

**FALL 2023 HPW SESSION BRIEFING NOTES**  
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****HPW Accomplishments since 2021**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Departmental accomplishments:**

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

*Our Clean Future*

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for 29 commitments in Our Clean Future (OCF).
- Since May 2021, we have completed many OCF initiatives, including:
  - reducing work travel by installing new teleconferencing systems in 48 board rooms and implementing a new remote work policy;
  - invested \$38 million toward building energy retrofits and renewable energy projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Government of Yukon buildings;
  - completed energy assessments for 81 Government of Yukon buildings in Whitehorse and in Yukon communities;
  - The tender to conduct the energy assessments for the remaining 35 sites with high-emitting Yukon government buildings opened on November 15, 2023, and will close on December 13, 2023;
  - completed a total of 23 energy retrofits to Government of Yukon buildings that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from these buildings by approximately 150 tonnes per year;
  - completing renewable energy feasibility studies for 35 buildings;

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- constructed one biomass energy system at Elijah Smith Elementary School to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 180 tonnes per year;
- entering into a heat purchase agreement with Teslin Tlingit Council to begin heating Khàtìnas.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School with biomass heat, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 106 tonnes per year;
- completing five climate risk assessments for major construction projects happening across the Yukon; and
- Invested \$1.5 million in electrifying Government of Yukon's fleet vehicles, including acquiring 2 battery-electric cars, 12 plug-in hybrid electric SUVs, 2 battery-electric vans and 13 gas hybrid-electric pick-up trucks for Yukon government's fleet. More are on order.

*Infrastructure investments*

- Our department recognizes the importance of investing in infrastructure that supports and connects Yukoners, including our buildings, roads and airports.
- We are working with the Department of Education to build two new schools in the territory. We are making sure they reflect a modern learning environment and meet the needs of their communities.
- In Whistle Bend, the new elementary school is well underway and is expected to welcome students next fall.
- As well, in Burwash Landing, we are beginning substantial work on the Kêts'ádań Kù (Ket-zah Done-COO) school starting in the summer of 2024.

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- The Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre and 10-plex housing complex is nearing completion. These buildings will improve services in Old Crow by providing much-needed housing, and a modern health centre.
- Beyond buildings, we have made major investments in our transportation infrastructure.
- In Carmacks, the Carmacks Bypass project under the Yukon Resource Gateway Program is now complete. The bypass was successfully finished a year ahead of schedule and within budget. This project included building a new road and bridge to divert large mining trucks away from the community of Carmacks and increase safety within the community.
- At the Erik Neilsen Whitehorse International Airport, we are finalizing upgrades to the parallel runway and will be reconstructing the main runway, as well as making various upgrades to airport facilities and infrastructure over the next few years. These improvements will support critical medical services, tourism and resource sectors, and contribute to arctic security efforts.
- We have also made significant progress on upgrades to critical sections of the North Klondike Highway. Approximately 57 kilometres have been reconstructed so far, and most recently completing a 10-kilometre section near the Dempster Highway.
- The project also involves improvements to three bridges with work on one bridge already complete and rehabilitation of another substantially complete. Rehabilitation on the third bridge is currently underway and is scheduled to be complete next summer.

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- These upgrades will increase safety, improve driving conditions, better connect the Yukon's resources to markets and increase resiliency of the highway to the impacts of climate change.
- Last summer we also started replacing one of the longest bridges in the Yukon, the Nisutlin Bay Bridge. This project will help ensure that this key gateway to the Yukon remains safe and reliable for the travelling public.

*Improving services for Yukoners*

- While it may not be the first thought for Yukoners when they think of Highways and Public Works, our department offers important online services to our citizens.
- We have modernized many of our existing services, moving them online to the MyYukon portal. Yukoners can now access government services like renewing their vehicle registration or applying for a commercial driving permit through one single log-in. This platform will continue to expand over the coming year to offer more services online.
- The Dempster Fibre Project is well underway, and construction is anticipated to be finished in 2024. After construction, Northwestel will commission the line. This project involves creating a new fibre optic line from Dawson City to Inuvik, which will provide Yukoners with more reliable internet and cellphone services in the event of a disruption to our current fibre line.
- Last, in 2021 the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* came into force which was designed to make government more transparent and accountable to the public and protect the personal information of Yukoners.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## HPW Accomplishments since 2021

Highways and  
Public Works

### Advancing reconciliation

- A priority for our government is to advance reconciliation through our everyday work.
- The Yukon First Nations Procurement policy is a great example of this commitment. Designed to bring more economic opportunities to First Nations across Yukon.
- Highways and Public Works also recently introduced the Indigenous Training Program. The goal of this program is to help young Indigenous people gain experience, learn about work at Highways and Public Works and help them in pursuing their career goals. So far, we have had two graduates from the program, and four more Indigenous trainees started in August at Highways and Public Works.
- Another way we are advancing reconciliation is through our Yukon Resource Gateway Program. This program requires all projects to have Project Agreements with affected First Nations before work can begin. The intent of these agreements is to provide opportunities that benefit local First Nation citizens and governments.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Approved by:



November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

#	Location	Est. GHG (tCO2e)	Cost
<b>2021/22</b>			
1	Holy Family Elementary School	5.37	\$ 411,863
2	Hidden Valley Elementary School	5.37	\$ 417,624
3	F.H. Collins Tech Ed Wing	0.78	\$ 250,991
4	Airport Terminal - Haines Junction	2.83	\$ 430,389
5	Robert Service School	7.81	\$ 651,293
6	Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School	2.17	\$ 416,851
7	Supervised Consumption Site	1.43	\$ 326,038
8	Grader Station - Dawson City	14.8	\$ 1,836,794
9	Firehall/Garage - Keno	3.81	\$ 701,874
10	Crew Residence - Tuchitua	0.71	\$ 169,091
11	Arts Centre	2.1	\$ 558,249
12	Crew Residence - Blanchard - Window Replacement	2.6	\$ 240,218
13	Crew Residence - Blanchard - Heating System	6	\$ 113,240
14	Workshop/Offices Parks	8.15	\$ 947,993
15	Mechanical Workshop Marwell	2.45	\$ 401,803
		<b>66</b>	<b>\$ 7,874,311</b>
<b>2022/23</b>			
16	Yukon Justice Centre - HVAC upgrades	10	\$ 1,496,796
17	Yukon Justice Centre - Atrium Skylight Replacement	23.5	\$ 3,036,505
18	Watson Lake High School	3.2	\$ 4,109,914
19	Ghuch Tlâ Community School - Carcross	0.56	\$ 510,737
20	Grader Station - Beaver Creek	11	\$ 1,057,079
21	Supply Services & Stores	4.59	\$ 972,326
22	Tourism Business Centre/VIC	14.79	\$ 84,207
23	Administration Building - Mayo	13.99	\$ 661,079
		<b>82</b>	<b>\$ 11,928,643</b>
		<b>148</b>	<b>\$ 19,802,954</b>



## Remaining Energy Assessments to be Completed

#	Energy assessment - Site name	Community	Year Built	Size (m <sup>2</sup> )
1	Transportation Museum	Whitehorse	1942	2031
2	Shed Sand Storage	Whitehorse	2017	300
3	Drury Creek Highway Camp			
	Crew Residence	Drury Creek	2017	465
	Grader Station	Drury Creek	1970	409
4	Liquor Store	Faro	1979	452
5	Del Van Gorder School	Faro	1969	5002
6	Health Centre	Faro	1969	588
7	Ross River School	Ross River	2000	2840
8	Multi Use/Community Hall	Ross River	2003	537
9	Arena	Ross River	1987	3090
10	Grader Station	Ross River	1988	420
11	Health Centre	Ross River	1996	624
12	Workshop/Garage	Ross River	1970	158
13	Water Treatment Plant and Firehall	Ross River	2012	500
14	Tuchitua Highway Camp			
	Grader station	Tuchitua	1963	316
	Power Plant Storage	Tuchitua	1982	68
	Living complex	Tuchitua	1986	586
15	Watson Lake High School	Watson Lake	1964	4721
16	Johnson Elementary School	Watson Lake	1962	3924
17	Weigh Station	Watson Lake	2004	108
18	Watson Lake Grader Station			
	Grader Station	Watson Lake	1950	449
	Storage Grader	Watson Lake	1965	442
19	FMRS Office - EAST Region	Watson Lake	1987	346
20	Airport Terminal	Watson Lake	1943	637
21	Storage Maintenance	Watson Lake	1989	963
22	District Office EMR	Watson Lake	1974	519
23	District Office	Watson Lake	2013	238
24	Fire Control Centre	Watson Lake	1993	360
25	Nelna Bessie John School	Beaver Creek	1961	548
26	Grader Station	Beaver Creek	1987	484
27	Airport Terminal	Beaver Creek	1983	90
28	Health Centre	Beaver Creek	1983	236
29	Blanchard Highway Camp			
	Grader Station	Blanchard River	1985	861
	Living Complex	Blanchard River	1985	360
30	Airport Terminal	Burwash Landing	1965	351
31	Firehall	Burwash Landing	1980	429
32	Destruction Bay Highway Camp			
	Grader Station	Destruction Bay	1969	441
	Residence	Destruction Bay	-	87
33	St. Elias Community School	Haines Junction	1966	3307
34	Administration Building/Library	Haines Junction	1975	1272
35	Grader Station	Haines Junction	1960	722

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Workcamp Culture**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Highways and Public Works is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment at all worksites we oversee across the Yukon.
- All contractors are expected to comply with safety regulations and follow the Yukon government's safe-work related policies and practices in our worksites.

**Additional response: Contractors**

- Contractors hired by Highways and Public Works on projects over \$100k are required to hold a Certificate of Recognition or equivalent from the Northern Safety Network, for all work under the contract, including the provision and operation of any workcamps.
- Contractors are required to develop and adhere to anti-harassment and drug and alcohol policies, as well as other inclusive practices for the workforce, as a part of their Certificate of Recognition (COR).
- The Northern Safety Network conducts on-site field reviews regularly, monitoring the safety and culture for any potential issues, as well as to verify that the contractor is following their COR policies.
- The Yukon government conducts on-site field reviews occasionally, monitoring the compliance of their site-specific Environment Management Plan, which includes anti-harassment policies, as well as the Contractor's project-specific safety plan.
- Contractors are encouraged to engage with any Yukon First Nations in whose traditional territory the camp is located and incorporate their needs and suggestions into site-specific rules and guidelines.
- There is an expectation that all interactions and dialogue with citizens during and outside of work hours will remain respectful.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Workcamp Culture**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Additional Response: Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement Project example**

- Contractors that are based in communities delivering on government projects often have additional requirements unique to their contract.
- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project has a requirement for the contractor to staff a community wellness team. The team provides a safe and confidential resource for workers and community members to raise any health and wellness issues pertaining to the project. The team includes one liaison for workers to contact, and a separate liaison for community members to contact.
- The contractor is also responsible for developing a drug and alcohol policy that includes the delivery of education programs to their workers and describes available counselling and treatment resources.
- In the case of the Nisutlin Bay project, the work camp will be substance free throughout all phases of the project to support community safety.
- In consultation with a qualified expert, the contractor is also responsible for developing policies and processes, which promote a safe, respectful and inclusive workcamp culture for women and gender minorities.
- Last, the contractor on the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project is required to provide harassment prevention training and an anti-harassment and anti-bullying policy to inform all employees of specific processes and actions to take to address any harassment or bullying that may take place within the project's scope.

**Fourth response: Old Crow example**

- Other examples are the Health and Wellness Centre and the 10-Plex projects currently under construction in Old Crow, that are being

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Workcamp Culture**Highways and  
Public Works

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developed by Ketza TSL Construction. The contract terms require that the community remains substance free.

- Rules of conduct and a “zero tolerance” policy are in place and enforced.
  - The contractor is responsible for monitoring behaviour in the camp.
  - The contractor provides orientation for their workers to ensure respect and cooperation are emphasized in day-to-day work, as well as outside of work hours.
  - There is ongoing dialogue between the Yukon government, the contractor and the Vuntut Gwitchin Government which provides an avenue for issues or complaints to be brought forward.
- 

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

- There could be questions regarding gender inclusive and workplace safety in government-sponsored projects happening in communities.
- 

**Background:****Nisutlin Bay Bridge**

- Highways and Public Works hosted many community engagements throughout the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project planning phase and heard substantial feedback about the importance of community safety to the residents of Teslin and the Citizens of the Teslin Tlingit Council.
- Teslin Tlingit Council, the Yukon government and the contractor engage monthly to discuss and address concerns that any party may have, including safety concerns.

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson  
Lake Airports**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: General**

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

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

- The Dawson City airport is a hub for many important operations including medevac, Wildland Fire, mineral exploration, tourism, and outfitting.
- Over the past few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has made several improvements to the Dawson City Airport, including paving the runway, building a second apron, constructing a new maintenance facility, upgrading operational areas, and relocating the Canadian Border Services Agency building to better support airport operations.
- Planning is currently underway for additional surface water management improvements, to ensure the airport remains operational during local flood events.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson  
Lake Airports**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Additional response: Scheduled Service to Dawson**

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

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

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

**Watson Lake Airport****Recommended response:**

- In 2021 and 2022 our government invested \$4 million at the Watson Lake Airport to resurface the runway and portions of the taxiway.
- Engineering design is currently underway for significant airfield lighting and electrical upgrades.
- We are working closely with departments and agencies that provide essential services from the airport to ensure the continued availability of emergency services throughout construction.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson Lake Airports**Highways and  
Public Works

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- These investments will maintain the critical aviation infrastructure that serves the community of Watson Lake and surrounding area.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Highways and Public Works made a number of significant upgrades and investments in the last few years to the Dawson City Airport, Watson Lake and Mayo Airport.
- 

**Background:****Dawson City Airport:**

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

**Mayo Airport:**

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

**Watson Lake Airport:**

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

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dawson City, Mayo and Watson  
Lake Airports**Highways and  
Public Works

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

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**FALL 2023**

### **Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**

Highways and  
Public Works

#### **Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is making crucial investments to the Yukon's infrastructure to provide Yukoners with safe and reliable aviation infrastructure for years to come.
- A number of improvements to the airside of Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport are needed to replace aging infrastructure and keep the airport up to current standards.
- This work will support current and future airport operations.
- Improvements completed to date include upgrades to:
  - the parallel runway;
  - the taxiways;
  - apron panels; and
  - developing airport land for institutional and commercial uses.

#### **Additional Response: YG v. Norcope Enterprises Ltd. Judgement**

- The previous apron replacement project completed in 2014 has been the subject of legal proceedings between the Yukon government and the constructor, Norcope Enterprises Ltd. since 2017.
- On November 14, 2022, the Supreme Court of Yukon released its decision that Norcope has been ordered to pay the Yukon government \$2.3 million in damages.
- Norcope Enterprises Ltd. appealed the November 14, 2022, decision. The appeal was argued on November 20 and 21, 2023, and the Court of Appeal has reserved its decision.
- As the matter is before the court, we cannot comment further at this time.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Additional response: Main runway reconstruction**

- The \$160.7 million contract to reconstruct the main runway was awarded to Flatiron Constructors Canada Limited on May 19, 2023.
- The proposed work is scheduled for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 construction seasons, and we anticipate it will be completed by 2026.
- While this is a large project, we expect there to be minimal disruptions overall for the travelling public.
- We will be working closely with aviation stakeholders to minimize impacts on their operations during the construction period.
- This year's work involved preparation for the main runway reconstruction including airfield drainage improvements, water and sanitary line extensions, fencing to secure the worksite, and construction of two access roads to the parallel runway in preparation for next year's construction season.
- In the following years, major reconstruction work will begin on the main runway. This will include fully replacing the main runway and adding additional features such as increased lighting.
- On August 3, we held an information session for aviation stakeholders about the project.
- On September 28, we held an information session for tourism stakeholders about the project.

**Additional response: Airport Classification Change**

- In the long term, the Government of Yukon will be evaluating how Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport could support larger aircraft.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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- To increase the service level at the Whitehorse Airport from an AGN IV to an AGN V, there are a number of program and infrastructure investments that would need to be made.
- These additional investments would include increasing:
  - aircraft rescue firefighting resources;
  - aircraft maneuvering surfaces;
  - space and processing capacity for Canadian Border Services; and,
  - passenger processing and screening facilities.
- While additional investments are required to support this category change, the length and width of the existing and new main runway will not limit the Whitehorse Airport from supporting the larger AGN V aircraft.

**Additional response: Community Development Agreements**

- We have entered into two Community Development Agreements for work on the main runway, one with Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and one with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- Both agreements are tailored to maximize socioeconomic benefits that are important to each community such as employment, subcontracting, training and workforce and business development.
- An example of implementation of these agreements is the subcontracting work performed by First Nations businesses.
- Additionally, the contractor held a job fair this past August targeted at employment for First Nations citizens. Another job fair will be held prior to next season's start-up.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Community Development Agreements are government-to-government agreements, and the content is confidential.
  - The framework for these agreements was developed as part of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy. We are working closely with both First Nation governments to implement these two agreements.

**Additional response: Parallel runway upgrades**

- The construction tender to upgrade the parallel runway was awarded to Terus Construction Ltd and Skookum Asphalt for approximately \$21 million. Construction began in spring 2023.
- To meet Transport Canada regulations, this summer we extended the runway safety area of the parallel runway. This required an infill of some of the Puckett's Gulch area, which involved relocating the airport fence line, clearing trees, and removing some vegetation to build a stable slope.
- The parallel runway was closed in September 2023 to allow the contractor for the main runway replacement to complete site preparation work for the main runway project in the vicinity.
- The final runway work includes grooving, painting that is now complete, and some electrical work which we expect will be finished at the end of November.

**Additional response: Condor**

- During the reconstruction of the main runway, the parallel runway will be used as the primary runway. The parallel runway will be limited to Boeing 737 aircraft or smaller.
- In the meantime, Condor has announced it is changing aircraft in 2024 to larger A330 models.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
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- Of interest, the new A330 aircraft would not be able to land at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport regardless of the planned construction and despite the new main runway.
- Air North has secured interline agreements with Condor that allows travellers to connect to the Yukon through Edmonton, Calgary or Vancouver.

**Additional response: Taxiway and tenant lease area upgrades**

- The construction tender for the realignment, paving and lighting of Taxiway G, and associated improvements to lease parcel servicing was awarded, and work started in spring 2022.
- These improvements are ongoing and expected to be substantially complete this fall.
- During this construction, Highways and Public Works will continue to communicate with airport stakeholders.

**Additional response: Maintenance facility**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements

Highways and Public Works

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:

*C. Harwood*

November 22, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Food Services**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport is the aviation gateway to the Yukon, welcoming passengers from across the country and around the world.
  - The airport hosts approximately 400,000 passengers a year, and food services is an important part of the service offered for the airport.
  - Since late 2019, the Yukon government has been working toward securing an agreement through our procurement process.
  - We are excited to share that the Yukon government has signed an agreement with Air North to offer food services at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.
  - The agreement is in place to permit Air North to undertake final renovations and outfitting.
  - The new restaurant is set to open on February 1, 2024.
  - Our goal is to provide quality food services for Yukoners and the thousands of passengers who pass through the airport every year.
  - Soon travellers will be able to not only enjoy Air North's delicious warm cookies and meals 30 000 feet in the air, but also what they have in store for the travellers in the Whitehorse terminal.
  - Until then, food and beverage options will continue to be available within the airport gift shop, vending machines and at nearby hotel restaurants.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Whitehorse Airport Food Services

Highways and  
Public Works

### Background:

- In June 2019, the last restaurant operator requested release from their agreement to provide food services at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. The Yukon government took this opportunity to remove obsolete and non-functional equipment and upgrade the restaurant area and kitchen space.
- Unfortunately, active negotiations for the primary food services agreement were paused in March 2020 due to pandemic-related public health directives, a decrease in passenger traffic and a decrease in airport terminal use in general.
- In August 2021, discussions resumed on the food services agreement. Discussions were placed on hold again in October 2021 when the restaurant space was temporarily repurposed as a COVID-19 testing facility to satisfy Transport Canada regulatory requirements.
- The department resumed engagement with the highest ranked proponent in the Negotiated Request for Proposals process in March 2022.
- Through negotiation engagement, we took the time to come up with a robust agreement for the future.

Approved by:

*C. Hamwood*

October 24, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Whitehorse Airport - Snow Clearing and Drainage

Highways and Public Works

### Recommended response:

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

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dempster Fibre Line**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended Response:**

- The Dempster Fibre Line project is progressing to extend 800 kilometres of high-speed fibre line along the Dempster Highway from Dawson City, Yukon, to Inuvik, Northwest Territories.
- The project will benefit communities in both territories by providing a backup line in the event of a service disruption.
- Construction of the new line began in July 2021.
- This year, installation work exceeded the targets set in spring 2023. As of the end of October 2023, 780 kilometres of fibre have been installed.
- The remaining work includes aerial attachments to existing power poles in the Yukon and NWT, splicing of the fibre, and testing and commissioning of the 800 kilometre line.
- Work is seasonal and most of the crews have demobilized for the winter. A small number of personnel remain to do a final season clean-up and continue splicing the cables.
- Construction takes place in challenging terrain which requires the use of specialized equipment and construction methods to minimize impacts to the environment.

**Additional Response: Environmental Protection**

- Input from Yukon University scientists, as well as First Nations traditional knowledge keepers, was incorporated to inform various environmental components during the design of the project.



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- Environmental protection is a key value of this project. Stantec and Tetrattech are subcontracted to mitigate the impacts of this project on the environment, particularly on permafrost.
- There is an extensive monitoring and inspection program being implemented as part of the project as well as by multiple regulatory agencies to help ensure that impacts from the project are mitigated or minimized as much as possible. This includes:
  - three to five environmental monitors on site each day providing daily reports and guidance to the work crews;
  - weekly environmental reports and recommendations submitted by Environmental Dynamics Inc, the company overseeing the environmental monitors;
  - two Stantec field inspectors providing daily reports;
  - monthly inspections by Stantec and Tetra-tech's lead project engineers; and
  - regular inspections by the Government of Northwest Territories environmental compliance team.
- The contractor follows an environmental plan with specific directions that were approved through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board process to protect values such as flora and fauna, wetlands and water bodies, and other sensitive environments.
- A second round of environmental monitor training was provided to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and Gwich'in Tribal Council citizens. Sixteen

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dempster Fibre Line**Highways and  
Public Works

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participants successfully completed the training and are eligible to work on the Dempster Fibre project as Environmental Monitors.

**Additional response: Environmental Incident and Remediation**

- At the end of August 2023, it was discovered that the clearing and brushing work had been performed with machinery closer than planned to some watercourses.
- Highways and Public Works, the contractor and the environmental consultant investigated all incident locations to provide remediation recommendations.
- The assessment of incident locations was completed in October 2023, and identified:
  - 19 locations of disturbance near water;
  - 13 of 19 locations require reseeding the riparian area with native plant species; and
  - 2 of the locations require the covering of any exposed soil with nearby woody debris, while the existing vegetation regrows.
- There is no remediation work being recommended in 4 locations as the impact was minor and anticipated to recover naturally in a short time period.
- Highways and Public Works is working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to review the proposed remediation work.

**Additional Response: First Nation Participation**

- First Nations participation was a large component of this value-driven tendering process.

