

Additional response:

- Some of the ways we are supporting First Nations to build capacity and identify economic priorities in their Traditional Territories are:
 - Supporting the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Community Development Corporation in hiring a contractor to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a gravel extraction business operating within the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory;
 - Supporting the Kluane Community Development Limited Partnership to explore opportunities to promote the local use of resources and to assess the viability of investing in wood product manufacturing in Burwash Landing; and
 - Partnering with Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship, to provide access to the National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem (NIWEE). This is a Canada-wide program with an Indigenous-focused curriculum and backed by

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

First Nations Collaboration Initiatives

Economic
Development

the University of Ottawa. In 2023, two Yukon women were admitted into this exceptional program.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon government is committed to increasing entrepreneurial opportunities for First Nations development corporations and working collaboratively with First Nations for their benefit and the benefit of all Yukoners.
- It also supports the Government of Yukon's obligations under Chapter 22 of Yukon First Nation Final Agreements.

Background:

- First Nations and their development corporations can access funding support from the Economic Development Fund, Community Development Fund and Labour Market Development programs.
- The department works both with individual development corporations and on territory-wide initiatives.
- The Yukon government provides advisory and funding support for First Nations' economic development, from business planning to project evaluation, including:
 - Building governance institutions through capacity development such as:
 - Supporting the Yukon First Nation Wildfire Limited Partnership to build capacity in its Wildfire Mitigation service.
 - Supporting strategic and economic planning efforts such as:
 - Supporting Selkirk Development Corporation to complete a three-year strategic plan with the intention to guide their sustainable growth and strategic business development; and
 - Supporting Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce to attend the Arctic 360 Conference.
 - Identifying and supporting projects that will provide lasting benefits to Yukoners such as:
 - Supporting the Liard First Nation to restore the Dena Cho Trail from Watson Lake towards Ross River to preserve traditional knowledge;

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

First Nations Collaboration Initiatives

Economic Development

- Providing support to First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun to create an all-inclusive multi-platform Northern Tutchone Language App that can be used to support language revitalization programming for all citizens;
- Providing support to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to celebrate their 25th anniversary of self-governance; and
- Supporting the Council of Yukon First Nations to complete a feasibility study for a CYFN Administration Building. A new facility will assist Yukon First Nation citizens in accessing more programs all in one building, thus providing more effective and efficient client service.
- Supporting and developing feasibility studies, and establishing business ventures such as:
 - Supporting the Yukon First Nations Hockey Association (YFNHA) to hire a consultant to complete comprehensive planning and training for the organization to ensure the future sustainability and continued success of the YFNHA as well as the annual Native Hockey Tournament.
- Supporting labour market and workforce development initiatives such as:
 - Supporting the Carcross/Tagish First Nation to provide complete suite of labour market programs including training support, case management and referral, and on-the-land development of Skills for Success.
 - Providing funding to Whitehorse General Hospital to support First Nations youth to explore healthcare careers via work experience placements.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

February 1, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Entrepreneurial & Innovation
Support**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- We are collaborating with business, industry, and First Nations partners to make strategic investments and promote an entrepreneurial culture that attracts and supports startups.
- We released our five-year Innovation Strategy in November 2023. The strategy includes actions that aim to support businesses and entrepreneurs, strengthen connections between academia, governments, First Nations, private capital, grow the domestic technology sector and attract local talent.
- We have valued partnerships with TechYukon, Yukonstruct and Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship to deliver the physical spaces, educational programming and networking opportunities that promote and grow innovation experience and knowledge.
- We partnered with the Government of Canada to support the implementation of the Canada Digital Adoption Program for the Yukon. This program will help up to 140 small and medium-sized businesses to go online over a three-year period. Eighteen Yukon businesses completed the program in 2023, and there are 26 more that are currently enrolled.
- We are sponsoring a Tech Summit, Yukon First Nations and Tech: Reclaiming Technology, in Whitehorse in February 2024, aimed at introducing Artificial Intelligence technology to Indigenous groups.
- Throughout the second half of 2022 and early 2023, we partnered with Yukon University and ComIT to deliver the first coding training for Yukon First Nations. Fifteen students completed stage one of the training.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Entrepreneurial & Innovation
Support**Economic
Development

- We participated **at** the Juneau Innovation Summit in February 2024 to share experiences and develop connections with Alaskan organizations in the startup and innovation sectors.
- Panache Ventures has invited members of Yukon's innovation ecosystem to Calgary to meet with organizations such as Platform Calgary, Hunter Hub and Creative Destruction Labs to strengthen connections, learn about the programming being offered, explore opportunities that we can incorporate locally and share operating experiences from the Yukon with their partner organizations. Dates are under consideration.
- We are also working with Panache Ventures to host activities in May 2024 in coordination with the Arctic Indigenous Investment Conference. This event will bring partners from Panache Ventures and potential business coaches in Panache's network to Whitehorse to participate in AIIC and to meet with local start-ups and business founders.
- We continue to partner with the innovation ecosystem to deliver on programs such as:
 - Yukonstruct's 12-week training program called Startup Bootcamp, Pathfinding services, Yukon innovation week, and the Hall of Innovators;
 - TechYukon's North of AI [Artificial Intelligence] program which had three startup companies accepted into the Scale AI program in 2022 and two more in 2023;
 - Investment readiness workshops for entrepreneurs and angel investors through a partnership between Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship and Vancouver-based Spring;

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Entrepreneurial & Innovation
Support**Economic
Development

- Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship's innovation grant;
- Sponsoring the Mitacs Accelerate Research and Business Strategy Internship Program;
- ElevateIP [intellectual property] program;
- Continued support for Yukon University's IncubateNorth program to provide space, tools and services to help market-ready startups grow faster; and
- In partnership with Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship, we provided access to the National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem (NIWEE), a Canada-wide program with an Indigenous-focused curriculum and backed by the University of Ottawa. In 2023, two Yukon women were admitted into this exceptional program.

Additional response:

- We continue to support the growth and attraction of startups and innovators in the Yukon through a wide range of programs and partnerships.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The technology and innovation sector is a key area for diversification in the Yukon's economy.
- Economic Development's 2023 mandate letter includes a commitment to complete a Yukon Innovation Strategy.

Background:

- The Technology and Innovation (TI) Branch is tasked with supporting the technology and innovation sector in the Yukon.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

Entrepreneurial & Innovation Support

Economic Development

- Over the past five years, the Yukon's tech sector has continued to grow and represented approximately 3.5 per cent of the Yukon's GDP.
- The department provides financial support to the following organizations:
 - Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship – \$835,000 in 2023-24;
 - Yukonstruct – \$290,000 in 2023-24; and
 - TechYukon – \$320,000 in 2023-24.
- Yukon University Innovation & Entrepreneurship is focused on areas of innovation that will contribute to the social and economic prosperity of the Yukon. The unit aims to provide living laboratories for learners, innovators and entrepreneurs to lead work on the focus areas including technology development, social justice, climate action, community development and sustainable resource development.
- TechYukon is the technology industry association for the Yukon, with a mission to grow the technology industry in the Yukon. The society represents 27 Yukon technology companies.
- Yukonstruct is a non-profit society based at Northlight Innovation in downtown Whitehorse. Members include innovators, freelancers, startups, developers, students, inventors and creatives. A community workshop, including wood and metal shops and digital fabrication provide space teaching nights and mentorship programs while a shared workspace offers hotdesking and offices. Yukonstruct offers entrepreneur programming to help Yukoners launch and grow their businesses.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 6, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Innovation Strategy

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to building a thriving innovation economy by supporting technological growth and entrepreneurship.
- A five-year strategy, “*Innovation Yukon: Bringing Northern Ingenuity to the World*”, was released on November 9, 2023. The strategy outlines the Yukon’s unique strengths and identifies actions to help Yukoners create, grow and mature their business ideas in the Yukon.
- Innovation Yukon focuses on five strategic objectives that will foster awareness of technology and innovation, cultivate connections within the Yukon and outside jurisdictions, grow talent, increase market access for Yukon’s entrepreneurs and focus our resources to support and drive innovation forward over the coming five years.
- Within these five objectives, we have 24 actions to achieve these goals over the next five years, such as:
 - Growing local talent by partnering with sector organizations to provide training in technology, innovation and entrepreneurship;
 - Fostering youth, rural, and place-based entrepreneurship;
 - Increasing access to private capital; and
 - Economic reconciliation with First Nations by partnering with key organizations to offer Indigenous-focused training and investment programs.
- We are committed to building upon the Yukon’s unique strengths and opportunities through actions that are reflective of the feedback received from Yukoners.

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Additional response:

- To support the development of the strategy, in fall 2020 over 160 stakeholders were invited, from across 13 sectors, to participate in interviews and focus groups during engagement.
- These sectors included academia, technology development, agriculture, mining, energy, climate change research, consultancy and entrepreneurship, tourism, media, First Nations Development Corporations and Yukon University.
- We also sought input from organizations from outside the territory to better understand how to attract investment, support research and further develop our innovation ecosystem.
- In 2021, we established the Innovation Commission to provide technical and professional input on the development of the strategy to expand opportunities for local entrepreneurs, diversify the economy, and create jobs.
- Over the past five years, the Yukon's tech sector has continued to grow, on average representing approximately 3.5% of the Yukon's GDP.
- Our strong innovation and entrepreneurial culture in the Yukon will continue providing momentum to expand and diversify our economy.
- By supporting innovation across sectors, we are creating jobs and building a strong, diverse Yukon economy for current and future generations.

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Context—this may be an issue because:

- Minister Pillai's 2021 and 2023 mandate letter identified the direction to develop an innovation strategy to create opportunities for local entrepreneurs and to establish an Innovation Commission.
- The May 2021 Speech from the Throne highlighted the importance of innovation to the Yukon in the coming years.

Background:

- Technology and innovation is the fastest growing sector across the globe. The global technology sector accounts for 4.5% of global GDP and is expected to double within the next 15 to 20 years.
- A public engagement period that included interviews, focus groups and surveys, ran from September 28, 2020 to October 28, 2020. The What We Heard was released in August 2021 in conjunction with the establishment of the Innovation Commission.

Innovation Commission:

- An Innovation Commission was formed in 2021 to provide technical and professional input on the development of the five-year innovation strategy. Made up of members and advisors from within the Yukon, across Canada and in Europe, the commission was convened to advise on topics such as attracting startups, building a digital ecosystem and fostering innovation and sharing networks across communities.
- The Innovation Commission members were chosen for their experience, diversity and interest in innovation, technology and entrepreneurship. Between August and November 2021, the commission met six times, considering key actions and priorities that would provide the foundation for the development of a thriving and diverse economy.
- Commission members included:
 - Astrid Grawehr, Kryotek Arctic Innovation Inc.;

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- Cherish Clarke, Digital Engine Technology;
- Chris Lane, Make IT Solutions; Northmark Ventures; TechYukon;
- Curtis Shaw, Northwestel;
- Inga Petri, Strategic Moves;
- John Jensen, MGrid Energy; and
- Melaina Sheldon, Melaina Sheldon Consulting.
- Commission advisors included:
 - Bernd Petak, Northmark Ventures;
 - David Larkin, Northmark Ventures;
 - Dr. Alexandra Greenhill, Careteam Technologies Inc.;
 - Micheal Mooney, Creative Lab North;
 - Norm Fraser, SoftIron;
 - Patrick Lor, Panache Ventures;
 - Thomas Park, BDC Deep Tech Fund; and
 - Véronique Herry, Startup Palace.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

February 1, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Panache Ventures**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- In 2019, the Government of Yukon provided \$2 million to the Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation to support their overall investment of \$5 million in Panache Ventures, a Canadian venture capital fund.
- This is a ten-year fund. The agreement ends in 2028 and we are currently in the fifth year.
- Panache has met and/or coached over 16 Yukon firms, invested in one Yukon enterprise and participated in the Innovation Commission.
- This investment and support for the Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation is one-step towards growing our innovation ecosystem and it aligns with the intent of Chapter 22 to provide Yukon First Nations with opportunities to fully participate in the Yukon's economy.

Additional response:

- The investment in Panache Ventures by the Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation helps diversify their investments and return benefits to Yukon communities.
- The value of the Government of Yukon's partnership with the First Nation Investment Corporation is in the capital and mentorship opportunities that it will bring to Yukon businesses. The government does not receive a financial return from its contribution.
- Panache Ventures participated in multiple events during Innovation Week in November 2023 including:
 - leading a workshop at Northlight on "*The Basics of Pitching*";
 - speaking on a panel; and

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Panache Ventures

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Development

- hosting a meeting with members of Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation (YFNIC) and other local innovation partners.
- We are also working with Panache Ventures to host activities in May 2024 in coordination with the Arctic Indigenous Investment Conference. This event will bring partners from Panache Ventures and potential business coaches in Panache's network to Whitehorse to participate in AIIC and to meet with local start-ups and business founders.
- Panache Ventures has invited members of the Yukon's innovation ecosystem to Calgary to meet with organizations such as Platform Calgary, Hunter Hub and Creative Destruction Labs to strengthen these connections, learn about the programming being offered, explore opportunities that we can incorporate locally and share operating experiences from the Yukon with their partner organizations. Dates are under consideration.

If asked about other deliverables:

- Through this investment, Panache Ventures provides Yukon First Nations Development Corporations with the opportunity and connections to engage, develop, and participate in deals that were previously difficult or not possible to attain.
- As a result, three Yukon First Nations Development Corporation partnerships have been created:
 - The Yukon First Nations Investment LP builds investment capacity and enable partners to explore larger deals.

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- The Yukon First Nation Telco LP, covers telecommunications, and was able to negotiate a \$10 million deal that has provided \$400,000 in cash flow reinvested into Yukon's economy.
- The Yukon First Nation Energy LP, exploring investment in energy initiatives, including green energy.
- These partnerships are now looking at larger deal flows with partners at Panache Ventures.
- Panache also provides mentoring and participation opportunities that enable Yukon First Nations women and youth to gain experience in venture capital in a safe space to learn and build networks.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The deal is a unique arrangement that does not have any recent comparable prospects. At \$2 million, the scale of the Yukon government's contribution is significant.
- During budget debate in April 2023, the Official Opposition raised concerns about the value of the investment to Yukon businesses.

Background:

- Government of Yukon transferred \$2 million, matched by a \$3 million contribution from the Yukon First Nation Investment Limited Partnership (the investment vehicle), for the purposes of a \$5 million investment in Panache Ventures Investment Fund Limited, 2018.
- The Yukon First Nation Investment Limited Partnership is comprised of seven Yukon First Nations development corporations.
- Panache Ventures Investment Fund Limited, 2018, was launched in March 2018 with \$25 million in capital and a commitment to focus on seed-stage companies.
- As of June 30, 2023, the Fund has \$58 million in committed capital, and includes 94 companies in its portfolio.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Panache Ventures****Economic
Development**

- The portfolio has seen multiple successful exits to date and has returned 12% of called capital to Limited Partners. It is performing well.

Panache's commitment towards investment in Yukon:

- This is a 10-year fund, from 2018-28. We are in the fifth year of the fund and working to develop investment ready Yukon opportunities.
- Panache noted that it is targeting to invest a minimum of 3% of \$58 million in the Yukon over the life of the fund, which is approximately \$2 million. They have also committed to use commercially reasonable efforts to identify and make investments in a minimum of three more Yukon companies over the life of the fund. Panache has invested in one Yukon-based company to date (Proof Data Technology).
- In 2021, Panache Ventures participated in the Yukon entrepreneurial ecosystem through the following actions:
 - joined the Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce (YFNCC) and attended monthly CEO breakfast meetings to help screen-presenting businesses. In addition, they nominated multiple organizations to present at YFNCC meetings;
 - organizer & panelist;
 - attended several Yukonstruct Demo Days events to offer feedback and encouragement to program participants;
 - coached and mentored in Yukonstruct STEM and Local Leaders Business Bootcamps, including the delivery of specific advice for developing company pitches, as well as product development and go-to-market strategies;
 - consulted with Yukon University and Yukonstruct on the development of entrepreneurship programs;
 - attended monthly check-ins with the CEOs of Yukon First Nations Business Development Corporations to discuss investment deal flow; and
 - participated as an advisor of the Innovation Commission (Patrick Lor).

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Panache Ventures

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Development

- We met with partners from Panache multiple times throughout the summer of 2023, and we are planning additional capacity building activities to benefit Yukon investors, business founders and First Nations Development Corporations.
- The keynote event that is being coordinated is a CEO forum that will be held in Whitehorse during the life of the fund.

Investment in Proof Data Technology:

- The exact investment amount is confidential and cannot be disclosed. The investment was leveraged to support Proof Data Technology to raise more significant capital from additional investment pools.

Assessment and Due Diligence:

- The Department of Economic Development contracted an independent consultant on venture capital, to assess the fund. The consultant's track record includes advising the Government of Nova Scotia on setting up its own venture capital fund.
- The assessment included the fund, the investment strategy, the team, the investors, the financial and economic development benefits for Yukon, and the risks of the investment and recommended that the department pursue this opportunity for the benefit of Yukoners.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| _____ | _____ |
| Approved | March 19, 2024 |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Performing Musicians Fund**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Department of Economic Development launched the Performing Musicians Fund (PMF) in 2022. It is a comprehensive funding program for Yukon musicians to foster continued growth in this vibrant creative industry.
- The annual funding for performing musicians is \$300,000, up from \$50,000 for the previous Sound Recording Fund.
- Between April 1, 2023, and **March 31**, 2024, the department approved 25 applications, including seven established musicians and 18 emerging musicians, for a total contribution of \$211,908.

Additional response:

- Activities eligible under the fund include:
 - Music video content and sound recordings;
 - Marketing activities such as touring and showcasing; and
 - Training and development of Yukon musicians.
- The program increases the funding available to Yukon musicians:
 - Up to \$10,000 for emerging musicians; and
 - Up to \$30,000 for established musicians.
- The music industry creates local jobs and builds capacity, supports Yukon businesses and entrepreneurs and contributes to economic diversification.
- Creators can find information on programs online at Yukon.ca or by contacting our Media Development team at Economic Development.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Performing Musicians Fund**Economic
Development

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Minister's 2016-20 mandate included a commitment to review economic funding programs to make programming more responsive with less red tape.
 - The PMF was raised during budget debate in Committee of the Whole on April 4, 2023.
-

Background:

- The PMF replaced the Yukon Sound Recording Program.
- The changes took place following engagement with Yukon stakeholders and consultation with program managers of provincial and territorial funding programs for music.
- The changes to the program are intended to broaden the spectrum of supports offered through the department to better meet the needs of Yukon musicians.
- The application process mirrors that of federal and provincial funding programs for the music industry. Applications are not accepted verbally.
- Eligible activities under the PMF include:
 - Activities that help musicians improve their skills, such as preproduction activities or workshop registration;
 - Professional sound recordings intended for commercial release, applying to showcases and for auditions to secure bookings; and
 - Costs associated with marketing newly-released music and developing opportunities that contribute substantially to their income.

Eligible transportation expenses include:

- Assistance with travel costs for touring and showcase opportunities outside the Yukon, including:
 - Applicants may choose to fly or drive to a touring area, but the total cost may not exceed the cost of a return economy airfare from Whitehorse to the nearest international airport in the touring area, per musician;
 - Within the touring area, rental vehicle expenses (including fuel) may not exceed the cost of rental of one passenger van (plus fuel); and
-

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Performing Musicians Fund

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- Where accommodation is not provided in the performance contract, accommodation will be based on double occupancy of standard rooms required at each performance location.
- Specific expense coverage for each approved application is outlined within a transfer payment agreement. All applicants are encouraged to discuss their specific project needs with a Media Advisor.

Approved by:

 Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

 April 23, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Screen Media Funding Programs**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Economic Development's media funding programs help to provide economic benefits and employment opportunities for Yukoners. The funds were launched in 2022 to support the production of professional film, television and digital media projects.
- The programs streamline production funding, strengthen support for development, simplify access to training supports and standardize program policies.
- Between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024, the department approved 24 applications for \$1,719,999, including:
 - eight applications for a total of \$1,530,739 under the Media Production Fund;
 - two applications for a total of \$62,095 under the Development Fund;
 - three applications for a total of \$44,700 under the Pre-Development Fund; and
 - 11 applications for a total of \$82,465 under the Training Fund.
- The 24 projects anticipate spending approximately \$5.5 million in the Yukon, creating local jobs and building capacity while supporting Yukon businesses and entrepreneurs and contributing to economic diversification.
- Creators can find information on programs online at Yukon.ca or by contacting our Media Development team at Economic Development.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Screen Media Funding Programs**Economic
Development

If asked about RAW TV:

- Supplementary Estimates #2 sought \$735,000 for the Media Production Fund to support RAW TV's Gold Rush television series.
 - The series has been filming in the Yukon for over a decade and has brought millions of eyes to our territory.
 - The production is also a significant economic driver, providing employment and supporting local business.
 - It has the largest economic footprint of any production operating in the territory, with approximately \$2.9 million in direct Yukon spending in this Season 14 alone for labour, goods and services.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners may want to know about Government of Yukon support for the screen media industry.
-

Background:

- The Media funding programs' annual intake dates are announced online. Each program may be closed once funding has been fully subscribed.
 - This is consistent with federal funding programs; and
 - Closing these programs allows the department to allocate resources to the year the activity occurs and manage its budget appropriately.
 - The application process mirrors that of federal funding programs for the media industries. Applications are not accepted verbally. The development of the new programs included:
 - Identification of best practices and development of terms of reference and project charter;
 - Public engagement;
-

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Screen Media Funding Programs

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- Development of Recommendations for Change and release to industry stakeholders;
- Development and release of a What We Heard document; and
- Public information sessions to review each program and application process with stakeholders.
- Local stakeholders and industry experts were extensively engaged during the development of the new programs.
- The budget to support these new programs was increased by \$500,000 to \$1,160,000.
- Screen Production Yukon Association was highly involved in and supported the development of the new funding programs.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|---|
| <u> Approved </u> | <u> April 23, 2024 </u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

Community Development Fund

Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Projects funded by the Community Development Fund (CDF) support events and initiatives that provide long-term, sustainable economic and social benefits to communities across the Yukon.
- From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, 68 projects were approved under the CDF, for a total of \$3,304,856 in funding.
- These projects are located throughout the Yukon and include, among others:
 - \$14,698 to the Whitehorse Bike Kitchen Task Force to operate a 'Community Bike Space' to provide Whitehorse community members with equitable access to repair, skills, and transportation.
 - \$20,000 to the Humane Society Dawson to hire an animal shelter specialist to complete a comprehensive assessment of the Dawson City animal shelter.
 - \$12,679 to the Alpine Ski Association Yukon to procure timing equipment to support competitive ski races and events in the Yukon.
 - \$20,000 to the Village of Teslin to do major upgrades to the ball diamond. The project includes installing a well, an irrigation system, power and lighting, and an upgraded diamond.

Additional response:

- During the 2022-23 fiscal year, 65 projects were approved for a total of \$3,200,369 in funding, with over 50% of that amount going to communities outside of Whitehorse.

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Community Development Fund

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Context—this may be an issue because:

- The CDF is well known and well regarded, and demand for program funding is high.
 - Questions may be asked on how CDF was distributed to communities across the territory.
-

Background:

- The Community Development Fund is for projects that:
 - Create economic benefits such as generating local spending, creating employment opportunities, building needed infrastructure and bringing new money into the Yukon from outside sources;
 - Develop skills, knowledge and experience;
 - Create social benefits such as strengthening social and community networks, building partnerships and facilitating community involvement;
 - Support the community's long-term well-being; and
 - Have measurable social, cultural and economic benefits for Yukon residents and communities.
- Funding is dispersed across three tiers:
 - Tier 1 for requests less than \$20,000 (four intakes per year);
 - Tier 2 for requests between \$20,001 and \$75,000 (two intakes per year); and
 - Tier 3 for requests over \$75,000 (one intake per year).

Other Major Projects from 2023-24:

- **Watson Lake Ski Club - \$107,747 – To purchase a new groomer for the Watson Lake Ski Hill.**
- **Yukon Arts Centre Corporation - \$74,193 – To purchase a new moving LED stage lighting system.**

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| <u>Approved</u> | <u>April 24, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

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Regional Accomplishments

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Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has made significant investments across all communities in the Yukon.
- Communities have benefitted from a variety of funds administered by the Department of Economic Development, most significantly through the Community Development Fund (CDF) and the Economic Development Fund (EDF).
- Community funding is broken down by region. From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, the department approved CDF and EDF funding for communities outside of Whitehorse totaling \$2,381,362, as follows:
 - North region: \$826,279;
 - West region: \$362,772;
 - Central region: \$356,064; and
 - Southeast region: \$836,247.
- Communities also benefit from Media Development funding programs. While the majority of applicants to media programs are from Whitehorse, various projects have positive impacts in the communities. Many screen-based media projects film in locations throughout the Yukon and spend portions of their production budgets in multiple communities.
- A notable project that has contributed significantly to Yukon communities in 2023-24 is Discovery Channel's *Gold Rush Season 14*.
- The Government of Yukon provides economic immigration programs to help businesses across the territory meet their labour needs. The Department of Economic Development administers two immigration programs in partnership with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

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Regional Accomplishments

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Canada (IRCC): The Yukon Business Nominee Program (YBNP) and the Yukon Nominee Program (YNP).

- In 2020, the department launched a new stream, the Yukon Community Program (YCP), specifically designed to support employers and nominees in rural communities.
 - Since its inception on June 1, 2020, 28 candidates have been approved through the program.
 - This pilot project has been extended until June 2025.
- Labour Market Development expects to distribute \$6.8 million in 2023-24 for programs and services across the Yukon that will help individuals meet their labour market goals and help employers recruit, train and retain the staff they need for their businesses to thrive.
- As of March 7, 2024, Labour Market Development has approved agreements with five First Nations: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Teslin Tlingit Council, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Liard First Nation and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in with a total value of \$2.48 million. Labour Market Development continues to develop agreements with other First Nations governments.
- Support to rural communities has also been provided through programs such as the Skills for Success program that is supporting projects such as:
 - Western Arctic Youth Collective, with a contribution of \$200,000, to provide mentorship programming for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Youth in various communities.
 - First Kaska (owned by Liard First Nations) with a contribution of \$250,000 to provide on-site training and mentoring for Liard First Nation community members in the manufacturing and

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Regional Accomplishments

Economic
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construction of timber homes, to improve vocational skills in a way that is culturally meaningful and encourages and supports projects planned or underway in the community.

- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations - Shāwthān Nāhzi, with a contribution up to \$150,000, to support land-based healing programs in communities.

Additional response:

- From April 2022 to March 31, 2023 (2022-23 fiscal year), \$1,845,428 in financial assistance from CDF and EDF was provided to communities outside of Whitehorse, as follows:
 - North region: \$839,857;
 - West region: \$143,591;
 - Central region: \$362,940; and
 - Southeast region: \$499,040.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be a perception that funding and program activities are Whitehorse-centric. The data shows that funding activities are occurring in all regions and communities throughout the Yukon.

Background:

- Between CDF and EDF, Whitehorse received 60% of total approved contributions (25% CDF, 35% EDF) from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.
- In the 2023-24 fiscal year, projects based in Whitehorse were approved for a total of \$3,595,915 in funding.
- The CDF/EDF regional funding overview provides a breakdown of Economic Development approved funding to clients and projects within communities outside of Whitehorse from April 2023 to March 31, 2024.

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Regional Accomplishments

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- North Region: Dawson City, Eagle Plains, Keno, Mayo, Old Crow.
 - 15 organizations received combined total funding of \$826,279;
 - Economic Development Fund: six organizations, \$302,203;
 - Community Development Fund: nine organizations, \$524,076.
- West Region: Beaver Creek, Burwash Landing, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction.
 - 13 organizations received combined total funding of \$362,772;
 - Economic Development Fund: six organizations, \$135,468;
 - Community Development Fund: seven organizations, \$227,304.
- Central Region: Carmacks, Faro, Pelly Crossing, Ross River.
 - Nine organizations received combined total funding of \$356,064;
 - Economic Development Fund: three organizations, \$120,707;
 - Community Development Fund: six organizations, \$235,357.
- Southeast Region: Carcross, Southern Lakes, Teslin, Watson Lake.
 - Six organizations received combined total funding of \$836,247;
 - Economic Development Fund: one organization, \$22,000;
 - Community Development Fund: five organizations, \$814,247.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

April 25, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Klondike Valley Flood Program -
SME Stream**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Government launched the Flood Recovery Funding Program in June 2023, to provide financial assistance to Yukoners for uninsured damages to their property and possessions caused by the flooding in the Klondike Valley and the surrounding area.
- The funding program had three streams: housing, agriculture and small business. The small business stream is administered by the Department of Economic Development.
- Under the small business stream administered by Economic Development, eligible businesses could reclaim damage costs up to a maximum of \$500,000. The deadline for applications was October 3, 2023.
- The department has received five applications and is working with applicants to process their submissions.

Additional response:

- Self-employed fishers, trappers, loggers and other harvesters of natural resources are eligible under the small business stream.
- Other expenses eligible under the program include hiring contractors to repair structural damages, cleanup costs, and replacing eligible business materials and business structures.
- Portions of the Flood Recovery program costs are recoverable from the federal Disaster Financial Assistance program.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Klondike Valley Flood Program -
SME Stream**Economic
Development

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions may be posed related to the government's response to flooding in the Klondike region.
-

Background:**Small Business Stream Eligibility:**

Yukon small business is eligible if it meets the following requirements:

- The owner or operator owns at least 50 per cent of the business.
- The owner or operator works as the day-to-day manager of the business.
- The business must have been in operation at the time of the May 2023 flood.
- The business must have a yearly gross revenue that is at least \$10,000, but less than \$2 million in the year immediately preceding the flood.
- The business must employ no more than 20 full-time employees at any one time.
- The business is in good standing with Yukon Corporate Registry and Workers' Health and Safety Board Yukon.
- Self-employed fishers, trappers, loggers and other harvesters of natural resources are also eligible.
- For those who did not have insurance, only those losses for which they could not obtain insurance at a reasonable cost will be eligible.

Klondike Valley Flood Details:

- In May 2023, the Klondike Valley flood caused significant and widespread property damage when overflow from the Klondike and Yukon rivers near Dawson City caused flooding, especially in Rock Creek and Henderson Corner subdivisions.
- Families, small businesses, and farms were affected by the flood and over 20 properties were damaged.