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Public Works

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- The Government of Yukon is actively engaged with three Yukon First Nations and five Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories whose traditional territories the project passes through.
- Under a First Nations and Indigenous Participation Plan for the project, 20 per cent of the contract value is allocated towards subcontracting, employment and training for First Nations in the Yukon and Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories.
- This provides opportunities for First Nations and Indigenous businesses and subcontractors in the form of direct employment benefits and training and capacity development.
- We encourage all First Nations and Indigenous businesses and citizens to apply for contracts and positions available through the Dempster Fibre Line Project.

**Additional Response: Engagement**

- We continue to engage with First Nations and Indigenous governments to ensure the success of this project. We regularly meet to ensure that economic opportunities are made available to local businesses and citizens.
- In spring 2023, we supported the contractor in holding open houses and job fairs in the communities of Dawson City, Old Crow, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik, and Fort McPherson. These events were well attended.

**Additional Response: Alternate Installation Methods**

- The preferred installation method is plowing cable into the ground — this method offers the greatest protection to the cable and helps to

## Session Briefing Note

FALL 2023

### Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and  
Public Works

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preserve the landscape and environmental values such as wetlands and habitats.

- Specialized equipment is used to exert minimal ground pressure to create a shallow trench where the conduit is laid and immediately buried.
- In areas where this equipment cannot be used, including river and roadway crossings, we use horizontal directional drilling. A small hole, measuring approximately 75mm, is drilled below the surface where the fibre conduit is placed. This was used to assist in crossing under the Arctic Red, Peel and Mackenzie rivers without disturbing the flow of the waters. This can only be done in suitable soil and not through rocky areas.
- The last option is the installation of new poles for an aerial installation, which is only used when we encounter hard rock or unstable clay-like soil.
- Aerial installations are our last and least preferred option and used in rare instances only when all other installation methods will not be effective.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

##### General

- Construction of the project will be complete in 2024-25. As is usual for major projects, clean up and remediation activities will likely be required, which typically requires another year of monitoring. For this reason, a 2025 timeline was submitted to the regulatory boards.
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**FALL 2023**

## Dempster Fibre Line

Highways and  
Public Works

- Commissioning of the line will commence in 2024. Testing, signal checks, and other aspects of networking will be conducted simultaneously as the project construction nears completion. Our emphasis is to get the network online as soon as possible.
- Regulatory permits for the project were issued after approval by the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board in the Northwest Territories and a recommendation was received from the Yukon Socio-Economic Assessment Board in the Yukon.
- Scientists and highway engineers from Yukon University and the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories have participated in several design reviews.

### Budget

- ROHL Global Networks, in partnership with Dagoo Services, was awarded the construction contract in May 2021. The federal government is contributing \$59 million to the project. Northwestel is contributing \$15 million as an upfront payment on a 20-year lease with exclusive rights to operate the line.
- Over \$30 million was spent on construction of the Dempster Fibre Line in 2022-23.

Approved by:



November 2, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Nisutlin Bay Bridge**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: General**

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

**Additional response: Project schedule**

- The contract was awarded on May 3, 2022, to Graham Infrastructure LP.
- Project work began in the summer of 2022 with a planned winter shutdown between mid-December 2022 to March 2023.
- The 2023 construction season started on March 16. Work continued to ramp up this construction season, with 30-50 rotating staff onsite at the construction camp throughout the summer.
- A planned winter shut down of major construction works is scheduled to begin mid-December 2023.
- Ongoing winter work will consist of:

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

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- receiving material;
- site and equipment maintenance; and,
- a winter crew of 8 to 12 people on-site.
- The spring start-up date is March or April 2024. This date depends on the weather conditions.
- The anticipated substantial completion date is September 30, 2025, and the total completion date is March 31, 2026.

**Additional response: Contractor's work plan**

- The contractor is constructing a temporary trestle bridge, which will serve as a working platform for the construction of the new bridge.
- As of now, 21 out of the total 30 spans have been completed and are facilitating the construction of the new bridge, starting with the piling.
- As of October 24, 2023, the following work has been completed by the contractor:
  - site mobilization and permanent pilings for the north and south abutments;
  - the south abutment, along with its seat, back wall, and wing walls;
  - the south embankment has been built up to the subgrade level;
  - riprap has been placed on the north-facing slope of the south abutment;
  - at Pier 2, all eight permanent piles are complete with concrete infill;

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Public Works

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- at Pier 3, all eight permanent piles are complete with concrete infill and the pile cap has been cast;
  - piles of the north abutment are complete with concrete infill;
  - the north embankment has been constructed up to the bottom of the abutment seat;
  - installation of cofferdams for Piers 2 and 3 are complete and installation of the cofferdam for Pier 4 is ongoing; and,
  - clearing and grubbing for the new road on the south side.
- Granular pit development and rock production near Teslin and environmental measures such as hydroacoustic monitoring, fish salvage and water sampling are ongoing.

**Additional response: Project cost**

- The contract with Graham Infrastructure LP is \$159.96 million.
- Infrastructure Canada's *Building Canada Fund* committed a \$41.25 million contribution to the project.
- Transport Canada will also contribute \$52.5 million through the *National Trade Corridors Fund* to the project.
- The capital plan indicates that approximate spending in 2023-24 is \$40 to 45 million, for fiscal year 2024-25 it is \$45 to 50 million, and for fiscal year 2025-26 it is \$25 to 30 million. These numbers are subject to change as the work progresses.



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**Additional response: Benefits for Local Businesses**

- As per the terms of the construction contract, the contractor, Graham Infrastructure LP, is responsible for the hiring sub-contractors for the project.
- Sub-contractors perform work including electrical, logistics, earthworks, quarry development, materials procurement, and environmental monitoring.
- There are several Teslin and Yukon businesses that were named under the contractor's proposal.
- This list exists for the life of the project, and the contractor can hire from this list at any time. They can also add to this list if need arises.
- The Yukon government does not direct the contractor, Graham Infrastructure LP, on sub-contracting opportunities.

**Additional response: First Nations Participation**

- Both Teslin Tlingit and Yukon First Nations participation hours are tracked throughout the project.
- They are submitted monthly by Graham Infrastructure LP to the Yukon government.
- The department is monitoring the project to ensure the contractor is following the commitments made.
- We continue to engage with Teslin Tlingit Council to inform them of opportunities on the project.

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**Additional Response: Granular Material**

- This project will use over 100,000 cubic metres of aggregate for the various components. This does not include asphalt.
- All the granular material for roadwork is locally sourced.
- However, the Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project will require approximately 2,400 m<sup>3</sup> of coarse aggregate for the cast-in-place concrete being used.
- This small amount of coarse aggregate for concrete work is coming from Whitehorse.
- The aggregate being used in this concrete has specific requirements to ensure the structural integrity of the bridge.
- There are very limited sources of aggregate in Yukon that meet this requirement which is why aggregate from the Whitehorse area will be used for this specific portion of the project, which equates to less than 2.5 per cent of the aggregate needed.

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

- A granular pit located at kilometer 1258 of the Alaska Highway, near Teslin, also called Ten Mile Pit, was developed in line with the construction contract.
- Granular sources for the project, including granular-E will be shipped from the gravel pits located at kilometre 1184 and kilometre 1238.
- The granular resources from Ten Mile Pit will be used by the Yukon government for other projects or construction activities in the surrounding area.

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- Half of the Ten Mile Pit area is also shared with the Teslin Tlingit Council. The First Nation will help to manage the development of the pit.

**Additional response: Engagement**

- Highways and Public Works continues to work collaboratively with the Teslin Tlingit Council and engage with the Village of Teslin, the public and specific stakeholders on this project as it moves forward.
- The Yukon government project team meets with Teslin Tlingit Council on a bi-weekly basis to discuss the project and troubleshoot challenges together.
- As well, the Yukon government, Teslin Tlingit Council and the primary contractor, Graham Construction, meet on a monthly basis to review the project and discuss potential community issues and solutions.

**Additional response: Community wellness and environmental monitoring**

- Graham Infrastructure LP have staffed a community wellness team that includes a liaison for workers to contact, and a separate liaison for community members to contact, with any health and wellness issues pertaining to the project they may have.
- The contractor has developed and enforces policies for all staff regarding drugs and alcohol, and a respectful workplace including equity and inclusion and diversity.
- Transfer Payment Agreements were signed with the Teslin Tlingit Council that addressed project planning, participation and

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Nisutlin Bay Bridge**Highways and  
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implementation support and Environmental and Socio-economic Baseline Studies.

**Additional response: Fisheries Act authorization and water licence**

- The water licence for the project was issued on August 31, 2022.
- The *Fisheries Act* authorization was issued on October 17, 2022.
- In response to the licence and authorization, the Yukon government successfully worked with its partners, Teslin Tlingit Council and Graham Construction LLP, and the regulator (DFO) on an amendment and a variance to better support the work activities required to construct the new bridge.
- We received the amendment on February 24, 2023, and a variance on March 8, 2023.
- Since then, the project is progressing well, and 88 pilings have been installed that meet the thresholds set by the FAA and Water Licence.

**Additional Response: Sonar Enumeration TPA for Teslin Tlingit Council**

- Environmental protection of the Nisutlin Bay area is a major component of the project, and under our *Fisheries Act Authorization* we are required to establish a sonar enumeration project.
- The sonar enumeration is to make sure that the construction work is not negatively impacting fish populations or migrations.
- I'm happy to report that we have now signed a Transfer Payment Agreement with Teslin Tlingit Council that provides funding to support this sonar project.

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- The sonar enumeration project will last until the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project is finished.
  - The project helps researchers with Teslin Tlingit Council count Chinook salmon passing through the Nisutlin River Delta National Wildlife Area.
  - This important natural area is along the migration route for Chinook salmon returning to the Nisutlin and Wolf rivers and their tributaries.
  - The sonar covers a relatively narrow and shallow section of river. Like a police officer measuring cars' speed with a radar gun, the sonar “pings” various objects, in this case salmon, as they go by the sonar. The result is translated into a daily count of the salmon.
  - This work is essential to protecting salmon and making sure the fish reach their spawning grounds while a new bridge is being built in Nisutlin Bay.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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

**FALL 2023**

## Nisutlin Bay Bridge

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Public Works

### Historic Public Engagement

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

Approved by:



November 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement  
Change Order**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government and Graham Infrastructure LP have been negotiating a change order to reflect the impacts of the *Fisheries Act* authorization for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project.
- Negotiations such as these are confidential because of their commercial nature and to maintain confidential positions.
- The Yukon government has done its due diligence in handling this matter, and in mitigating risks due to the original *Fisheries Act* authorization.
- When the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project was tendered, there was no reason to expect any significant deviation from similar, previous *Fisheries Act* authorizations from the regulator, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- However, the Yukon government received a *Fisheries Act* authorization that had new, restrictive limits to cumulative noise impacts on fish.
- Together, the Yukon government, Teslin Tlingit Council and Graham Infrastructure LP worked on an amendment to the authorization. This took time.
- The amendment was received in March 2023, at which point negotiations began between the Yukon government and Graham Infrastructure LP about a new schedule and work plan reflective of the authorization.

# Session Briefing Note

## Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement Change Order

Highways and  
Public Works

### Additional response:

- Change orders, both large and small, are a regular part of contract management.
- Work on the bridge replacement continues to progress as planned, with creative adaptations designed by the contractor, the Yukon government, and Teslin Tlingit Council to ensure the requirements of the Fisheries Act authorization and Water Licence are met.
- The Yukon government remains committed to delivering the construction of a new Nisutlin Bay Bridge.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions may be raised about the bridge replacement budget.

### Background:

- To date, one change order for the construction contract has been issued for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project.
- This change order did not affect the dollar value of the contract but identified some changes to the scope of work related to the embankment fill, sheet piles and granular sources.

### Approved by:



November 2, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



## **Session Briefing Note**

**FALL 2023**

### **Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**

Highways and  
Public Works

#### **Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is making crucial investments to the Yukon's infrastructure to provide Yukoners with safe and reliable aviation infrastructure for years to come.
- A number of improvements to the airside of Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport are needed to replace aging infrastructure and keep the airport up to current standards.
- This work will support current and future airport operations.
- Improvements completed to date include upgrades to:
  - the parallel runway;
  - the taxiways;
  - apron panels; and
  - developing airport land for institutional and commercial uses.

#### **Additional Response: YG v. Norcope Enterprises Ltd. Judgement**

- The previous apron replacement project completed in 2014 has been the subject of legal proceedings between the Yukon government and the constructor, Norcope Enterprises Ltd. since 2017.
- On November 14, 2022, the Supreme Court of Yukon released its decision that Norcope has been ordered to pay the Yukon government \$2.3 million in damages.
- Norcope Enterprises Ltd. appealed the November 14, 2022, decision. The appeal was argued on November 20 and 21, 2023, and the Court of Appeal has reserved its decision.
- As the matter is before the court, we cannot comment further at this time.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
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**Additional response: Main runway reconstruction**

- The \$160.7 million contract to reconstruct the main runway was awarded to Flatiron Constructors Canada Limited on May 19, 2023.
- The proposed work is scheduled for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 construction seasons, and we anticipate it will be completed by 2026.
- While this is a large project, we expect there to be minimal disruptions overall for the travelling public.
- We will be working closely with aviation stakeholders to minimize impacts on their operations during the construction period.
- This year's work involved preparation for the main runway reconstruction including airfield drainage improvements, water and sanitary line extensions, fencing to secure the worksite, and construction of two access roads to the parallel runway in preparation for next year's construction season.
- In the following years, major reconstruction work will begin on the main runway. This will include fully replacing the main runway and adding additional features such as increased lighting.
- On August 3, we held an information session for aviation stakeholders about the project.
- On September 28, we held an information session for tourism stakeholders about the project.

**Additional response: Airport Classification Change**

- In the long term, the Government of Yukon will be evaluating how Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport could support larger aircraft.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
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- To increase the service level at the Whitehorse Airport from an AGN IV to an AGN V, there are a number of program and infrastructure investments that would need to be made.
- These additional investments would include increasing:
  - aircraft rescue firefighting resources;
  - aircraft maneuvering surfaces;
  - space and processing capacity for Canadian Border Services; and,
  - passenger processing and screening facilities.
- While additional investments are required to support this category change, the length and width of the existing and new main runway will not limit the Whitehorse Airport from supporting the larger AGN V aircraft.

**Additional response: Community Development Agreements**

- We have entered into two Community Development Agreements for work on the main runway, one with Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and one with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- Both agreements are tailored to maximize socioeconomic benefits that are important to each community such as employment, subcontracting, training and workforce and business development.
- An example of implementation of these agreements is the subcontracting work performed by First Nations businesses.
- Additionally, the contractor held a job fair this past August targeted at employment for First Nations citizens. Another job fair will be held prior to next season's start-up.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

- 
- Community Development Agreements are government-to-government agreements, and the content is confidential.
  - The framework for these agreements was developed as part of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy. We are working closely with both First Nation governments to implement these two agreements.

**Additional response: Parallel runway upgrades**

- The construction tender to upgrade the parallel runway was awarded to Terus Construction Ltd and Skookum Asphalt for approximately \$21 million. Construction began in spring 2023.
- To meet Transport Canada regulations, this summer we extended the runway safety area of the parallel runway. This required an infill of some of the Puckett's Gulch area, which involved relocating the airport fence line, clearing trees, and removing some vegetation to build a stable slope.
- The parallel runway was closed in September 2023 to allow the contractor for the main runway replacement to complete site preparation work for the main runway project in the vicinity.
- The final runway work includes grooving, painting that is now complete, and some electrical work which we expect will be finished at the end of November.

**Additional response: Condor**

- During the reconstruction of the main runway, the parallel runway will be used as the primary runway. The parallel runway will be limited to Boeing 737 aircraft or smaller.
- In the meantime, Condor has announced it is changing aircraft in 2024 to larger A330 models.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Of interest, the new A330 aircraft would not be able to land at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport regardless of the planned construction and despite the new main runway.
- Air North has secured interline agreements with Condor that allows travellers to connect to the Yukon through Edmonton, Calgary or Vancouver.

**Additional response: Taxiway and tenant lease area upgrades**

- The construction tender for the realignment, paving and lighting of Taxiway G, and associated improvements to lease parcel servicing was awarded, and work started in spring 2022.
- These improvements are ongoing and expected to be substantially complete this fall.
- During this construction, Highways and Public Works will continue to communicate with airport stakeholders.

**Additional response: Maintenance facility**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements

Highways and  
Public Works

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:

*C. Harwood*

November 22, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Active Transportation**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: General**

- Promoting active transportation is a focus of our government and we aim to incorporate active transportation elements wherever possible in major infrastructure projects.
- Active transportation not only helps support healthy living, but also supports a cleaner and more sustainable future for the Yukon.

**Recommended Response: Highway and Bridge Design**

- Highways and Public Works strongly supports and is actively incorporating active transportation options into our highway infrastructure projects wherever possible.
- For example, the department recently completed construction of a paved, multi-use trail between the Lodestar Lane and the intersection of Robert Service Way and the Alaska Highway.
- We are planning on extending this active transportation trail from the Robert Service Way intersection to Philmar RV, at the same time as the reconstruction of this section of the Alaska Highway occurs.
- Highways and Public Works is in the process of developing options to enhance the safety of active transportation on the Takhini River Bridge on the Klondike Highway.
- \$8.5 million is budgeted for upgrades to the existing bridge, of which the Government of Yukon will receive over \$6 million in federal funding through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- We are looking into what options would be available, including the estimated costs for the improvement upgrades. The options will include a sidewalk or active transportation route on one or both sides

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Active Transportation**Highways and  
Public Works

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of the bridge, and the modifications that are necessary to improve the structure and increase its lifespan.

- Another example is the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project which will include a pedestrian walkway across the bridge and a trail underneath the bridge that will provide all-season access.

**Additional response: Building and Parking Lot Design**

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

**Additional response:**

- The Government of Yukon, along with the City of Whitehorse, is participating as a stakeholder in a community-led study that will assess the feasibility for two active transportation underpasses beneath the Alaska Highway within Whitehorse.
- This study is being funded by the Government of Canada.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Active Transportation**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The Government of Yukon has also partnered with the City of Whitehorse on the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill intersection, and the Range Road, Combined Intersection Upgrades project.
- This joint initiative, which is currently in the public engagement phase, will focus on developing designs to improve the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill intersection, and the Range Road-Two Mile Hill intersection, with an emphasis on making travel more efficient for all transportation modes.

**Additional response: Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements:**

- \$1.5 million is budgeted for Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements, and of that \$1.1 million is funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- The project includes the installation of streetlighting, pedestrian-activated beacons, and pathway connections to the crossings and will improve the safety for active transportation users and pedestrians within Watson Lake.
- In August 2023, Highways and Public Works met with Watson Lake's Chief Administration Officer regarding a needs assessment for connecting pathways to the new crosswalks for construction in 2024.

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

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Active Transportation

Highways and  
Public Works

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

Approved by:



October 16, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

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**Recommended response:**

- As part of the Confidence and Supply Agreement between the Yukon NDP and Yukon Liberal caucus, our government has committed to investing an additional \$5 million per year into renewable energy infrastructure.
  - In addition to the significant investments being made by Yukon Development Corporation, Highways and Public works invested an additional \$2 million this year under the Yukon Green Infrastructure Program for the district heating system expansion project at Whitehorse Correctional Centre – which is expected to be completed in summer 2024.
  - Highways and Public Works continues to invest in renewable energy infrastructure across the territory from solar energy systems in remote locations to biomass heating systems in our schools.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

- In November 2022, a design-bid-build contract was awarded for the Whitehorse Correctional Center biomass expansion project.
  - The project will connect underground piping from Takhini Haven and the Young Offenders Facility to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre that has an operational biomass boiler with additional capacity.
  - The system currently uses low-carbon wood pellets made from the waste of a sawmill in Northern Alberta.
-

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

- The number of wood pellet deliveries will increase from 5 to 10 per year for this project. The emissions from these trips will be primarily offset by the corresponding reduction in heating oil and propane deliveries from Northern BC and Alaska.

**Approved by:**

November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The impacts of climate change on the Yukon are being felt everywhere.
- Whether it be wildfires, flooding, landslides, increased precipitation, permafrost thaw or avalanches, our territory is changing quickly, and we need to be prepared for more changes to come.
- That is why it is so important that the infrastructure we are building today will withstand the climate impacts of tomorrow.
- To support our understanding of how climate change is impacting our infrastructure, the Yukon government recently released the first Yukon Climate Risk Assessment which can be found on Yukon.ca.
- This report will help guide our actions so that we are more resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Furthermore, our government is conducting climate risk assessments of all major transportation and building infrastructure projects over \$10 million.
- Lastly, the department is in the process of developing guidelines for managing climate risk in new and existing infrastructure across the Yukon.

**Additional response:**

- Climate risk assessments evaluate infrastructures' vulnerability to climate change and use that information to incorporate adaptation measures into design to mitigate climate change impacts.
- The assessment considers the potential damage, how likely it is to occur, and what options exist to mitigate that threat.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Highways and Public Works completed climate risk assessments for five major construction projects in recent years: the Dempster Fibre Line, Carmacks Bypass, North Klondike Highway Reconstruction, Whitehorse Airport Airfield Upgrades, and the Kêts'ádań Kù (Kay-et-zah-Done-coo) (Burwash Landing School).
- The department is finalizing climate risk assessments for the Alaska Highway safety improvements through Whitehorse, and the Alaska Highway realignment at the Takhini River thaw slump.
- We will use the information from these assessments to help build safer and more resilient infrastructure for years to come.

**Third response:**

- We have recently completed a project to improve the Yukon's capacity for assessing and managing the impacts of climate change on buildings.
- This project identified the type and severity of climate change hazards that our buildings are facing, such as floods, wildfires, and thawing permafrost.
- We are expanding on this work by developing guidelines that address the risks identified in new and existing infrastructure.
- In October, we issued a request for information asking for feedback to align our approach with current industry best practices. and to determine the next steps.
- Incorporating climate resiliency from the conceptual design stage for all infrastructure projects is important for building infrastructure that accounts for future climate events.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Climate Resilience in Infrastructure

Highways and  
Public Works

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:



November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Electric Fleet Vehicles**

**FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

- One of the actions for Highways and Public Works under Our Clean Future is to develop and implement a system to prioritize and purchase zero-emission vehicles for all of the Yukon government's new fleet acquisitions, as available and suitable.
- We are making progress on this commitment.
  - In early 2021, the Yukon government purchased two battery electric passenger cars from local dealerships. The cars were delivered in April 2021.
  - In late 2021, 12 plug-in hybrid SUVs were ordered and were delivered in 2022.



## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Electric Fleet Vehicles**

**FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

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- In 2023, the Yukon government received 13 gas hybrid pickup trucks that are now in use across the fleet and two battery electric cargo vans that are being used by the mailroom.
- In 2024, we will add two more cargo vans and three pickup trucks – all battery electric – that will be deployed to program areas based on the best use for these vehicles.
  - The department's efforts in building relationships with Ford Canada and the local dealer helped in the procurement of the gas hybrid pickup trucks.
- In addition, we anticipate that 30 more battery electric cars will be delivered in the spring of 2024 to replace older gas models.
- Highways and Public Works continues to meet with local dealerships to build relationships and understand market conditions so that we can maximize the number of electric vehicles in the government fleet.
- Market stabilization and transition to EV production for battery electric trucks and SUVs is evident with the recent bid(s) from suppliers of EV. Effort is still required to align procurements with production schedules.

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

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

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**Background:**

- Market supply chains continue to experience delays and disruptions in the motor vehicle sector but are returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- Two Chevy Bolt electric vehicle cars and twelve Ford Escape electric hybrid SUVs are available for government use from Fleet Vehicle motor pool services. Other

# Session Briefing Note

## Electric Fleet Vehicles

**FALL 2023**

Highways and  
Public Works

vehicles will be assigned to specific users for testing utilization, range and suitability for different scenarios on purchase.

- In 2016, the Yukon government purchased its first zero-emission vehicle as a pilot project: a Chevrolet Spark compact passenger car that was studied for northern climate use by the Energy Solutions Centre.
- Zero-emission vehicles include both battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.
- Local dealerships can currently supply battery electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid electric and gasoline hybrid vehicles in most vehicle categories. Highways and Public Works is staying in touch with local dealerships about supply and demand.
- Procurement of zero-emissions vehicles will follow the federal rebate standards set by Natural Resources Canada to determine vehicle eligibility.
- The federal Incentives for Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Program provides incentives of up to \$5,000 for the purchase or lease of eligible zero-emission vehicles.
- Federal rebates will be applied to the Yukon government purchases through the procurement process.

Approved by:



September 11, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- One of the ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to meet *Our Clean Future* goals is by switching to electric vehicles.
- In the Yukon, on-road gasoline and diesel vehicles accounted for 49 per cent of our territory's 2020 greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Yukon government has committed to making it possible for electric vehicles to reach all drivable communities in the Yukon by 2027.
- To do this, the Government of Yukon's Department of Energy Mines and Resources has installed 19 fast charging stations available for public use within Whitehorse and other communities.

**Additional response:**

- Highways and Public Works is working closely with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to install a total of eight additional electric vehicle fast charging stations along the Alaska, North Klondike and Robert Campbell Highways.
- Electric vehicle charging stations located along highways between communities require additional time to plan and implement as they are dependent on the availability of power and communications infrastructure, which is limited along some areas of the highway network.
- The next highway fast charging station planned for installation at the Canol Road rest area on the Alaska Highway in 2024. This fall, both electrical and communications servicing is planned to be installed for the charger.

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

- The initiative to electrify Yukon's highway network is a commitment in *Our Clean Future*.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Highways and  
Public Works

### Background:

- Investing in the Yukon's roadways to support low carbon transportation, such as electric vehicles, is a Government of Yukon commitment under Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy.
- Energy, Mines and Resources installed Yukon's first Level 3 electric vehicle fast-charging in 2019.
- Electric vehicles can now be fast charged in 19 locations across the territory including the communities of Beaver Creek, Carcross, Carmacks, Dawson City, Haines Junction, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Stewart Crossing, Teslin, Watson Lake and Whitehorse.
- Energy, Mines and Resources is working to reduce long gaps between charging stations in the communities by installing additional fast-charging stations along the highways, where feasible. Highways and Public Works is supporting this work by modifying existing highway pullouts to support the electric vehicle charging infrastructure where needed.
- The different types of charging stations are:
  - Level 1 – a common household outlet (120 volts) that can charge a vehicle overnight;
  - Level 2 – similar to a household outlet for ranges or clothes dryers (240 volts) that can charge a vehicle in a few hours; and
  - Level 3 – specialized units (480 volts) that can charge a vehicle in 30 minutes, also known as fast charging stations.

Approved by:



October 4, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Our Clean Future – HPW Actions**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon government is making substantial progress on meeting the goals of Our Clean Future.
- When Our Clean Future launched in 2020, Highways and Public Works had 23 specific actions.
- Last year, the department added six new actions:
  - creating a new system to promote the re-use of government assets throughout the Yukon government;

## Session Briefing Note

FALL 2023

### Our Clean Future – HPW Actions

Highways and  
Public Works

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- installing fast-charging stations across the Yukon to make it possible to travel between all road-accessible Yukon Communities by 2027 (joint action with EMR);
  - implementing new guidelines for addressing climate change hazards in all major infrastructure projects by 2024;
  - incorporating greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks into government infrastructure investments by 2024;
  - aligning the Yukon government's energy management program with international standards by 2025; and
  - working with partners to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the Government of Yukon's building portfolio.
- Highways and Public Works is now responsible for 29 actions in Our Clean Future. I am happy to report that many of these are progressing ahead of schedule and 7 have already been completed.

#### **Additional response: Green investment and planning**

- In 2020, Highways and Public Works created the Yukon Green Infrastructure Program, a multi-year investment program that aims to reduce carbon emissions and improve the climate resiliency of Yukon government buildings and assets.
- To date, we have completed 81 energy assessments in high-emitting Yukon government buildings. These assessments are used to identify opportunities for building energy retrofits.
- The tender to conduct the energy assessments for the remaining 35 sites with high-emitting Yukon government buildings opened on November 15, 2023, and will close on December 13, 2023.
- We are also conducting renewable energy feasibility studies to evaluate biomass, geothermal, and other renewable heating options at

## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### Our Clean Future – HPW Actions

Highways and  
Public Works

over 50 sites across the territory. These studies will identify several renewable energy projects that could be constructed over the next several years.

- As a result of these studies, the department will be installing a biomass heating system in Haines Junction. Engineering design work for this project started in the spring of 2023.
- We are also installing renewable power systems in highway camps currently powered by diesel-generated facilities. Four of these sites are off grid in isolated locations.
- Final construction of the solar power systems at two of these sites will be complete in spring 2024, when the batteries are installed. We are planning for the other two solar power systems to be started in 2024-25.

#### Additional response: Key accomplishments

- We are working to exceed our commitments for incorporating zero emission vehicles into the government fleet. Through the addition of electric cars, plug-in hybrid SUVs, hybrid pick-up trucks and battery electric cargo vans, we are reducing the carbon footprint of our fleet vehicles.
- We are coordinating with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' Energy Branch to install a total of 10 public charging stations at the Jim Smith south parking lot. Two units are currently operational, and the remaining units are scheduled to be installed in November and December 2023.
- We have climate change adaptation pilot projects underway. For example, thermosyphons have been installed at Dry Creek along the Alaska Highway. These could stabilize permafrost thaw by running cool air beneath the surface of the road.

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### Our Clean Future – HPW Actions

 Highways and  
Public Works

- Climate risk assessments are being conducted on an ongoing basis for major building and road infrastructure projects \$10 million. We have recently completed a project to develop tools that identify and evaluate climate risk in buildings.
- In 2023, we launched the Yukon Green Infrastructure Program Blog to publicly share information about what we are doing to address climate change in our buildings, highways, and other infrastructure. The blog can be found on the Yukon government's website.

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

#### Background:

- The projects in the Yukon Green Infrastructure Program include energy retrofits to improve building envelopes, lighting, heating and ventilation equipment, and the integration of renewable energy systems such as biomass and solar.
- Renewable energy systems are a significant component of the department's strategy to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets in Our Clean Future.
- In 2021, a feasibility study was performed to look at the value of installing solar arrays at 8 diesel powered grader stations, resulting in 4 projects moving ahead.
- The Yukon government and the Government of Canada have worked together through the Northern Transportation Adaptation Initiative to invest in climate change adaptation projects in Yukon.

Approved by:



November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Renewable Energy Projects  
(Biomass and Solar)**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: General**

- Investing in renewable energy projects is part of the many initiatives that the Yukon government is taking to meet the goals of Our Clean Future.
- We are excited to be nearing completion in 2023 of three biomass and two solar initiatives that, combined, will offset 837 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year.
- We are conducting renewable energy feasibility studies to evaluate biomass, geothermal and other renewable heating options at over 50 sites across the territory. These studies will identify several renewable energy projects that could be constructed over the next several years.

**Additional response: Biomass****Biomass systems**

- Biomass systems use renewable fuels to displace the use of fossil fuels and reduce our overall emissions. Our government has made significant investments in biomass heating systems this past year.
- A new biomass heating system was recently installed at Elijah Smith Elementary School in Whitehorse which will reduce the school's emissions by 180 tonnes annually.
- The Yukon government is expanding the biomass heating system at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre to reduce emissions by 271 tonnes annually. Construction is expected to be completed in summer 2024.

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**FALL 2023**

### **Renewable Energy Projects (Biomass and Solar)**

Highways and  
Public Works

- We are also partnering with Teslin Tlingit Council to begin heating the Teslin Khàtinas.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School with biomass this winter which will reduce emissions by 106 tonnes each year.
- These three biomass systems combined will reduce emissions by over 550 tonnes each year.

#### **Additional response: Solar**

##### **HPW grader stations**

- In spring 2024, we will complete two projects by installing the batteries for two solar array systems at the Klondike and Ogilvie grader stations. These two projects will offset more than 100,000 litres of diesel fuel each year and reduce emissions by 280 tonnes.
- We are also moving forward with solar energy projects at the Tuchitua and Blanchard grader stations, which will be tendered in the coming months.
- Once these two additional solar array systems are installed, the four systems will offset a total of approximately 200,000 litres of diesel fuel each year, which is a reduction of over 500 tonnes of greenhouse gases.

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

#### **Background:**

- The majority of most Yukon government buildings' greenhouse gas emissions come from the combustion of heating fuels such as heating oil and propane.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Renewable Energy Projects  
(Biomass and Solar)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Heating oil has the highest environmental impact compared to other heating fuels. Highways and Public Works is reducing heating oil consumption with cleaner fuels such as propane and renewable fuels such as biomass.

**Biomass systems:**

- We have listened to the Yukon's biomass industry. We have numerous biomass projects in design and construction stages.
- The systems constructed are designed to use either local wood chips or imported wood pellets. This provides the service provider with the flexibility to ensure reliable and sustainable operations of the biomass heating system.
- Locally and sustainably harvested wood chips are a good option for renewable heating in the Yukon. We are installing more biomass systems to help foster the growth of a local wood chip or biomass industry.
- Wood pellets are currently 100 per cent sourced from waste wood or from a byproduct of lumber mills that is diverted from landfills.
- Although the use of biomass fuel will require more frequent deliveries compared to fossil fuels, the increased emissions from transportation are very small compared to the greenhouse gas emission reductions achieved from switching to a cleaner fuel source.

**Biomass – Elijah Smith Elementary School**

- In July 2021, we engaged with biomass contractors to discuss our plans for the Elijah Smith School biomass project and to listen to their suggestions and feedback.
- Construction of the Elijah Smith biomass system was completed by Budget Plumbing and Heating for \$2.3 million. The contractor is providing operations and maintenance services for the system going forward.

**Biomass – Whitehorse Correction Centre**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Renewable Energy Projects (Biomass and Solar)

Highways and  
Public Works

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

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

- The Teslin Khatinas.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School biomass heating system will help reduce emissions by an additional 106 tonnes each year, or 470 round trips from Whitehorse to Dawson.
- This renewable energy partnership will help to support a green economy in the community.

**Approved by:**



November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****General Messaging – Information  
Technology**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Highways and Public Works is making improvements to digital infrastructure to make it easier for the public and businesses to access government services online, as well as for government employees to do their work in serving the public.
  - We work with other departments to provide a number of services such as the contract registry, Yukon 511 road condition reports, camping permits, business entity searches and so much more.
  - We regularly expand our digital offerings to Yukoners. This allows citizens and businesses to access these services online without needing to take travel time out of their day to do so in-person.
  - For example, Yukoners can complete many tasks related to motor vehicles services online, and businesses can apply online for commercial carrier permits.
  - We also worked with the Department of Tourism and Culture to allow organizations to apply online for funding for a tourism-focused project or initiative.
  - The department is also continually improving the way government functions. We have created the capacity for about 1,500 employees to work remotely, creating opportunities for teams to re-think where and how they work, while also introducing more modern tools for collaboration and communication.
  - We are focused on reducing barriers to government services, improving the efficiency of government operations and being nimble enough to respond to the challenges that arise.
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# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## General Messaging – Information Technology

Highways and Public Works

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Information technology is an increasingly important part of how government functions. Citizens are expecting their government to adopt similar digital strategies to the private sector, including making more government services available online, and innovating internally.

### Background: Specific projects

Specific projects to mention include:

- MyYukon:** In January 2023, the Yukon government launched a new service called MyYukon – a new way to access online government services through one single login. This is the government’s first step to modernize how people access digital services.
- Open Government:** In 2019, we launched the Open Data portal. In spring 2021, we added the Open Information portal. These online tools make more government information available to be freely accessed, used and shared by anyone, anywhere.
- New Low Earth Orbit satellite services:** We have and continue to offer our support to these services with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada through the regulatory approval process.
- eProcurement:** In 2020, we introduced digital procurement to improve the way we manage procurement internally, to create a better way to remain informed and submit bids.
- Mobile Radio Network:** In November 2020, we launched a four-year, \$4 million project to update the mobile radio network to improve overall performance. We also partnered with the RCMP to make improvements to our Yukon-wide Mobile Radio system improving coverage and safety for both first responders and our highway maintenance staff.

Approved by:



September 15, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****AI and ChatGPT**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Artificial Intelligence**

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

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

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

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**Background:**

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

# Session Briefing Note

## AI and ChatGPT

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- The basic ChatGPT is free to use, making it widely accessible.

**Approved by:**



September 11, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Cyber Security**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response: September Distributed Denial of Service Attack**

- On September 14, 2023, the Yukon government experienced a distributed denial of service attack. The attack resulted in the inability to access Yukon.ca web sites and disrupted access to cloud services for internal government employees.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Cyber Security**Highways and  
Public Works

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- This type of attack is designed to disrupt access to services by overwhelming the online systems with a massive load of requests. The attacks are not designed to gain access to internal information.
- To be clear, this was not a ransomware attack.
- We were able to introduce some measures to minimize the impacts of the attack and make services available again within the same day.
- The measures that were put in place to mitigate the impacts of distributed denial of service attacks will help in any future attacks.
- We are continuing to work with the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, other impacted provinces/territories and the RCMP Cybercrime division to investigate the source of the attack.
- At this time there is no evidence that any unauthorized access to private citizen data, government systems or government files took place.
- As with all cyber security related incidents, we are conducting a post-incident review to capture what we learned from this incident which will be incorporated into our improvement process.

**Third response: Approach to Ransomware**

- The Government of Yukon has robust security systems in place to monitor, detect and repel cyberattacks.
- There are numerous measures in place to ensure that our systems would protect government data in the case of a potential ransomware attack. We are confident that these measures will continue to protect government data.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Cyber Security**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The Government of Yukon's position on paying ransom for a cyberattack is confidential as it is part of our security approach to protecting government data.
- As such, we do not disclose our approach to protecting government data, including ransom attacks, as it essential that this remains confidential to best protect our systems.
- Sharing any information about how we protect government data could create risks.

**Additional Response: Working with Partners**

- The Yukon government is an active member of the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security. We attend weekly briefings with the centre about emerging threats and receive all security alerts and recommendations for actions to be taken.
- For example, on September 5, 2023, Google issued a security advisory to address vulnerabilities in Chrome for Desktop. The Yukon government reviews these alerts and applies updates to its systems as necessary.
- We are also active members of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Committee on cyber security, where governments share information about threats, advice and best practices. The Yukon government also provides input into cyber security position papers that are produced by this committee.

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

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

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Cyber Security**

**FALL 2023**

Highways and  
Public Works

**Background:**

- State-sponsored cyberattacks are on the rise due to global geopolitical tensions. Notably, the recent NATO summit in June 2023 coincided with threat actors using sophisticated '0-day' attacks against western governments. Foreign interference through misinformation campaigns intended to interfere with elections and influence policy decisions are a growing concern.
- In early 2023, the Government of Nunavut had a significant ransomware attack that crippled their government's services for weeks. While capabilities were re-built and re-deployed, ultimately some data was never recovered.
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Health Authority experienced a significant attack in 2021 that exposed sensitive personal information for ransom resulting in impacts to delivering health care.

Approved by:



October 10, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Information Technology Strategy**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government is always looking for ways to improve our information technology services.
- Highways and Public Works is reviewing the ways in which we deliver and support IT services and technologies to inform our IT strategy.
- There are five strategic pillars that are informing the review including:
  - using a citizen-centric approach for digital service design;
  - ensuring decision-making is informed and effective;
  - securing citizen's personal information;
  - building productive and flexible work places; and
  - building a culture of innovation and sustainability.
- As part of the overall IT strategy, we will also conduct an organizational capacity analysis which could guide the Yukon government to:
  - improve the security of information across government;
  - reduce inefficiencies; and
  - enhance the consistency and reliability of IT services.
- The analysis of our current IT organization will allow for the best use of our existing resources.
- We will continue to share details on our IT strategy as we move forward with the analysis.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Information Technology Strategy

Highways and  
Public Works

### Additional response:

- In March 2023, we reached out to industry consultants with a Request for Information seeking feedback on the potential costs and considerations related to the organizational capacity analysis.
- This feedback will inform the terms of a Request for Proposals for the organizational capacity analysis in winter 2023.
- In 2024, we will provide recommendations based on the organizational capacity analysis and produce the government's plan for implementation of the recommendations as part of the overall IT strategy.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Premier's 2021 mandate letter to Minister Clarke included direction to create an IT strategy for the Yukon government that is focused on integration, collaboration and leveraging existing platforms.

### Background:

- Several high-profile information security incidents in other public and private organizations (e.g., Government of Nunavut) have demonstrated the importance of continually evaluating and improving the Yukon government's IT infrastructure and operations.

Approved by:



September 14, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****MyYukon (Digital Identity)**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- We are advancing our ability to deliver a wide range of highly secure government services online by developing a digital trust program, known as MyYukon.
- MyYukon was incorporated into several public online services in January 2023, to provide a single Yukon government online login.
- For instance, MyYukon is how citizens sign into online services related to motor vehicles, and student financial assistance services. More services and additional capabilities will be added over time.
- Yukoners and businesses will use one secure log-in, similar to online banking, to access a wide range of government services online. This will reduce the number of passwords and logins citizens require.
- Future steps include establishing a verified account that will provide enhanced convenience for citizens and businesses through their ability to access more services.

**Additional response:**

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

## Session Briefing Note

FALL 2023

## MyYukon (Digital Identity)

Highways and  
Public Works

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- The department continues to engage with the Information and Privacy Commissioner to confirm the appropriate procedures are in place to protect the privacy of citizen's personal information.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

- Historically, governments have issued paper or plastic cards or certificates for citizens to prove who they are.
- Most provinces and territories in Canada are working on digital identity services for their citizens.
- The goal is to create a service which ensures the citizen is in control of the use of their personal information for their needs.
- The Yukon is an active contributor to the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework, which maintains a set of standards to ensure consistency of digital identities across Canada.
- The Yukon government will continue to invest in updating systems to provide the highest level of functionality, security and privacy while increasing efficiencies and providing better ways for citizens and businesses to interact with us.
- The *Digital Identification Regulation* was approved in September 2022 under the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Privacy Breaches**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Protecting the personal information of Yukoners is important to our government.
- The *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* contains provisions that outline what personal information may be collected, how it is managed, who has access to it, and how privacy breaches must be reported.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works has created Government of Yukon-wide employee and contractor privacy training, a breach reporting process and privacy impact assessment tools and guidelines to foster awareness and understanding of personal information and its protection in the public service.
- The department has also created a corporate privacy advice and oversight resource for departments and has ensured that all government departments have a designated privacy officer.

**Additional response:**

- Privacy breaches include issues such as loss of paper or digital records, inadvertently providing information to the wrong person, inappropriate accessing of information by employees, as well as things like phishing or hacking.
- All privacy breaches with a risk of significant harm must be reported to the Corporate Privacy Office in the Department of Highways and Public Works.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Privacy Breaches**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Privacy breaches with a risk of significant harm are also reported to the Information and Privacy Commissioner by the department where the significant breach occurred.
- For privacy breaches of this nature, we notify those individuals who may have been subject to a privacy breach so that they are aware and can take further action to mitigate any potential impacts of the breach.

**Third response:**

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

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Privacy Breaches**

**FALL 2023**

Highways and  
Public Works

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

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

**Background:**

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

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****WeChat and Kaspersky on  
government-issued devices**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- We are aware of the federal government's recent decision to remove the WeChat application from government-issued mobile devices and the blocking of Kaspersky anti-virus software.
- The Yukon government is not aware of the use of WeChat on any government-issued devices and has now blocked it.
- The Yukon government uses Microsoft's Defender for Endpoint for its anti-virus protection on government-issued devices and does not allow Kaspersky to be installed.
- We take cyber security very seriously and we have policies in place that provide employees with direction on how to use their government-issued device safely and securely.

**Additional Response: Operationalize**

- Highways and Public Works has the ability to make a change in government-owned cellphones through the mobile application manager system.
- This system allows us to delete specific apps and prevent them from being downloaded in future.
- We will let all employees know of the change through internal communication channels.

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

- The Government of Canada announced on October 30, 2023, that they will be banning the use of WeChat and Kaspersky on government-issued mobile devices.

**Session Briefing Note****WeChat and Kaspersky on  
government-issued devices**Highways and  
Public Works

- Based on a review of the application by the Chief Information Officer of Canada, the Government of Canada has determined that WeChat presents an unacceptable level of risk to privacy and security.
- How this change will impact the use of personal cellphones being used in government work through the Bring-Your-Own-Device Policy is still being considered at this time.

Approved by:



November 2, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Yukon Resource Gateway Program Project Agreements:**

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

**Yukon First Nation Community Development Agreements:**

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

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations**Highways and  
Public Works

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

**Yukon Asset Construction Agreements:**

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

## **Session Briefing Note**

**FALL 2023**

### **Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations**

Highways and  
Public Works

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#### **Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project Charter**

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

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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#### **Background:**

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



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Agreements in place with Yukon First Nations**Highways and  
Public Works

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

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****King's Printer and Central Stores**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government is improving service delivery and providing better value for taxpayer dollars by modernizing the way government does business.
- The Central Stores warehouse closed on January 31, 2020, and Queen's Printer Agency officially closed on March 31, 2020.
- By closing these units:
  - we eliminated the long-term warehousing of a wide variety of centrally distributed supplies.
  - For example, we no longer have supplies that could expire on the shelf or become outdated.
  - Also, supplies such as high visibility vests can become outdated when safety regulations change.
  - We contracted out printing that used to be done in the Queen's Printer Agency, including confidential printing like budget documents.
- The department is pleased to report that we have also modernized many processes through these changes. For example, many paper forms have been digitized – and now live with eServices.
- We no longer have staff doing actual printing but instead they are facilitating printing contracts with local printing companies.
- The Queen's Printer Agency had a previous budget that ranged between \$530 thousand and \$600 thousand each year.
- This budget is now zero as the agency does not exist.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****King's Printer and Central Stores**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The Central Stores budget was embedded within a larger departmental budget.
- Central Stores had a previous budget that ranged between \$550 thousand and \$570 thousand per year.
- The Central Stores budget is now zero.