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Klondike Valley Flood Program - SME Stream

Economic
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- The Yukon government delivered a public funding program to address flood damage, administered by three departments: Yukon Housing Corporation, Economic Development, and Energy Mines and Resources. The department of Community Services **led the** program coordination.
- Under Yukon's program, support is being offered to restore:
 - Housing in the form of grants for eligible primary residences and loans for eligible secondary residences, outbuildings, mitigation work;
 - Eligible farmers and agricultural producers' property, destroyed harvested crops, field erosion and debris clean-up, infrastructure and fencing repairs and perished livestock; and
 - Small business owners' property and flood-related costs deemed essential to the business.
- The Emergency Measures Organization continues work on the recovery phase of this event. As part of this work, Stantec **was** contracted to conduct an After Action Review. An online survey for residents impacted by the flood **was** available until February 16, 2024. A public meeting was held in Dawson on January 23, 2024.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 26, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

Labour Market Overview

Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Yukon is experiencing the effects of nationwide labour shortages, resulting in low unemployment rates, coupled with high vacancy and labour force participation rates in the territory.
- Persistent job vacancies can prevent business expansion, strain existing workforces, impede infrastructure projects and increase business costs.
- In 2024-25, Economic Development plans to **distribute** over \$5.0 million to support Yukoners and business in meeting their labour market needs.

Additional response:

- The department of Economic Development, through its Labour Market Development Branch, is working on **consultations for** a new Yukon labour market strategy to guide our future investments in the workforce.
- Initiatives aimed at removing barriers for Labour Mobility are important tools to address certified job vacancies. The **Government of Yukon** plans to continue to support these initiatives through the Foreign Credential Recognition Project.
- Our data demonstrates that the number of unfilled jobs is exceeded by the number of working-age Yukoners who are not in the labour force for a variety of reasons.
- Work is underway to determine:
 - Who are those working-age Yukoners who are not participating in the labour market?
 - What are the available skill sets of those Yukoners?

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Spring 2024

Labour Market Overview

Economic
Development

-
- What supports and incentives (employer and program) should be employed to engage or re-engage these individuals?
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There are unfilled jobs in all sectors across Canada, which is a concern for businesses in Yukon.
 - The Yukon continues to have a higher job vacancy rate than Canada as a whole, indicating continued tightness in the local labour market.
-

Background:

- In 2023, annual data show Yukon's unemployment rate at 3.6%, lowest in Canada and below the national average of 5.4%. In the same period, Yukon had the second highest participation rate with 73.2%, behind NWT at 74.3% but well above the national average of 65%.
 - In Q3 2023, Yukon had the highest job vacancy rate with 5.5 percent, compared to the national average of 4.1%. There were 1,175 job vacancies and 20,170 payroll employees with an average offered hourly wage of \$28.45.
 - Statistics Canada's Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours provides a more granular look at how many payroll jobs are filled (and vacant) in the Yukon each month (note that it does not cover self-employed).
 - In December 2023, 41.7% of those working in Yukon were employed by one of four levels of government in the territory. The proportion of those who were self-employed was 27.7%.
 - The table below summarizes key data from the 2022 Yukon Employment and Skills Survey carried out by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics in the fall of 2022. For the purposes of labour market development, it is far better to rely on this annual survey rather than the more volatile data sets such as the monthly Labour Force Survey or the monthly number of EI recipients.
-

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2024

Labour Market Overview

Economic
Development

| 2022 Yukon Employment and Skills Survey Summary | |
|--|--------|
| Working- age (18-65) population | 30,061 |
| Labour force | 24,290 |
| Employed | 23,481 |
| Employed or self-employed and currently working | 21,802 |
| Employed or self-employed, and currently absent from work (e.g. on vacation, sick leave, leave for personal needs, etc.) | 1,051 |
| Employed or self-employed, and currently on leave (e.g. parental, short-term disability or medical, etc.) and expecting to return to the job within a year | 628 |
| Unemployed | 809 |
| Temporarily laid off from work | 284 |
| Unemployed and looking for work (job seeker) | 525 |
| Not in the labour force | 5,465 |
| Self-employed but not currently working due to business closure | 125 |
| Not currently working or looking for work but able to work | 3,657 |
| Not currently working or looking for work and unable to work | 1,683 |
| Don't know | 74 |
| Prefer not to say | 232 |
| | |
| Of note, as part of this survey, the number of respondents citing retirement as reason for not working | 2,058 |

- Economic Development's Labour Market Development supports the Government of Canada Job Bank, which created in March 2022 a dedicated resource called "Jobs for Ukraine" to help connect Ukrainian job seekers with employment opportunities in Canada.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 1, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Labour Market Programs**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Economic Development supports labour market development initiatives of employers and organizations through Staffing UP and Building UP programs.
- Under Building UP, Labour Market Development branch supports the delivery of services to adult learners and job seekers and those under-represented groups in the Yukon's labour market.
- Under Staffing UP, the branch works directly with employers addressing capacity issues, and assisting in the recruitment, training, and retention of staff to sustained success of the businesses.

Additional response:

- Based on current estimates, Labour Market Development distributed \$6.8 million in 2023-24 for programs and services that will help individuals, employers, and organizations meet their labour market goals.
 - Within that budget, Labour Market Development has committed: Support for 11 organizations and institutions providing labour market programs for First Nations, benefitting nearly 1,000 individuals;
 - Support to 19 service providers and organizations to provide help with employment assistance services and/or foundational skills to approximately 7,000 individuals to obtain employment; and
 - Support to 30 employers for training, hiring and retaining employees.

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Development

If asked about budget reduction:

- The Skills for Success program was time-limited and expired on March 31, 2024. This accounted for \$1.48 million in previous budgets.
 - Labour market transfer agreements across Canada were reduced for 2024.
 - The department is working with Canada to identify funding that would help offset this reduction.
 - The department will be working with organizations to determine funding levels that are scaled for their operational realities and to determine priority objectives.
 - We are working closely with other provinces and territories to advocate for appropriate funding levels from Canada.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Employers throughout Canada, including in Whitehorse and across Yukon communities, continue to have trouble recruiting and retaining staff.
 - Yukoners may want to know what support is available.
-

Background:

- Economic Development is the strategic lead for Yukon with Canada on the Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTAs), the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM), and for F/P/T strategic engagement.
 - The Department of Economic Development has responsibility for the Canada – Yukon Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTAs), which include:
 - Canada – Yukon Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA):
 - To assist individuals in preparing for, obtaining and maintaining employment; and
 - To reduce individuals' dependency on government forms of income support.
-

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Labour Market Programs

Economic
Development

- Canada – Yukon Workforce Development Agreement (WDA):
 - To foster labour market participation;
 - To align skills with labour market needs; and
 - To create efficient labour markets.
- Together these agreements account for 75% of the annual labour market program budget for Yukon.
- The LMTAs are scheduled to be renewed in all jurisdictions. Negotiations with the Government of Canada are pending a mandate from the Federal Minister.
- In past years, the federal government has allocated additional “top-up” funding to maintain funding levels. The federal government has not confirmed that “top-up” funding will be available for this year.
- Additionally, the federal government has indicated that it has miscalculated funding amounts under the LMDAs for the territories since 2014. The Department is following up with federal counterparts to better understand the LMDA calculations and the implications of the calculation error.
- The Canada-Yukon Skills for success (SFS), a two-year funding agreement, also expired on March 31, 2024. This program provided \$2,224,000 in total over a two-year period to the Government of Yukon to strengthen adult literacy and essential skills for individuals furthest removed from employment.
- On February 5, 2024, Economic Development signed a funding agreement with the Government of Canada under the Foreign Credential Recognition Program, for \$3.6 million to be expended over 48 months. This pilot project will aim to streamline the process for recognition of Internationally Educated Healthcare Professionals in the Yukon.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

April 24, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Labour Mobility**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Yukon is experiencing the effects of a nationwide labour shortage in which many employers are having difficulty finding suitable workers to maintain or grow their businesses or deliver critical services.
- Initiatives designed to remove barriers to domestic and international mobility are key for the Yukon to reduce the number of certified job vacancies faced by the health care, construction and manufacturing sectors.
- Economic Development will continue to identify opportunities to streamline and support recognition of foreign credentials and assist Yukon employers to meet their labour market needs.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon expects to invest over \$6.2 million in labour market development in 2024-25 to help individual workers and employers meet their labour market goals.
- This funding will be used to strengthen labour mobility; for instance, employers can apply to support workers looking to upgrade or attain recognition for credentials earned outside of the territory.
- Government of Yukon continues to participate in the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) and its working groups to support measures to streamline application requirements, align occupational standards and improve the communication and transparency of labour mobility opportunities across Canada.

If asked about Foreign Credential Recognition:

- On February 5, 2024, the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada finalized the Foreign Credential Recognition Project to

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Labour Mobility

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Development

support the integration of internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) in the Yukon.

- This is a four year pilot initiative valued at \$3,650,286.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of labour market shortages, especially in health care, may be raised during the legislative session, with questions about plans to mitigate impacts on services and the territorial economy.
- Foreign Credential Recognition is a high-profile issue, especially as it relates to Health Human Resources.

Background:

- The Yukon does not have a designated Labour Mobility Coordinator.
- Economic Development, Community Services, and Health and Social Services oversee issues related to mobility in a collaborative manner.
- **Labour Mobility and Trade.** The Yukon has flexibility in obtaining regulated workers from other jurisdictions; however, with the absence of regulators in the territory, it has no authority when it comes to foreign credentials. Many new permanent residents with professional designations leave the territory to have credentials recognized in other jurisdictions.
- Chapter 7 of the Canada Free Trade Agreement requires provinces and territories, subject to certain requirements and upon application, to certify workers to practice an occupation in their jurisdiction without additional assessment or training if that worker is certified for that occupation in another Canadian jurisdiction.
- Provincial and territorial governments across Canada have posted exceptions to this Chapter for certain occupations, meaning that for those occupations, additional assessment or training is required to practice in their jurisdiction.
- The Yukon only has one narrow exception for lawyers certified solely in Quebec, due to the differences between common and civil law practices.

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- **Housing.** Housing is a major impediment to attracting workers from outside the territory. The Yukon Housing Corporation's Housing Initiatives Fund aims to increase the supply of affordable housing across Yukon, which could have a positive spillover effect on labour flows to the territory.
- The Yukon's Health Human Resource Strategy was released in December 2023. Actions that directly address labour mobility issues for the health sector include Initiatives 2.3 (Streamline new licensing pathways to support the health system), 2.5 (Evolve health professional laws and regulations to be modern and flexible) and 2.6 (Establish a clear IEHP integration pathway into the Yukon's health system in a healthy, culturally safe, and sustainable manner.)
- **Foreign Credential Recognition.** The Government of Yukon signed a contribution agreement with the Government of Canada on February 5, 2024. The Department of Economic Development signed for Yukon, and Employment and Social Development Canada signed for Canada.
- The agreement is a time-limited four-year agreement valued at \$3.65 million.
- The first phase of the project includes extensive research, which will inform subsequent initiatives. Actions currently being considered are:
 - the creation of a central hub to support newcomer health professionals;
 - career navigation and assessment support services;
 - partnerships with national assessment services; and
 - a Nursing Bridging Pilot Program.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 7, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

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Labour Market Strategy- Public Engagement

Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Premier’s 2023 Mandate letter includes a commitment to: “advance opportunities for innovation, diversification, and growth of a strong, resilient economy by beginning consultation on a new labour market strategy”.
- Since the 2020 expiration of the Yukon Labour Market Framework, a 10-year engagement framework for labour market development programs and services, government and stakeholder labour perspectives are likely to have shifted. There is an opportunity here to establish a new process for setting labour market priorities.
- The Department of Economic Development will conduct a public engagement to better understand changing priorities and trends in the labour market.

Additional response:

- The Department of Economic Development will undertake public engagement between March and October of 2024 through targeted outreach with First Nations governments, partners and stakeholders. A public survey will be available in the fall, to help capture Yukoners’ diverse views.
- Targeted engagement ensures the inclusion of First Nations priorities in the broader Yukon strategy, acknowledges the unique needs of First Nations specific to their labour market requirements and actively supports efforts under the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy (YFNPP).
- Engagement will help to ensure that labour market programming is aligned with the objectives of ‘Our Clean Future’ – Yukon’s strategy for climate change envisions transitioning towards a low-carbon,

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Labour Market Strategy- Public Engagement

Economic
Development

sustainable economy, which will create new green jobs while also requiring a skilled workforce.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon is facing acute labor shortages despite having a low unemployment rate (3.6% in November 2023; 3.9% in December 2023) and reports a vacancy rate among the highest in the country (1,330 unfilled jobs in the second quarter of 2023).
- Persistent vacancies may burden regional economic development by limiting business expansion, straining existing workforces, impeding crucial infrastructure projects, while increasing costs for businesses and potentially compromising service quality.

Background:

- On February 28, 2024, the Cabinet Committee on Priorities and Planning (CCPP) provided approval to the Department of Economic Development to conduct public labour market engagement.
- A Yukon labour market strategy should be responsive to emerging trends and priorities.
- Robust public engagement is necessary to gather diverse perspectives from various governments and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive strategy.
- Government-to-government labour market engagement will include representatives from all Yukon First Nations governments willing to participate.
- Key stakeholders we will engage with include:
 - Employers including, but not limited to key informants at: Large entities; small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); First Nation corporations; not-for-profits and NGOs; health care providers; industry organizations and associations (e.g. Chamber of Mines, Yukon Tourism Industry Association); chambers of commerce (Whitehorse, Yukon, and Yukon First Nations);

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- Working-age individuals, including those employed, those unemployed and those not currently in the labour market; and
- Service providers, specifically key informants from organizations involved in the delivery of information, services, or support to Yukoners (employees and job seekers) seeking to strengthen their labour market outcomes.
- Engagement will identify priority areas and inform the development of a new strategy, which will guide policy responses and departmental labour market program spending.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 6, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Government of Yukon Immigration Programs**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon provides economic immigration programs to help businesses across the territory meet their labour needs.
- The Department of Economic Development administers two immigration programs in partnership with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): The Yukon Business Nominee Program (YBNP) and the Yukon Nominee Program (YNP).
- The YNP allocation for 2024 has been maintained at the same level as 2023, allowing the Yukon to nominate 430 people through the program.
- We will continue to support the Yukon's economic growth, labour market **and communities** through responsible immigration programming and advancing the recognition of training received outside of Canada.

Additional response:

- Due to the Yukon's advocacy with IRCC, there was an 82% increase in the Yukon's base allocations from 2021 to 2023 (220 in 2021, 270 in 2022, to 400 in 2023).

If asked about the Yukon Business Nominee Program:

- The YBNP aims to attract and retain skilled international entrepreneurs who inject new capital and business expertise into the Yukon's economy, creating job opportunities and enhancing economic diversification and growth within the territory.
- The program has successfully attracted entrepreneurs to the hospitality, service, tourism, arts and agricultural sectors in Dawson City, Mayo, Faro, Haines Junction and Whitehorse.
- Between January 1 and December 31, 2023, nine business concepts were assessed under the YBNP. While no new business owners were

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Development

welcomed to the Yukon through the YBNP in 2023, Economic Development continues to support foreign nationals who are interested in starting or obtaining a business in the territory through the program.