**Additional response: The Kings Printer**

- The King's Printer is referenced in Yukon's legislation, and the position is held by the director of Supply Services Branch. The position is the sole position and there is no King's Printer Agency.
  - The King's Printer position is responsible for ensuring official versions of legislation are accessible to those who request them.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Department of Finance is putting forward the Technical Amendments (Finance) Act (2023) that will formally close the revolving funds for the Queen's Printer Agency and Central Stores.
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**Background:**

- Not a single employee lost their job because of this change. All staff affected at Queen's Printer and Central Stores were reassigned to other areas in Highways and Public Works or other departments filling vacant positions. Some staff also retired.
  - 16 employees were affected by this change.
  - The central purchasing unit in the Supply Services Branch remains a key department function and continues to serve the Yukon government by facilitating procurement, pricing and order management for supplies and printing as it always has done.
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****King's Printer and Central Stores**Highways and  
Public Works

- Printing equipment is being publicly sold or disposed of from the old print room at Supply Services Branch. Some older machines will be posted on Govdeals.com this week.
- Confidential printing has been contracted to the private sector through public tender since 2022.
- The printed version of legislation, regulations and the Yukon Gazette continue to be the official version that the Kings Printer position is responsible for. These are published online as unofficial versions for easy access on laws.yukon.ca.
- Whenever possible, Highways and Public Works sources office, paper and cleaning supplies through Standing Offer arrangements with local vendors.

Approved by:



October 18, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Contract Management**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

- During the tender period, contractors can ask for clarification of expectations in the tender documents.
- Once the tender closes, a post-tender review meeting is often held where the contractor who is eligible for the award confirms that they will meet the commitments in their tender.
- After the contract is awarded, the Yukon government's role during contract performance is to actively manage the contract to verify that all deliverables and commitments are being met. This can include the schedule, the price, or Yukon First Nation participation.
- To have effective contract management, there must be continuous communication between the government and the contractor. Our project managers have regular check-ins throughout a contract to track the progress of the commitments.
- If a contractor is not meeting their commitments, there are both formal and informal mechanisms for engaging with the contractor.
- It is important to note that these mechanisms are also available to the contractor if they feel they are not being treated appropriately.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Contract Management

Highways and  
Public Works

### Third response:

- When issues cannot be resolved through these conversations, the dispute resolution processes outlined in the contract documents are triggered. Depending on the type of contract, this can include mediation or arbitration.
- If the Yukon government and the contractor cannot resolve the performance issues, legal action is sometimes required.
- The Vendor Performance Review program gives both parties a chance to take performance into account in future procurements.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- It is important for the Yukon government to ensure contract commitments are met. For the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy to be effective, the commitments made in the procurement phase need to be realized through contract management and enforcement.

### Background:

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

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Posting Tender Bid Prices**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government posts construction tender bid prices as quickly as possible to provide transparency in our procurement process.
- In the past, once a tender closed, and following a compliance review, the department would confirm that the project could proceed within budget before posting the bids. With many bids coming over budget in recent years, it created delays in posting bids. We heard this feedback from the business community, and we responded to improve the time for posting bids.
- Beginning in September 2023, we started posting all bid prices after the compliance review. The prices are released after the compliance stage to help make sure the Yukon government is sharing accurate information that our bidders can rely on.
- We will continue to meet with the Yukon Contractors Association and review these changes to make sure the changes are creating improvements for the business community.
- We are committed to transparency, and we post bid prices publicly online on Yukon bids&tenders.
- All bidders have the same access to the results in a convenient and modern virtual publication.

**Additional response: Compliance, retendering and cancellation**

- Highways and Public Works values the integrity and consistency of the procurement process by reviewing all public tenders for compliance before sharing bid prices. This protects supplier pricing and maintains effective competition.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Posting Tender Bid Prices**Highways and  
Public Works

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- All bids and proposals are electronic. The prices are posted once we have done our due diligence.
- If a tender is cancelled and the bid prices have not been posted, the Yukon government can re-tender as needed.
- If a tender must be cancelled and the bid prices have already been posted, the government cannot re-tender the same project with the same scope right away. Doing so would undermine competition as bidders would know what low price to beat in the re-tender.
- Highways and Public Works connects regularly with the Yukon Contractors Association and has shared information about the new timelines for posting prices with them.

**Additional response: Recent changes to Yukon bids&tenders platform**

- The Government of Yukon uses a third-party platform called bids&tenders to post our bid opportunities online.
- The eProcurement bids&tenders platform operates in several countries. Our government uses this eProcurement platform to operate a specific site which is called Yukon bids&tenders.
- The Yukon bids&tenders site is free to use and is tailored for the Yukon government and its suppliers.
- On July 31, 2023, the bids&tenders company implemented an update to their platform that requires users to create a free account to view various aspects of posted bids, including which suppliers had bid, the prices submitted, the bid value reduction information, and who was awarded the contract.
- This information was previously accessible without an account.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Posting Tender Bid Prices**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The reason for the bids&tenders change is to reduce “data scraping” which means that other hosting sites are copying bids posted. This can mean unnecessary fees are incurred by clients who unknowingly sign up for subscriptions on other sites and are then redirected to the original bids&tenders page to place a bid. This change provides a better experience for bidders using the platform.
- This is an issue that affects all organizations using the bids&tenders platform.
- The Government of Yukon has been actively working with bids&tenders to find solutions to increase transparency by increasing the amount of publicly accessible information, without the need to log in.
- In early September, the bids&tenders company made details such as contact information, site visits, plan takers, bids submitted, and award details accessible without an account.
- Despite the changes to account requirements, no other functions of the site have been affected by this change, and all information is still free to access.
- Anyone can access the publicly available information on Yukon bids&tenders by creating a free account at [Yukon.bidsandtenders.ca](https://Yukon.bidsandtenders.ca).

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

- Bids&tenders implemented new requirements to view various aspects of posted bids on our Yukon bids&tenders platform. The public may question the accessibility and transparency of the platform resulting from these new requirements.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Posting Tender Bid Prices****FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Background:**

- From April 1, 2019, bid prices must go through a compliance review and be verified before they can be posted. Bid prices have not been posted in situations where all bid responses are non-compliant, or the project has been cancelled.
- Sharing bid pricing quickly is important to industry as it gives them an indication as to whether they are to be successful in getting the proposed contract. This allows them to make business decisions about other potential opportunities and tenders.

Approved by:



September 27, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Regional Economic Development  
Exceptions (10x\$1M)**Highways and  
Public Works

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**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 exclusively to invited, qualified Yukon businesses for up to ten projects per year in order 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 55 Yukon-exclusive government contracts worth \$28 million.

**Additional response: This year's projects**

- Thus far for the 2023-24 fiscal year, we have awarded two projects to Yukon businesses, totaling \$1.2 million.
- Two more contracts will be tendered in November.
- The Yukon government strives to maximize its allocation of 10 projects every year.
- We post details of awarded contracts on Yukon.ca.
- When selecting Regional Economic Development Exceptions, we consider many factors including the dollar value of economic opportunities created in the Yukon and whether the project supports the territory's industries and suppliers.

## Session Briefing Note

FALL 2023

### Regional Economic Development Exceptions (10x\$1M)

Highways and  
Public Works

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- 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 direct positive impact these projects have on Yukoners.
  - Since the new reporting requirement came into effect, suppliers have reported on 14 completed contracts. Eight of these projects used 100 per cent Yukon labour and Yukon materials.
  - These reports also confirms that over \$1.1 million was spent on employing Yukoners, through those 14 projects.
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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

- The following two contracts were awarded for the 2023-24 fiscal year:
    - Village of Carmacks – Rowlinson/Prospector Lot Development; and
    - Northern Digital Message Sign Realignment along the North Klondike Highway and Dempster Highway.
  - The total value of the contracts is \$1.2 million.
  - Two contracts will be tendered in November 2023, include:
    - Ghùch Tlâ (Gooch Tlaw) Community School- Asbestos Containing Material Abatement; and
    - upgrade and link to various radio repeater sites.
  - 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.
-

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Regional Economic Development  
Exceptions (10x\$1M)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- 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:



October 30, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

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

# Session Briefing Note

## Sustainable Procurement

**TAB# 54**

**Fall 2023**

Highways and  
Public Works

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increase their evaluation points by describing those corporate initiatives, policies, products, or programs.

### Third response:

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

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

#### Approved by:



October 31, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Timing of Tendering and Forecasting**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

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

**Additional response:**

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



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Timing of Tendering and Forecasting**Highways and  
Public Works

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- We have many examples of tenders that were posted early enough that contractors could prepare for the work.
  - Some examples include:
    - critical upgrades to the domestic water system at Copper Ridge Place. This was tendered in February 2023, for construction in summer 2023.
    - a tender forecast issued in October 2021, for solar energy systems for the Klondike and Ogilvie grader stations. This was tendered in April 2022, for construction to start in summer 2023.
    - the standing offer arrangement for home heating fuel was tendered in July 2023 for use during the 2023-2024 winter season.
    - a tender for Sodium Chloride was posted in January 2023, for the 2023-2024 winter season.
    - a tender forecast was issued in January 2022 for the Watson Lake Housing First Project. This was tendered in February 2023, for work to start in summer 2023.
    - the Wildland Fire Air Tanker Services was tendered in August 2022, for services in the 2024 to 2029 fire seasons.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Industry has historically requested more advanced notice regarding the timing and tendering of forecasts to ensure they can make the most of the Yukon's short building season.
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Timing of Tendering and  
Forecasting**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Background:**

- Tender forecasts are posted as “Notice of Planned Procurements” within the Yukon Bids and Tenders eProcurement platform.
- This year, the Yukon government right-time tendered 57 projects totalling \$104.4 million before March 31, 2023.
- Between April 1 and July 31, 2023, the Yukon government right-time tendered 30 projects totaling \$66.4 million.

**Approved by:**

November 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Vendor Performance Review Program**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response: Implementation**

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

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Vendor Performance Review  
Program**Highways and  
Public Works

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- We will be monitoring the effects of this program moving forward and will be consulting with industry on any unanticipated effects which could lead to further changes if necessary.

**Third response: Engagement**

- Highways and Public Works is actively engaged with industry through the Yukon Contractors Association and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce's Procurement Committee to assist in vendors becoming more accustomed to the new program and to hear feedback about improvements.
- Before launching the first phase of implementation, we spoke to industry at a Procurement Business Committee meeting in September 2021 and received input.
- The Procurement Support Centre has engaged with industry throughout the phases of implementation to provide training, through live sessions, as well as provided an online training course available on YGLearn for government staff.
- More recently, the Procurement Support Centre has been meeting with industry representatives, including on May 17, June 28, and November 2, 2023, to get feedback on the program and find solutions to concerns.
- The Procurement Support Centre will continue to meet with industry to provide updates on the feedback received and discuss potential adjustments to the program.
- Highways and Public Works is committed to listening to industry's feedback and considering adjustments to the program that advance shared interests.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Vendor Performance Review  
Program**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The Procurement Support Centre met with our First Nation partners on July 19 to provide an update on the program's progress and will continue to meet with them as needed.

**Additional response: Scoring**

- When a vendor receives their scores, they can either accept, contest, or not respond.
- If a vendor contests their score, it will initiate the contestation process. The first step will be the project manager and vendor working together to come to an agreement.
- If no agreement is reached, the Procurement Support Centre will review and submit a recommendation to the Deputy Minister of Highways and Public Works for a final decision.
- One of the criteria that a vendor can be scored on is the fulfillment of their tendering commitments to Yukon First Nation participation.
- Based on the tender type, there are up to seven key performance indicators that are assessed for each contract, which creates an overall performance score. The key performance indicators are:
  - Cost Control
  - Health and Safety
  - Quality Assurance
  - Schedule and Time Control
  - Staff and Administration
  - Yukon First Nation Participation (if applicable)
  - Functionality and Training (for goods contracts)

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Vendor Performance Review  
Program**Highways and  
Public Works**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

**Background:**

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

**Approved by:**

November 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy is providing opportunities for Yukon First Nations people and businesses to be active partners in the economy.
- This policy positions the Yukon government as a trailblazer 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 governments, 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 every step of the way.
- It has been more than 3 years since this policy was implemented, and Yukon is still ahead of other jurisdictions when it comes to commitments and actions on Indigenous procurement.
- The other provinces and territories, and even the federal government are looking to the Yukon to understand how they can leverage our experience to advance their own journeys toward reconciliation.
- 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 120 verified Yukon First Nation businesses are currently listed on the registry.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and  
Public Works

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- To be verified and listed on the registry, the business must meet the definition of a Yukon First Nations business.
  - Over the past year, the Yukon government has received feedback from industry and Yukon First Nation partners on the Yukon First Nation business definition.
  - We are continuing our relationship with the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce to administer the registry. We signed a letter of understanding in March 2023, and are now engaging together to develop a longer-term agreement.
  - 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.
  - There have been some larger complex applications and Highways and Public Works is making progress on processing these.
  - 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 that we are meeting the intent of the policy.
  - To provide support to the Yukon First Nation business community in how they can work with the policy and apply to be on the Yukon First Nation Business Registry, the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce is planning a Yukon-wide engagement in the coming months.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and  
Public Works

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**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.
- 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 be evaluated on how well they fulfilled their Yukon First Nation commitments following implementation of 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 for interventions or continuous improvement.
- This committee's role is vital to ensuring that the policy measures are contributing to advancing the policy's objectives and principles.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The committee's first annual report was released on March 15, 2023, and is available online at [Yukon.ca/growing-together](https://Yukon.ca/growing-together). The report provides over one year's worth of data on the outcomes of the policy.
  - Some of the highlights include:
    - 6.2 per cent of contracts that were awarded went to Yukon First Nation businesses.
    - 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.
  - Moving forward, the committee will continue to conduct regular data analysis and to monitor for any market disruption.
  - The next report will be released in early 2024 and will provide an updated performance review of the policy.

**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 have Yukon First Nation participation.
- As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we hired an independent contractor this spring to conduct a review of the bid value reduction measure over the past two years.
- The consultant has produced a report, which was published on [Yukon.ca/growing-together](https://Yukon.ca/growing-together) on October 18, 2023.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Using the information from this report, the Monitor and Review Committee has made recommendations to Highways and Public Works on how to make improvements to the bid value reduction process.
  - 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.

**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.
- 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 on getting Yukon First Nations governments and citizens engaged 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.

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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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## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy

 Highways and  
Public Works

#### 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 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. We expect to have a fully mapped out process in May 2024.
- The Monitor and Review Committee meets monthly to review the policy's performance.

Approved by:



October 19, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**FALL 2023**

### **Accessibility and Inclusive Building Design**

Highways and  
Public Works

#### **Recommended response:**

- Highways and Public Works is committed to providing respectful spaces that are inclusive and accessible to people of all ages, genders, and abilities.
- The Government of Yukon released a *Building Design Requirements and Technical Standards Manual* that contains standards for inclusive and accessible buildings.
- These standards are now being used for all new buildings and major renovations.

#### **Additional response: Accessibility Design Requirements**

- All new Government of Yukon buildings are designed to meet or exceed the National Building Code barrier-free requirements and standards for accessibility.
- The *Building Design Requirements and Technical Standards Manual* is referenced in all project tender documents and must be followed. The manual includes mandatory accessibility provisions such as:
  - corridor handrails are required in senior and health care facilities to provide fall protection and greater accessibility;
  - elevators or lifts are required in all multi-story buildings, unless an upper floor is used only for storage; and
  - parking lots and walkways must not have grades of more than five per cent to maintain accessibility.

#### **Third response: Gender Inclusivity in HPW Buildings**

- The Yukon government is working to improve gender inclusivity and safety in all of our buildings.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**FALL 2023**

### **Accessibility and Inclusive Building Design**

Highways and Public Works

- Highways and Public Works sought input from the LGBTQ2S+ community to inform the *Design Requirements and Building Standards Manual*.
- The manual includes gender-inclusive washroom and change room design standards and requirements for gender-inclusive signage.
- We have converted many single user washrooms to meet gender inclusive standards and have begun a multi-year program to renovate gender-inclusive washrooms in our buildings.

#### **Fourth response: Snow Clearing**

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for clearing snow and ice at the majority of Yukon government-owned buildings.
- There are certain government programs that manage their own snow and ice clearing contracts due to specific operational requirements, such as 24/7 facilities, group homes and Yukon Housing Corporation facilities.
- We prioritize which buildings are cleared based on a tiered system. For example, the first tier includes continuing care facilities, schools and emergency response centres.
- At each of our buildings, we prioritize the clearing of accessible parking spots, main entrances, main walkways and fire exits.

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The *LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan* was released in July 2021, and included a commitment to provide access to gender-inclusive washrooms in Yukon government buildings within five years.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Accessibility and Inclusive Building  
Design**Highways and  
Public Works**Background:**

- The National Building Code includes requirements for barrier free designs. The *Design Requirements and Technical Standards Manual* goes above and beyond the code in its application and requirements.

Approved by:



September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Light Pollution and Electricity  
Use at YG Buildings**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Our government buildings are equipped with a variety of lighting features to support building occupants in delivering their programs.
- From a design perspective, Highways and Public Works adheres to the accepted lighting design standards and industry best practices.
- We follow the Yukon Design Requirements Technical Standards Manual which provides standards, strategies and technical requirements for the planning, design and construction of buildings, additions, and major projects.
- Highways and Public Works also prioritizes cost-effective designs that address concerns specific to the Yukon.
- Our buildings are constructed to be energy efficient and functional even during the Yukon's extended periods of darkness.

**Additional response:**

- When reviewing lighting standards and design requirements, Highways and Public Works balances a variety of interests, including the safety of building occupants, asset security, energy conservation and light pollution.
- Many of our exterior building lights are on photocells, which turn the exterior lights on at dusk, and automatically turn them off at dawn.
- We also have some exterior lights on set schedules that only activate when that building or area is in use. For example, lighting around some of the school bus loops are activated when buses are coming and going at the beginning and end of the school day.



**Session Briefing Note****Light Pollution and Electricity  
Use at YG Buildings**Highways and  
Public Works

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

- We have received public feedback on exterior lighting at certain Government of Yukon buildings.
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**Background:**

- The Design Requirements Technical Standards Manual is reviewed on a regular basis. Highways and Public Works is open to comments related to the guidelines and standards and has an established process to seek feedback and consolidate proposed changes in advance of every formal review.
- In fall 2022, Highways and Public Works staff met with the Dark Sky Society as well as the Yukon Astronomical Society, who provided input to our Design Requirements Technical Standards Manual. Their suggestions include:
  - timed exterior lights to provide lighting only for occupied times;
  - exterior lights reduced to minimum amounts around front entrances; and
  - lights for safety and inspections could be motion-sensor activated during unoccupied time.
- In addition, the Yukon Astronomical Society developed its own guidelines for low impact lighting which will be shared with Highways and Public Works staff for information.

**Approved by:**

September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Marwell Grader Station - Relocation**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Marwell Grader Station in Whitehorse is approximately 60 years old and is nearing the end of its useful life.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is assessing the possibility of relocating the grader station to free up valuable land that may be better suited for other types of development.
- The current buildings at the site also have high energy use and maintenance costs; therefore, replacing Marwell Grader Station may be the most economical long-term option.
- We have identified land along the Alaska Highway as a possible site for future replacement.

**Additional response: Kwanlin Dün First Nation**

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

**Additional response: Energy use and GHG emissions**

- The current site in Marwell is known to be heavily contaminated and will require significant remediation before it can be used for any new development, particularly if used for any type of non-industrial purpose.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Marwell Grader Station - Relocation

Highways and  
Public Works

- The Department of Environment's Site Assessment and Remediation Unit is carrying out groundwater monitoring and completing a Phase 2 site assessment this fall.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:



September 12, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Old Crow Health and Wellness  
Centre and 10-Plex**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government is making investments across the territory to build healthy and vibrant communities.
- We are excited to be working with Vuntut Gwitchin Government on a new health and wellness centre and 10-plex housing unit in Old Crow.
- This project replaces the aging health centre in Old Crow, increases the number of affordable housing units and creates jobs for the community.

**Additional response: Construction work**

- The buildings are currently under construction and significant progress has been made onsite. The department expects to reach substantial completion of the 10-plex in November 2023, and the health and wellness centre later this winter.
- Through this project, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation community has realized roughly \$10.7 million in benefits through employment, training and business opportunities from March 2021 to September 2023.
- To assist with this project and other projects in the community, a winter road was constructed during the last two winters between Eagle Plains and Old Crow to ship materials.

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

- The health and wellness centre and 10-plex housing unit is an important project for the community of Old Crow.
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Old Crow Health and Wellness  
Centre and 10-Plex**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Background:**

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for the procurement and management of the Health and Wellness Centre and the 10-plex housing unit.
- A combined procurement was used for the two facilities to simplify construction resource demands and decrease the cost of both projects by realizing the benefits of economies of scale and shared resources.
- Stantec Architecture and Engineering completed the conceptual design and will stay engaged during the final design and construction of both facilities.
- The design-build contract for the project was awarded to Ketza TSL Construction in March 2021, for \$44.8 million.
- The design-build procurement was value-driven. Value-driven procurements look beyond the price to make sure the project brings as much value as possible to the community and to the territory. In this case, the winning proponent received points for the schedule, training plans, subcontracting plans, northern experience, and First Nations participation.
- A 60-year land lease was signed in spring 2021 with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government.

**Shipping**

- In 2022, a total of 67 truckloads transported material to and from Old Crow.
- In 2023, a total of 54 truckloads were shipped to Old Crow on the winter road, including:
  - 41 for Vuntut Gwitchin Government; and
  - 13 for the Yukon government and other parties.
- The first loads arrived in the community on February 22, 2023, and the last convoy left Old Crow on March 13, 2023.
- The winter road was used to haul 13 loads out of the community on behalf of Yukon government and other parties.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Old Crow Health and Wellness  
Centre and 10-Plex**Highways and  
Public Works

- These loads included construction equipment, old and outdated machinery, vehicles and equipment no longer needed in the community, waste oil and batteries and other miscellaneous materials.
- There is no plan for a 2023-24 winter road.
- Air North Partnership has been hired to transport materials by air for the Old Crow Health and Wellness Center and 10-Plex project. Air North is a Yukon company, partly owned by the Vuntut Development Corporation, and is helping to keep the benefits of this project flowing within the Yukon.

Approved by:



September 29, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

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**Recommended response:**

- Grading, drainage, and resurfacing improvements to the south parking lot at the Jim Smith Building have addressed flooding and pooling previously experienced during heavy rainfall and spring snow melt.
- Often after heavy rain, flooding and pooling would occur, limiting full use of the lot and making it challenging for people with mobility issues to access the building.
- This is the first major regrading and repaving of the parking lot since its initial construction in 1976, 46 years ago.
- These improvements have made the Jim Smith building a more inclusive and welcoming environment for both the staff who work here, and the public.
- Resurfacing of the parking lot was completed in October 2022. Electrical work, bike shelter construction, and landscaping were completed in summer 2023.

**Additional response: Assessment**

- The main defect with the old parking lot was the consistent flooding after large rain events and fast snow melts.
- To address this issue, the department removed the old asphalt, added gravel, and re-graded the parking area.
- It should also be noted that the concrete curbs were deteriorating and needed to be remade.
- While doing this work the department also included needed safety upgrades such as removing trees so that sightlines were clear, both

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

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for vehicles and security. Also, the leaves from the trees blocked the storm drain and caused ponding to occur.

- In addition, we upgraded the lighting for the parking lot to eliminate low lighting or dark sections and improve energy efficiency and security.
- This project also incorporated sustainability features including a new bicycle shelter to support active transportation and ensure that certain areas of the new lot could support the future installation of electric vehicle chargers, including two that are now operational and eight that will be installed soon.
- Some trees needed to be removed during construction. The trees closest to Rotary Park have been replaced, while the trees that were in the middle of the parking lot have been replaced with planter boxes. This allows a higher level of maintenance to be provided at a lower cost.

**Third response: Block Heater Outlets**

- As the weather begins to get colder, we understand the need for functional block heater outlets at the Jim Smith parking lot.
- The majority of block heater outlets are working and will be available for use as the temperature drops.
- 11 block heater outlets in the south parking lot will not have power this winter due to the delay in receiving a transformer.
- The delay in receiving the transformer is due to supply chain issues.
- The supply chain issues are easing and parts are now coming in.



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

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- Therefore, we expect to have all block heater outlets available well before April 2024.
- In the south parking lot, block heater outlets with power will show a flashing green LED light. The outlets in the south parking lot that do not have power will not have working lights.
- In the coming months, the outlets that do not have power will have covers to indicate that they are not in service.

**Fourth response: Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Parking Lot at the Jim Smith Building (MAB)

Highways and  
Public Works

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- Norcope Enterprises Ltd. was awarded the construction contract for \$2.7 million.
- A small contract was awarded to Southpaw Construction, a local contractor, to construct a concrete ramp for the bike shelter, and replace a section of the sidewalk at the exit of the parking lot adjacent to 2nd Avenue.
- This work is weather dependent and anticipated to be completed by the end of November.
- The ramp will improve access and accessibility.
- There will be no disruption to staff or the public during the construction.

Approved by:

*C. Harwood*

November 14, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

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**Recommended response:**

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

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

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

**Additional response: Pest control**

- The Yukon government's response to pests depends on who owns the building. If pests are discovered in a leased building, the response is coordinated through the landlord.
- If pests are discovered in a Yukon government-owned building, the Department of Highways and Public Works collaborates with the building occupant to ensure an immediate response.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**School Maintenance**

Highways and  
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works identifies potential improvements to buildings, such as installing new door sweeps or patching holes that might help address pest issues in the long term.

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

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

**Approved by:**



September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Seismic and Schools**

**FALL 2023**

Education /  
Highways and  
Public Works

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#### **Recommended response:**

- Safety at our schools is a top priority and we work to proactively address safety issues whenever possible.
- Schools are regularly inspected to ensure that they are safe.
- If structural issues are identified, precautionary action is taken and mitigation work is prioritized based on a risk assessment.
- Given the evolution in seismic research, the Government of Yukon conducted studies on all Yukon schools to identify potential seismic risks and the likelihood of seismic events.
- The Yukon government continues to perform seismic and structural assessments on Yukon schools as required, to ensure the safety of staff and students.
- As a result of these studies, our government has undertaken several mitigation measures.
- To date, we have addressed several structural issues – for example, repairs on roofs, floors, and walls – and many non-structural issues such as duct work, furniture upgrades and shelving.
- Yukon's last major seismic event was in 2017 and the mitigations we had in place proved effective during that event.

#### **Additional response:**

- Every school was built to the standard of the day and inspected to ensure they meet all relevant codes at the time of construction.

# Session Briefing Note

## Seismic and Schools

**FALL 2023**

Education /  
Highways and  
Public Works

- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Education are reviewing all Yukon school facilities and planning for the future of those facilities.
- Seismic issues are one of the many factors considered in new school design.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- Yukon schools were built to the building code in place at the time of construction and modern building code requirements contain increasingly stringent structural requirements.
- The type and severity of seismic issues varies from building to building and can be categorized into:
  - structural components - roof, floors, walls, foundations; or
  - non-structural components - suspended ceilings, water piping, ductwork, furniture upgrades and shelving units.

Approved by:

*C. Hamwood*

September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Education

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****WSCB Investigation**

Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The safety of building occupants is a top priority for the Department of Highways and Public Works. The department also strives to ensure the safety of its personnel working in government-owned buildings.
- Highways and Public Works performs regular building maintenance in accordance with our facilities maintenance program in over 550 buildings across the territory.
- The department is aware of a Workers' Safety and Compensation Board investigation regarding Selkirk School in Whitehorse and has actively participated in the response.

**Additional response:**

- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board provided Highways and Public Works with an investigation report dated September 7, 2023.
- The report relates to an incident that occurred at Selkirk School in April 2023 when a Highways and Public Works employee was working with a potentially hazardous building material.
- The report contained eight orders for Highways and Public Works relating to the investigation as well as a levy to the department.
- We are complying with the orders and will pay the levy.

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

- Levies from WSCB investigations are published on the WSCB's website.



# Session Briefing Note

## WSCB Investigation

**TAB# 67**

**Fall 2023**

Highways and  
Public Works

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### Background:

- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board is governed by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Act. The main purpose of the Act is to promote workplace health and safety.

### Approved by:



October 31, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Christ the King Elementary  
School**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government takes great pride in maintaining school buildings. The safety and well-being of children in our schools is always our highest priority.
- Christ the King Elementary School was built in 1960, with an addition added in 1965, according to the building codes and best construction practices of the day.
- Highways and Public Works is aware of the issues raised this past spring about the Christ the King Elementary School seismic retrofit and capital infrastructure investments.
- We regularly assess schools, and if potential structural issues are identified, we immediately address them.
- Over the years we have invested in and maintained Christ the King Elementary School, and we will continue to do so throughout the life of the building.

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

- Concerns about the age of the building were brought forward in spring, 2023 and covered by local media.

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**Background:**

- In order to prioritize Yukon schools for replacement or major capital upgrades, the Departments of Education and Highways and Public Works look at a wide range of factors to create a balanced ranking.

**Approved by:**

September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response: Replacement school**

- The new school is currently in the early planning phase, being led by the Department of Education.
- The exact location of the new school on the Takhini Education Land Reserve has not yet been determined.
- The Project Advisory Committee will provide us with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- The Yukon government will continue engaging with the First Nation School Board, the Project Advisory Committee, and Softball Yukon to determine the best plan for moving forward on the site. This will include implications for the existing Takhini Elementary and the softball fields.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****École Whitehorse Elementary  
Replacement School**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Kobayashi + Zedda Architects has been hired to provide a plan for the entire design of the replacement school. The first phase of the project is site analysis and test fit for a total cost of \$272K.

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

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

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

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

- The building itself is over 70 years old and nearing the end of its useful life.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve will be ideal to accommodate French Immersion students from around the city and has a number of other advantages, including better access to green space.
- We will have plans in place to manage noise, traffic and dust during construction.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## École Whitehorse Elementary Replacement School

Highways and  
Public Works

- A traffic study is included in the scope of the Kobayashi + Zedda contract and will be completed as part of Phase 2, the pre-design portion of the contract. We anticipate that Phase 2 will be completed this winter.
- Costs to renovate the existing school would be roughly 1.4 times more than building a new identically sized school, in large part due to the estimate of \$15-20 million needed to complete seismic upgrades.
- Following construction of the replacement school, an assessment will be performed on the existing building downtown to determine whether to move forward with a demolition. Highways and Public Works will consider factors such as public health and safety, the ongoing maintenance costs and value of the land for potential development in making such a decision.

Approved by:

*C. Hamwood*

October 16, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## Session Briefing Note

**Fall 2023**

### Jack Hulland Elementary School – Tree Removal

Highways and  
Public Works

#### Recommended response:

- The health and safety of staff and students in Yukon schools is a top priority for our government.
- This year, several trees blew over at Jack Hulland Elementary School, which caused safety concerns.
- As a follow up to a school joint health and safety committee meeting, the Department of Education hired an arborist to conduct an assessment to identify any trees that were at risk of falling on the school grounds.
- Through that assessment, the arborist recommended removing 114 trees.
- Highways and Public Works responded to the report by contracting an arborist to remove the trees over the summer break.

#### Additional response:

- Other trees on the lot were removed through a separate contract managed by the Department of Education to make way for a new 1.5-metre-wide perimeter path that can be used by both the school occupants and the larger community.

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may ask questions about the number of trees that have been removed.

#### Approved by:



September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government is working closely with Kluane First Nation to plan the design and construction of a new school in Burwash Landing.
- The new school will be called Kêts'ádań Kù (Kay-et-zah-Done-coo) - which means “house of learning” in Southern Tutchone.
- The school will provide a new learning and community space that meets the needs of residents in the surrounding area.

**Additional response:**

- A site for the new school has been selected by the project team with representatives from Highways and Public Works, the Department of Education and Kluane First Nation.
- On May 31, 2023, a land clearing ceremony was held on the site to celebrate the partnership between the Yukon government and Kluane First Nation.
- Funding has been allocated to support the planning and construction of the school. We look forward to working together – government to government – on this important project.
- The site was cleared in the spring. Construction of the road and parking lot and work on proper drainage is now complete under the Kluane First Nation Yukon Asset Construction Agreement.
- We plan to tender for the construction of the school later this winter.

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

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

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

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

Approved by:



November 3, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023****Ross River School**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The health and safety of students across the territory is a top priority for the Yukon government.
- The school in Ross River is built on changing permafrost, as is much of the community.
- Changing permafrost has contributed to the need for structural assessments and repairs over the years, but we continue to make sure the school is kept safe by mitigating structural movement through upgrades like the relevening system and by performing repairs to lessen the effects of building movement.
- The Ross River School is inspected quarterly by a multi-disciplinary team that includes an architect, a structural engineer, a geotechnical engineer and a surveyor.
- The latest building condition inspection report, received on September 7, 2023, confirmed the school remains safe for occupancy. The next inspection report is expected to be received in December 2023.

**Additional response: Status of current projects**

- The installation of the new relevening system at the school was successfully completed in spring 2023.
- Over 200 permanent jacks were installed underneath the school and can be re-used in the future to address any further movement of the school.
- A significant Yukon First Nation Participation Plan provided opportunities for the Ross River Dena community.
- Additional work related to the relevening, such as fixing the building skirting, siding, drywall crack repairs and re-adjustment of door frames will be complete this fall.

## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### Ross River School

Highways and  
Public Works

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- The construction of a new modular mechanical room to replace the existing mechanical plant was completed during summer break and was operational for the start of the school year. The heat emitted from the old mechanical plant was contributing to the deterioration of permafrost under the school.
  - Upcoming work includes a building assessment to determine what additional repairs and upgrades are required to further mitigate the effects of permafrost deterioration.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

- Permafrost conditions at the school have resulted in many structural assessments and repairs over the years.
- The contract for the installation of the releveling system, awarded to T. Moon Construction in July 2022, was \$3.55 million.
- The contract for the new mechanical room, awarded to Cube Construction in June 2022, was \$1.29 million.

Approved by:



October 19, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Parking lot**

- The Yukon government is committed to providing appropriate learning environments for all students.
- Over the last few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has upgraded four school parking lots: Holy Family, Golden Horn, Christ the King and Hidden Valley School.
- Construction of a new staff parking area behind Selkirk Elementary School started during summer break.
- The majority of the earthworks, such as underground utilities, have been completed. Construction paused at the end of October for the season.
- Highways and Public Works and the contractor, Castle Rock, worked together to make the parking area available for use by the public during the winter.
- The parking lot is scheduled to be completed next summer prior to the start of the school year and next year's work will include paving, electrical equipment installation and landscaping.
- Until the new parking lot is completed, parking for staff at Selkirk Elementary School will remain at the front of the school.
- The design of the new parking lot has allowed for the future installation of electric vehicle charging stations at parking stalls. The design has also included bike parking stalls for active transportation users.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and  
Public Works

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

**Additional response: Selkirk storm water project**

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

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

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

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**Background:**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Selkirk Elementary School

Highways and  
Public Works

- Two modular classrooms were previously completed for Selkirk Elementary School in 2020 and 2021.

Approved by:



November 3, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Whistle Bend Elementary School**

Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Building a new school for the community of Whistle Bend is a great addition to a fast-growing neighbourhood.
- Highways and Public Works has worked with the Department of Education and the Project Advisory Committee throughout the project to ensure the school design incorporates important community elements.
- The construction is well underway and there is a lot of activity on the site as the new school is going up.
- The construction of the school is expected to be completed in the winter of 2023-24, which leaves time for fit up and moving in before the start of school in August 2024.

**Additional response: Cost increase**

- Inflation, supply chain issues and price increases in lumber, wood products, steel and labour have led to cost increases in projects across the territory.
- A contract was awarded to Ketza Construction Corporation for \$42.8 million.
- The design-build tender closed at a time of near-peak prices for lumber and steel, which are key materials for the project.
- Despite these challenges and impacts, the project is moving forward and is currently on schedule to be completed next winter.

**Additional response: Active transportation**

- Active transportation infrastructure is an important component of reducing emissions and healthy communities.

# Session Briefing Note

## Whistle Bend Elementary School

Highways and  
Public Works

- We are investing more in active transportation by widening the sidewalk to accommodate cyclist traffic in front of the school.
- In addition, trails behind the school will be integrated into the Whistle Bend trail system to allow students to commute to school.
- We will also include pedestrian traffic lights at Olive May Way and Casca Boulevard for pedestrians and cyclists.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:



September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****General Messaging – Roads and Bridges**Highways and  
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon's road system is essential for connecting our communities and building our economy.
- The Government of Yukon is making strategic investments to keep these vital links safe and open for business.
- Over the past couple of years, Highways and Public Works has undertaken several upgrade projects to improve safety along the Alaska Highway, the territory's busiest transportation route.
- All bridges, large culverts, and paved sections are assessed, evaluated and rated annually or bi-annually to prioritize any improvement and investment decisions.

**Additional response: Roads**

- During the winter months, regional highway crews are scheduled to work seven days a week, and Whitehorse has 24/7 coverage.
- Highways are cleared on a priority basis, with the school bus routes and sections with the highest traffic volumes being cleared first. All other highways are cleared and sanded as soon as possible thereafter.
- Roads are cleared next in order of priority, by their classification.
- Our highway system consists of 4,831 kilometres of maintained roads surfaced with:
  - 350 kilometres of asphalt pavement;
  - 1,976 kilometres of bituminous surface treatment (BST) or chip seal;
  - 2,498 kilometres of gravel; and



# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## General Messaging – Roads and Bridges

Highways and  
Public Works

- 7 kilometres of bridge and ferry crossings.
- The Yukon's transportation network is underlain by sporadic discontinuous permafrost which, when disturbed, causes deformation to the highway. This can range from cracking, to thaw slumps to structural problems requiring reconstruction.
- Every year on average we resurface 130 kilometres of BST, 2-10 kilometres of asphalt, and clear approximately 900 kilometres of highway right-of-way vegetation.

### Third response: Bridges

- The Government of Yukon maintains 136 bridges. On our maintained road network there are currently 267 large structural culverts and over 7,000 smaller drainage culverts.
- We prioritize bridge repairs based on several different factors, with safety being the most important. In addition, cost, traffic volumes, impact to communities and impact to industry are also considered.
- Many of the bridges in the Yukon were built in the 1950s and 1960s and are at an age where many will need rehabilitation work to keep them in service.

Approved by:



October 3, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Abandoned Vehicles**

Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for the safe and efficient movement of travellers and goods over Yukon highways, as well as maintaining the highway system so that it is safe, clean and free from roadside obstructions.
- Abandoned vehicles pose a potential safety risk to the travelling public and can impede the efficiency of our crews to maintain parts of our roadway.
- At times, vehicles are left abandoned and interfere with the flow of traffic, impede visibility, prevent proper snow removal or present an environmental hazard.
- Highways and Public Works renewed our efforts beginning in May 2023 to identify and remove abandoned vehicles as quickly as possible. Since May, 42 abandoned vehicles were removed from Yukon's highways.

**Additional response: Reporting Abandoned Vehicles**

- We encourage members of the public to report any abandoned vehicles they see to the local RCMP.
- As designated peace officers under the *Motor Vehicles Act*, the RCMP are the public's primary point of contact for reporting abandoned vehicles on the Yukon's highways.
- Highways and Public Works continues to work with the RCMP and local towing companies to facilitate the removal of abandoned vehicles in the right-of-way as quickly as possible.
- Our highway crews have also been tasked with the identification of abandoned vehicles so that removal can be actioned quickly.

**Session Briefing Note****Abandoned Vehicles**

Highways and  
Public Works

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- Towing companies are selected based on their proximity to the abandoned vehicle, the services that each company can provide and their respective availability.
  - In some cases, it may take longer for the vehicle to be removed due to tow operator availability and space at secure storage facilities.
  - Highways and Public Works is continuously working to improve processes to provide a more efficient and timely removal of abandoned vehicles within the highway right-of-way.

**Third response: Removal process**

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

# Session Briefing Note

## Abandoned Vehicles

Highways and  
Public Works

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

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background

- The Yukon has a long history of abandoned vehicles that dates back to the 1940s, when the Alaska Highway was first built.
- Vehicles must first be reviewed before they are towed to ensure the vehicle is not part of an active investigation nor is stolen.

Approved by:



November 7, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## Abandoned Vehicles

Date Updated: Nov 7, 2023  
RP

## Klondike Highway

Location	Vehicle type	Tow status	Date Flagged
KM 143 South Klondike hwy at Robinson Subdivision Entrance	2004 Grey Hyundai Santa fe	Towed	2023-08-08 0:00
KM 222.5 North Klondike Hwy		Towed	2023-06-05 0:00
KM 224.5 North Klondike Highway		Towed	2023-06-29 0:00
km 262.8 North Klondike Highway		Towed	2023-06-29 0:00
km 267.6 North Klondike Highway		Towed	2023-06-27 0:00
KM 286 North Klondike		Towed	2023-07-25 0:00
km 520 North Klondike		Towed	2023-07-25 0:00
		<b>Abandoned Vehicles Identified:</b>	7
		<b>Tows Requested:</b>	7
		<b>Abandoned Vehicles Towed:</b>	7
		<b>Still Awaiting Tow:</b>	0

## Alaska Highway

Location	Vehicle type	Tow status	Date Flagged
KM 1124 Alaska Highway-Across road from Swift River grader station in	Tiaga motor home	Tow requested	2023-08-07 0:00
KM 1341.6 Alaska Hwy RHS	Blue Truck Box Trailer	Towed	2023-08-02 0:00
Km 1354 Alaska hwy west side of road		Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-07 0:00
KM 1371.5 Alaska Hwy LHS	Ford Pickup - Burnt	Tow requested	2023-08-02 0:00
Km 1380.9 Alaska Hwy	Chev trailblazer	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-26 0:00
KM 1382.1 Alaska Hwy LHS	1960 Ford Mustang Coupe	Tow requested	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 1394.7 Alaska Hwy LHS	1998 Pontiac Bonneville Blue	Tow requested	2023-08-01 0:00
Km 1404.5 Alaska Highway - Duncan Drive RHS	F350 Flat deck truck	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-08-03 0:00
KM 1415.8 Alaska Hwy LHS	Ford Explorer	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-08-03 0:00
KM 1421 Alaska Hwy		Towed	2023-05-12 0:00
KM 1439 Alaska Highway Parent Lane&Wanners Rd		Towed	2023-06-05 0:00
KM 1441 Alaska Hwy		Towed	2023-06-05 0:00
KM 1454 Alaska hwy RHS	1987 Ford F-350 Blue	Tow requested	2023-08-01 0:00
Km 1468.3 Alaska Hwy	burnt	Towed	2023-07-26 0:00
KM 1468.3 Alaska Hwy - Ibex Valley Pit	4door Sedan - Burnt	Tow requested	2023-08-02 0:00
Km 1469.3 Alaska Hwy	Pontiac sunfire	Waiting for more info from TMB	2023-07-26 0:00
Mile marker 931.6 Old Alaska Higwhay(YG pit)	2002 Nissan Frontier	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-26 0:00
Mile marker 931.6 Old Alaska Higwhay(YG pit)	1982 Chevrolet P30 Motor Home	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-26 0:00
Alaska Hwy East side before Deohle Dr. ????		Towed	2023-06-19 0:00
		<b>Abandoned Vehicles Identified:</b>	19
		<b>Tows Requested:</b>	18
		<b>Abandoned Vehicles Towed:</b>	12
		<b>Still Awaiting Tow:</b>	7

## Other locations

Location	Vehicle Type	Tow Status	Date Flagged
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)		Towed	2023-05-12 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)		Towed	2023-05-12 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)		Towed	2023-05-12 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)		Towed	2023-05-26 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)		Towed	2023-05-26 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)		Towed	2023-05-26 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)	1980's Pontiac Grand Lemans	Towed	2023-07-25 0:00
Across from Sale' Salvage (Carcross Cut-off)	Toyota Corolla	Towed	2023-08-08 0:00
Hwy 7 West side just after Tarfu Creek (km 30 Atlin Road)		Towed	2023-06-19 0:00
KM 0.7 Lewes Dam Road (#136) RHS	1999 Chevrolet Malibu LS	Towed	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 0.7 Lewes Dam Road (#136) RHS	1997 Ford Taurus GL	Towed	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 0.7 Lewes Dam Road (#136) RHS	1990 Ford F150 EXT Cab Pickup	Towed	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 1.9 North McClintock Rd - Swan Haven Rd (#123)	GMC Sierra 1500 SL	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 14.3 Fish Lake Rd LHS Gravel Pit	1995 Subaru Legacy	Tow requested	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 1414 RHS Lorne road	Toyota Corolla	Towed	2023-08-03 0:00
KM 2 North McClintock Rd - Swan Haven Rd (#123)	1989 Toyota Camry	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-08-02 0:00
KM 280 North Campbell hwy	Burnt Dodge truck	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-25 0:00

km 280 Robert Campbell		Towed	2023-07-17 0:00
Whitehorse Scale Yard		Towed	2023-05-12 0:00
West Dawson Ferry Landing (km 0 Top of the World Highway)	Hyundia Elantra	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-12 0:00
West Dawson Ferry Landing (km 0 Top of the World Highway)	1998 Mercury Mystique	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-12 0:00
West Dawson Ferry Landing (km 0 Top of the World Highway)	"2002 Ford F-150 Lariat"	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-12 0:00
West Dawson Ferry Landing (km 0 Top of the World Highway)	2001 Chrysler Neon	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-12 0:00
West Dawson Ferry Landing (km 0 Top of the World Highway)	1987 Dodge Dakota	Towed (confirmed by TMB)	2023-07-12 0:00
<b>Abandoned Vehicles Identified:</b>			24
<b>Tows Requested:</b>			24
<b>Abandoned Vehicles Towed:</b>			23
<b>Still Awaiting Tow:</b>			1

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Alaska Highway Thaw Slump**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

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

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Alaska Highway Thaw Slump**Highways and  
Public Works

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

**Third response**

- The project will move the Alaska Highway further away from the active thaw slump caused by thawing permafrost that is located between the Takhini River and the existing highway in the vicinity.
- The realignment will protect highway infrastructure and public safety by increasing the buffer between the active thaw slump and the highway.
- Highways and Public Works staff have communicated project details to the adjacent private landowners to help mitigate impacts to them through the course of construction.