If asked about the Yukon Nominee Program:

- The YNP helps employers fill crucial positions with foreign nationals who intend to settle in the Yukon and gain Permanent Resident status.
- Between January 1 and March 31, 2024, 91 applicants were nominated; 64 Critical Impact Workers, 11 Skilled Workers, 12 Yukon Express Entry and 4 Yukon Community Program.
- The YNP allocation for 2023 was 430 people (400 Base and 30 Enhanced).
 - On November 16, 2023, as a result of our ongoing dialogue and advocacy with IRCC, the YNP received an additional 150 base allocations during the fall redistribution of allocation exercise bringing the total to 580.
 - Between January 1 and December 31, 2023, 581 applicants were nominated; 475 Critical Impact Workers, 78 Skilled Workers (The critical Impact Workers and Skilled Workers streams number includes the 12 people nominated through the YCP), 25 Express Entry and 3 YBNP.

If asked about the Yukon Community Program:

- The YCP was launched in June 2020 as a new pilot stream of the YNP to provide flexibility to employers in rural communities where seasonal and part-time work is a fundamental part of the local economy and essential for local economic development.
- IRCC extended the pilot until June 22, 2025.

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- Up to 35 candidates can be nominated through the program enabling them to work in one of the participating communities of Dawson City, Carmacks, Carcross, Haines Junction, Watson Lake and Whitehorse.
- Between June 1, 2020, and March 31, 2024, 32 candidates have been nominated through the program – 12 in Whitehorse, two in Carcross, nine in Dawson City, six in Carmacks, one in Watson Lake and two in Haines Junction.

If asked about temporary foreign workers:

- In March 2024, IRCC announced its intent to reduce Canada's temporary resident population from 6.2% in 2023 to 5% over the next three years by:
 - Stabilizing international student numbers;
 - More strategic planning and assessment of demand for temporary foreign workers; and
 - Including temporary resident arrivals in the Immigration Levels Plan.
- These measures will not directly affect the Yukon Nominee Program. However, when necessary due to the volume of applications received, we will prioritize applications for visa holders already within Canada and those with current work permits, serving to transition temporary residents to permanent residency.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukon businesses continue to express concerns over labour shortages. The Yukon's unemployment rate remains among the lowest in Canada.
- There is interest in the availability of immigration programming.

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Background:

- The IRCC has implemented several measures to ease labour shortages being experienced across Canada, including:
 - Resuming Express Entry draws in 2022;
 - Extending temporary policy allowing visitors to apply for work permits inside Canada to February 28, 2025;
 - Extending current open work permits expiring between August 1 and the end of 2023;
 - Resuming invitations to apply for federal high-skilled streams, including the Canadian experience class, federal skilled worker class and federal skilled trades class;
 - Launching Category-based Selection in the Express Entry Program to target skilled workers;
 - Implementing new arrangements to expand work opportunities for Canadians, British and South Korea Youth;
 - Implementing a new youth mobility agreement with Finland for youth to receive Working Holiday Open Work Permits; and
 - Implementing several measures to facilitate applications made before the November 2021 deadline to transition from temporary to permanent residency.

Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot:

- In 2018, IRCC launched the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot to identify possible candidates registered with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) for recruitment through existing economic immigration pathways.
- The Yukon was one of five jurisdictions that partnered with IRCC in the creation and implementation of EMPP.
- The Yukon has not had any successful matches to date through this program.

Vital Stats:

- There are currently four streams under the YNP: Critical Impact Worker, Skilled Worker, Express Entry and the YCP (extended to June 2025).

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- **YNP Allocations.** The YNP 2023 allocation was 430 persons, with an additional 150 spaces received during the fall reallocation exercise. **The YNP 2024 allocation is 430 nominations.**
- The YNP 2022 allocation was 300 persons -270 Base, 30 Enhanced with an additional two base spaces received during the fall redistribution of allocation exercise.
 - YNP utilized its full 2022 annual allocation for the second time since the program was established in 2007, showing the demand from both employers and nominees for the program.
- Because of the high number of received applications in 2023, YNP introduced a temporary system to prioritize applications for visa holders already within Canada and those with current work permits. This was communicated to employers via email and posted on the website in July 2023.
- **Nominee Countries of origin.** Top five countries of origin for the YNP in 2023:
 - India – 219;
 - Philippines – 170;
 - China – 18;
 - Japan – 14; and
 - Vietnam – 12;
- **Nominee Occupations.** Top five occupations filled by nominees in 2023:
 - Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Occupations – 154;
 - Light Duty Cleaners – 58;
 - Cashiers – 52;
 - Grocery Clerks and Store Shelf Stockers – 55; and
 - Early Childhood Educators – 38
- **YNP Employers.** **Between 2007 and December 31, 2023,** the YNP has received applications from over 611 employers to address labour shortages, approving 2,942 principal nominees to date and approximately 2,228 dependents
- Between 2018 and 2022, the number of employers who welcomed workers utilizing the YNP almost doubled:
 - 2018 – 94 employers;
 - 2019 – 118 employers;

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Government of Yukon Immigration Programs

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- 2020 – 116 employers;
- 2021 – 169 employers;
- 2022 – 171 employers; and
- 2023 – 200 employers
- **YBNP.** Since 2001, 52 candidates have been nominated for Permanent Residence through the YBNP, establishing 32 businesses and investing \$25.3 million into their businesses in the Yukon.
- YBNP participants are required to contribute a minimum of \$300,000 to their business in the Yukon and have a minimum verifiable net worth of \$500,000 to ensure their business' viability.
- Although immigration may be a factor in resolving seasonal labour shortages in the Yukon, there are other challenges, such as housing and community retention, which may constrain the availability of seasonal workers.
- Once a nominee has received their Permanent Resident status, they are no longer part of the YNP and the department does not actively collect information on whether nominees remain within the territory.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|---|
| <u> Approved </u> | <u> April 25, 2024 </u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Immigration Branch Operations**Economic
Development

Recommended response:**Application Processing Times:**

- After receiving a complete application, the standard processing time by the Government of Yukon is 12-14 weeks. Processing times vary with the volume of applications received and the complexity of the application.
- Following YNP approval, a nominee may need to apply to IRCC for a work permit. As of February 21, 2024:
 - Overseas nominees are subject to the processing times of the local visa office which varies greatly by location, present capacity or priorities, taking from as little as four weeks to 67 weeks; and
 - The overall processing of work permit applications from inside Canada is 101 days.
- Permanent Residence application review by IRCC for provincial and territorial nominees is 13 months (7 months for the Express Entry stream).

Canada's 2024-26 Immigration Levels Plan:

- The Government of Canada's Immigration Levels Plan for 2024-26 aims to welcome 485,000 new permanent residents in 2024, 500,000 in 2025 and plateau at 500,000 in 2026, following the trajectory of the 2023-25 Plan.
- By stabilizing the number of newcomers after 2025, Canada will seek to properly consider and balance housing, infrastructure planning and sustainable population growth into the future.
- The Yukon will continue to advocate for YNP positions to meet the needs of the Yukon's business community.

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Development

- The YNP allocation for 2024 has been maintained at the same level as 2023, allowing the Yukon to nominate 430 people through the program.

Canada's Francophone Immigration Measures:

- On January 16, 2024, the Honourable Marc Miller, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced several initiatives to support Francophone immigration outside of Quebec.
- These initiatives are:
 - Policy on Francophone Immigration;
 - Welcoming Francophone Communities; and
 - Francophone Immigration Support Program.
- The Yukon has exceeded the previous goal of having 4.4% of immigrants outside of Quebec to be French-speaking.
 - To date, francophones have made up approximately 5.8% of newcomers arriving through the YNP to the Yukon.
 - Canada's francophone immigration targets for 2024-26 are 6%, 7% and 8%.
- Whitehorse is currently participating in the Welcoming Francophone Communities program, with funding being provided to L'Association franco-yukonnaise to create programs and activities to help French-speaking newcomers feel welcomed and integrate into the community.
- The Department of Economic Development will continue to showcase the Yukon to bilingual foreign nationals, urging them to consider the territory as a target destination.

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Canada's International Student Changes:

- On January 22, 2024, the Honourable Marc Miller, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship announced that Canada will set an intake cap on international student permit applications at 360,000 nationally.
- Changes to the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program were also made.
- IRCC is engaging provinces and territories on how to manage permit allocations.
- Economic Development and the Department of Education are on a Federal-Provincial-Territorial working group led by IRCC on implementation, including on IRCC's new requirement for attestation letters from provinces and territories.

Temporary foreign workers:

- In March 2024, IRCC announced its intent to reduce Canada's temporary resident population from 6.2% in 2023 to 5% over the next three years by:
 - Stabilizing international student numbers;
 - More strategic planning and assessment of demand for temporary foreign workers; and
 - Including temporary resident arrivals in the Immigration Levels Plan.
- These measures will not directly affect the Yukon Nominee Program. However, when necessary due to the volume of applications received, we will prioritize applications for visa holders already within Canada and those with current work permits, serving to transition temporary residents to permanent residency.

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Program Assessment:

- In 2020, as part of the preparation of a new immigration strategy, we engaged with program users, municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, settlement agencies and cultural associations. Their feedback on the program was thoroughly considered in determining the direction the program will take over the next ten years, including any gaps or areas of improvement that should be addressed.
 - In August 2022, the Ombudsman provided a recommendation for the department to evaluate its application of the YNP program including its policy, operations manual and tri-partite agreement to ensure it is complying with fairness standards. The department is currently engaged in this evaluation.
 - Economic Development is planning to review the program policies and procedures over the coming three years to increase application and program efficiency to respond to the needs of businesses and nominees and for better protection of newcomers.
 - The Department takes employer and nominee feedback seriously and we are continually seeking ways to improve the client experience for our immigration programs.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Immigration has made national headlines in the last year, particularly related to the national housing crisis, international students and immigration services.
-

Background:

- In fall 2023, Yukon University had 114 international students from the following countries: India (55), Philippines (24), Japan (4), Mexico (4) and various other countries.
-

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Immigration Branch Operations

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- There are currently four streams under the YNP: Critical Impact Worker, Skilled Worker, Express Entry and the Yukon Community Program (extended to June 2025).
- Due to the significant influx of applications received in 2023, YNP implemented a temporary system to prioritize applications for individuals already holding visas within Canada and those with valid work permits. This information was conveyed to employers through email and posted on Yukon.ca in July 2023.
- The prioritization list, coupled with the substantial number of applications, had a notable impact on our processing times.
- The department continues to prioritize applications in 2024, due to the continued high number of applications.
- Although immigration may be a factor in resolving seasonal labour shortages in the Yukon, there are other challenges, such as housing and community retention, which may constrain the availability of seasonal workers.
- Once a nominee has received their Permanent Resident status, they are no longer part of the YNP and the Yukon does not actively collect information on whether nominees remain within the territory.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

April 3, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Settlement Services**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Settlement services are an important part of welcoming and integrating newcomers to the Yukon into our communities.
- The Department of Economic Development provides settlement support to Yukon Nominees in the form of information sessions, worksite monitoring and community outreach.
- L'Association franco-yukonnaise (AFY) and the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon (MCY) provide settlement assistance through a wide range of integration services and programs on behalf of the Government of Canada.
- Settlement services include support in finding housing, employment language instruction (tutoring) and referrals to government services such as early childcare, education and health care. The Government of Canada invested \$1.57 million for settlement services for permanent residents (PR) in the Yukon in 2022-23, and \$1.70 million dollars in 2023-24.
- In 2023, the Government of Yukon delivered six information sessions and seven monitoring sessions in Whitehorse, Dawson City, Watson Lake, Tagish, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction and Carmacks. A total of 214 nominees and 61 employers participated.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Settlement services and the ability of newcomers to integrate into society remains an area of topical interest.
- Retention is a key interest of many Yukon communities. The Yukon Community Program draws additional focus on settlement and retention in rural Yukon.
- Limited affordable housing options can be a challenge for some newcomers settling in the Yukon.

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Settlement Services

Economic
Development

Background:

- Settlement services are generally funded by the federal government to support permanent residents to integrate and establish themselves in the economic, social, political and cultural aspects of their chosen community, whereas Temporary Residents (international students, foreign workers, refugee claimants) are usually supported by the province or territory.
- In spring 2023, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) assessed national settlement services with the B.C.-Yukon region reporting improved Indigenous-newcomer relationships and improved supports in settlement with the employment of subject matter experts, such as services for mental health.
- The Immigration Unit provides the following settlement services directly to its Yukon Nominee Program clients (foreign workers and employers):
 - Review and interpretation of the Nominee Tri-Partite Agreement;
 - Employee and employer worksite monitoring;
 - Mandatory workplace standards information sessions; and
 - Community Outreach visits, including a weekly drop-in session **which is open to foreign workers and international students.**
- The Canada-Yukon Local Coordination Working Group, a group made up of government and non-government organization representatives, meets regularly to oversee settlement within the Yukon and promote effective communication and collaboration between Canada and the Yukon on settlement outcomes, pre-arrival services, integration programs and policy issues.

Settlement Agencies:

- In 2023-24, MCY received \$1.5 million in funding from IRCC through Yukon Tourism Education Council in support of Canada's Settlement Program (ends in 2025) for people who have permanent resident status and refugees.
- MCY offers the following services and programs:
 - Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services;
 - Information and Orientation;

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Settlement Services**Economic
Development

- Community Connections;
 - Employment Related Services;
 - Language Assessment;
 - Language Training;
 - Literacy Programs;
 - Settlement Worker in School program and support services;
 - Local Immigration Partnership; and
 - Outreach services.
- Over the past five years, MCY has provided services to 1161 clients.
- AFY received \$205,872 in 2023-24.
- AFY offers the following services and programs:
 - Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services;
 - Information and Orientation;
 - Community Connections; and
 - Employment Related Services.
- Agreements AFY has with IRCC:
 - Francophone Welcoming Community (pilot project), 2020-24 \$102,079/year:
 - Indirect (resource development);
 - Promo and publications (raise awareness, inform);
 - Community connections (community dinners, film presentations, cultural activities, networking opportunities);
 - Information sessions; and
 - Employers' connections.
 - Francophone Settlement, 2020-25 \$65,000/year:
 - Information sessions and orientation;
 - Employment and settlement services;
 - Community connections (community dinners, film presentation, cultural activities, networking opportunities); and
 - Indirect (meet with employers, tournée de liaison nationale de l'IRCC, participate in virtual job fair organized by RDÉE Canada).

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Settlement Services

Economic
Development

- Réseau en immigration francophone du Yukon (RIFY), 2020-25
\$25,000/year:
 - Mobilize, share, discuss and work on immigration issues;
 - Meet and lead a group of Francophone partners (organizations);
 - Educate RIFY members and raise awareness in the community;
 - Implement the group strategic and action plans; and
 - Conduct research.
- In fall 2023, Yukon University had 114 international students from the following countries: India (55), Philippines (24), Japan (4), Mexico (4) and various other countries.
- Yukon University and Yukon Cares sponsor refugees.
 - Yukon University sponsored five refugees in 2021-22;
 - Yukon University has formed an Intercultural Services team and are point of contact for support for international students and sponsored refugees; and
 - Yukon Cares sponsored two families from Sierra Leone through the Family Reunification Program.
- Since 2014, refugees have arrived in the Yukon from the following countries:
 - Syria – 11;
 - Sudan – 8;
 - Liberia – 2;
 - Eritrea – 6;
 - Iraq – 4;
 - Congo – 4; and
 - Pakistan – 2.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 6, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Francophone Immigration**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Francophone immigration is a priority for the Yukon and we recognize the economic, social, cultural and demographic opportunities that French-speaking immigrants represent for the territory.
- The department has been working on a new immigration strategy and will continue to recognize and prioritize francophone immigration as a valued and important contributor to supporting the needs of Yukon employers and communities.
- The Yukon is the third most bilingual jurisdiction in Canada, making us an attractive settlement destination for French-speaking immigrants.
- The Government of Yukon continues to work in partnership with the Government of Canada and L'Association franco-yukonnaise (AFY) to recruit bilingual immigrants and help them integrate into Yukon communities.
- AFY was an active participant in our stakeholder engagement for the new Immigration Strategy and provided meaningful feedback.

Additional response:

- In 2022, 20 francophones (and their households), were approved under the Yukon Nominee Program (YNP).
- Between 2016 and 2021, the Yukon was the only Canadian jurisdiction to increase the number and proportion of those who speak predominantly French at home (up from 2.4% to 2.6%).
 - The number of Yukon residents who identified French as their exclusive first official language grew by more than 200.
 - In 2021, French was the first official language spoken by 4.5% of the Yukon's population.

Session Briefing Note

Francophone Immigration

Spring 2024

Economic
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-
- In 2021, the rate of English-French bilingualism in the Yukon was 14.2%.
 - Since 2007 when the YNP was established, 131 nominees (including their households) from French-speaking countries have been approved through the program.
 - As part of the 2024-26 Immigration Levels Plan, Canada announced an increase to French-speaking permanent resident targets outside Quebec to: 6% in 2024, 7% in 2025 and 8% in 2026, building on the achievement of a 4.4% target in 2022.
 - To date, the Yukon has exceeded the 4.4% target by welcoming francophones making up approximately 5.8% of the total number of people settling in the Yukon through the YNP.
 - We will continue to support businesses using the YNP to bring French-speaking newcomers to our territory to fill labour gaps and recognize the importance of francophones to our communities and our economy.
 - AFY attended Paris and Rabat at the Destination Canada recruitment event in fall 2023 and Department staff attended virtually.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In January 2024, Government of Canada announced several new initiatives to support Francophone immigration outside of Quebec.
- Government of Canada has released the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-28*.

Background:

- On March 6, 2024, as part of the new Francophone Immigration Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada announced the Francophone Community Immigration Pilot, planned to start, Fall 2024. The pilot will support an

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Francophone Immigration

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

increasing number of French-speaking newcomers and help ensure the economic development of Francophone minority communities.

- On January 16, 2024, Marc Miller, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced several initiatives to support Francophone immigration outside of Quebec, including:
 - Release of the new "Policy on Francophone Immigration", to replace the 2019 Francophone Immigration Strategy;
 - Renewal and expansion of the Welcoming Communities Initiative; and
 - Development of a Francophone Immigration Support Program.
- Whitehorse was selected as one of 14 communities across Canada under the three-year Welcoming Francophone Communities initiative. Under the initiative, AFY receives \$102,079 per year (2020-24) to create programs and activities to help French-speaking newcomers feel welcomed and integrate into the community.
- Increasing francophone immigration is a high priority of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Vision Action Plan (VAP). The VAP outlines shared goals for immigration based on FPT collaboration, consultation, and cooperation.
- Provinces and Territories met with IRCC on August 22, 2022, for consultations on the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-28.
- The Immigration Unit has attended Destination Canada, an annual francophone recruitment fair in Paris and Brussels, since 2017, to fill labour market needs in the Yukon. Program staff participated in a virtual booth in partnership with AFY in 2020, 2021 and 2022.
- The Immigration Unit offers bilingual services for clients and is represented on the "Réseau d'immigration francophone au Yukon".
- AFY receives federal funding to provide settlement services including language instruction, orientation to healthcare, education and information on the employment sector.

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Francophone Immigration

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- The Yukon's top source francophone countries are France, Belgium, Switzerland and Morocco.
- In addition to the YNP, some skilled francophone workers arrive through the federally administered Mobilité Francophone stream, while young francophones may arrive with federal, temporary working holiday permits.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

March 19, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Immigration Strategy

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- We look forward to releasing “*Stronger Together: Immigration, Thriving Communities and a Growing Economy*” in the coming months. This strategy will guide us over the next decade, helping us to ensure our immigration programs are responsive to the evolving needs of the Yukon’s economy, employers and communities.
- Economic immigration is an essential tool for attracting workers and developing a labour force that supports investment and economic growth while meeting the needs of Yukon businesses.
- Immigrants contribute to the modernization and diversification of the Yukon’s economy, invest in businesses that create jobs and enrich the culture of the territory.

Additional response:

- The department has worked with stakeholders and government partners to ensure the new strategy will meet the territory’s needs now and into the future.
- Public engagement that asked Yukoners for their ideas and experiences with the Yukon Nominee Program and Yukon Business Nominee Program concluded in December 2020.
 - The Government of Yukon published the *What We Heard* report in July 2021.
- The feedback from engagement is helping the Government of Yukon position the territory as a northern leader with immigration programs that reflect the values and priorities of Yukoners.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Immigration Strategy**Economic
Development

- As with many other Canadian locales, housing supply and affordability is an ongoing challenge faced by current residents and by immigrants seeking to settle in the Yukon. The strategy will include actions to work together to meet the housing needs for our community.

If asked about timeline:

- The Department hopes to release the strategy in 2024.
- The strategy is taking longer than expected to complete as:
 - the Department works to ensure the strategy aligns with other government priorities;
 - serves the interests of all Yukoners; and
 - reflects changes to the immigration landscape since the initial engagement occurred in 2020.
- The Department regularly collaborates with Yukon stakeholders, including employers, employees and settlement agencies for the delivery of the Yukon Nominee Program, providing officials with insight into their current priorities and concerns.
- The Department also engages regularly with its federal counterparts at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada on changes to federal immigration policy, including Francophone immigration measures.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Minister's mandate letter includes introducing a new immigration strategy to support workforce requirements of business and industry.
- Labour shortage has been a concern for many employers as the Yukon's unemployment rate remains well below the national average.

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Immigration Strategy

Spring 2024**Economic
Development**

Background:

- The engagement ran from October 20 to December 4, 2020, and included an online survey and discussion document, phone interview and virtual meetings.
- The engaged stakeholders included nominee program users (employers and nominees), municipalities, chambers of commerce, settlement agencies (Association franco-yukonnaise, the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon) and other cultural associations.
- The previous 10-year immigration strategy was developed in 2010 by the Immigration Strategy Working Group.

Approved by:

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| <u>Approved</u> | <u>February 1, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note

Immigration MOUs

Spring 2024Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Department is working to ensure the Yukon Nominee Program (YNP) effectively meets the territory's labour market needs by exploring potential partnerships with certain jurisdictions.
- On March 18, 2022, the Yukon and the Philippines signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Employment and Protection of Filipinos under the YNP.
- The Philippines reorganized its departments following a general election. Work on MOU implementation continues with the new Department of Migrant Workers, formed in February 2022.
- The Department of Economic Development is working to finalize the Implementation Guidelines for the MOU with the Philippine Department of Migrant Workers.
- The MOU will make it easier for Filipinos to come to the Yukon while reducing costs and red tape for employers.
- The Yukon also signed a Letter of Intent with the Indian State of Kerala's Department of Non-Resident Keralite Affairs (NORKA-Roots) on September 14, 2023.
- The Letter of Intent was signed to explore potential collaboration on healthcare recruitment. The Government of Yukon is currently considering next steps.
- The Yukon continues to consider whether agreements with other countries could support delivery of the Yukon Nominee Program.

Session Briefing Note

Immigration MOUs

Spring 2024**Economic
Development**

Additional response:

- The Filipino community greatly contributes to the Yukon's diverse culture and economy.

If asked about the status of negotiations:

- Implementation guidelines are still being negotiated between the governments of Yukon and the Philippines.
- A Yukon-Philippines working group to develop implementation guidelines has been in contact regularly since September 2022. The guidelines have undergone several revisions.
- Logistical challenges, including changes in Philippine government officials, has delayed the negotiations.

If asked about the implementation guidelines text:

- The text is still under draft and has not been finalized and approved by either the Government of Yukon or the Philippines.
- The implementation guidelines will include an activities plan for the Government of Yukon and the Philippines, as well as terms of reference for a Joint Committee that will monitor and advise on the implementation of the MOU.
- Under the current draft, the Joint Committee would be co-chaired by the Yukon and the Philippines, with three members from each side. Membership has not yet been finalized.
- The implementation guidelines cannot be made public until final text has been confirmed by both the Yukon and the Philippines.

Session Briefing Note

Immigration MOUs

Spring 2024

Economic
Development

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Implementation Guidelines have taken longer than expected to complete, primarily due to logistical challenges.
-

Background:

Philippines MOU:

- In February 2022, the Department of Migrant Workers was formed, absorbing the responsibilities of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, and certain offices of the Departments of Labor and Foreign Affairs.
- On March 18, 2022, both Parties signed the MOU.
- The MOU improves coordination between the Yukon and the Philippines on labour mobility and specifically:
 - improves the ability for Filipinos to be identified and recruited through the YNP process;
 - supports the safety of Filipino nominees coming to the Yukon through requirements for Yukon employers under the YNP;
 - formalizes Yukon-Philippines cooperation on labour mobility and the YNP through the creation of a Joint Committee;
 - waives existing fees applied by the Philippines to Filipino YNP applicants; and
 - clarifies the interaction between the YNP and the Philippines pre-screened and vetted pool of qualified Filipino workers.
- The Department began the process of negotiating implementation guidelines with the Philippines in fall 2021.
- On October 12, 2023, the Department of Migrant Workers provided new text proposals for the implementation guidelines, to which the Department of Economic Development has responded. The Department is awaiting Philippine

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Immigration MOUs

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comments on the draft guidelines. The Department will work with the Philippine Consulate in Vancouver to identify a time for a senior officials' meeting to resolve outstanding issues once comments are received.

Other Initiatives

- The Premier led a business delegation in September 2023 on a mission to Asia, visiting Japan and India. The mission included a visit to Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of the Indian State of Kerala.
- During the visit, the Premier signed a Letter of Intent with the Kerala Department of Non-Resident Keralite Affairs (NORKA Roots). Included in NORKA Roots' mandate is the recruitment of healthcare professionals by international governments.
- The Government of Yukon is considering internally how best to advance the objectives of the Letter of Intent.
- The Department considers how best to ensure the YNP meets the labour market needs in the territory on an ongoing basis, including whether agreements with certain partners could support program delivery.

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| Approved by: | |
| <u> Approved </u> | <u> March 6, 2024 </u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Recommended response:

- The Yukon is committed to supporting global citizens who have been impacted by catastrophic natural disasters and those who are victims of violence in contravention of international law.
- The Yukon remains steadfast in its condemnation of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. This is a blatant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and of the Ukrainian people's right to determine their own future.
- The Yukon sends its deepest condolences to Turkish and Syrian families who have been affected by the deadly earthquake in February 2023 that killed more than 50,000 people and displaced millions.
- The Yukon is deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.
- Anyone who needs assistance finding information on available support for refugees can contact the Immigration Branch of Economic Development.

Additional response:

Russian Invasion of Ukraine:

- The Government of Yukon launched the Ukrainian Family Support Desk in March 2022, to help Ukrainians seek residency and employment in the Yukon.
 - As of April 8, 2024, the Support Desk has received 461 inquiries.
- The Government of Yukon provided one-night of accommodation and food vouchers to Ukrainians transiting through Whitehorse via seasonal Condor flights.
 - In 2022, we assisted 45 Ukrainians; and
 - In 2023, we assisted 13 Ukrainians.

Session Briefing Note

Humanitarian Initiatives

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- As of April 8, 2024, the Ukrainian Canadian Association of Yukon (UCA Y) estimates that at least 150 Ukrainians have chosen to settle in the Yukon.
 - Seven Ukrainians along with their families, for a total of seventeen individuals, were nominated for permanent residence through the Yukon Nominee Program.

Türkiye and Syria Earthquake Response:

- In April 2023, the Ukrainian Family Support Desk was expanded to include connecting Turkish and Syrian families with local services.
 - As of February 28, 2024, the Support Desk has received 25 inquiries from Turkish and Syrian families.
 - The Türkiye and Syria Support Desk is no longer operating as the Canada's special measures ended on January 3, 2024.
- Our response to the humanitarian crisis in Türkiye and Syria had three main pillars:
 - A Support Desk and dedicated web page with information on federal programs to assist with immigration and family reunification and connect those in need with local programs, services, humanitarian aid and jobs;
 - Prioritization of Yukon Nominee Program applications for Turkish and Syrian immigrants seeking employment and Canadian permanent residence in the Yukon; and
 - A donation of \$25,000 was made to Yukon Cares to assist with the resettlement of Turkish and Syrian nationals arriving in the Yukon.

Crisis in Gaza Response:

- On December 21, 2023, the Honourable Marc Miller, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship announced

temporary immigration measures to support family members of Canadians and permanent residents who have fled Israel and the Palestinian Territories as well as those already in Canada. These measures will be in place for one year, or for 1000 visa applications, and include:

- Fee-exempt study or open work permits; and
- Prioritized processing of all existing and new permanent residence applications for Palestinians within family-based streams.

Support Desk:

- The Yukon will use its immigration support desk service to offer information and support to people affected by natural disasters and international crises seeking to arrive in the territory.
- Our support desk will:
 - provide information on federal programs to assist with immigration and family reunification;
 - provide information on settlement services and availability of humanitarian aid; and
 - guide new arrivals looking for employment opportunities in the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On February 6, 2023, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake and several powerful aftershocks created a major humanitarian crisis in Türkiye and Syria. Yukoners may want to know how the Government of Yukon supported those displaced by the disaster.
- The Russian invasion of Ukraine has created a major humanitarian crisis. It has significant implications for NATO, the European security order, and global security. Yukoners may want to know the Government of Yukon's position.

- The conflict between Israel and Hamas has created a major humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Yukoners may want to know the Government of Yukon's position.
-

Background:

Russian Invasion of Ukraine:

- On February 24, 2022, Russia launched an unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine.
- The invasion created a humanitarian crisis. The following are current UNHCR estimates, with real figures inside Ukraine likely much higher.
 - 6.3 million have fled abroad with 5.9 million refugees recorded across Europe (January 2024);
 - At least 3.7 million are internally displaced (January 2024); and
 - At least 27,149 civilian casualties (OHCHR, October 27, 2023), including at least 10,000 deaths (November 21, 2023).
- Economic Development's Labour Market Development branch supports the "Jobs for Ukraine" program launched in March 2022 by the Government of Canada Job Bank, to support Ukrainians seeking jobs in Canada.
- The Yukon Liquor Corporation has ended the sale of Russian-produced products in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.
- The Yukon supports Canadian sanctions against senior Russian officials and institutions, as well as export controls.

Türkiye and Syria Earthquake:

- On February 6, 2023, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake and several powerful aftershocks hit the border of Türkiye and Syria.
 - The earthquake in Syria has affected at least 8.8 million people. Before the earthquake hit, an estimated 15.3 million people in Syria were already in need of humanitarian assistance.
 - Canada provided \$50 million in humanitarian support and implemented temporary measures to assist Turkish and Syrian citizens. These temporary measures were in place from March 29, 2023, to January 3, 2024, and allowed Turkish and Syrian nationals to:
 - continue to study, work or visit family in Canada free of charge;
 - receive prioritized processing for immigration applications;
-

Session Briefing Note

Humanitarian Initiatives

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Development

- be approved for a permanent resident visa without a passport or travel document;
- utilize a streamlined process for work permit applications; and
- acquire necessary travel documents, such as temporary passports, limited-validity passports or emergency travel documents, free of charge.