**Fourth response**

- The thaw slump was first identified in April 2019, and since then it has advanced significantly and is now within the highway right-of-way.
- Long tension cracks have formed between the thaw slump and the highway, as close as 20 metres from the road embankment.
- Highways and Public Works has been working with Yukon University to understand thaw slumps and to develop options for mitigation, including insulation of a headwall, spring water diversion and consolidation of the sediment debris, and realignment of the highway away from the thaw slump.



# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Alaska Highway Thaw Slump

Highways and  
Public Works

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

- Thawing permafrost causes the ground above it to slump, which could cause significant damage to the road surface if corrective actions are not taken.
- This project will include incorporation of water drainage systems to further protect the highway from climate-related damage.
- A portion of work will most likely require a detour road to safely pass traffic during construction activities.
- Once the project is completed, the department will continue to monitor the area.

### Approved by:



November 16, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and Public Works

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- Public engagement for these projects happened at various times over the last few years, and included open houses, pop-up information booths, an interactive website, expert panel discussions, meetings, and presentations.
- In addition, the project team has engaged with a variety of stakeholder groups, the City of Whitehorse, local businesses, and First Nation governments.

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

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

**Third Response: Upcoming Work – Porter Creek Area**

- Highways and Public Works met with affected businesses and residents in fall 2020 to discuss the plans for this project. The project was also open for public comment on YESAB's project registry site in 2021.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and Public Works

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- The department met with the City of Whitehorse and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council in September 2022, to discuss the impacts of the frontage road connecting Birch Street with Wann Road Intersection and McDonald Road Intersection.
- No work will happen at this location before 2025.
- We have sent letters to inform residents and businesses in Porter Creek regarding the change in the project timeline.
- Before construction does proceed, Highways and Public Works will hold information sessions with the Porter Creek community.
- We have advanced work in this area to improve safety, including:
  - installing a new left hand turn traffic signal at the Alaska Highway and Wann Road intersection in November 2022; and,
  - upgrading the crosswalks at Birch Road and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue with pedestrian-activated flashing beacons. The project is expected to be complete by the end of this fiscal year.

**Fourth Response: Upcoming Work – Robert Service Way Intersection**

- We are continuing to plan for the upgrades between Robert Service Way intersection and Philmar RV. This work will include the consolidation of uncontrolled highway accesses and the construction of new frontage roads.
- Two design options for this portion of the project are being considered to determine which option will allow for the safest and most efficient intersection operation, including an option for an improved four-way traffic light intersection or a roundabout.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse**Highways and Public Works

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- While standard signalized intersections are familiar to most road users, roundabouts are important to consider because they can allow for better traffic flow by operating continuously.
- Roundabouts can also improve safety by reducing the number and severity of collisions by requiring drivers to slow down and by changing the angle of impact if it occurs.
- Roundabouts can be designed to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the highway.

**Fifth Response: Two Mile Hill Intersections**

- The City of Whitehorse and Government of Yukon are partnering on the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway, Range Road, Two Mile Hill intersection (HART), combined intersection upgrades project.
  - This joint initiative will focus on developing designs to improve the Hamilton Boulevard and Alaska Highway / Two-Mile-Hill Road and the Range Road / Two-Mile Hill Road intersections with an emphasis on making travel safer and more efficient for all transportation modes.
  - In June 2023, the City of Whitehorse started the first round of public engagement for the project, which included an online survey that received 455 responses.
  - The next round of public engagement is planned for the fall of 2023.
- 

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

- The Alaska Highway is an important part of our transportation network. The safety improvements through Whitehorse will affect many road users.
- The Government of Yukon and City of Whitehorse are participating as stakeholders in a community-led study that will assess the feasibility for two

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Alaska Highway Upgrades through Whitehorse

Highways and Public Works

active transportation underpasses beneath the Alaska Highway within Whitehorse. This study has been funded by the Government of Canada.

### Background:

- Safety upgrades between Lodestar Lane and the Whitehorse weigh station were expected to be completed during 2022; however due to material supply issues, project completion was delayed until summer 2023.

### Robert Service Way Intersection

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

### Porter Creek

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

Approved by:

*C. Hamwood*

November 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Big Creek Bridge Replacement**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon government is exploring all options available to complete the project.
- We are working with the engineer for the project to perform a full assessment of the bridge. The assessment will provide details of what additional work is required to allow the bridge to be open for public use.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Big Creek Bridge Replacement

Highways and  
Public Works

- Until the new bridge is ready, we will continue to perform regular maintenance and inspections of the existing bridge to verify that it remains safe for the travelling public.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- The project to replace the existing bridge started in 2020.
- The Yukon government paid over \$6,000,000.00 to Julmac.
- Payment of subcontractors is generally a private commercial matter between the general contractor and subcontractor as per their individual subcontracts.
- In the event of a subcontractor claim, the process is administered by the Department of Highways and Public Works' Procurement Support Centre and the Department of Justice. This process and its requirements are laid out in the Contract and Procurement Regulation.

Approved by:

*C. Hamwood*

October 12, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Roadway Safety Improvement Program**

- Highways and Public Works makes our roads safer throughout the year by brushing, improving lane markings, removing hazards in the right-of-way, and installing and maintaining roadside barriers.
- As part of that work, the department has implemented a Roadway Safety Improvement Program to improve safety by targeting and increasing funding for these activities.
- Since 2019, the department has installed over 9 kilometres of new barriers, painted over 3,000 kilometres of highway lines, and cleared approximately 3,400 kilometres of vegetation in the right-of-way.

**Additional response: Wildlife considerations**

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

**Third response: Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

- The Yukon government put out a request for qualifications in 2022 for contractors interested in bidding on vegetation control tenders to establish a Qualified Source List of pre-vetted contractors.
- This allows the Yukon government to quickly and more effectively tender contracts with the assurance that potential contractors have the capabilities to do the work, such as necessary equipment and experience.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The Government of Yukon awarded \$3.6 million in vegetation control contracts this season. This represents approximately 1,000 kilometres of clearing. The majority of work is scheduled to be completed at the end of October, with one winter project this fiscal year.
- Depending on size, projects will be offered by direct award, invitational, or open tenders to the full list of qualified companies.

**Fourth response: Engagement and online portal**

- In April 2022, Highways and Public Works sent 994 letters to property owners who lived close to upcoming vegetation control and mowing work.
- The letters directed owners to an online platform that mapped the locations where vegetation control may be taking place, noted the specifications of planned vegetation control and explained the benefits of vegetation control.
- This year, 165 similar letters were sent to affected property owners for the upcoming vegetation control outside of the Whitehorse city limits, on March 31, 2023.

**Fifth response: Judas Creek brushing**

- A meeting was held on January 11 between Highways and Public Works and the Marsh Lake Local Area Council.
- Due to public concerns and snow conditions, work in the area was paused last winter.
- In consultation with residents and the Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council, the department finalized a brushing scope of work that is

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements**Highways and  
Public Works

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consistent with the Highway Service Standard, and will appropriately mitigate safety issues along the road.

- It was agreed to wait until 2024 season to complete the brushing at Judas Creek.

**Sixth response: Barrier program increase**

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

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

- There is often public interest in brushing in the right-of-way.
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**Background:****Roadway safety improvement**

- In 2018, Yukon's primary highways were assessed for vehicle hazards. This assessment led to the development of a Yukon Roadside Barrier Guideline, which includes a system to identify hazards across the highway network.

## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements

Highways and Public Works

- The Roadway Safety Improvement Program will schedule maintenance using the Highway Classification Framework. This framework classifies Yukon highways based on traffic volumes, type of use and other socioeconomic factors.

#### Vegetation Control

- Since the beginning of the program in 2019, we have brushed 2,387 kilometres and mowed 1,014 kilometres of vegetation. This totals approximately 3,400 kilometres cleared by the department. Under the new program, we are now clearing approximately 900 kilometres of right-of-way vegetation every year.
- Vegetation control is completed through contracts and through Memoranda of Understanding with First Nations and municipalities.
- Each contract contains detailed specifications for vegetation control that include stem height, clearing widths, steep slopes, riparian zones, inside curves for sight line distance, and salvageable wood, which is available for the public.
- Brushing specifications must meet or exceed specification set out in "Preventing Wildlife Injuries from Right-of-Way Vegetation Control." These specifications were recommended by the Yukon Department of Environment, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Southern Lakes Caribou Steering Committee.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 14, 2023

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dawson City Ice Bridge**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The safety of Dawson City residents is the Yukon government's top priority when considering the timing and construction of the ice bridge.
  - Ice bridge construction is dependent on several factors including environmental conditions such as river hydrology, ice conditions and air and water temperatures.
  - The ice bridge typically opens in January and closes in mid-April each year, depending on temperatures.
  - Department staff monitor the condition of the ice bridge to determine when to close and decommission it for the season.
  - The Yukon government does not condone or support any unauthorized crossing locations, as they are not monitored and are risky.
- 

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

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

**Background:**

- Ice bridge construction cannot occur until water and ice conditions are cold and stable enough to proceed.
  - The tender for construction of the ice bridge closed on November 9, 2023.
  - Light traffic includes vehicles that are up to 5000kg in weight. Heavy duty vehicles include vehicles up to 40,000kg.
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dawson City Ice Bridge**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The City of Dawson was without an official ice bridge in the winters of 2016-17 and 2017-18. This was because environmental conditions did not allow for a safe crossing to be constructed.
- Although there are no national standards for ice bridge construction, in 2011 the Transportation Association of Canada released guidelines for the construction and operation of winter roads. The Yukon government participated in developing these guidelines and utilizes them in the construction and operation of the ice bridge.

Approved by:



November 16, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****George Black Ferry**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The George Black Ferry typically operates between mid-May and mid-October.
- The season is based on water levels, which must be high enough so the ferry can be safely launched.
- The safety and well-being of Yukoners and visitors is always our first consideration when operating the ferry.

**Additional response: Mechanical update**

- In April 2023, two newly refurbished marine engines were installed in the George Black Ferry.
- The crew conducts weekly and annual maintenance to the George Black Ferry to ensure appropriate upkeep is performed.
- To account for any unforeseen impacts to the ferry operations, there is an adequate supply of parts on hand in Dawson to perform major repairs quickly and efficiently. These include spare drivetrain parts and spare engines.
- Highways and Public Works is currently exploring long-term options for the Yukon River crossing in Dawson City.

**Third response: Looking into the future**

- Highways and Public Works and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief and Council met in September 2022 to begin discussions on community engagement and the future of the river crossing in Dawson.
- Highways and Public Works hosted two engagement sessions for Dawson City residents on March 16, 2023. The sessions focused on

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

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what is important to residents when planning for the future of the crossing.

- Highways and Public Works was invited to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders Council and hosted an engagement session with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens on March 15, 2023.
  - The sessions were well attended, and we received a lot of helpful feedback from residents.
  - A follow-up survey was sent to Dawson City residents in June to request further feedback from the engagement.
  - The Yukon Bureau of Statistics facilitated the survey on behalf of Highways and Public Works and is compiling the results with a what we heard report that will summarize the results of the engagement.
- 

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

- The George Black Ferry is an important part of our transportation network.
- 

**Background:**

- The ferry is over 50 years old and was transferred to the Government of Yukon by the federal government.
  - Recent inspections indicate that it will need to be replaced in the next 15 years.
  - The average travel time is approximately ten minutes from one side to the other.
  - The ferry can haul about 143 thousand pounds, is 83 feet long and 17 feet wide.
  - In July 2022, the ferry was on a reduced schedule for one day due to staffing issues and in August 2022, ferry operations were temporarily halted due to a mechanical issue with the propeller and shaft.
  - Our crews worked quickly to have the ferry operational within five days.
-



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****George Black Ferry**Highways and  
Public Works

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- During the service outage in summer 2022, the department was able to contract with a tourism operator to provide passenger service only across the river.
- During the 2023 season, the ferry ran well and there were no long stoppages in service.

Approved by:



September 14, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Future of the River Crossing in  
Dawson City**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Climate Impacts**

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for the Yukon's transportation system, including two ferries.
- Climate change is impacting the Yukon's transportation infrastructure in many ways, including along the Yukon River.
- Given these circumstances, we started discussions with the residents of Dawson City on the future of the river crossing.

**Additional response: Community Engagement**

- Highways and Public Works and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief and Council met in September 2022 to begin discussions on community engagement and the future of the river crossing in Dawson.
- Highways and Public Works hosted two engagement sessions for Dawson City residents on March 16, 2023. The sessions focused on what is and is not working, and what is important to residents when planning for the future of the crossing.
- Highways and Public Works was invited to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders Council and hosted an engagement session with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens on March 15, 2023.
- The sessions were well attended, and we received a lot of helpful feedback from residents.
- A follow-up survey was sent to Dawson City residents in June to request further feedback from the engagement.
- A What We Heard report is being finalized. The document compiles the responses received at the public, in-person sessions, as well as

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Future of the River Crossing in Dawson City**Highways and  
Public Works

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the responses received through the survey issued by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics.

- The report will be released to the public this winter and will provide invaluable feedback that will serve as a resource for Government of Yukon staff and guide discussions on the future of the Yukon River crossing in Dawson.

**Third response: Seasonal Gaps in Service**

- Currently, Yukoners rely on the George Black Ferry and the ice bridge to cross the Yukon River in Dawson.
- The George Black Ferry typically operates between May and October. Ice bridge construction usually begins in mid-December, but timing is dependent on environmental conditions.
- This means that twice a year there are gaps in service in the spring from mid-April to mid-May and in the fall from mid-October to mid-December.
- The gap in service, climate impacts, and age of the ferry are the reasons we engaged with the residents of Dawson about the crossing.

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

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

**Background:**

- In the winter of 2013-14, an alternate route for the ice bridge was necessary because the ice conditions did not allow it to be built at the usual location.

## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### Future of the River Crossing in Dawson City

Highways and Public Works

- In the winters of 2016-17 and 2017-18, the City of Dawson was without an official ice bridge due to a number of factors, including water levels and speed of flow, ice conditions and air and water temperatures.
- Last summer there were some unexpected impacts to ferry operations.
- In July 2022, the ferry was on a reduced schedule for one day due to staffing issues.
- In August 2022, ferry operations were temporarily halted due to a mechanical issue with the propeller and shaft.
- Our crews worked quickly, and the ferry was operational again within five days.

Approved by:



November 22, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dempster Highway**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government maintains the Yukon section of the Dempster Highway from the North Klondike Highway to the Yukon-Northwest Territories border.
- In May of this year, there was a highway washout at kilometre 238 near the Ogilvie River that required repairs, resulting in a highway closure lasting for several days.
- During the 2023 construction season, gravel resurfacing on sections of the highway between Ogilvie and Eagle Plains was completed.
- The Yukon government has applied to the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund to upgrade the highway to help mitigate flooding along the Dempster Highway. If approved work would be conducted over a 7-year period.

**Additional Response: Conditions During Seasonal Changes**

- The Dempster Highway sees considerable weather challenges that can pose a safety risk to drivers.
- Snow, rain, freezing rain, and major temperature fluctuations can make the highway conditions slippery.
- Throughout the year our crews are out maintaining the highway daily, plowing, grading, and fixing issues as they arise.
- We urge all drivers to use caution when traveling along the Dempster Highway, to drive to the current road conditions, and to check 511 Yukon for the latest updates.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Dempster Highway**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Additional response: Engagement with the Government of NWT**

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

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

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

- In July 2022, Highways and Public Works met with Minister Archie and Gwich'in Tribal Council Grand Chief Kyikavichik in Inuvik.
  - In January 2023, Highways and Public Works met with Minister Archie at the Annual Roundup Conference in Vancouver and again in Whitehorse.
  - The Dempster Highway is a 740-kilometre gravel road that connects the North Klondike Highway with Fort McPherson, Inuvik and the Mackenzie Delta, passing
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# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Dempster Highway

Highways and  
Public Works

through both Yukon and the Northwest Territories. 465 kilometre of the highway is in the Yukon.

- The route roughly follows the traditional dog sled route from Dawson City to Fort McPherson.
- The Government of Northwest Territories operates ferries at the Peel and Mackenzie rivers, with ice bridges used in the winter.
- The Yukon section of the highway is supported by three grader stations located at Ogilvie, Klondike and Eagle Plains.
- The southern section of highway up to Tombstone Territorial Park receives moderate traffic volumes, about 80 vehicles a day, compared to the northern part of the highway, which receives about 50 vehicles a day.
- While traffic volumes for the 300-plus kilometres of the highway north of Tombstone are not significant, Highways and Public Works crews work to maintain this section of the highway to a set standard.
- The department tendered to hire a consultant to build the Highway Infrastructure Improvement Plan, formerly known as Functional Plans, for various highway sections across Yukon's Highway Network. The Dempster is included in the tender's scope of work. Work on the Dempster's Plan is expected to begin in 2025-26.
- The project team plans to work with the Northwest Territories on building this plan once the tender is awarded.

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

# Session Briefing Note

## Digital Highway Signs

FALL 2023

Highways and  
Public Works

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### Recommended response:

- Digital message signs are posted along the highways to advise travellers of road hazards, closures and construction activities.
- There are 53 digital message signs in use across the Yukon including:
  - 20 fixed signs, including the four cantilevered boards along the Alaska Highway near Whitehorse;
  - 27 portable message boards; and
  - 6 portable message boards that are primarily used for speed radar feedback for drivers.
- The Department of Highways and Public works has developed operational guidelines to determine what messages are displayed on these signs.
- The guidelines are based on the *Transportation Association of Canada's Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada*, which outlines best practices for the use of digital highway signs.
- Factors that affect the length and content of messages on digital signs include:
  - appropriate reading time for drivers passing signs based on the posted speed limit;
  - legibility and font size;
  - the number of characters that can be displayed based on font size; and
  - duration of display time for multi-screen messages.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Digital Highway Signs**Highways and  
Public Works

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- When there are no adverse conditions to report, the operational guidelines also help staff determine when lower-priority messages, such as public service announcements, should be displayed.

**Additional Response: Intelligent Transportation System**

- The digital message signs are part of the Yukon's Intelligent Transportation System. This system includes other devices along the highway that count traffic and collect road temperature data.
- Highways and Public Works uses this information to inform highway planning and design to improve safety for all road users.
- In October 2021, we updated the 511 Yukon system so that any time a digital highway sign displays a message, it is also displayed on 511 Yukon. This process provides Yukoners with the most up-to-date and accurate road condition information.
- Investment in the Yukon's Intelligent Transportation System, including digital highway signs, is supported by the federal government's National Trade Corridors Fund.
- The federal government is contributing \$6.9 million, and the Yukon is contributing \$2.4 million to the system between now and 2028.
- So far in 2023, there have been approximately 939 messages displayed across all the fixed digital message signs in the Yukon, including any repeated messages. Of these, 268 were unique messages.
- That total includes the four cantilevered digital message signs near Whitehorse, which on their own displayed 111 unique messages, with a total of 291 messages displayed so far this year.

# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Digital Highway Signs**

**FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

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

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

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**Background: Yukon's Intelligent Transportation Systems**

- In 2022, there were approximately 778 messages displayed across all the fixed digital message signs in the Yukon, including any repeated messages. Of these, 255 were unique messages. The total includes the four cantilevered digital message signs near Whitehorse, which on their own displayed 125 unique messages, with a total of 272 messages used throughout the year.
- The Yukon's Intelligent Transportation System helps the department by collecting, synthesizing, and disseminating traffic data to inform strategic investments in transportation planning.
- The 511 Yukon website provides up-to-date road information, digital highway sign messages and includes functions such as travel planning, a mobile app with a hands-free mode, and customizable real-time notifications.
- Speed radar boards have been deployed along primary highways in communities across the Yukon to provide visual cues for highway speed limit changes to help improve safety in those communities.
- Road Weather Information Systems located throughout the territory provide real-time information of meteorological and road conditions to help inform maintenance response and the Yukon's 511 traveller information system for safe trip planning.
- When there are no traffic or safety messages to display, the digital messages signs can be used for public service announcements. For example, during National Day for Truth and Reconciliation the signs displayed "Every Child Matters", and on Remembrance Day displayed messaging in support of veterans.
- In addition to commemorating important days, we can display general public safety messaging about topics like impaired driving.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Digital Highway Signs****FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

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- A contractor was needed to repair the northbound overhead digital message board, located south of Whitehorse, at the end of March 2023.

Approved by:



November 1, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Early Mining Road Opening**

Highways and  
Public Works

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#### **Recommended response:**

- Mining is an extremely important economic driver for the territory, and miners prefer early access to their claims to maximize the short mining season in the Yukon.
- As you know, some roads in the Yukon are only maintained during the summer.
- In response to requests from industry, the department opened certain roads ahead of schedule this year so that mining companies could better plan for their seasonal operations.
- Opening the roads early allows industry to move materials into their worksites while the ground is still frozen and can take heavy loads.
- On March 10, 2023, the department opened the Hunker Loop, which includes Bonanza Creek Road, and Hunker Creek Road.
- On March 17, 2023, the department opened the Top of the World Highway.
- The crew continued clearing and maintenance on the Top of the World Highway to Sixty Mile in April.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Yukon government recognizes the importance of early access to worksites for many in the mining industry which is why we have committed to a planned early season opening in 2024.
- While the opening of any road is somewhat dependent on the conditions of the weather, the department is working toward an early opening, before April.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Early Mining Road Opening**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Highways and Public Works is developing a schedule for road openings next spring and will communicate with stakeholders in advance of the openings.
  - Once the roads are open, regular maintenance occurs between May and October annually.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

**Background:**

- Specific dates are dependent on several uncontrolled variables including winter conditions, snowpack, and ground water. A date will be communicated to KPMA each year as far in advance as possible to help with their planning.

**Approved by:**

October 16, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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**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 are going through various stages of planning, design, assessment, and construction.
- 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 project.

**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, 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 Yukon government and Yukon First Nations 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.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Once an agreement is signed, 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.
- Implementation work may not be visible, but it is crucial.
- Once the foundational work is complete, project procurement and construction can begin.

**Additional response: Yukon First Nations involvement**

- The Yukon government is working in collaboration with Yukon First Nations 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 Yukon government has 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.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- This flexibility allowed us to include additional road components on the Silver Trail, North Canol, and sections of the Robert Campbell Highway.
- The Yukon government was successful in negotiating a Contribution Agreement with the Government of Canada that resulted in the Yukon Resource Gateway Program's completion date being extended from 2025 to March 2031.

**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 as of August 31, the total labour hours performed by Yukon First Nations persons



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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was 99,175 – 3 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.
- 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 with the Ross River Dena Council.
- This road rehabilitation project runs from Ross River to Faro (km 354.9 to km 414.4).
- 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 (km 363.6 to km 367.5), which will allow work to proceed for this section of the component.
- In 2023, the Yukon government has continued to work with Ross River Dena Council to implement the Project Agreement and determine the next steps of this project together.
- The aim is to tender this work this fiscal year.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Silver Trail**

- A Project Agreement for the Silver Trail component was signed with the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun in February 2021.
- The Silver Trail component includes rehabilitation of the Mayo River bridge, road reconstruction and spot repairs from km 0 to km 110 between Mayo and Keno City.
- In the coming year, the department will be advancing the implementation of the agreement with the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun, with design and assessment activities planned to occur in 2024-25.
- Officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works are in regular contact with the Executive Director of the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun, and the next meeting is scheduled for November 27, 2023.

**Recommended response: Robert Campbell Highway km 114 to km 171**

- In June 2020, a Project Agreement was signed with the Liard First Nation for this section of the Robert Campbell Highway.
- This project, which runs from just past the Tuchitua River Bridge to the Frances Lake campground (km 114 to km 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 Nation later this year. Additionally, we underwent preliminary project planning and developed the scope of work.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- 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 this summer and fall.

**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, two of which 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.
- Clearing of the right-of-way to improve lines of sight 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 Yukon government 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

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)**Highways and  
Public Works

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help increase 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 with the Yukon Resource Gateway Project Committee, which includes Liard First Nation and Yukon government representatives, on this project.
- This work includes identifying clearing and brushing work, completing the draft environmental assessment, project planning and design work.

**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 would include bridge replacements, line of sight improvements and vegetation clearing on the North Canol Road.
- We are working with Ross River Dene Council on advancing the agreement.
- Officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works are planning a visit to Ross River this fall to discuss the Gateway projects.

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

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

**FALL 2023**

## Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

Highways and Public Works

### 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)	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council.
Construction (km 363.6 to km 367.5)	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council. Anticipate in summer 2024.

Silver Trail Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timelines

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

Highways and Public Works

Silver Trail Project Agreement Implementation in collaboration with First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk 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 2024.
Procurement – sub project	2024.
Construction of Robert Campbell Highway km 114 to km 171 – sub project	2025

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. Project Agreement negotiations are ongoing with Selkirk First nation, led by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.	Fall 2020  Ongoing

Nahanni Range Road Phase 1 Project Schedule	
Project Details and Activities	Start Date and Estimated Timeline

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

Highways and Public Works

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 Dena Council
Procurement	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council
Construction	To be determined in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council

**Approved by:**

*C. Harwood*

November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****511 Yukon**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response: Features of 511 Yukon**

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

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

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



# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## 511 Yukon

Highways and  
Public Works

their travel through Yukon, particularly whenever there are unplanned road closures.

### Background:

- In October 2021, Highways and Public Works upgraded the 511 Yukon website and launched a new mobile app. The upgrades make it easier for users to navigate the system and provide more information to motorists.
- In spring 2022, 511 Yukon was further upgraded to display weight restrictions on highways and bridges.
- The website offers a user-friendly experience, including a Google Maps integrated interface and the ability to create a personal user profile.
- The mobile app can be downloaded for free from the Apple Store or Google Play Store.
- A Privacy Impact Assessment was conducted before 511 Yukon started using roadside camera images and no personal information is collected or provided to law enforcement.

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Motorcycle Safety**

Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Motorcycle riders are considered vulnerable road users, and the Department of Highways and Public Works is working hard to encourage all vehicle drivers to be vigilant for motorcyclists to help keep them safe on our roads.
- Our department has many educational resources available for both motorcyclists and vehicle drivers. There is a dedicated webpage for motorcycle safety, and this year we launched a new three-year educational and awareness campaign.

**Additional response: Construction zones and motorcycle safety**

- Every construction season, we rehabilitate and upgrade sections of Yukon's highway system to improve driving conditions and enhance road safety.
- All drivers, but especially motorcyclists, are susceptible to hazards such as loose gravel and dust in construction zones which is why our department ensures that adequate signage is in place for our construction zones.
- While signage is in place for every road construction project, in some locations, there are also electronic message boards.
- Drivers are informed of upcoming road work 500 meters before a construction zone begins, are warned of loose gravel and dusty conditions, and are instructed to slow their speed.
- Our standards and specifications for road construction projects clearly lay out the requirements regarding traffic control and signage that road crews need to implement.

# Session Briefing Note

## Motorcycle Safety

**TAB# 80b**

**Fall 2023**

Highways and  
Public Works

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There have been a few motorcycle fatalities this year in the Yukon.

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### Background:

- Strict requirements for contractors to install traffic signage in the construction area are included in all Yukon government construction contracts.

Approved by:



September 5, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Klondike Highway Takhini River Bridge and Lewes River Bridge**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Takhini River Bridge**

- Highways and Public Works is in the process of developing options to enhance the safety of active transportation on the Takhini River Bridge on the Klondike Highway.
- \$8.5 million is budgeted for upgrades to the existing bridge, of which the Government of Yukon will receive over \$6 million in federal funding through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- We are looking into what options would be available, including the estimated costs for the improvement upgrades. The options will include a sidewalk or active transportation route on one or both sides of the bridge, and the modifications that are necessary to improve the structure and increase its lifespan.
- As part of this options review, the consultant will be evaluating ways to increase safety for all users of the bridge.
- In 2024-25 once the options review is complete, the Yukon government will provide an update on the selected design option.
- In the meantime, the department is working to install speed radar boards on either side of the bridge this fall to alert drivers of their vehicle speed before approaching the bridge.

**Recommended response: Lewes River Bridge**

- Highways and Public Works completed a study in May 2021, to identify opportunities to improve the safety of the Alaska Highway near the Lewes River bridge.
- Based on this work, the department is planning a project for implementation in 2024-25 that will focus on improvements on the

## Session Briefing Note

**SPRING 2023**

### **Klondike Highway Takhini River Bridge and Lewes River Bridge**

Highways and  
Public Works

west side of the bridge (the Whitehorse side), where there are limited lines of sight for traffic on the bridge and traffic approaching on Sawmill Creek Road.

- Planned work will include lowering the grade of the hill, adjusting the road alignment, widening the shoulder and installing barriers.

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- These bridges are close to Whitehorse and receive a lot of attention.

#### **Background:**

##### **Takhini River Bridge:**

- In July 2017, an engineering review of the structure was completed.
- In September 2017, based on the engineering review, a strengthening project was completed to improve the bridge's capacity for supporting heavy loads.
- The geometry of the highway curve north of the bridge and the posted signage meet the minimum standards outlined in the Transportation Association of Canada standard for a 90km/h speed zone.
- Due to the limitations of the bridge's superstructure, widening the vehicle lanes on the Takhini River Bridge is not cost effective.

Approved by:



November 2, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023*****Motor Vehicles Act Rewrite***Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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

**Additional response: Stakeholder and public engagement**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## **Motor Vehicles Act Rewrite**

Highways and  
Public Works

- In summer 2023, there was an additional round of engagement with stakeholders and Indigenous governments to provide an update on the development of the Act and to give another opportunity for feedback.

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The rewrite of the *Motor Vehicles Act* is a mandate letter item.

### **Background:**

- Yukon's *Motor Vehicles Act* has not been significantly updated since it was first written in the late 1970s.
- This large, complex piece of legislation touches on a wide range of issues important to Yukoners.
- The government is working with stakeholders, municipalities and First Nations to ensure their interests are taken into consideration.

### **Timeline**

- Public engagement took place in 2019, and more than 2,800 responses were received.
- In June 2023, Highways and Public Works conducted additional stakeholder engagement, reaching out to over 60 stakeholders and Indigenous governments and organizations.
- The current timeline is for the Act to be tabled in fall 2024 with the regulations to follow in short order.

Approved by:



September 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Nahanni Range Road  
End of Federal Maintenance**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Nahanni Range Road begins at the Robert Campbell Highway and continues to the Northwest Territories, ending at the Cantung Mine.
- 182 kilometres of this road is within the Yukon; as per Schedule 1 of the *Highways Act*. Highways and Public Works is responsible for maintaining the first 134 kilometres.
- Historically, the maintenance of the rest of the road has been funded by the mine's operator.
- In 2015 the mine closed, and the federal government took over responsibility for maintenance beyond kilometre 134.
- The federal government informed Highways and Public Works that they would no longer be performing maintenance beyond kilometre 134, starting October 1, 2023.

**Additional response:**

- The department installed a sign to advise travellers that the highway road is not maintained past kilometre 134.
- While the road is not closed, users are reminded that it is not maintained and there may be unidentified hazards.
- The department may need to close the road beyond kilometre 134 on short notice if any of the highway features or assets are deemed unsafe for use.



**Session Briefing Note**  
**Nahanni Range Road**  
**End of Federal Maintenance**

Highways and  
Public Works

**Third response:**

- Highways and Public Works is also conducting a review of the road up to kilometre 134, including its current uses, to determine its class, and to inform maintenance standards.
- If it is determined that changes to service levels are required, Highways and Public Works will work with stakeholders and the affected First Nations.

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

- There could be public interest about the end of road maintenance beyond kilometre 134.

**Background:**

- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada filed a care and maintenance licence application for Cantung Mine with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. The federal government intends to completely close the camp at the mine in October 2023, with care and maintenance activities being completed by fly-in workers only.
- The federal government, through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, consulted with the affected First Nations regarding this decision.

**Approved by:**



October 26, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**North Canol Road Upgrades**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Gateway**

- The North Canol Road and Robert Campbell Highway are included in the Yukon Resource Gateway Program's project agreement with Ross River Dene Council.
- We are focusing on advancing the Robert Campbell component first as this highway has more traffic.
- This component is from kilometre 354.9 to kilometre 414.4, between Ross River and Faro.
- The department is working with the Ross River Dene Council to advance the 2020 project agreement, in order for work to begin.
- Officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works are planning to visit the community this fall to discuss the gateway projects.

**Additional response: Highway Maintenance**

- Highways and Public Works continues to maintain the North Canol Road and has completed safety improvements over the past several years, as well as responding to emergency road washouts.
- During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the department spent \$190K on safety improvements to the Pup Creek Bridge.
- During 2022-23 fiscal year, the department spent \$71K on safety improvements to the North Canol Road.
- In addition, \$75K has been spent so far this fiscal year on bridge safety improvements.

# Session Briefing Note

## North Canol Road Upgrades

**TAB# 95**  
**Fall 2023**  
Highways and  
Public Works

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### Additional response: Road Washouts

- The following was spent on road washouts:
  - In 2021-22, \$164K.
  - In 2022-23, \$122K.
  - So far in 2023-24, \$191K.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- North Canol Road maintenance was recently raised during the fall sitting.

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### Background:

- The Government of Yukon continues to work with First Nations on project planning and implementation related to the other project components. Implementation work for these projects may not be visible, however it is crucial. Once the foundational work is complete, project procurement and construction can begin.

#### Approved by:



October 16, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****North Canol Weight Restrictions**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government is committed to keeping transportation routes safe throughout the Yukon.
- Prior to opening the North Canol Road each spring, Highways and Public Works promptly conducts bridge inspections.
- Necessary repairs are completed as soon as possible following the inspections.
- To help keep the travelling public safe and to maintain the integrity of the structures, the department has applied weight restrictions on North Canol bridges since 2016.

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon government prioritizes bridge repairs based on a number of different factors, including safety, cost, traffic volumes and impacts to industry.
- Over the coming years, depending on inspection findings, bridge replacements along the North Canol Road and the South Canol Road may be required.
- We urge all drivers to use caution when travelling along the North Canol Highway, and to check 511 Yukon for the latest updates.

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

- North Canol has a number of bridges that are in variable states of repair. Weight restrictions are important measures for ensuring safety of infrastructure, however mining companies may be impacted by these weight restrictions.
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# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## North Canol Weight Restrictions

Highways and  
Public Works

### Background:

- The bridge load rating on the North Canol Road remains 48 tonnes with speed restrictions of 30 km/hr.
- There has been increased traffic in the area as a result of mining exploration over the past few years.
- Inspection of the North Canol bridges took place on June 6 and 7, 2023. Of the 27 bridges inspected, 4 required minor repairs, including: Gravel Creek Bridge (km 279.7), Beaver Creek Bridge (km 287.9), MacMillan River #2 Bridge (km 438.6) and Jeff Creek Bridge (km 421.5). All repair work was completed by June 14, 2023, and the road was officially opened to the public the next day.
- In addition to bridge work, road maintenance was performed to the road in advance of the contractor being able to access the bridges to perform repairs.

Approved by:



September 5, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The North Klondike Highway is a vital link for industry and a well-travelled route for Yukoners and tourists from around the world.
- Through the federal government's National Trade Corridors Fund, the Department of Highways and Public Works is upgrading critical sections of the North Klondike Highway over a 10-year period.
- There are 209 kilometres between Carmacks and the Dempster Highway intersection that are eligible for reconstruction under the National Trade Corridors Fund.
- These upgrades will increase safety, improve driving conditions, better connect the Yukon's resources to markets, and increase the resiliency of the highway to the impacts of climate change in the face of changing weather patterns and thawing permafrost.
- This will also provide economic opportunities for Yukon First Nations through the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
- The department will expand the use of technology in the corridor that collects data on traffic, road conditions and weather – all of which helps to improve safety for road users.
- The department is also planning the installation of more electric vehicle charging stations along this highway to support the growing use of electric vehicles.

**Additional response: Stewart Crossing to Dawson City**

- Upgrades between Stewart Crossing and Dawson City will involve the reconstruction of 65 kilometres of highway. In January 2023, we tendered the next 10-kilometre section of re-construction in an area

## Session Briefing Note

FALL 2023

### North Klondike Highway and Upgrades

Highways and Public Works

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20 kilometres south of the Dempster Highway. The project was awarded to PS Sidhu Trucking on March 29, 2023, and **is substantially complete.**

- In 2023-24, we completed 9.8 kilometres of road reconstruction, 23.1 kilometres of Bituminous Surface Treatment, or BST, and 18 kilometres of revegetation between Stewart Crossing and Dawson City.
- **Moose Creek Bridge rehabilitation is substantially complete, and the bridge was opened for traffic in the fall of 2022. Minor work and paving were completed in summer 2023, and the remaining work will be finished this fall.**
- As of this fall, we will have completed the reconstruction of approximately 57 kilometres of the highway.
- We have already installed digital message signs to make drivers aware of construction zones, cleared vegetation in the corridor and improved several culverts to assist with drainage.

#### **Additional response: Carmacks to Stewart Crossing**

- Upgrades between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing will involve the reconstruction of 144 kilometres of highway between the communities of Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Stewart Crossing.
- Once complete, this reconstruction will allow the removal of seasonal weight restrictions for heavy trucks on this section of highway.
- **The rehabilitation of McCabe Creek Bridge is underway and will be completed next summer.**

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The new Crooked Creek Bridge was opened to public traffic in the fall of 2022. Asphalt paving, minor civil works and final clean-up was completed in summer 2023.

**Additional response: 2022 Mudslide near Rock Creek and Flat Creek**

- In September 2022, heavy rainfall affected slope stability in the Rock Creek and Flat Creek areas resulting in a number of landslides onto the highway.
- This area is highly susceptible to precipitation-induced slides where the surface layer detaches from the shallow permafrost layer underneath.
- In this case, once the ground became too saturated, the upper layer of the slopes became unstable and resulted in landslides.
- Slide activity may continue in this area until all the detached surface layer above the rock face slides down.
- The Yukon government is expecting increased maintenance needs in these areas for several years. However, there have not been slide issues so far this year.
- The department is working with the Yukon Geological Survey to study and monitor climate-driven slope movements near Rock Creek and in the Klondike valley in an effort to improve predictive capability for mass movement events.
- The slope-monitoring project with the Yukon Geological Survey will include installation of roadside cameras to remotely monitor the slide area, which may help to provide faster awareness of a landslide and improve response times to close and clear the road.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and Public Works

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**Additional Response: 2023 Washouts**

- This past spring, there were multiple washouts along the Klondike Highway that caused traffic disruptions and some highway closures.
- Washouts happened near Dawson Airport, Henderson Corner and Clear Creek Bridge. As well, a culvert washout occurred near the Dempster Cutoff at kilometre 670. Highways and Public Works crews repaired the washouts and opened the roads to traffic in a few days.

**Additional response: Alternate access to Dawson**

- Highways and Public Works performs proactive summer maintenance activities on the All Gold to Hunker Summit Road, which allows alternate access to the City of Dawson if required.
  - This route will provide an alternate emergency access for non-commercial vehicles to support the movement of supplies and support personnel in the event that additional slides occur in this area in the future, similar to those experienced in fall 2022.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The North Klondike Highway is an essential transportation corridor.
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**Background:**

- In 2019, the governments of Yukon and Canada announced a total of \$157 million in funding over ten years to upgrade critical sections of the North Klondike Highway.
  - In 2021, a further \$110 million in funding over seven years was announced to upgrade the North Klondike Highway between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing.
  - The total project cost is \$267 million. The National Trade Corridors Fund will contribute \$200 million and the Yukon government will contribute \$67 million.
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****North Klondike Highway and  
Upgrades**Highways and  
Public Works

- The proposed work will occur in the Traditional Territories of Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.

Approved by:



November 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## Session Briefing Note

### Outhouse Closures on the North Klondike Highway

Highways and  
Public Works

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#### Recommended response:

- Rest areas along Yukon highways are an important part of our transportation network and provide all travellers with a safe and appropriate area to rest. Some rest areas have outhouses, garbage disposal, and interpretive messaging on the Yukon's history and environment.
- The Yukon government is developing a rest area strategy to provide a high, consistent level of service for rest areas with a standardized distance between them, allowing highway travellers to predict and rely on the Yukon system of rest areas for outhouse and garbage services.
- We know there is a need for a rest area between Faro and Carmacks, which is why we are planning to add a new rest area on the Robert Cambell Highway.
- The Yukon government permanently closed three rest areas on one road, the North Klondike Highway, this fall. There are currently 69 highway rest areas with outhouses in the Yukon.
- The closure of the three sites aligns with the Yukon government's rest area strategy. The three sites that closed are:
  - The Conglomerates point of interest at kilometre 297.8. There are outhouse facilities within 10 to 20 kilometers on either side of Conglomerates near Braeburn and Montague Roadhouse;
  - Yukon Crossing at kilometre 395.2. There are outhouse facilities within 13 kilometres of Yukon Crossing at Five Finger Rapids.
  - Stewart River viewpoint at kilometre 551.0. There are outhouse facilities in Stewart Crossing at kilometre 535 which is 16km away.

## Session Briefing Note

### Outhouse Closures on the North Klondike Highway

Highways and  
Public Works

- The outhouse at Conglomerates point of interest was removed in mid-October 2023, and the outhouses at the other two locations were removed at the end of October by Highways and Public Works.
- Highways and Public Works will evaluate the impacts of these closures on nearby rest areas to inform the rest area strategy.

#### Additional response:

- Implementing a long-term strategy and vision for a more standardized and cost-efficient system of roadside amenities will involve some outhouse closures.
- Highways and Public Works is also planning to install fast-charging stations at certain rest areas where feasible. For example, in 2024 we are planning on installing a charging station at the Canol Road rest area on the Alaska Highway.
- As the department develops and implements the rest area strategy, the department will continue to meet the needs of Yukoners and travellers travelling on our highways.

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The closure of outhouses has generated media attention.

#### Background:

- Most highway rest areas in the Yukon fall under the domain of Highways and Public Works.

#### Approved by:



October 31, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Rural Roads Program**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Rural Road Upgrade Program**

- The Rural Road Upgrade Program provides financial support to Yukoners for the improvement of maintained and unmaintained rural Yukon roads.
- Applications for funding were considered in the 2023-24 fiscal year, and so far, \$270,000 has been allocated to fund eight to ten rural road applications.
- In 2022-23, the program funding was reallocated to address flood mitigation requirements in various locations.

**Additional response: Resource Access Road Program**

- The Resource Access Road Program provides support for industry to develop transportation infrastructure to support commercial activity.
- So far in 2023-24, the program has been allocated a budget of \$250,000. The department will be conducting assessments of applications on file for construction next year.
- We know how important this is to industry as resource access roads enable exploration and extraction activities across the Yukon and foster economic development in the broader territorial economy.

**Third response:**

- The Government of Yukon is committed to continuing our work to construct and maintain public infrastructure.
- As in previous years, we will be allocating funds to both the Rural Road Upgrade and the Resource Access Road programs.
- Applications can be found on Yukon.ca.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Rural Roads Program**Highways and  
Public Works

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

- There have been concerns over the lack of funding in 2022-23 for the Rural Road Upgrade Program.
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**Background:**

- The objectives of the **Rural Road Upgrade Program** are:
  - to serve the transportation needs of Yukoners;
  - to upgrade non-industrial rural roads in the Yukon, whether currently maintained by the Yukon government or not;
  - to upgrade rural roads based on requests and input from communities, property owners and other stakeholders;
  - to accomplish approved work with local contractors where available;
  - to evaluate projects on a geographical basis so that all regions of Yukon benefit from the program; and
  - to develop cost sharing arrangements for projects that are not in the Yukon government's current inventory of maintained roads.
- To be eligible, the road must be:
  - available for use by the public;
  - within a surveyed right-of-way where designated; and
  - located on public land or, if on private land, the road must be formally recognized as a highway, in other words a public road.
- This year we have completed projects on 37 Mile Road, Guardian Trail, 3 Mile Road, and Fossil Point Road. We are starting projects on Lewes Farm Road and Ta'an Village Road.
- For the **Resource Access Road Program**, the same eligibility criteria must be met, and the road must also provide an economic benefit to Yukon.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Rural Roads Program**Highways and  
Public Works

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- This is a joint program that is facilitated through Energy, Mines and Resources, Highways and Public Works, and Economic Development.
- Highways and Public Works provides assistance through planning, contracting and road upgrading work.

Approved by:



September 18, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****School Bus Safety**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The safety of the Yukon's children is a key focus for our government. It is the law for drivers to respect the flashing lights and stop signs on school buses that are intended to keep our kids safe.
- We've taken decisive action to address the issue of those who do not drive lawfully around school buses.
- In March 2019, we increased penalties for failing to stop for a school bus and for passing a stopped school bus when not permitted.
- Fines were increased from \$200 to \$500, which is the maximum allowable under the current *Motor Vehicles Act* and demerit points for these offences were increased from five to eight.
- Further increases in fines and penalties, as well as additional penalty options, are being analyzed as part of our ongoing work to replace the *Motor Vehicles Act*.

**Additional response: Enhancing Safety**

- Since 2019 the Yukon government, along with Transport Canada and other Canadian jurisdictions, have participated in a national task force focused on developing measures to enhance school bus safety.
- In 2020, this task force produced a report titled *Strengthening School Bus Safety in Canada*. The report included four recommendations informed by evidence and focused on school bus components that aid in safe bus operation and that deter motorists from passing illegally.
- In February 2020, the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety endorsed the report.
- Some recommendations, such as extended stop arms and increased visibility standards, would be addressed through the Canadian Motor



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**FALL 2023**

## School Bus Safety

Highways and  
Public Works

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Vehicle Safety regulations (MVSR). Others, such as installation of infraction cameras on the bus, could be considered through regulation at a later date, after the new Motor Vehicles Act is in force.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Two minor collisions involving school buses in the winter of 2018-19 received significant media attention. Standard Bus drivers have reported many incidents to the RCMP involving vehicles ignoring the flashing lights on school buses.
  - As of March 4, 2019, amendments to the Summary Convictions Regulation and the Motor Vehicles Act came into effect.
  - Motion No. 432 was brought forward urging HPW to improve school bus safety on October 6, 2022.
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### Background:

- Work on replacing the Motor Vehicles Act is underway and further consideration is being given to additional penalty options, including an automatic demerit suspension and increasing the maximum fine amounts permitted in the Act.
- Some provinces in Canada have strengthened penalties for failing to stop for a school bus. For example, Prince Edward Island recently increased fines as well as demerit points so that such an offence automatically triggers a three-month license suspension.
- In July 2022, the Minister of Transport Canada proposed updated manufacturing requirements for school buses to increase safety. The proposal follows the 2020 Report of the Task Force on School Bus Safety.