Crisis in Gaza:

- In October 2023, the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel, resulting in more than 1,200 primarily Israeli deaths and taking more than 240 people hostage.
- Israel subsequently declared war, cut electricity, and blocked the entry of food and fuel to the Gaza Strip.
- Three weeks after the initial assault, more than 1.4 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip had become internally displaced.
- On November 1, 2023, the border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt was opened, allowing foreign nationals to evacuate the territory.
- A temporary pause in fighting for seven days in November 2023 allowed the release of 110 Israeli hostages for 240 Palestinian prisoners.
- While Hamas has faced widespread global condemnation, Israel has also received significant international pressure to allow aid into the territory to support the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.
- On January 3, 2024, South Africa instituted International Court of Justice (ICJ) hearings against Israel alleging the Crime of Genocide. On January 26, the ICJ ordered Israel to undertake provisional measures to prevent acts of genocide in Gaza.

Approved by:

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| _____ Approved | _____ April 16, 2024 |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Canada-United States Trade**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- We work closely with federal, provincial, and territorial counterparts on supporting trade with the United States that secures Canadian interests through advocacy, trade agreement implementation, and promotion.
- We work actively with counterparts on Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) implementation. CUSMA preserves key elements of the long-lasting Canada-US trading relationship, with new and updated provisions that address modern trade issues.
- We support the federal commitment to rules-based international trade and a trading relationship with the US that protects Yukon interests.

Additional response:

- Alaska is our most important international trading partner. We work closely with our counterparts there to benefit both our economies.
- The Yukon's two-way merchandise trade with the US for 2022 was \$240.5 million. Two-way merchandise trade with Alaska for the same period was \$210.9 million.
- In December 2022, department officials participated in a trade mission to Alaska with the Senior Trade Commissioner from the Consulate General of Canada in Seattle to strengthen bilateral relations and promote the interests of Yukon businesses.
- The Yukon continues to promote greater cross-border trade and collaboration that advances and protects Yukoners' interests.
- Rules-based trade is the cornerstone of a healthy Canada-US relationship.

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Canada-United States Trade

Economic
Development**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Canadian jurisdictions, including the Yukon, are monitoring protectionist trends in the US, such as “Buy American” policies in federal infrastructure projects.
- Canada-US trade disputes periodically relate to issues that impact PTs or involve PT jurisdiction.
- CUSMA parties are undertaking several implementation efforts on certain CUSMA chapters. This includes a review of CUSMA Annex 22-C, relating to the potential application of Chapter 22 (State-owned enterprises and designated monopolies) to sub-national entities, as well as Chapter 20 (Intellectual Property), Chapter 23 (Labour), and Chapter 24 (Environment).

Background:

- Trade between Canada and the United States is governed by the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement. CUSMA replaced NAFTA, and entered into force on July 1, 2020.
- CUSMA applies to the Yukon, except in areas where there is exclusive federal jurisdiction. The Yukon is not a signatory, but as a member of the WTO, Canada must take reasonable measures to ensure observance by provinces and territories.
- US-Yukon Trade in 2022 stood at \$240.5 million, up 13.2% from 2021.
- The vast majority of the Yukon’s trade with the US is with the State of Alaska, constituting roughly 85%-95% of the Yukon’s trade with the US. Trade with Alaska fell substantially in 2018-20, to a low of \$56.5 million in 2019. It recovered to pre-COVID levels in 2021, and stood at \$210.9 million in 2022.
- Skagway, AK is a key port for Yukon-US trade relations, and is the primary gateway for Yukon ore exports. The Department of Economic Development has a representative that sits on Skagway’s Ports and Harbors Advisory Board, and is in negotiations with the municipality on the future of ore export capability.

Approved by:

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| _____ Approved | _____ February 1, 2024 |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Canadian Free Trade Agreement
Implementation**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- As a Party to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA), we are ensuring Yukon businesses have access to markets, procurement and investment opportunities across Canada.
- We are creating opportunities for Yukon businesses to expand beyond our territory while utilizing the Yukon's exceptions to increase local employment, support small businesses and strengthen our regional economies.
- In December 2022, Yukon chaired the annual meeting of the Committee on Internal Trade and advanced key decisions related to the movement of goods, services, investments and labour within Canada.
- Prince Edward Island is the 2024 chair of the Committee on Internal Trade. We look forward to continuing our negotiations on the full implementation of the CFTA in Charlottetown later this year.

Additional response:

- Since chairing the Committee on Internal Trade in 2022, the Government of Yukon has contributed to advancing internal trade in various ways, including:
 - Removing five of the Yukon's party-specific exceptions to the CFTA based on a technical review process;
 - Ratifying the Second Protocol of Amendment to the CFTA, thereby expanding the scope and coverage of the agreement to include trade in non-medical cannabis;
 - Participating in ongoing negotiations to complete and incorporate a new chapter on financial services into the CFTA;

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Canadian Free Trade Agreement
Implementation**Economic
Development

- Providing feedback to the federal government on the development of the Canadian Internal Trade Data and Information Hub; and
 - Co-chairing the renewed Northern Foods Working Group in support of economic development opportunities in the food sector across the territories.
- We also continue to work with our provincial, territorial and federal colleagues at the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT) to identify and address non-tariff barriers to trade within Canada.
- Since its creation, 30 reconciliation items and five cooperation items have been added to the RCT's Work Plan. To date, the table has completed 12 reconciliation agreements, covering 17 reconciliation items, as well as three cooperation items.
- The Government of Yukon has signed all agreements for which it has relevant measures.
- By signing these agreements, we are streamlining interprovincial regulatory requirements in areas such as health and safety, food inspection, transportation and construction to the benefit of Yukon businesses and consumers.

If asked about the 2023 CFIB Internal Trade Report:

- The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) gave Yukon an overall grade of “D” in their 2023 report card on internal trade, ranking the territory at 12th place in Canada, above New Brunswick and Quebec.

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Spring 2024

Canadian Free Trade Agreement Implementation

Economic
Development

- CFIB's methodology mainly compares each jurisdiction's number of exceptions in the CFTA, in addition to performance on certain metrics that do not fully reflect trade openness.
 - Concerns remain with CFIB's approach of using a simple count of exceptions to grade jurisdictions, especially at such a significant weight. There is no exact science to counting exceptions, and not all exceptions are created equal in terms of their impact on the economy.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukon was Chair of the Committee on Internal Trade for 2022 and hosted the annual meeting in Toronto on December 8, 2022.
 - The Canadian Federation of Independent Business released its 2023 State of Internal Trade: Canada's Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card. This report ranks provinces, territories and the federal government on their openness to trade. The Yukon was ranked 12th among the 14 jurisdictions primarily due to its number of exceptions in the CFTA and certain metrics on "barriers to trade".
-

Background:

- Since 2017, the CFTA has applied to all government measures affecting trade unless explicitly excluded. Parties can retain exclusions through general and party-specific exceptions.
- The CFTA makes it easier and more profitable for businesses to operate inter-provincially because its Parties commit to:
 - Transparency about measures affecting trade;
 - Non-discriminatory treatment and access to their markets, investment opportunities and government tenders;
 - Reducing regulatory barriers to trade; and
 - Dispute settlement processes.

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Canadian Free Trade Agreement Implementation

Economic Development

- CFTA does not impact territorial legislation or protections related to Indigenous peoples, language, their environment, culture or health care. These areas are exempt from the rules of the agreement.

Exceptions:

- All parties share general exceptions that exclude measures for Indigenous Peoples, social services, language, culture, gambling and betting, and other sensitive areas. Parties have taken party-specific exceptions reflecting local economic priorities.
- In 2021, the Yukon had 33 exceptions, comprising 13 Annex I, nine Annex II, and 11 procurement exceptions, more than all parties except Quebec. However, given the size of our economy, these exceptions have little negative impact on Canada's overall growth in practice.
- Yukon exceptions include:
 - Annex I: Exceptions for Existing Measures:
 - The Yukon is able to undertake certain discriminatory actions that provide preference to Yukon residents including preference to Yukon resident real estate agents and authorizations related to agricultural land use;
 - limit market access for wilderness and outfitter tourism operations and land lotteries; and
 - impose performance requirements under the *Yukon Income Tax Act* as it relates to investment tax credits; the *Waters Act* as it relates to electrical energy; the *Corporate Governance Act* as it relates to regulating energy; the *Public Utilities Act* as it relates to energy transportation, among others.
 - Annex II: Exceptions for Future Measures:
 - The Yukon has maintained the ability to control the right of entry or exit of goods and to limit market access in advertising, storage, manufacture, distribution, transport, sale and trade of alcoholic beverages;

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Spring 2024

Canadian Free Trade Agreement Implementation

Economic
Development

- the ability to limit market access in areas such as oil and gas development; commercial and industrial water uses; forestry activities; agricultural land; fisheries and recycling services; and
- has a broad exception for measures for Regional Economic Development. Non-discrimination and Performance requirements do not apply to the general framework of the Yukon's regional economic development.
- The Yukon has a number of procurement exceptions as well.
 - Regional, local, district or other forms of municipal governments; Francophone School Board and publicly funded academic institutions and health and social service entities are not covered by the CFTA procurement chapter;
 - The procurement chapter does not cover the Yukon Business Incentive Policy or any successor policy having similar objectives; and
 - Yukon may detract from the procurement chapter in order to promote regional economic development, up to ten times per year and up to \$1 million per occasion.
- A Party may unilaterally remove any of its exceptions or, with the consent of other parties, narrow any of its exceptions.

Technical Review of Exceptions:

- Parties undertook technical reviews to verify the accuracy of their current exceptions. This review considers the accuracy of each element of each exception: sector, sub-sector, industry classification, type of exception, measure and description.
- The technical review was directed by the Committee on Internal Trade in May 2019, and reaffirmed in December 2019. Some parties anticipated the technical review would support a subsequent renegotiation and liberalization of exceptions. However, this is not a consensus view, and parties have not exchanged any

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Canadian Free Trade Agreement
Implementation**Economic
Development

information regarding their technical reviews, partly due to the onset of COVID-19.

- The Yukon's technical review identified five party-specific exceptions that could be removed with limited impact on operations. Cabinet discussed and approved the removal of these exceptions from the CFTA in 2022. The five exceptions are as follows:
 - YT-520.1, Part C: "Procurement – Transitional Measures";
 - YT-I-06: "Grazing Agreement";
 - YT-I-07: "Regulate and issue various authorizations relating to agriculture";
 - YT-I-08: "Forestry and Logging Products"; and
 - YT-II-07: "Limiting market access in recycling services".

Other Issues:

- The RCT reduces barriers to trade by reconciling existing regulatory measures and cooperating in the development of future regulatory measures.
- The RCT has endorsed 12 reconciliation agreements since 2018 and individual parties implement only those agreements for which they have relevant regulations.
- The Yukon has signed all agreements for which it has measures (seven agreements), which includes occupational health and equipment, pressure vessel registration, construction codes, corporate registries, fall protection equipment, wide-base single tires and entry-level training for commercial drivers.
- Article 1205 commits parties to negotiating the inclusion of Financial Services. Negotiations have been underway since 2018, however several substantive issues remain to be resolved. The exchange of final offers is anticipated in 2024.
- Article 1206 commits parties to negotiating the inclusion of Cannabis for Non-Medical Purposes. In January 2024, the Second Protocol of Amendment to the CFTA entered into force, resulting in the formal inclusion of cannabis related provisions in the agreement.

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Spring 2024

Canadian Free Trade Agreement Implementation

Economic
Development

- In September 2020, rules and party-specific exceptions pursuant to Annex 309 Electricity Transmission Service Providers and Trade in Electricity Transmission Services came into effect. The Yukon took a broad exception to electricity obligations, to be reviewed within two years of any future connection to the North American electricity grid.
- Parties have developed several recommendations to facilitate trade in alcohol. The Yukon is:
 - Already compliant with recommendations relating to improved sales channels, information transparency, and listing and pricing practices;
 - Contributing information on its alcohol regime to alcohollaws.ca, a new website aimed at manufacturers and distributors; and
 - Participating on the task force to investigate the implementation of a direct-to-consumer model.

Approved by:

Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development

February 1, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****International Trade & Agreements**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Increasing market access for Yukon businesses and investments helps grow the economy and provides good jobs for Yukoners.
- The Yukon participates in federal-provincial-territorial consultations on international trade, including implementation, and new initiatives. We advocate that Canada's efforts reflect the Yukon's trade interests.
- We promote the Yukon's trade interests, including regional economic development, small business and government procurement.

Additional response:

- We work with Global Affairs Canada and the Trade Commissioner Service to identify opportunities for Yukoners and Yukon companies.
- Trade liberalization opens foreign markets and creates economic opportunity for Yukoners, Yukon businesses and Canadians.
- In September 2023, Yukon conducted a Premier-led delegation to Japan and India, which included a trade component.
- In October-November 2023, the Department joined a federal Team Canada Trade Mission to Japan, leading a delegation of Yukon chambers of commerce.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Canada is undertaking a number of international trade initiatives that may impact Yukon's interest. This includes exploring new agreements with India, Indonesia and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), creating a successor FTA with the UK, and modernizing the Canada-Ukraine FTA.

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Spring 2024

International Trade & Agreements

Economic
Development

Background:

- The Government of Canada is the only order of government that can negotiate international trade agreements. Canada consults provinces and territories, as modern agreements include commitments within provincial/territorial jurisdiction.

Trade Initiatives:

- **Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement (CUSMA):** Canada is currently consulting PTs on the subnational application of the State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) chapter and on the Environment chapter implementation.
- **Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA):** Canada is engaging provinces and territories on implementation, including the first mutual recognition agreement (MRA) under CETA, on architects, the work of the CETA Committee of Wines and Spirits, and on a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. As of December 2022, 17 of 27 EU members have ratified CETA.
- **Canada–UK Free Trade Agreement:** Canada-UK trade is currently governed by a Trade Continuity Agreement entered into force in April 2021, as a bridge until a full FTA is negotiated. On January 25, 2024, the UK informed Canada it decided to pause negotiations after Canada did not to extend two time-limited clauses of the Trade Continuity Agreement on rules of origin and cheese market access.
- **Canada-India CEPA Negotiations:** Canada has been in negotiations with India on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) since 2010. Negotiations re-started in March 2022, but in August 2023, negotiations toward an “early harvest” agreement (EPTA) halted after Canada requested a pause in negotiations over bilateral tensions.
- **Canada-Indonesia CEPA Negotiations:** Canada and Indonesia launched negotiations toward a CEPA on June 20, 2021. There have been six rounds, in March, August, and November 2022, and March, June and October 2023.
- **Canada-ASEAN FTA Negotiations:** Canada and ASEAN launched negotiations toward an FTA in November 2021, with rounds beginning in 2022. The Trade Negotiating Committee **has met seven times, most recently in January 2024.**

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Economic
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- **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP):** Canada is one of eleven members of the CPTPP Free Trade Agreement. The UK is in the process of acceding to the CPTPP, and signed a Protocol of Accession in July 2023. To date, only Japan and Singapore have ratified the UK's accession protocol.
- **Canada-Ecuador FTA Exploratory Talks:** On November 24, 2022, Canada and Ecuador launched exploratory discussions toward an FTA. Canada launched a public consultation in January 2023, including consultations with provinces and territories.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| <u>Approved</u> | <u>March 1, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date approved |

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Northern Food Working Group**Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- The Northern Food Working Group (NFWG) was established in 2017, under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA), and it includes the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Government of Canada.
- The NFWG produced a final report in 2018, with recommendations to support the territorial food sector. Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts to fully explore those recommendations were paused.
- As Chair of the Committee on Internal Trade (CIT) in 2022, Yukon tabled a recommendation to renew the activities of the NFWG, which include determining the appropriate timing to extend the group's membership to the provinces.
- The renewed NFWG is developing an environmental scan of programs and policies of the governments of Canada, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut that focus on economic development opportunities within the food sector in the north.
- This project aims to identify potential areas for greater focus and an actionable path forward towards further development of the food sector in the territories.

Additional response:

- The NFWG's 2018 final report identified recommendations for advancing the development of the territorial food sector. Those recommendations addressed challenges related to four key areas:
 1. access to capital;

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Northern Food Working Group**Spring 2024**Economic
Development

- 2. innovation and research;
- 3. regulatory development; and
- 4. local food production.
- Several federal funding programs support the development of the food sector across Canada, including:
 - AgriDiversity Program;
 - Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership;
 - Canadian Agricultural Partnership Cost-Shared Program; and
 - Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund.
- Officials from each jurisdiction continue to meet regularly to discuss and better understand the challenges faced by the sector.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon was Chair of the Committee on Internal Trade for 2022 and hosted the Committee's annual meeting in Toronto on December 8, 2022.
- The activities of the NFWG were put on hold due to COVID-19. Officials have since resumed the working group's activities.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Northern Food Working Group**Economic
Development

Background:

- Under Article 1103 of the CFTA, the Parties agreed to establish two working groups focused on developing the food sector in the Territories.
- The NFWG is the first of the two working groups to be established. Consisting of only the Government of Canada and the three territories, its mandate is to identify economic development opportunities for the respective territorial food sectors.
- The establishment of the second working is pending a recommendation to do so from the NFWG. This forthcoming working group will include the provinces and prioritize the following:
 - identify ways in which the provinces and the Government of Canada could work with the Territories to better direct the innovation strengths of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector to provide for economic benefits and improved access to healthy foods in the Territories; and
 - assess and consider the role of supply management, including the quota allocation process, in economic development in the Territories.

Approved by:

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| <u>Approved</u> | <u>February 1, 2024</u> |
| A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development | Date 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*.

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Finance

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

- 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.

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- 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.

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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

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Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2023-24 Supplementary Overview

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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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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**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.

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(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.

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(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).

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(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

Prepared for Premier Pillai, Ministers Clarke and Silver
Departments of Environment and Finance

Date prepared: January 8, 2024

Last Updated: February 22, 2024

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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.

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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

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Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Spring 2024

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- 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.
- 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.

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.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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- 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.

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.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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- 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.

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

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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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.
- 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.

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- 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.
- 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.

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- 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.
- 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.

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- 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)
 - 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.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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- 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:
 - Providing tourism sector leadership;
 - Rebuilding confidence and capabilities for tourism;
 - Supporting the recovery of tourism industry operators; and
 - 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:
 - Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement (TASS);
 - Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement (TNASS);
 - Culture and Tourism Non-profit Sector Supplement;
 - 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;

Session Briefing Note
Inflation and Affordability
(Corporate Note)

Spring 2024
 Finance

- 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:

February 28, 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

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

**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

Recommended response:

- The Yukon and Alaska share many common interests and challenges.
- We need to work together to advance shared priorities that will improve the prosperity, stability and wellbeing of both jurisdictions.
- Our interests in Arctic security, a healthy environment, critical minerals, robust transportation infrastructure and access to tidewater serve both our jurisdictions as investment and geopolitical focus remain on the North.
- The US and Alaska recognize the Yukon's significance as part of their connectivity, regional security and economic partnerships.
- We were pleased to host Governor Dunleavy and members of the Alaska Cabinet in February.
- We also continue to engage regularly with the US Consul General in Vancouver, Jim DeHart.

Additional response (Governor's visit):

- Over the course of the Governor's visit, we had productive conversations on highways and connectivity, fish and wildlife, community safety, wildfire response, regional security and enhancing the private sector's exposure to Alaskan officials.
- The Governor and I signed a new Intergovernmental Relations Accord between the Yukon and Alaska, which sets out a framework for how we will work together on matters of shared interest.
- We are stronger together as neighbours and friends because of this visit, and we will continue to foster this important regional relationship.

Additional response (Shakwak/Alcan Highway):

- The Alaska Highway is a critical component of highway infrastructure for life in the North and the tourism sector.
- The Shakwak project encompasses the Haines Road and the Alaska Highway north of Haines Junction.
- Supporting the repair and safety of this road advances Canadian and U.S. priorities, including resilience to climate change, economic development, supporting communities and people in the Arctic and maintaining Indigenous connections that span borders.
- We continue to work in collaboration with the State of Alaska to identify short- and long-term funding solutions for this critical infrastructure.
- With our Alaskan counterparts, we have delivered an updated application seeking approximately \$25 million USD from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity, or “RAISE”, grant program.
- This grant will allow our government to restore some of the most degraded sections of the north Alaska Highway in the Yukon to improve this critical overland route that is adversely affected by thawing permafrost and exacerbated by climate change.
- While we recognize this program is extremely competitive, we hope to see success for our application later this summer.

Additional response (Borders):

- We look forward to continued increases in cross border traffic and seeing more visitors from the U.S. this year, as well as Yukoners visiting our neighbours in Skagway, Haines and beyond.
- Our government is continuing to work with both the Canadian and U.S. federal government and Alaskan elected officials to get the Little Gold border crossing near Dawson back to its pre-pandemic operating window.
- I urge strong cooperation between Canadian and U.S. authorities on this issue.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in our efforts to secure funding for the Shakwak highway.
 - Little Gold border crossing did not open in 2020 or 2021 and was open for a shorter operating window in 2022 and 2023 than was typical pre-pandemic.
-

Background:

US relations:

- The Canada/US Roadmap announced by Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden in February 2021 is guiding relationships across borders. We are seeing more engagement with U.S. officials since the Roadmap was announced.
- Consul General Jim DeHart (Vancouver) visited the Yukon in October 2023. Consular staff also visited the Yukon and met with YG officials.
- Premier Pillai met with the newly installed Consul General DeHart in Vancouver on January 5, 2023, to discuss the Yukon-U.S. relationship.
- The Consul General plans to return to the Yukon in the spring, and Ambassador Cohen has also indicated that planning begin to facilitate his first visit to the Yukon in 2023.

Alaska Relations

Executive Council Office

- Premier Pillai met by phone with Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy in September and October 2023 where they discussed a number of areas for intergovernmental collaboration. The discussion was wide-ranging and included shared infrastructure, physician assistants training, Arctic security, fish and wildlife, and wildfire management.
- Governor Dunleavy, the First Lady and four Cabinet members visited Whitehorse on February 8-9, 2024.

Shakwak:

- A new funding opportunity for the Shakwak project was identified in the US government's *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*. The Haines Road and the Alaska Highway north of Haines Junction are now eligible for competitive grants administered by the US Department of Transportation.
- The Yukon government worked closely with Alaska in 2022 and 2023 to apply to the RAISE grant program for USD \$25 million over five years, the maximum available for an individual project. The proposal would have funded reconstruction of permafrost-affected areas in an 80-kilometre stretch of the highway.
- The application was not successful in 2022 or 2023. While the proposal was rated "recommended", it fell short of the "highly recommended" rating that is required to get funding. Even then, only one quarter of the "highly recommended" projects were awarded funding.
- Ambassador Cohen had a follow-up call with the undersecretary after the 2023 decision was made not to fund this project. The key gap in the application that was identified is related to insufficient evidence and data to support the claims related to quality of life, mobility, and connectivity.
- The Yukon government has continued to work with Alaska to build an improved application to RAISE. The application was submitted and we expect a decision in summer 2024.
- The total project cost is USD \$31.25 million. RAISE is proposed to make up 80 per cent of that cost, with Alaska and the Yukon covering 10 per cent each.

Session Briefing Note

ECO -TAB 9

Spring 2024

Alaska Relations

Executive Council Office

- There is strong communication and support for our application in both the US Consulate in Vancouver and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

Skagway Port redevelopment: See Note # TAB 17 EcDev

Approved by:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| _____ | 2024.02.05 |
| Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office | Date Approved |

Recommended response:

- The Yukon's international engagement helps meet labour force needs, attract investment across our economy and ensures our voice and values are heard in global discussions about the Arctic.
- Taking the Yukon abroad shows that we are serious about being a productive partner in the global economy, including in critical minerals supply chains. It also demonstrates that the Yukon is a place where people from around the world can find success.
- We regularly host diplomats from other countries here in the Yukon, giving us opportunities to showcase what is exceptional about our territory.
- Throughout the past year, the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations leaderships have had many good discussions on mining investment and promotion and mineral development in the territory. We will continue to work together towards identifying and advancing a shared vision and on collaborative solutions for promoting responsible and respectful mineral development in the Yukon.

Additional response (UK Mission)

- Our mission to Frankfurt and London in November was a success, offering the chance to engage directly with international businesses that are interested in the Yukon's critical minerals.
- I also had the opportunity to connect with the UK government.
- The UK is developing partnerships with Canada on critical minerals, and the Yukon stands to be a valuable part of those conversations going forward.

Additional response (Asia Mission):

- The mission to Asia last September built on the significant engagement we have had with Japan and India through their diplomatic corps in Canada over the last few years.
- The trip was arranged with an eye to efficiency of time and money, and to receive good value for the money we spent.
- Our extensive program of meetings with government and business officials was the next step in strengthening these relationships.
- I am pleased that we were able to bring some Yukon businesses with us, to help them get exposure to new markets and opportunities.
- Japan and India are major international markets that are projected to grow significantly in the coming years.
- While Canada-India relations are facing significant challenges, we cannot lose sight of the fact that the Yukon has strong people-to-people ties in India.
- We continue to seek a constructive dialogue to support these connections at a sub-national level.

Additional response (costs):

- Government travel is essential to developing our relationships, enhancing the Yukon's profile and promoting new opportunities abroad.
- Travel is managed under a longstanding government policy, the travel directive. The directive sets out the authorities required for travel by government officials, is based on principles of economy and efficiency, and establishes rates for certain costs.
- Airfares are booked at the best rate through our travel desk and the travel agents we work with.

- Our choices for hotels are guided by whether those facilities have been vetted by the Global Affairs missions in each country.
- We take their recommendations, and in many cases, we get preferred rates or negotiate group rates.
- Most of the budget for international trips includes travel, hotel and per diems. The remaining budget lines were costs associated with hosting meetings and sponsoring events in each city.
- Ministerial travel expenses will be posted online as soon as they are finalized. This normally takes around 90 days.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Questions on the mission to Asia may emerge following information disclosures and continued coverage of Canada-India diplomatic relations.
- Some may question the use of funds for international government travel.

Background:

UK Mission

- A Yukon delegation visited Frankfurt and London November 24-30, 2023.
- Outcomes from Frankfurt included:
 - Profiling the Yukon as a gold mining leader at the German Gold Show;
 - Private conversations with industry; and
 - Media.
- Outcomes from London included:
 - Connecting with UK MPs and Ministers at Critical Minerals Day;
 - Direct conversation with Canada's High Commissioner to the UK, Ralph Goodale;
 - Speaking engagements, private meetings and media at the Mines and Money @ Resourcing Tomorrow conference.
 - Bilateral discussion with Rio Tinto.
 - Meeting with Canada UK Chamber of Commerce.

- The total cost for the Frankfurt/London trip was approximately \$35,000. This figure does not include the Economic Development sponsorships at the conferences.

Asia Mission

- A Yukon delegation made a visit to Japan and India September 8 to 20, 2023.
- Outcomes and engagements in Tokyo included:
 - meetings with private companies (Mitsubishi Materials, DOWA Metals) and government (JOGMEC, JOIN) on critical minerals investment;
 - general business development with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan;
 - meeting with Japanese Arctic interests to discuss clean energy and climate change;
 - signing a letter of intent to support another special Aurora flight and tourism to the Yukon; and
 - several tourism engagements with Japanese companies.
- Outcomes and engagements in Trivandrum:
 - meetings with the Chief Minister and several state Cabinet ministers on health care, training and commerce;
 - a letter of intent from the Yukon government to work with NORKA on a targeted recruitment program; and
 - in-depth tour of Technopark Trivandrum and exposure to many tech companies working there.
- Outcomes and engagements in New Delhi:
 - meeting with the federal minister of mines;
 - engagement with Indian business leaders, including in tech; and
 - exposure to health training institutions.
- The total cost of the Asia trip was **\$170,899.54**, broken down as follows:
 - ECO (travel, gifts and hospitality, charge-backs for embassy services, Canada-India Business Council support): \$111,556.53;
 - Economic Development (travel, hospitality): \$26,542.71;

- Tourism and Culture (travel, Tokyo event venue): \$16,802.69; and
- Health and Social Services (travel): \$15,997.61.

India diplomatic relations

- On September 18, the Prime Minister announced that Canadian national security authorities are in possession of credible intelligence that “agents of the government of India” carried out the fatal shooting of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a prominent Sikh leader in British Columbia, earlier this year.
- The Yukon government had not been briefed on this intelligence or the timing of the announcement before it was made. Planned meetings with Indian federal ministers the following day were cancelled.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024.02.02

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Creative Potential

Spring 2024
Tourism and Culture

Recommended response:

- Creative and cultural industries are an essential part of the Yukon's economy, well-being, and northern way of life.
- Our strategy, *Creative Potential: Advancing the Yukon's Creative and Cultural Industries*, is aimed at growing and developing Yukon's creative and cultural industries.
- The strategy identifies 4 strategic objectives and 22 key actions which reflect input gathered through extensive public and sector engagement. We have identified 10 actions to be completed over three years as Phase 1 implementation.
- These priority actions include: modernizing existing funding; offering new funding streams; industry branding and promotion; marketing and export strategies; workshops; and labour market supports.

Additional response:

- Approximately \$500,000 was allocated to new initiatives starting in fiscal year 2022/23, and we have implemented or are midstream implementing seven actions, with more underway. A progress report was released in May 2023.
- We launched three new programs which provide an additional \$450,000 to the creative and cultural sectors. These are the: Express Micro-grant, the Indigenous Artists and Cultural Carriers Micro-grant, and the Creative and Cultural Career Advancement Fund. The partnership with Canada Council for the Arts to fund the Indigenous Artists and Cultural Carriers Micro-grant has been extended for two years based on its success to date. (see DPT 4 Funding Programs).
- The budget for new acquisitions to the Yukon Permanent Art Collection was doubled in 2023-24.

Session Briefing Note

Creative Potential

Spring 2024
Tourism and Culture

- Over 25 professional development workshops for the creative and cultural sector have been offered by the department since 2022.
- A new policy on Yukon First Nations Cultural Centres and Museums is nearing completion. A funding review is ongoing. (see C7 Policy on Yukon first Nations Cultural Centres and Museums and Funding Review).

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some members of the public may be interested in the implementation status of the strategy.

Background:

- The Yukon's 2021 Culture GDP was \$67.8 million, representing 1.9% of the total territorial economy. Canada's 2021 Culture GDP was \$54.8 billion, representing 2.3% of Canada's total economy.
- The creative and cultural industries sector encompasses the creation, production, promotion, distribution and commercialization of cultural goods, as well as the labour force and institutions required to support it.
- The share of culture jobs accounted for 3.3% of all jobs in Canada. Yukon culture jobs have increased 1.8% from 2020 to 2021 for a total of 782 culture jobs (2021).

Approved by:

February 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Tourism and Culture

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Critical Minerals

Spring 2024Energy, Mines and
Resources

Recommended response:

- Our 2021 Yukon Critical Minerals Inventory shows that the Yukon has known deposits of nine and documented occurrences of 16 of the 31 critical minerals identified by Canada.
- In 2022, the Yukon saw exploration activity for the following critical minerals: copper, zinc, tungsten, nickel, cobalt, platinum group metals, and rare earth elements.
- We are supporting exploration and development of the Yukon's critical minerals by advancing our work to establish an electrical grid intertie with British Columbia, providing continued tide water access in Skagway, and making improvements to our road infrastructure through the Yukon Resource Gateway Project. (See BN#7 and 104)

Additional response:

- To stimulate investment in critical minerals in the Yukon, we updated the evaluation criteria for the Yukon Mineral Exploration Program to include extra weighting for projects that target critical minerals as the primary exploration goal.
- We are working with Natural Resources Canada on the implementation of Canada's Critical Minerals Strategy and considering other made-in-Yukon solutions to advance critical minerals opportunities in the territory.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Geopolitical tensions have increased the focus on securing domestic supply chains for critical minerals. Questions may be raised on whether the development of critical minerals is prioritized in the Yukon.

Session Briefing Note

Critical Minerals

Spring 2024Energy, Mines and
Resources

Background:

- Critical minerals are important for economic prosperity and supplies are vulnerable to disruption due to geopolitical events.
- In 2021, Canada released a list of 31 critical minerals, of which the Yukon has deposits for nine, including copper (electrical transmission), zinc (anode in material batteries), tungsten (strengthening metals), nickel (metal coatings), cobalt (batteries), platinum group metals (catalytic agents), molybdenum (alloy steel), antimony (batteries) and tin (protective metal coatings).
- The Mines Intergovernmental Working Group, chaired by NRCan, held the first consultation meeting with provinces and territories on January 9, 2024, to update the criteria that defines critical minerals in Canada. The current criteria are:
 1. Essential to Canada's economic or national security.
 2. Required for transition to a sustainable low-carbon and digital economy.
 3. A sustainable and strategic source of critical minerals for allies.
 4. Mineral supply is threatened.
 5. The mineral has a reasonable likelihood of being produced in Canada.
- It is possible that silver could be added to Canada's critical minerals list based on the current criteria.
- The Yukon's endowment of critical minerals represents both economic opportunities and an opportunity to contribute to the renewable energy/green economy in Canada.
- Canada's Budget 2022 proposed up to \$3.8 billion over eight years, starting in 2022-23, to implement Canada's first Critical Minerals Strategy. This includes:
 1. Up to \$1.5 billion over seven years, starting in 2023-24, for infrastructure investments that would support the development of the critical minerals supply chains, with a focus on priority deposits;
 2. \$79.2 million over five years, starting in 2022-23, for Natural Resources Canada to provide public access to integrated data sets to inform critical mineral exploration and development; and

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Critical Minerals

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3. The introduction of a new 30 per cent Critical Mineral Exploration Tax Credit for specified mineral exploration expenses incurred in Canada and renounced to flow-through share investors. This targets nickel, lithium, cobalt, graphite, copper, rare earths elements, vanadium, tellurium, gallium, scandium, titanium, magnesium, zinc, platinum group metals, or uranium.
- Yukon Geological Survey has applied to Natural Resources Canada's Critical Minerals Geoscience and Data Program for \$200,000 over three years (2024-2027) to support the digitization of critical mineral exploration data from assessment files. This will facilitate access to the data and support the assessment of mineral potential for land use planning.

Approved by:**February 1, 2024**

Deputy Minister
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Dawson Regional Land Use Planning

EMR # 1 / ENV #9
Spring 2024

Energy, Mines and Resources
and Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in are making progress on consensus discussions regarding the decision on the Dawson Regional Land Use Recommended Plan.
- Engagement on the Recommended Plan concluded December 20, 2022. A What We Heard report detailing feedback received during the engagement was released in June 2023.
- Input gathered from the engagement will inform the Parties' decision whether to accept, reject or request modifications to the Recommended Plan.
- If the Parties reject or request modifications to the Recommended Plan, the Commission will prepare a Final Recommended Plan. We anticipate they could provide a Final Recommended Plan in 2025.

Additional response:

- If a Final Recommended Plan is required, there will be another round of public engagements and First Nations consultation, and the Government of Yukon will provide detailed feedback to the Commission to support their work developing this plan.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, the Government of Yukon's response to the Recommended Plan, and the future of the interim withdrawals are of high interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in formed the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission in December 2018.

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Dawson Regional Land Use Planning

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Spring 2024

Energy, Mines and Resources
and Environment

- The *Umbrella Final Agreement* Chapter 11 process provides the Commission with the autonomy to develop and recommend a plan to the Parties for their consideration.
- The Commission conducted a public consultation on the Draft Plan from June 15 to November 1, 2021.
- The Government of Yukon's response to the Draft Plan in November 2021 focused on six key topics: designations and Land Management Unit boundaries, cumulative effects, wetlands, culture and heritage, missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited people, and implementation.
- Subsequent comments submitted to the Commission by the Government of Yukon pertained to critical minerals, access, rivers and watercourses, cumulative effects and working within the Draft Plan prohibition of entry order (interim and permanent).
- The Planning Commission delivered the Recommended Plan to the Parties (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon) on June 10, 2022.
- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in conducted a public consultation on the Commission's Recommended Plan from September 20 to December 20, 2022.
- Interim withdrawal of land proposed by the Commission was approved by Order-In-Council on June 15, 2021. This Order was amended on September 7, 2022, to reflect the Recommended Plan. The interim withdrawal is in effect until December 1, 2024 and may be extended to allow time to complete a final plan for the region.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Brian Young, A/Deputy Minister of Environment

February 12, 2024

Date approved

February 8, 2024

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Mineral Sector Status and Supports

Spring 2024Energy, Mines and
Resources

Recommended response:

- The Yukon continues to attract interest from investors, explorers and miners due to the territory's mineral potential, identified resources and stability as a jurisdiction.
- Natural Resources Canada announced in the fall that the 2024 spending intentions for mineral exploration in the Yukon is \$147.1 million; their preliminary estimate of 2023 exploration spending in the Yukon is \$164.3 million and will be finalized later this Spring.
- The reported placer gold production for 2023 was 73,690 crude ounces worth \$154.47 million, down from 80,165 crude ounces in 2022.
- Last year saw an overall increase in quartz and placer claims staked compared to 2022. New quartz and placer claim staking went up from 3,178 and 1,411 in 2022, respectively, to 5,868 and 3,178, in 2023.

Additional response:

- The territory ranked 20th in the world for desirable mining jurisdictions according to the Fraser Institute survey for 2022. 2023 rankings are not yet available.
- We are also working with First Nations partners to develop new minerals legislation. One goal is increased certainty for the industry on rules and processes that better align with Final Agreements and best practices.

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Mineral Sector Status and Supports

Spring 2024

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Resources

- There were 82 hard rock exploration projects active in the territory in 2023.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about the health of the mineral and exploration in the Yukon and what the Government of Yukon is doing to support the sector.

Background:

- Indicators of the general health of the quartz and placer mining sectors include exploration expenditures, increases in mineral and metal production, new mineral claims staked, the total number of existing claims, and strong commodity prices.
- Because most mineral discoveries do not progress to advanced stages, and only a small proportion of advanced-stage projects go into production, another indicator of a healthy sector is a high ratio of early-stage projects.
- The Yukon Mineral Exploration Program provides part of the risk capital to support early-stage exploration for both hard rock and placer exploration projects. (See BN #99)
- The reported placer gold production for 2023 was 73,823 crude ounces worth \$158 million, down from 80,165 crude ounces in 2022.
- Our work to create modern Minerals Legislation realizes a 30-year promise made to First Nations and will create an effective and sustainable framework for the mining industry and the territory - one that will lead to a bright future for mining in the Yukon.

Placer and Quartz Production

- Total gold production from the Yukon's placer mines was 73,823 crude ounces as of December 31, 2023. This represents an approximate value of about \$158 million (based on an average gold price of CDN\$2620.27 for year).
- In recent years, annual placer production has been approximately 75,000 ounces of gold.

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Mineral Sector Status and Supports

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Energy, Mines and Resources

- The total value of metals reported by Yukon hard rock mine operators for 2023 was \$513 million. Natural Resources Canada valued quartz mineral and metal production in 2022 at approximately \$491 million. This is less than \$499 million in 2021 but more than in previous years: \$458 million in 2020, \$157 million in 2019, and \$218 million in 2018.

Staking Activity —2022 and 2023 Comparison (January 1 – July 31)

- There were 5,868 quartz claims staked in 2023, and 162,340 total quartz claims are in good standing. This is an increase from 2022, when there were 3,178 quartz claims staked.
- There were 1,701 placer claims staked in 2023, and 29,542 total placer claims are in good standing. This is an increase from 2022, where there were 1,411 placer claims staked.

Fraser Institute 2022 Survey of Mining Companies

- While the Yukon's overall Investment Attractiveness for 2022 (31st out of 62 jurisdictions) dipped from 2021 (23rd out of 84 jurisdictions in 2021), we rank top of the three Northern territories and only one place below BC in Canada's ranked list.
- The year 2022 also saw the Yukon obtain a strong rating as a jurisdiction whose geology encourages mineral investment, once again leading the three Northern territories and ranking above our neighbours to the south, BC
- The Fraser Institute noted several key areas identified by industry when responding to questions about our territory. We are encouraged to see that work is already well underway in these areas.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

April 15, 2024

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.

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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.

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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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**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.

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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.

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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.

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- 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.

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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.

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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;

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Public Works

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- 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.

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Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy

Highways and
Public Works

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- 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.

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- 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.
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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.
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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
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Session Briefing Note**SPRING 2024****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**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.

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

- 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.

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

- 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 Tuchtua 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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Public Works

- 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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Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

Highways and Public Works

- 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. |

Session Briefing Note

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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)

Highways and Public Works

| 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:

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

April 5, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Five-Year Capital Plan

SPRING 2024Highways 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

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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.

Session Briefing Note

Five-Year Capital Plan

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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.

Session Briefing Note

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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

Expired COVID Relief Programs

Economic
Development

Recommended response:

- Yukon Business Relief Program:
 - Ran from the onset of the pandemic through to September 2021, helping Yukon businesses cover their eligible fixed costs.
 - Provided almost \$13.5 million to over 500 businesses.
 - The accommodation and food services sector received 43.5% of the total funding.
 - Funding went to businesses in every Yukon community.
- Yukon Essential Workers Income Support Program:
 - Provided a top-up to wages of up to \$4.00 per hour to essential workers until February 2021.
 - Paid out \$5.4 million (of which the federal government provided \$4.3 million) to more than 2,000 workers employed by 160 businesses.

| Top-up Level | No. of Employees | Percentage of Employees |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| \$4.00 per hour | 1,678 | 59.0% |
| \$3.00 per hour to \$3.99 per hour | 569 | 20.0% |
| \$2.00 per hour to \$2.99 per hour | 331 | 11.6% |
| \$1.00 per hour to \$1.99 per hour | 211 | 7.4% |
| Less than \$1.00 per hour | 56 | 2.0% |
| Total | 2,845 | 100.0% |

- Temporary Support for Cancelled Events:
 - Ran from March to July of 2020.
 - Provided \$1.87 million in relief to 43 businesses connected to 31 cancelled events.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Expired COVID Relief Programs**Economic
Development

- Regional Relief Loan Program:
 - Program announced February 2021 with applications for low or no interest, partially forgivable business loans accepted until June 30, 2021.
 - Total funding of \$3.93 million provided by CanNor.
 - 62 applicants received \$3,446,202 in loans.
 - Loans are interest-free and repayable at 75% of the total loan if repaid by the deadline.
 - The interest-free and partial forgiveness deadline was December 31, 2023. On September 14, 2023, the federal government announced an extension for loan repayment until January 18, 2024.
 - To November 8, 2023, 27 loans have been repaid, totaling \$1,048,988 in repayments. This represents \$1,398,650 in total loans, since only 75% is repayable if paid by the January 18, 2024 deadline;
 - \$349,662 has been forgiven for the 27 that have been repaid in full.
 - 35 loans remain outstanding, totaling \$2,047,552.
- Vaccine Verification Rebate:
 - Program launched on November 25, 2021, to support eligible businesses and non-governmental organizations directly impacted by the Civil Emergency Measures Act (CEMA) orders and restrictions put in place on November 8, 2021.
 - Provided a 50% rebate (to a maximum of \$500) towards the purchase of equipment required for the efficient and accurate checking of vaccine statuses.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Expired COVID Relief Programs**Economic
Development

- At the program's conclusion on January 31, 2022, 48 inquiries were received resulting in rebates to 34 organizations.
 - The total rebates issued were \$12,997.
- Yukon Emergency Relief Program:
 - The Yukon Emergency Relief Program supported Yukon businesses and non-government organizations directly affected by restrictions under the CEMA.
 - The program focused on funding eligible fixed costs for businesses, and non-recoverable financial commitments or incremental expenses incurred by non-government organizations for events cancelled or significantly altered due to CEMA orders.
 - Between November 8, 2021 and March 31, 2022, 25 organizations received \$307,679 in support through the Yukon Emergency Relief Program.
- Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement and Non-Accommodation (TASS/TNASS):
 - The program ran from October 1, 2020 to August 31, 2022, and was initially administered by Tourism and Culture until September 2021.
 - Tourism and Culture report that, approximately 94 Yukon tourism businesses submitted 140 applications under TASS and TNASS from October 2020 to September 2021. These applications have resulted in funding agreements totaling \$4.1 million.
 - From October 1, 2021, the Department of Economic Development administered these two programs.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Expired COVID Relief Programs**Economic
Development

- From October 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022, 102 businesses received support through TASS/TNASS resulting in a total contribution of approximately \$3,833,595.
- On February 10, 2022, the department announced the enhanced TNASS stream for restaurants and bars.
- Restaurants and bars were eligible to apply for the Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement for the period from November 8, 2021, to March 31, 2022, and/or also receive a One-Time- Sector supplement of \$10,000.
- During this time, 59 restaurants/bars received financial assistance through the enhanced TNASS stream with a total contribution of \$1,056,494.
- The COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Rebate program was in place from March 2020 to March 31, 2023.
 - The Paid Sick Leave Rebate program helped employers and workers without paid sick leave benefits to meet their financial needs while staying home with specific COVID-19 illness.
 - Over the duration of the program, employees had received \$3,663,453 in rebates through the Paid Sick Leave Rebate program.
 - The retail trade sector was the largest user of the program at approximately 25% of the funding.
 - The health and social services sector, which includes day care operators and the construction sector, were also significant users of the program, receiving approximately 22% and 16% of funding respectively.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2024****Expired COVID Relief Programs**Economic
Development

- Non-Profit Relief and Recovery Fund:
 - Working with the non-profit sector to ensure that this important industry is able to recover from COVID-19 by enhancing opportunities for collaboration and shared services.
 - This is a shared mandate commitment with Community Services.
 - The department of Economic Development designed a short-term COVID response and recovery program in collaboration with the non-profit sector that was administered by Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon. This program provided a fund of \$250,000 to help address the impacts of Covid-19 that were still having an effect on the Yukon's NGOs.

Approved by: Approved
A/Deputy Minister, Economic Development February 1, 2024
Date approved