Approved by:



September 11, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Delays in Class 4 and Class 5 Drivers  
Licences and Exams**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- As part of getting a drivers licence, applicants must pass a written test, and a practical drivers test, and in addition a Class 4 requires a medical examination certificate.
- Highways and Public Works is aware of the 4 to 6 weeks wait times for road tests in the Yukon, and throughout Canada.
- The department is working closely with industry to expedite road tests for their employees, to help meet their business needs.
- Currently, two examiners work full-time performing testing for Class 5 and commercial licences. To reduce wait times, the department is actively seeking an additional driver examiner to increase testing capacity further.

**Additional response: Medical examination certificates**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Delays in Class 4 and Class 5 Drivers Licences and Exams

Highways and  
Public Works

### Third response:

- The Yukon government has reciprocal agreements in place with other jurisdictions within Canada and the United States that allow drivers with existing class 4 licences, or the equivalent, to exchange their licences for a class 4 Yukon driver's licence without further testing.
- At the time of exchange, applicants are provided with a Yukon driver's licence and a new expiry date of up to five years to alleviate the typical testing requirements.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

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

Approved by:

*C. Hamwood*

November 1, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Territorial Agents and Staffing**

Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon Housing Corporation operates offices in certain communities that are staffed with territorial agents. These agents can offer motor vehicle related services such as driver's licence renewals.
- There have been temporary office closures this summer and fall due to staffing shortages, which has impacted access to motor vehicle related services in Carcross, Teslin and Carmacks.
- Teslin and Carcross offices reopened earlier this summer. The Carcross office was closed again from October 4 to October 30, and reopened on October 31.
- The Yukon Housing Corporation is actively recruiting territorial agents and aims to address staffing shortages as quickly as possible.
- When there are temporary closures, Yukoners will need to visit an office in another community to access in-person services such as getting a new driver's licence.
- All prebooked driver's road tests in communities will proceed as planned unless clients are otherwise notified. Driver examiners do travel to the communities for client road tests.

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

- The Yukon Housing Corporation had to temporarily close multiple offices this summer, which impacted motor vehicle related services.

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**Background:**

- The Yukon Housing Corporation's territorial agents offer motor vehicle related services on behalf of the Department of Highways and Public Works in the following communities:

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Territorial Agents and Staffing**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Carmacks
- Carcross
- Teslin
- Ross River
- Yukon Liquor Corporation offers motor vehicle related services on our behalf in the following communities:
  - Dawson City
  - Faro
  - Haines Junction
  - Mayo
  - Watson Lake
- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Government acts as a representative to assist with motor vehicle services for the citizens of Old Crow.

**Approved by:**

November 14, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Shakwak (North Alaska Highway - Haines Junction to Beaver Creek, and Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska)**Highways and  
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Alaska Highway from the Alaska border at Beaver Creek to Haines Junction, and the Haines Road from Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska is the stretch we often call “Shakwak”.
- These sections of the highway are essential for connecting mainland Alaska to Alaska’s southeast and to the lower 48.
- Unfortunately, these sections of highway have not benefited from significant capital investment since 2015, when stable, predictable funding under the U.S.-Canada Shakwak agreement ended.
- While we work to secure funding from the U.S., Highways and Public Works continues to inspect and maintain segments of the Alaska Highway connecting the Yukon and Alaska.
- Each spring and fall, inspections take place to prioritize where maintenance is required. Some sections of road have been converted from Bituminous Surface Treatment, or BST, to gravel to mitigate the impacts of shifting permafrost.

**Additional response: Funding opportunities**

- Our government’s continued work with U.S. and Alaskan Officials led to the inclusion of the north Alaska Highway in the 2021 *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*.
- While the Act does not commit any specific dollar amount to the reconstruction project, it allows the Yukon and Alaska to apply for U.S. funding for this part of the highway.

**Session Briefing Note****Shakwak (North Alaska Highway - Haines Junction to Beaver Creek, and Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- In December 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced \$1.5 billion in funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program for 2023.
  - This grant would make it possible for our government to restore some of the worst sections of this critical part of the north Alaska Highway into Alaska that is adversely affected by thawing permafrost and climate change.
  - The State of Alaska, in collaboration with our government, applied to the RAISE grant program on February 27, 2023, seeking approximately \$25 million USD for the north Alaska Highway. Unfortunately, our RAISE application was unsuccessful in securing funding.
  - On August 21, 2023, working with our Alaskan counterparts, we submitted a similar funding request for \$31.25 million USD over six years to a different U.S. funding program, the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG). The department expects to receive the results on this submission by the end of 2023.
  - While we await a response, the department is also looking forward to bringing the international team together again to prepare a 2024 RAISE application, strengthened by the learnings from the 2023 RAISE application.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Shakwak (North Alaska Highway - Haines Junction to Beaver Creek, and Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska)**

Highways and Public Works

**Third response: Maintenance**

- While we work to secure funding from the U.S., Highways and Public Works continues to inspect and maintain segments of the North Alaska Highway.
- In 2023, the department rehabilitated 45 kilometres of BST, 27 kilometres of gravel road, and completed more than seven kilometres of gravel patching work on the north Alaska Highway.
- Highways and Public Works' Transportation Maintenance Branch operates two camps that service the north Alaska Highway exclusively, one in Destruction Bay and one in Beaver Creek.
- The Haines Junction maintenance camp also serves part of the north Alaska Highway and the Haines Road, and the Blanchard camp serves the Haines Road.
- Operations and maintenance expenses for the Shakwak portion of the highway vary from year to year, but average approximately \$2 million per year over the past three years.
- Capital expenditures for the north Alaska Highway are estimated to be nearly \$2.5 million for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

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

- The U.S. passed a major bipartisan infrastructure funding bill, the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, in 2021. This bill specifically mentions the Alaska Highway in the Yukon.



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Shakwak (North Alaska Highway - Haines Junction to Beaver Creek, and Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska)**

Highways and Public Works

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- Some of the appropriations under the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* for Alaska were announced in August 2022. There was no funding allocated for the Alaska Highway in the Yukon.
  - Applications to RAISE were submitted in both 2022 and 2023 but both were unsuccessful.
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**Background:****Funding Applications**

- The goal of the former Shakwak agreement was to upgrade 520 kilometres of highway comprising parts of the north Alaska Highway and the Haines Road to a modern, all-weather, two-lane highway.
- The Yukon and Alaskan governments previously submitted joint applications for funding to the BUILD discretionary grant (similar to RAISE) in 2018, 2019 and 2020; however, none of the applications were accepted.
- The specific mention in the U.S. *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* of the Yukon's Alaska Highway was expected to strengthen the merit of the RAISE grant application, compared to the previous BUILD applications.

**Permafrost Issues**

- Thawing permafrost causes severe distortions of the road surface and significant cracking along the road shoulders, creating issues for highway users.
- Highway maintenance costs in permafrost areas can be up to six times higher per kilometre than in non-permafrost areas.
- Inspections carried out in July 2020 confirmed significant distortions from permafrost degradations in the northern segments of the Alaska Highway.
- In 2020-21, we completed the installation of thermosyphons at Dry Creek located at kilometre 1,841 of the Alaska Highway near Beaver Creek. The thermosyphons will help cool the underlying permafrost foundation and stabilize the highway. The

## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### **Shakwak (North Alaska Highway - Haines Junction to Beaver Creek, and Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska)**

Highways and Public Works

thermosyphon project is partially funded by Transport Canada under the Northern Transportation Adaptation Initiative.

- HPW is planning to present the findings from this project at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Permafrost (ICOP), which will be held in Whitehorse from June 16-24, 2024. The Branch will jointly present a paper with Christopher Stevens who is the principal consultant of Northern Permafrost Consulting Eagle River, Alaska.
- In the fall of 2020 and 2021, we reverted several sections along the highway to gravel. This was done to help mitigate the severe permafrost damage impacting the road surface, and to make the road easier to maintain.

Approved by:



November 20, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Takhini River Road and Gully Road**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Highways and Public Works makes it a priority to keep all maintained roads safe and in good condition.
- Twice a year, the department grades the Takhini River Road surface and more frequently as required.
- The crew sanded and plowed the Takhini River Road on October 22, 2023, and put gravel on the road on October 23, to improve the condition for travellers.
- So far, during the 2023-24 fiscal year, the department spent over \$43K on maintenance and upgrades to the road. This is a significant investment in comparison to other rural roads of similar standard.
- In 2022, the department installed a wooden deck to allow traffic to cross a very soft spot at the far end of the road.

**Additional response:**

- Highways and Public Works is working to improve drainage to address erosion issues on the Takhini River Road near its intersection with Gully Road.
- The department is conducting preliminary design work and looking at reconstruction alternatives to improve safety and drainage for the Takhini River Road beyond the Gully Road intersection area.
- The reconstruction design will include strengthening of the road structures, widening the road where it is narrow, installing culvert markers and steam pipes, cleaning and correcting existing culverts, deepening ditches and correcting soft spots in the road.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Takhini River Road and Gully Road

Highways and  
Public Works

- In the coming months, a design will be submitted to YESAB for this area. Before the submission to YESAB, the department will contact affected property owners to share the proposed design and any impacts to property owners.
- Construction on the road will be prioritized in relation to our overall upgrade priorities. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor and provide maintenance to these roads as required.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Takhini River Road maintenance was recently raised during the fall sitting.

### Background:

- The Takhini River Road was built by local residents prior to the 1940s and development has increased over the years.
- In the past decade, large spring runoffs have caused significant erosion to the Takhini River Road and the Gully Road.
- The Yukon government uses a road classification system that considers traffic volumes and socio-economic factors when determining maintenance schedules and planning upgrades.

Approved by:

*C Hamwood*

November 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Watson Lake – Crosswalks and Lighting**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Highways and Public Works is continuing to plan and prioritize safety improvements along the Alaska Highway.
- Over the past year, we have focused on making safety improvements to the Alaska Highway in Watson Lake.
- The department met with Liard First Nation, the RCMP and the Town of Watson Lake, and continues to meet with the town's Chief Administration Officer to discuss their priorities around road infrastructure in the Watson Lake area.
- In August 2022, the department secured funding through Canada's Active Transportation Fund to implement pedestrian safety improvements along the highways in Watson Lake.
- These improvements include new streetlights along the Robert Campbell Highway and upgrades to pedestrian crossings along the Alaska Highway.
- Construction of new streetlights along Robert Campbell Highway between Ravenhill Drive and Two and One-Half Mile Village is currently underway, and it is expected the lights will be operational in early November.
- In the spring of 2024, the department will hire a contractor to upgrade two crosswalks along the Alaska Highway, one near the Robert Campbell Highway intersection and the other in front of Andrea's Hotel.
- The addition of pedestrian-activated flashing beacons to the crosswalks will improve pedestrian safety and visibility, and warn drivers when a pedestrian is using the crosswalk.

## Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

### **Watson Lake – Crosswalks and Lighting**

Highways and  
Public Works

#### **Additional response: Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements:**

- \$1.5 million is budgeted for Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements, and approximately \$1.1 million is funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- The project will improve the safety for active transportation users and pedestrians within Watson Lake, which includes the installation of streetlighting, pedestrian-activated beacons, and pathway connections to the crossings.
- In August 2023, Highways and Public Works met with the Watson Lake Chief Administration Officer regarding a needs assessment for connecting pathways to the new crosswalks for construction in 2024.

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Improving the crosswalks in Watson Lake has been a topic of discussion in the Legislative Assembly.

#### **Background:**

- Highways and Public Works conducted a preliminary assessment on pedestrian infrastructure in Watson Lake during summer 2021.
- Decisions to improve pedestrian safety features are based on a number of factors including the criteria outlined in the Yukon Street lighting Guidelines. Factors include traffic volume, operational factors, roadway design and collision history.

Approved by:



November 1, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Weigh Scale Exemption Permit  
Redesign**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- Monitoring commercial vehicles on Yukon's highways is important for the safety of the travelling public and the integrity of our highway infrastructure.
- The *Highways Act* requires commercial trucks to stop and be weighed every time they pass the weigh scales.
- Commercial carriers who operate within a 20-kilometre radius of the weigh station may apply for a weigh scale exemption permit to avoid having to stop at the weigh scales multiple times a day.
- Highways and Public Works is updating the permitting process to reduce administrative obligations of carriers while continuing to prioritize safety.
- The proposed draft policy uses a risk-based approach to determine carrier reporting requirements and references a carrier's National Safety Rating which includes factors such as carrier safety incidents, roadside safety violations and summary conviction tickets.

**Additional response: Engagement with Industry**

- We continue to engage with industry on developing a safe, effective weigh scale permit exemption system.
- We have met with the Yukon Contractors Association, the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon and the Yukon Transportation Association several times this past year on this topic.
- As a result of this engagement, we created a What We Heard report and a draft policy that we shared with the associations in July 2023.

# Session Briefing Note

**FALL 2023**

## Weigh Scale Exemption Permit Redesign

Highways and Public Works

- The department will consider changes to the draft policy based on feedback received from the engagement with the goal of finalizing the policy this fall for implementation in spring 2024.
- In the meantime, the existing policy remains in effect.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Changes to the weigh scale exemption permits will affect various commercial carriers travelling through the Yukon.

### Background:

- The Yukon government's approach to weigh scale reporting exemption permits was last reviewed in 2007.
- Local weigh scale exemption permits are currently provided to commercial carriers operating within 20 kilometres of the scales and allows them to legally bypass the weigh scales.
- Carrier Compliance vehicle checks helps to protect the traveling public by ensuring commercial vehicles and drivers operating on highways are meeting our safety standards and licensing requirements, their loads are secure, and drivers are operating within road tolerances to help minimize damage to road infrastructure.
- The department meets with TIAY weekly and YCA semi-monthly.

Approved by:



September 11, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Electronic Logging Devices**

**FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon prioritizes the safety of all drivers. In order to keep Yukon's roads and the travelling public safe, commercial drivers are required to only operate a certain number of hours per day. These hours must be tracked accurately.
- In the past two years, over 102 "hours of service" violations were identified by Carrier Compliance Officers on Yukon highways.
- As of January 1, 2023, the *Canadian Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* requires drivers of heavy commercial vehicles to use automated electronic logging devices (ELDs) certified and approved by Transport Canada.
- The Yukon provided a one-year education period, which was extended for 6 months for a total of 18 months, from June 2021 to January 2023. The education period was implemented on instructions by Transport Canada.
- The Yukon used this time to assist carriers with this transition and to provide information and education to carriers on this change.

**Additional response:**

- No other changes have been made related to hours or driver time.
- Currently, there are 96 different certified devices available across Canada at a variety of price points, that commercial vehicle drivers may use.
- The federal *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* have identified several scenarios in which carriers are exempt from the electronic logging device requirement, as long as certain other conditions are met.

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Electronic Logging Devices**

Highways and  
Public Works

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#### **Third response: Exemptions for ELDs**

- The Yukon provides an exemption from maintaining an electronic logging device for vehicles that carry commercial goods under 11,794kg and operate solely in the Yukon, as long as the carrier maintains a record-of-duty status, and drivers have 8 hours of rest between shifts.
- As per the federal regulations, drivers of commercial buses who carry 10 passengers or more, or drivers who carry commercial goods, do not need an electronic logging device if:
  - the model of their vehicle is made in 2000 or earlier;
  - the vehicle is being operated within a 160-kilometre radius of its home terminal and returns to its home terminal at the end of each day (this exemption only applies if the driver has a minimum of eight hours off between their shifts and the carrier maintains a record of on-duty hours);
  - the vehicle is subject to a rental of no more than 30-days without extension or renewal;
  - the vehicle is being operated under a motor carrier permit, typically an oilfield exemption or emergency declaration; and,
  - the vehicle is operated by a motor carrier for which an exemption has been issued by Transport Canada (e.g., currently, Transport Canada has one exemption for vehicles that are being delivered to a client from a manufacturer where the vehicles are the product).

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Electronic Logging Devices**

Highways and  
Public Works

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Some stakeholders are asking that the Yukon delay implementation along with certain provinces.
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#### **Background:**

- There are delays in implementation in certain provinces. However, these are tied to delays in updating provincial regulations related to electronic logging devices for intra-provincial carriers. For inter-provincial carriers the new federal requirements are being enforced.
  - In June 2021, Highways and Public Works began providing information on electronic logging devices and the new regulations to carriers and the public.
    - Handouts were given to carriers who passed through the weigh stations.
    - Information cards were distributed through Carrier Compliance at the following locations:
      - the Whitehorse Weigh Scales;
      - the Watson Lake Weigh Scales; and,
      - the National Safety Code Office via email requests.
    - A website with information on the new regulations also went live.
  - In November 2022, a Zoom presentation was provided to industry. This presentation was advertised, and industry was informed via email invite. The department has been meeting with industry regularly on this and other topics.
  - Beginning on January 1, 2023, Carrier Compliance started issuing electronic logging device warnings. Just over 75 warnings had been issued between January 1 and July 31, 2023. As of August 1, Carrier Compliance has stopped issuing warnings and started enforcement. Carriers are allowed 14 days to become compliant if they are not operating with an electronic logging device.
  - Beyond these educational activities, Carrier Compliance has provided electronic logging device handouts when performing Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance inspections. Over 1,300 inspections were completed in the last 24 months.
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**Session Briefing Note**  
**Electronic Logging Devices****FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

- Following best practices, the Yukon government has adopted the Federal *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* by reference in legislation. Adoption by reference helps the Yukon avoid implementation issues, and helps with ongoing alignment, while minimizing the necessity to update regulations when future amendments are made to the federal laws.
- Operating north of the 60th parallel results in more drive and work time for carriers. Accurate logging of on-duty and off-duty time is critical to avoid fatigue.

Approved by:



September 14, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections  
(PMVIs)**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended Response:**

- Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections (PMVIs) are the first line of defense when it comes to the safety of large commercial vehicles operating on Yukon's highways.
- To help keep our roads safe, the Yukon is aligned with other jurisdictions in Canada and with the National Safety Code to require that all commercial vehicles undergo PMVIs conducted by certified inspectors.
- Regular, preventative maintenance of equipment catches small problems before they result in mechanical failure and increase the potential for collisions or vehicle breakdown.
- Operators are required to participate in a regular vehicle maintenance and servicing program for all commercial trucks, trailers and buses under their control to verify they are mechanically sound.
- The comprehensive maintenance program systematically identifies defects and allows an operator to undertake necessary repairs, while complying with the semi-annual requirements under the PMVI program.
- Certification for doing PMVIs is required for the inspections, not for performing the mechanical work.

**Additional response: Licenced mechanics**

- Commercial vehicles systems are becoming more complex. A certified mechanic is a requirement before they can become certified PMVI inspectors and perform PMVIs.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections  
(PMVIs)**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The inspections are performed by certified inspectors to ensure that commercial motor vehicles are mechanically sound and in safe working order.
- A certified mechanic includes both Journeyman and Red Seal mechanic qualifications.
- Non-certified mechanics can continue to challenge the Red Seal Mechanical Exam through the Yukon Apprentice and Trades Office.
- In October 2022, the Yukon government worked with the Yukon Apprentice and Trades Office to offer a free preparatory course to non-certified mechanics, so they can challenge the mechanics exam.
- Since November 2022, 16 local mechanics have completed the process of becoming a certified inspector.
- The Yukon now has a total of 306 certified inspectors in the following communities: Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Teslin, Watson Lake and Whitehorse.
- Non-certified mechanics can still perform work, however, only a certified inspector can complete the PMVI.
- A 15-month grace period was provided to allow industry to meet these new certification requirements. This grace period ended January 1, 2023.

**Third Response: Tourism Operators**

- The regulations regarding inspection requirements for passenger-carrying vehicles have not changed in the Yukon in over 20 years.
- The Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators' National Safety Code Standard 11b requires commercial transportation

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections  
(PMVIs)**Highways and  
Public Works

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vehicles to undergo an inspection every 6 months. This is consistent across the country for passenger bus carriers.

- Highways and Public Works officials are reaching out to passenger bus carriers to make sure they are aware of the requirements.

**Fourth Response: 6-month Renewal Cycle**

- The Yukon adopts the National Safety Code, Standard 11 that requires that vehicles be inspected every 6 months. This standard is also followed by British Columbia and Saskatchewan for vehicles that carry commercial goods.
- While many jurisdictions require inspections on all vehicles over 4,500kg, this requirement only applies to heavy trucks over 11,794kg in the Yukon.
- The 6-month inspection frequency is appropriate for the Yukon because the weather and driving conditions in a northern environment are hard on commercial vehicles, and regular certified inspections provide an additional level of assurance that commercial vehicles are mechanically sound and safe for operation.
- Every jurisdiction in Canada requires passenger carrying vehicles that have a manufactured seating capacity of more than 10, including the driver, to undergo an inspection every 6 months.

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

- There may be concerns related to the impacts on industry resulting from changes in the PMVI inspector qualifications that mean only certified inspectors can perform these inspections and in order to qualify to be a PMVI inspector they must be a certified mechanic.
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**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspections  
(PMVIs)**Highways and  
Public Works**Background:**

- The Yukon was the only jurisdiction in Canada that allowed non-certified mechanics to perform PMVIs for the past 10 years until January 1, 2023.
- As of January 1, 2023, only certified mechanic can qualify to become certified inspectors can perform these inspections.
- Yukon's PMVI program has not been updated since the 1990s.
- The National Safety Code Office began work with industry on this issue in the summer of 2020.
- In the past, enforcement activities have identified numerous serious safety infractions with commercial vehicles that had passed inspection, which is why we are now requiring inspections to be done by certified inspectors.

**Approved by:**

September 14, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved



**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Five-Year Capital Plan**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The Five-Year Capital Plan for 2023-24 builds on the Yukon government'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.
- 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.

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon government will continue to advertise tenders as early as possible to support vendors to better prepare and plan for these projects, and so that the government is building at the best times of the year for construction.
- As capital plans change and mature, we will work toward meeting both project and vendor needs. Departments may spread out major projects that have several components, such as a school or bridge project, rather than tender them all at the same time.
- The Five-Year Capital Plan also supports the implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy through information sharing on capital spending and through direct engagement with Yukon First Nations.

**Session Briefing Note****FALL 2023****Five-Year Capital Plan**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Third response: Sharing the Capital Plan with Yukon First Nations**

- Every 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.
- At the First Nation's request, the department sets up in-person meetings during the spring to discuss the capital plan and look for opportunities for cooperation and coordination.
- In March this year, the department reached out to all Yukon First Nations to discuss this year's capital plan: 10 of the 14 Yukon First Nations participated in these meetings.
- The department also met as a group with eight Yukon First Nation development corporations.

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

- The 2023-24 Five-Year Capital Plan lays out the Yukon government's long-term capital investment strategy.
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**Background:**

- 2023-24 marks the sixth 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.
- This is the fifth 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.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Five-Year Capital Plan****FALL 2023**Highways and  
Public Works

- 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.

Approved by:



September 8, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved