

FALL 2024 HPW SESSION BRIEFING NOTES

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Public Works

Recommended response: Highway and Bridge Design

- Promoting active transportation is important as it not only helps support healthy lifestyles it also moves us toward a cleaner and more sustainable future for the Yukon.
- We are developing Yukon-specific design guidelines for active transportation infrastructure to ensure that any new infrastructure, or changes to existing infrastructure, will be engineered with a focus on comfort and safety for users and ease of winter maintenance.
- The guidelines will align with national best practices and will also be tailored to the Yukon's context which includes rural areas with lower populations and constraining topography. This work is expected to be completed by March 2025.
- Currently, Highways and Public Works is incorporating active transportation options into our highway infrastructure projects wherever possible.
- We are making progress to improve options for walking and cycling along the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse through the ongoing development of a multi-use trail.
- We have started planning future extensions to this trail from Robert Service Way south to the South Klondike Highway intersection and from Two Mile Hill north through Porter Creek to the North Klondike Highway, which will provide safer and more comfortable options for people walking and riding.
- We are also incorporating active transportation trails as part of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project, which will include a

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Public Works

pedestrian walkway across the bridge and a trail underneath the bridge that will provide all-season access.

Additional response: Alaska Highway Intersection Upgrades at Robert Service Way and Two Mile Hill

- Our priority is to improve the safety and efficiency of key sections of the highway, starting with the busiest area near the centre of Whitehorse and expanding outward.
- This approach ensures a more consistent and reliable corridor for all who use it. This is why we are designing upgrades to the Robert Service Way and Two-Mile Hill intersections, which are the two key access points to Whitehorse.
- The Two-Mile Hill intersection is being planned and designed jointly with the City of Whitehorse as part of the HART project: the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill and Range Road Combined Intersection Upgrades project.
- The planned upgrades to these intersections will reduce collisions, improve traffic flow and will make crossings safer by improving active transportation infrastructure.

Additional response: Rabbit Foot Canyon

- In September 2024, we started working on a plan for a continuous multi-use trail along the Alaska Highway from the South Klondike Highway to the North Klondike Highway to expand existing paved trail network along the highway.

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- We've identified the 6-kilometre section of trail between Two Mile Hill to Porter Creek as a near-term priority, which aligns with the City of Whitehorse's Transportation Master Plan.
- This project includes construction of a trail through the narrow section of highway known as Rabbit Foot Canyon.
- During the winter, engineering and detailed design planning for the trail will take place, with implementation planned to follow in summer 2025.

Additional response: Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements:

- We are also making pedestrian safety improvements in Watson Lake.
- The safety improvements include:
 - the addition of streetlights along the Robert Campbell Highway, which was completed in November 2023;
 - the upgrade of two existing pedestrian crossings with pedestrian-activated flashing beacons along the Alaska Highway in 2024; and
 - four new pedestrian crosswalks along the Alaska and Robert Campbell Highways in 2024.
- \$1.5 million is budgeted for the Watson Lake Pedestrian Safety Improvements. Approximately \$1.1 million of that is funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

Additional response: Building and Parking Lot Design

- Active Transportation planning is incorporated into how we design and construct new buildings.

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- For example, the new Whistle Bend School has been constructed to accommodate children riding bikes in front of the school, and the trails behind the school integrate into the Whistle Bend trail system to allow students to actively commute to school.
- Construction of a new staff parking area behind Selkirk Elementary School is now complete. The design has allowed for a bike and walking path alongside the parking lot which links with the City of Whitehorse's active transportation plan for Selkirk Street.
- 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: 20-year Transportation Plan (Action T35)

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

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Public Works

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

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

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There was a tragic fatal collision involving a cyclist along the Alaska Highway in June 2024. A memorial bike ride organized for the lost community member, and to show support for improved infrastructure, included hundreds of riders.
- 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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Commuter Safety Projects**Highways and
Public Works**Background:**

- In January 2024, two push-button pedestrian crossings were activated along the Alaska Highway at Birch Street and 17th Avenue in Porter Creek, to increase safety for active transportation commuters.
- In July 2023, the department completed construction of a paved, multi-use trail between the Lodestar Lane and the intersection of Robert Service Way and the Alaska Highway.
- 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.

Approved by:

T. Allen

September 27, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Alaska Highway through Whitehorse is not only an international highway; it is a vital link for local transportation in Yukon that includes people from the communities travelling to Whitehorse and for Whitehorse residents commuting to and from work and school in cars, on bikes, and as pedestrians.
- Unfortunately, several vehicle collisions have occurred along the corridor this past year, which has affirmed our government's priority to improve traffic safety for all highway users through the corridor.
- Through 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works has worked closely with road safety experts to conduct a Road Safety Review of the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse to help prioritize safety improvements in the corridor.
- Our priority is to improve the safety and efficiency of key sections of the highway, starting with the busiest area near the centre of Whitehorse and expanding outward. This approach ensures a more consistent and reliable corridor for all who use it.
- This is why we are currently focusing on upgrades to the Robert Service Way and Two Mile Hill intersections, which are the two key access points to downtown Whitehorse.
- We are also looking for more innovative ways to improve safety that minimize costly highway expansion projects.
- This includes designing more sustainable travel options, such as expansions to the paved multi-use trail along the highway, with a focus on the section between Two Mile Hill and Porter Creek.

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Highways and Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon takes the safety of those travelling on our highways very seriously.
- While we do not know the cause of recent incidents in this area, we continue to take measures on all our highways to improve safety for all travellers.
- Highways and Public Works traffic engineers review RCMP investigation reports to understand the factors that led to highway incidents for the purpose of planning highway safety improvements.
- The Alaska Highway through Whitehorse is not only an international highway; it is a vital link for local transportation in Yukon that includes people from the communities travelling to Whitehorse and for Whitehorse residents commuting to and from work and school in cars, on bikes, and as pedestrians.
- Through 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works has worked closely with road safety experts to conduct a Road Safety Review of the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse to help prioritize safety improvements in the corridor.
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- We are also looking for more innovative ways to improve safety that minimize costly highway expansion projects.
 - This includes designing more sustainable travel options, such as expansions to the paved multi-use trail along the highway, with a focus on the section between Two Mile Hill and Porter Creek.
 - We are working closely with our colleagues at the City of Whitehorse on these corridor projects to align with the priorities outlined in their Transportation Master Plan.
 - Our goal is to create infrastructure that integrates seamlessly with theirs.

Additional response: Upcoming Work – Robert Service Way Intersection

- We are continuing to plan for upgrades to the Robert Service Way intersection.
- Two design options for this portion of the project were considered, an improved four-way traffic light intersection or a roundabout which we are reviewing.
- Roundabouts are proven to improve traffic safety by slowing traffic down, reducing the severity of collisions and making it easier for cyclists and pedestrians to cross.
- Roundabouts can also improve traffic flow to accommodate future city growth.
- If a roundabout is determined to be the best option, we will ensure that it would be designed with Yukoners in mind.

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Additional response: Two Mile Hill Intersections

- The City of Whitehorse and Government of Yukon have partnered on the Hamilton Boulevard, Alaska Highway, Range Road, Two Mile Hill intersection (HART), upgrades project.
- This joint initiative is focused on developing designs that will improve the Hamilton Boulevard and Alaska Highway intersection with an emphasis on making travelling safer and more efficient for all transportation modes.
- In 2023, we started the first round of public engagement for the project, which included an online survey that received 455 responses.
- The proposed intersection designs were shared with the public in April 2024 during a second round of public engagement.
- After evaluating the options, we will select the preferred design and develop a project report.
- More information can be found online at engagewhitehorse.ca.

Additional response: Upcoming Work – Porter Creek Area

- We have made a number of safety improvements in Porter Creek, including:
 - installing a new left hand turn traffic signal at the Alaska Highway and Wann Road intersection in November 2022; and,
 - upgrading the crosswalks at Birch Road and 17th Avenue with pedestrian-activated flashing beacons. This project was completed in January 2024.
- A priority project for this government is a paved multi-use trail along the highway through Porter Creek that will connect Two Mile Hill to Wann Road.

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Highways and Public Works

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- We have started planning for this project, and construction is anticipated to begin next summer.
 - The construction start date is dependent on the final design plan which could require that the project undergo regulatory processes.
 - The multi-use trails in development will reflect valuable input from the public and key stakeholders.
 - As designs are finalized, we are committed to continuing meaningful discussions with the City of Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dun First Nation and local community groups to help design trails that meet the needs and preferences of everyone involved.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The safety improvements through Whitehorse will affect many road users.
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Background:

- We completed several projects along the Alaska Highway, including:
 - installing a left turn light at the Robert Service Way intersection;
 - major reconstruction at both the South and North Klondike Highway intersections;
 - improvements to the Range Road intersection, including traffic lights with pedestrian-controlled lights and a paved multi-use trail;
 - improvements at the Hillcrest Drive intersection, including acceleration and deceleration lanes and traffic lights;
 - improvements between Hillcrest Drive and Burns Road, including the addition of:
 - streetlights;
 - two crossings with pedestrian-controlled traffic lights;
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- a paved multi-use trail connecting to trails going into downtown; and
- upgrades to the multi-use trail adjacent to the highway.
- Public engagement for these projects happened at various times over the last few years, and included open houses, pop-up information booths, an interactive website, and expert panel discussions.
- In addition, the project team has engaged with First Nations governments and a variety of stakeholder groups, such as the City of Whitehorse community associations and local businesses.

Robert Service Way Intersection

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

Porter Creek

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

October 28, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Dempster Fibre Line**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Our government was mandated to complete the Dempster Fibre Project to ensure this critical backup telecommunications line is available for the benefit of communities in the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories in the event of service disruption – and so I am happy to report that we succeeded in completing another commitment made to Yukoners.
- The Dempster Fibre Line is a 778-kilometre fibre optic line that follows the Dempster Highway from Dawson City, Yukon to Inuvik Northwest Territories.
- The completion of the Dempster Fibre Line project demonstrates our government's dedication to improving telecommunications infrastructure across the North.
- This fibre line will play a vital role in ensuring connectivity for northern residents and supporting a growing digital ecosystem in the Yukon.
- The new network line will provide communities with a backup fibre line in the event of a fibre line service disruption and provide more reliable internet and cellphone services.
- The construction phase of the project was completed by ROHL Global Networks, on September 12, 2024. The total contract value was \$94 million.
- The fibre line also crosses the Traditional Territories of eight First Nations and Indigenous groups in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, whose partnership and guidance were crucial to the successful completion of this essential infrastructure.

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Additional response:

- For years, northern communities were dependent on a single fibre optic line. When that line went down, the region was largely cut off from the digital world.
- Northwestel has advised that the Yukon's section of the fibre line between Dawson City and Inuvik is now commissioned and available for internet traffic.
- While there is ongoing testing, this is a significant milestone and means that if there is any disruption of service south of Whitehorse, the Yukon can be re-routed over the Dempster Fibre Line to Inuvik.
- The rest of the Canada North Fibre Loop is expected to come into service as planned in December 2024.
- The Canada North Fibre Loop is the connection of the Dempster Fibre Line to the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link and other existing lines in Northern British Columbia.

Additional response: Construction Activities and Project Schedule

- In the 2023 summer season construction progress exceeded expectations, with nearly double the planned work completed.
- At times, up to 10 different crews operated simultaneously across various sections of the route, laying a total of 405,965 meters of conduit and 701,995 meters of fibre optic cable.
- This past summer, the contractor was focused on essential work in the communities of Dawson, Fort McPherson, and Inuvik.
- Additionally, connections were made to Northwestel buildings along the route, to enhance the network's resilience.

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- The 2024 season also involved splicing or joining of the installed fibre cables and commissioning of the line.
- The Government of Yukon looks forward to the positive benefits this project will have on telecommunications reliability in the North, benefiting both citizens and businesses alike.
- Testing, signal checks, and other aspects of networking were conducted simultaneously as the project construction neared completion.
- Clean up and ground remediation will continue following construction, as is normal for a project of this size and complexity.

Additional response: First Nation Participation

- First Nations participation was a large component of this value-driven tendering process.
- Under a First Nations and Indigenous Participation Plan for the project, 20 per cent of the contract value is allocated toward subcontracting, employment and training for First Nations in the Yukon and Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories.
- Over the course of the project, open houses and job fairs in the communities of Dawson City, Old Crow, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik, and Fort McPherson.
- At the end of 2023, the project successfully achieved its First Nation and Indigenous Participation targets of 20 per cent of the construction cost by way of training, employment hours and subcontracting.

Additional response: Environmental Protection

- Environmental protection remains a key value of this project. Stantec and Tetrattech were contracted directly by the Yukon government to

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mitigate the impacts of this project on the environment, particularly on permafrost.

- Throughout the project an extensive monitoring and inspection program has been implemented to help ensure that impacts were mitigated as much as possible. This includes:
 - environmental and field inspectors monitoring 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;
 - monthly inspections by Stantec and Tetra-tech's lead project engineers; and
 - regular inspections by the Government of Northwest Territories environmental compliance team.
- The Main Contractor was required to follow 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.
- Subcontracts were also put in place by the main contractor to mitigate the impact of this project on the environment, particularly on permafrost.
- Input from Yukon University scientists, as well as First Nations traditional knowledge keepers, was incorporated to inform various environmental components during the design of the project.

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Additional response: Alternate Installation Methods

- Construction of the fibre took place in challenging terrain which requires the use of specialized equipment and construction methods to minimize impacts to the environment.
- The preferred installation method is installing cable beneath the ground — this method offers the greatest protection to the cable.
- In areas when this method could not be used, such as waterways, horizontal directional drilling was used.
- For this method, a small hole is drilled below the surface where the fibre conduit is placed, with the longest bore hole going approximately 1.3 kilometres under the Mackenzie River
- The horizontal directional drilling method was used to assist in crossing under three major rivers – the Arctic Red, the Peel and the Mackenzie River – without disturbing the flow of the waters. This can only be done in suitable soil and not through rocky areas.
- The least preferred method is the installation of new poles for an aerial installation, which is only used when we encounter hard rock or unstable clay-like soil. Aerial installation methods are commonly found outside of riparian areas, bodies of water and small rivers.
- Aerial installations are the least preferred option and are only used in rare instances when all other installation methods are not possible due to existing ground conditions.

Additional response: Installation Facts

- For the Dempster Fibre Line:
 - 89 percent was buried below the surface using plows;

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

Additional response: Key Facts**Route:**

- The fiber optic line will follow the Dempster Highway, which is the only road connection between Yukon and the Northwest Territories
- It runs approximately 800 kilometers or 500 miles between Dawson City, Yukon, and Inuvik, Northwest Territories.

Purpose:

- The project aims to provide high-speed internet and improve connectivity for remote northern communities, which have long been underserved in terms of reliable telecommunications infrastructure.
- It will create a redundant fiber loop with the existing Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link, increasing the resiliency of communications networks in the North.

Improved Connectivity:

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- It will enhance internet access for northern communities, businesses, and government services.
- The line will significantly reduce the chances of network outages that have previously affected the North by creating a backup system.

Economic Benefits:

- The project created jobs during the entire construction phase and provided long-term benefits by improving the economic prospects of the region through better digital infrastructure.
- Enhanced connectivity supports local businesses, tourism, and government services in remote areas.

Challenges:

- The construction of the Dempster Fibre Line faced significant challenges due to the harsh Arctic conditions, such as extreme cold, permafrost, and difficult terrain.
- It was carefully constructed to minimize the impact on the surrounding ecosystems, including the sensitive tundra regions.

Funding and Timeline:

- The project is jointly funded by the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon. The total cost is \$94 million.

Strategic Importance:

- Before the Dempster Fibre line project, the Yukon, Beaufort Delta and Mackenzie Valley were the only regions in Canada without a redundant or backup fibre optic line.

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- This left the territory vulnerable to communication outages in case of damage to the single fibre line that connected it to the rest of the country.
 - A backup fibre connection significantly improves Yukoners reliability of internet and telecommunications.
 - The Dempster Fibre Line is a critical northern communication backbone, allowing for more reliable internet, cell phone service, and communication systems, especially important in emergency situations.
 - Overall, the Dempster Fibre Line is a transformative project aimed at bridging the digital divide for northern communities, enhancing economic opportunities, and ensuring more resilient telecommunications infrastructure in a challenging and remote region.
-

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.
 - This is a mandate commitment item.
-

Background:

- ROHL Global Networks, in partnership with Dagoo Services, was awarded the construction contract in May 2021 and construction began in July 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.
 - The Five Year Capital Plan indicates the 2024-25 budget is \$10 to \$15 million.
 - 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.
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- Scientists and highway engineers from Yukon University and the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories have participated in several design reviews.
- 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.
- Highways and Public Works worked with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to review the proposed remediation work.
- Northern communities currently depend on a single fibre optic line. When that line goes down, the region is largely cut off from the digital world. Once in Inuvik, the fibre line will connect to the existing Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link. Together, the new line will complete a 4,000-kilometre network. That network will provide communities with a backup line in the event of a service disruption and provide more reliable internet and cellphone services.
- Regulatory permits for the project were issued after approval by the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board in the Northwest Territories and a recommendation was received from the Yukon Socio-Economic Assessment Board in the Yukon.
- Scientists and highway engineers from Yukon University and the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories have participated in several design reviews.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 4, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Dempster Highway is Canada's only all-season public road to cross the Arctic Circle. Starting near Dawson City, this 740-kilometre unpaved two-lane highway traverses northern Yukon all the way to Inuvik, Northwest Territories. 465 kilometres of the highway is in the Yukon.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works is responsible for maintaining the Dempster Highway between the North Klondike Highway and the Yukon-Northwest Territories border.
- We prioritize the safety of travellers and continuously monitor the Yukon's highway network for potential risks and road safety hazards.
- The Dempster Highway sees shifting weather patterns that can pose a safety risk to drivers.
- Throughout the year our crews maintain the highway daily, plowing, grading, blowing snow and fixing issues as they arise.
- We urge all drivers to use caution when travelling along the Dempster Highway, to drive to the current road conditions, and to check 511 Yukon for the latest updates.

Additional response: Engagement with the Government of NWT

- The Government of Yukon is actively engaged with the Government of Northwest Territories to ensure the Dempster Highway remains resilient to the impacts of climate change and continues to meet the needs of our communities.

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

- Together, we are working on a Memorandum of Understanding to define our shared goals of maintaining the Dempster Highway as a safe, dependable and efficient route.
- To support this initiative, we have shared planning, engineering and climate data related to the Dempster Highway.
- Once the plans are complete, we plan to submit a joint application to the federal government to support upgrades to the Dempster Highway over the next 10 to 20 years.

Additional response: Weather and Road Conditions

- The Dempster Highway is a road unlike any other, and for many travellers, it could present challenges depending on weather.
- Snow, rain, freezing rain, strong winds and major temperature fluctuations can impact the conditions of the road, making it challenging to drive on for even the most experienced of drivers.
- While we work hard to keep it maintained, we encourage travellers to be prepared by travelling with spare tires, extra fuel, spare oil and anything else to be self sufficient in the remote wilderness.
- In early August, our engineers conducted an assessment of the highway and identified a number of areas for potential improvement from both an engineering and traveller perspective.
- This detailed assessment will enable us to formulate effective plans and cost estimates for potential improvements which we aim to finalize by the end of March next year.
- The Government of Yukon spent approximately \$7 million on resurfacing and maintenance of the Dempster Highway this past year.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Dempster Highway

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**Incidents**

- This year a number of serious motorcycle incidents took place on the Dempster Highway.

Road Closures

- In March 2024, the Dempster Highway was under a blizzard warning with extremely high winds and was closed for a week due to an accumulation of blowing snow, and extremely icy sections.
- Highways and Public Works officials were in contact with NWT throughout the closure to help keep travellers informed.

Road Washout

- In May 2023, 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 2024 construction season, gravel resurfacing on sections of the highway between Ogilvie and Eagle Plains was completed.

General

- 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.

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

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- While traffic volumes for the 300-plus kilometres of the highway north of Tombstone are not significant, Highways and Public Works maintains this section of the highway to a set standard.
 - The development of the Highway Infrastructure Improvement Plan for the Yukon portion of the Dempster Highway began in January 2024. It is planned to be completed in the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 3, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Erik Nielsen Whitehorse
International Airport**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport – YXY is a crucial gateway for travellers to and from the northern region of Canada.
- The airport plays a significant role in connecting the Yukon to major cities across Canada and is an important hub for the region's tourism industry.
- As such, the Department of Highways and Public Works is facilitating essential improvements to Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport to ensure it meets current standards. Improvements completed to date include upgrades to:
 - the parallel runway;
 - the taxiways;
 - apron panels; and
 - developing airport land for institutional and commercial uses.
- The main runway replacement project is well underway and expected to be complete by 2026.
- The department upgraded the surface water drainage infrastructure as part of the main runway replacement project and make further improvements to drainage at the airport for the long term.
- We will continue making upgrades to the Whitehorse airport to meet the needs of travellers now and into the future.

Additional response:

- During the reconstruction of the main runway, the parallel runway is being used as the primary runway.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Erik Nielsen Whitehorse
International Airport**Highways and
Public Works

- While the runway and taxiway dimensions will be able to accommodate larger aircraft such as those found in Aircraft Group Number or AGN V, overall, the Whitehorse Airport including the air terminal building, fire hall, etc. is designed to support AGN IV aircraft and would require significant investments to support a larger AGN V aircraft.
- Air North has secured interline agreements with Condor and Westjet that allow travellers to connect to the Yukon through Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.
- The parallel runway will continue to support all other domestic traffic regularly operating at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport while construction is occurring on the Main Runway.

Third response: Taxiway and Tenant Lease Area Upgrades

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

Fourth response: Maintenance Facility

- Planning work is underway for the replacement of the airport maintenance facility, which is critical to the operation of the airport.
- The new facility is being considered in a location on the east side of the airport to maximize the land available for commercial aviation operators on the west bench of the airport.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Erik Nielsen Whitehorse
International Airport**Highways and
Public Works

- Construction is taking place this year for utility upgrades needed for development of the east bench of the airport. Timelines for construction and demolition of the maintenance facility will be announced in a future capital budget.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**Future Airport Development and Service Levels**

- There are six Aircraft Group Number (AGN) classifications, ranging from I to VI, or smallest to largest.
 - Airports classified as AGN V in Canada typically support significant metropolitan area populations and have passenger volumes in the millions.
 - The Whitehorse Airport supports about 400,000 passengers per year and a relatively small surrounding population, less than 40,000 people.
 - The Government of Yukon continues to evaluate the opportunities for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport to increase its service levels and accommodate larger passenger planes.
 - For this service level increase there are a number of program and infrastructure investments that would need to be made.
 - These additional investments would include increasing:
 - aircraft rescue firefighting resources;
 - aircraft maneuvering surfaces;
 - space and processing capacity for Canadian Border Services; and,
 - passenger processing and screening facilities.
 - While additional investments are required to support moving from a category 4 airport (AGN IV) to a category 5 (AGN V) airport, the length and width of the
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Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport

Highways and
Public Works

existing and new main runway does not limit the Whitehorse Airport from supporting larger aircraft.

- Service level increases at Yukon airports and aerodromes require a clear business case to ensure informed investments in our infrastructure.
- The Yukon government will continue to work with industry and the Department of Tourism and Culture to inform future planning for Yukon airports and aerodromes.
- There are relatively few airports in Canada classified as AGN V, and those airports support significant metro area populations and have passenger volumes in the millions.

Parallel Runway

- The construction tender to upgrade the parallel runway was awarded to Terus Construction Ltd and Skookum Asphalt for approximately \$21 million. Construction began in spring 2023 and was substantially completed in late 2023.
- To meet Transport Canada regulations, last summer, we extended the runway safety area of the parallel runway. This required work in 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 work on the parallel runway and upcoming work on the main runway preserve the existing Active Transportation trail owned and operated by the City of Whitehorse, which is routed around the north end of the airport.

Canadian Airports classified as AGN V (Aircraft Group Number):

- Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) - Toronto, Ontario
 - Annual average 34.7 million passengers in 2022.
- Vancouver International Airport (YVR) - Vancouver, British Columbia
 - Annual average passengers 18.6 million passengers in 2022.

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International Airport**Highways and
Public Works

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

October 10, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon takes the safety of those travelling on our highways very seriously.
- Highways and Public Works is actively working on several safety enhancements for the Lewes River Bridge area.
- We have updated the line markings and have extended the no-passing zone further from the bridge approach.
- To help improve visibility, our traffic engineers will be replacing the reflective hazard signage on the bridge in the coming weeks.
- Planning and design efforts are underway to install intersection lighting on the bridge approach.
- Our traffic engineers are assessing additional cautionary signage to better inform drivers as they approach and are reviewing the speed limit in the area.
- The department is also exploring options to modify the access from Lewes Sawmill Road onto the Alaska Highway to address visibility concerns and make this area safer.

Additional response: Planned Line of Sight Enhancements

- One of the primary challenges in this area is the limited lines of sight for traffic on the bridge and vehicles approaching from Sawmill Road - which we are working to address. At certain times of the year, fog may also impact visibility.
- On the west side of the bridge, the department has been reviewing options that would include lowering the grade of the hill, adjusting the road alignment, and widening the shoulder.

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

- On the east side of the bridge, options include relocating the pullout, adding a right turn lane into the pullout and reducing the grade of the hill to improve sight lines.

Additional response: Changes to project timelines and budget

- Work was undertaken this past year to identify any heritage values in the project area, as well as to advance the engineering design.
- As design work for this project progressed, some project specifications had to be re-evaluated due to topographical challenges.
- As a result, the construction component of this project was not included in the final 2024 – 2025 capital plan.
- Highways and Public Works is now refining the scope with a focus on improving safety outcomes. In the coming months, we will finalize the design and submit to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment board.
- In the meantime, the department is also looking at ways to accelerate key safety improvements.
- While this work is still in the feasibility stage, the department intends to provide additional details in the coming months, when the capital plan is tabled.

Additional response: Lewes River Bridge Maintenance

- As part of regular maintenance for the bridge, the department hired a consultant through a Request for Proposal process to conduct a detailed site inspection of the bridge. They identified an area where some concrete repairs are required.

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

- We plan to complete the repairs in 2025-26 and have budgeted \$2.5 million to complete this work.
- Highways and Public Works regularly monitors and maintains the protective barrier in the area beside the Sawmill Road intersection, repairing any damaged sections as needed to ensure safety.

Additional response: Collision Analysis

- We consider collision information when making decisions related to the design and maintenance of our infrastructure.
- Vehicle collisions are reported to the RCMP and are stored in the National Collision Database.
- Engineers and road safety planners in the department use the collision database information to assess the safety performance of highway infrastructure.
- Collision analysis is part of the overall safety analysis for infrastructure design that includes review of existing conditions, operations and human factors.

Additional response: Highway Network Safety

- The department has been actively working on several projects to improve safety for all travelers.
 - Since the launch of the Roadway Safety Improvement Program in 2019, we have installed over 9 kilometers of new barriers, painted over 3,500 kilometres of highway lines, and cleared approximately 4,200 kilometres of vegetation in the right-of-way.

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

- In 2023, we constructed a bypass road that connects the existing Freegold Road with the Klondike Highway a year in advance of the designated time frame and within budget.
 - We recently upgraded two existing pedestrian crossings along the Alaska Highway in Porter Creek with pedestrian-activated flashing beacons.
 - These are some examples of the department taking action to improve the safety of those that travel our highways.
 - As we are now in the winter season conditions are changing and we have been sanding the highway to mitigate slippery conditions.
 - We encourage the travelling public to stay safe and drive to the road conditions as we shift into the winter season.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- On September 16 of this year, a pickup truck pulling a trailer drove into the water on the east side of the Lewes River Bridge. One of the two men in the truck at the time remains unaccounted for.
 - In 2022, a semi-truck overturned on the Alaska Highway west of the Lewes River Bridge.
 - Highways and Public Works completed a study in May 2021, to identify opportunities to improve the safety of the Alaska Highway near the Lewes River bridge.
 - In 2020, a motorcycle rider was killed on the hill west of the Lewes River Bridge.
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Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Lewes River Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works traffic engineers review RCMP investigation reports to understand the factors that led to highway incidents for the purpose of planning highway safety improvements in the area of the bridge.
- In the past 30 years, there have been a total of 14 reported collisions on this bridge. In reviewing these collisions, there were a variety of contributing factors, with no single common cause.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Main Runway Replacement Project**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is making significant investments to the Yukon's infrastructure to provide Yukoners with safe and reliable aviation infrastructure for years to come.
- The \$160.7 million contract to reconstruct the main runway was awarded to Flatiron Constructors Canada Limited on May 19, 2023.
- Construction began during the 2023 season and is scheduled for completion in fall 2025.
- While this is a major project, we are committed to minimizing disruptions for the travelling public and will continue to work closely with aviation stakeholders to ensure smooth operations during the construction period.
- During the 2024 and 2025 construction seasons, the main runway will be closed to all traffic from April to October to allow for work to take place. The parallel runway will be used while construction is taking place.
- As of October 15, the main runway reconstruction project is halfway complete, and the runway has reopened for the winter season.
- Construction on the southern half of the runway is set to begin in spring 2025.
- The project is expected to be completed by fall 2025.
- This work is part of a \$258 million program to improve Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.
- The federal government is contributing \$186 million through the National Trade Corridors Fund with the Yukon government funding the remaining \$72 million.

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Public Works

Additional response: Facts and Quantities

- 75,000 square metres of old concrete runway was rubblized this past summer.
 - This method helps avoid costly and time-consuming process of removing and hauling away the old concrete, while also allowing for construction of a solid foundation for the new surface.
- Approximately 100 runway edge lights and 200 taxiway edge lights will be installed over the two years of the project.
 - The new edge lighting has transitioned us to energy efficient, eco-friendly lighting solutions.
- The modern runway and taxiway edge lights are LED, which consumes less energy, have a longer lifespan, requires less maintenance compared to traditional incandescent bulbs, and the light output is also more uniform for approaching aircraft.
 - By switching to more efficient lighting systems, airports can significantly lower their carbon emissions, making the lighting systems more environmentally friendly.
 - Overall, the shift to newer lighting technologies makes the runway and taxiway edge lights more sustainable and energy efficient.
- 40 airfield guidance signs will be installed for the project.
 - The increase is important to provide crucial information to pilots and ground personnel to ensure safe navigation while on the ground.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Main Runway Replacement Project**Highways and
Public Works

- Over 300 pull-pits and 60 manholes make up the underground portion of the work. This allows for a highly accessible and maintainable underground system.
- Drainage and electrical crossings that go under taxiway or runway surfaces are encased in concrete to ensure they withstand the forces exerted on them by large aircraft.
- Horizontal directional drilling was used to install electrical conduits under the main runway to minimize the chances of the conduit trench reflecting up to the surface and causing cracks or bumps.

Additional response: Funding and Budget Information

- Funding for the project is being provided by Transport Canada's National Trade Corridor fund. This program is funding 75 per cent of the project's cost.
- The 5-year capital plan for 2024-25 is \$70-75 million.
- The project is currently on budget, and on schedule.

Additional response: 2024 Construction Activities

- This year's work on the project will conclude for the season in November.
- Work completed this year included:
 - reconstruction of the north half of the runway surface which included rubblization of the existing asphalt and concrete surface, placing new base material, and placing new asphalt pavement;
 - installation of new edge lighting;
 - installation of a storm drainage system;

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Public Works

- construction of a new taxiway F; and,
- adjustments to the north perimeter service road.
- Our operations and engineering teams inspected the work completed over the summer and approved the runway to reopen for the winter.

Additional response: 2023 Construction Activities

- In 2023, progress on the main runway included:
 - preparation for the main runway reconstruction, including airfield drainage improvements;
 - water and sanitary line extensions;
 - fencing to secure the worksite; and
 - construction of two access roads to the parallel runway in preparation for the 2024 construction season.

Additional response: YESAB Assessment

- During the initial planning phase Highways and Public Works reviewed the project scope and determined that the planned activities did not require a water licence or a YESAB assessment.
- Most of the work associated with the Main Runway replacement project was categorized as falling under the “repair and maintenance of an aerodrome”, which means the work falls outside the scope of projects requiring a YESAB assessment as outlined in Schedule 1 of the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*.
- After careful project assessment, it was also determined prior to commencing the work in 2023, that the project would not interact or impact on any visible or identifiable watercourses, negating the need for a YESAB review or a water licence.

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Public Works

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- However, during preparatory construction work in the Baxter's Gulch area, an underground stream was encountered near where the existing north approach lighting towers were planned to be replaced.
 - The department removed the replacement of these lighting towers from the contract's current scope of work to assess the possible impact on the underground stream.
 - A YESAB submission for the north approach lighting work has been submitted for this specific work.
 - Once the stream was found, we immediately enhanced existing erosion and sediment controls to prevent any deposit of silt or waste into the stream during ongoing construction.

Additional response: Drainage work and sediment control

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

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Public Works

Additional response: Impacts to Trails

- Puckett's Gulch is currently undergoing active construction as we work on developing a new airside access road.
- For safety reasons, this has led to the temporary closure of the footpaths that extend around the airport beyond the Black Street Stairs.
- Construction in this area will be completed in the coming weeks. The footpaths beyond the Black Street Stairs will be accessible again by the end of November when the rest of the project construction wraps for the season.
- The footpaths in this area, including those along the escarpment around the airport, fall under the jurisdiction of the City of Whitehorse.
- Highways and Public Works continues open dialogue with the City of Whitehorse as they develop their active transportation infrastructure near the airport.

Additional response: Sustainability and Resilience

- As part of the reconstruction work at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, a new Field Electric Centre was constructed.
- The new Field Electric Centre replaces the current one which was originally constructed in 1992.
- The new centre offers upgraded electrical control systems which allow for easier maintenance of the airfield lighting system.
- Electrical components on the airfield have been installed in conduit and pull-pits.
- This replaces the old system which had many wires buried directly beneath the ground.

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Public Works

- The conduit and pull-pits allow for easier repairs if issues arise, and minimize the potential for damage due to freeze thaw cycles.

Additional response: Project Rationale

- As asphalt ages, the ability for the mix to hold together degrades and the surface loses its flexibility. The lower flexibility results in increased cracking and produces foreign object debris, which can be detrimental to aircraft.
- Since 2017, the department has been regularly patching and rehabilitating the runway to extend the runway's life, but it was no longer economical or practical to continue with this approach.
- There are existing concrete panels under the asphalt surface of the runway which were originally installed when the airport was first built in 1943.
- These panels are approximately 20 cm thick and lie under 15 cm of asphalt.
- The panels are cracked throughout due to age and the cracks are reflecting through the asphalt layers causing the top layer of asphalt to also break down.
- Large cracks on runways are a major source of foreign object debris (FOD) and pose potential dangers to aircraft.
- These existing layers of concrete will undergo rubblization to be used as base material in the new runway structure.
- Where poor quality materials are found, below the existing concrete, they will be removed and replaced with new aggregates to ensure there is at minimum 1.5 metres of quality materials under the new asphalt surface.

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Public Works

- In addition, over the past few years the existing electrical infrastructure, including runway and taxiway edge lights, has required more frequent repairs to keep the lighting system operational. This project will solve these problems.
- Each end of the current runway had portions that were not usable. The project will lengthen the usable portion of main runway by fixing the 257 metre portion on the north end this year, and the 427 metre portion at the south end of the main runway as part of next year's construction.
- Part of the reconstruction work will allow the use of the full paved surface, which will go from being 2,216 metres of usable runway to 2,900 metres of usable runway.
 - Reclaiming the displacements requires changes be made to existing paint markings, signs, edge lights, approach lighting towers, and NavCanada publications.
 - It also requires a relocation of NavCanada's glide path for the instrument landing system.
- In addition, part of the reconstruction also includes raising the elevation of the runway in order to install new drainage infrastructure.
- This will help minimize the impact of frost below the runway and also help keep subbase soils dry and solid to prevent movement and cracking of the asphalt surface.
- This change in elevation will also allow more structural fill to be used within the base of the runway, further increasing the lifespan of the asphalt on top.

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Public Works

Additional response: Impacts to Air Carriers

- The main runway closed on April 15, 2024, for the season and is anticipated to reopen mid-October. All aircraft will be using the parallel runway during this time.
- There will be similar closures of the main runway during the 2025 construction season.
- As part of the overall project plan, in 2022 the parallel runway was lengthened and strengthened to allow 737 type aircraft to use the runway.
- Lights were also added to the parallel runway to allow for nighttime operations.
- However, the parallel runway is still shorter than the main runway which means that during the construction seasons, diverted aircraft larger than a 737 will not be able to land.
- We have been and will continue to work with air carriers to plan for and minimize any impacts while we reconstruct the main runway.
- While the airline Condor will not be able to offer direct service to Whitehorse during the 2024 and 2025 construction seasons, Air North has secured interline agreements with both WestJet and Condor that allow travellers to connect to the Yukon through Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

Additional response: Community Development Agreements (Yukon First Nation Participation)

- 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.

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Public Works

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- Both agreements are tailored to maximize socioeconomic benefits that are important to each community such as employment, subcontracting, training and workforce and business development.
 - Additionally, the contractor held a job fair in March 2024, targeting employment for First Nations citizens. Another job fair is expected to be held in spring 2025, prior to construction season start-up.
 - Community Development Agreements are government-to-government agreements, and the specific 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.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

- The Contractor's Environmental Management Plan is in place to mitigate environmental concerns. The plan outlines the contractor's plans for sediment controls, monitoring requirements, and reporting requirements for all planned work on site.
- Highways and Public Works consultant regularly reviews the implementation of this plan and reports any issues to the contractor.
- The drainage work planned for the airport is the replacement of existing drainage systems, some of which date back to the 1950s.

Engagement

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

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Main Runway Replacement Project

Highways and
Public Works

- On August 3, and September 28, 2023, information sessions were hosted for aviation and tourism stakeholders, respectively, about the project.
- Both sessions were well attended and provided the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
- There will also be posters at the Whitehorse airport communicating information about the project and upgrades. This information is also found on Yukon.ca.

Fast Facts

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

Runway Length Comparison

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 20, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The existing Nisutlin Bay bridge was constructed in 1953 by the Department of National Defence and crosses the Nisutlin Bay at kilometre 1,243 along the Alaska Highway.
- This is the longest bridge along the Alaska Highway within the Yukon, spanning 584 metres or 1916 feet.
- The replacement project is now in its third year and the construction is being completed by Graham Infrastructure LP.
- This project provides a significant positive economic outcome for the territory, local businesses, and the community of Teslin.
- The substantial completion date is anticipated to be November 5, 2025, and the total completion date is April 6, 2026.
- Infrastructure Canada is contributing \$41.25 million through the *Building Canada Fund* and Transport Canada is contributing \$52.5 million through the *National Trade Corridors Fund*.
- For this 2024-25 fiscal year the Five-Year Capital Plan spending is expected to be between \$45 to \$50 million.

Additional response: Progress To-date

- I am happy to report that that team has successfully completed:
 - trestle and cofferdam construction.
 - The trestle has 90 piles, 32 spans of approximately 15 meters, and 6 fingers.
 - construction of 6 piers and 2 abutments.

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Public Works

- A total of 58 permanent piles with a total of 1801 meters of pile driven.
- the removal of all cofferdams as pier construction has been completed;
- a total of 3,000 cubic metres of concrete has been poured so far, between the piers and abutments;
- a total of 52 girders delivered and installed, with a total length of 1935 meters of girders installed;
- 32 bearings installed with 4 bearings per abutment and pier;
 - preload placement on both south and north abutment – total of 16000 cubic metres;
- a total of 504 precast panels delivered and placed; and
- the south and north fish offsetting area construction.

Additional response: Work in the upcoming months

- Work in the upcoming months, includes:
 - casting of concrete deck infill between the panels;
 - casting concrete deck ends;
 - the installation of utility conduit; and
 - production of Class II Rip Rap;

Additional response: 2025-26 Work Plan

- In 2025-26, the work plan includes:

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Public Works

- the removal of the trestle and temporary fill;
- completion of the north and south earthworks and road-related works such as warm mix asphalt, culverts and spillways;
- placement of armoring rip rap;
- construction of snowmobile bench;
- completion of expansion joints;
- installation of the bridge guardrail;
- installation of concrete barriers;
- installation of bridge lights;
- paving the new bridge paving;
- installation of waterproofing;
- completion of electric work;
- opening of the new bridge to traffic; and
- demolition and disposal of the existing bridge.

Additional response: Propane leak incident

- On October 20, the Contractor notified Highways and Public Works of a propane leak at the north abutment on the job site due to a faulty pressure equalization and release valve on two tanks.
- As the Contractor is responsible for occupational health and safety in this instance, they followed the proper process and reported the spill.
- The North abutment area was immediately evacuated, and the bridge and highway was closed for safety.

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Public Works

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- Shortly after the incident was identified a propane technician was on site to repair the faulty pressure system and relief valve.
 - The bridge and highway reopened within less than two hours of the incident.

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

- The contractor, Graham infrastructure LP, is responsible for the hiring of sub-contractors for the project. The Government of Yukon does not direct the contractor, on any sub-contracting opportunities.
- Sub-contractors perform work such as electrical, logistics, earthworks, quarry development, materials procurement, and environmental monitoring.
- There are several Teslin and Yukon businesses that are working as sub-contractors on the project.
- As part of the monthly progress claim submission process the contractor provides a summary of the progress on the involvement of Yukon First Nation businesses and local suppliers.
- The Government of Yukon does not publicly comment on the values or terms of these sub-contracts, as this is proprietary information.
- However, the project team actively works with the contractor and Teslin Tlingit Council to monitor their progress and make certain the contractor meets their proposed targets.

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Public Works

Additional response: First Nations Participation Commitments

- The Government of Yukon is grateful to Teslin Tlingit Council for their ongoing participation in the implementation of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project.
- First Nations participation was a large component of this value-driven tendering process.
- Both Teslin Tlingit Citizens and Yukon First Nations participation hours are tracked throughout the project and submitted monthly to the Yukon government.
- The Yukon government works with the Teslin Tlingit Council to review the contractor's progress to meet these targets.
- As the project is over half-way completed, the contractor is also trending towards accomplishing the proportionate target value.
- The Government of Yukon has also provided additional funding to the Teslin Tlingit Council to support their participation in the project. These agreements range from project planning, implementation support, a community liaison position, fisheries initiatives and environmental baseline studies, fibre recovery, and artwork for the new bridge.

Additional response: Quality Assurance

- As with any large infrastructure project, frequent inspections are a regular part of construction monitoring.
- Throughout the project, the Contractor is responsible for developing and following an approved Quality Control plan.

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Public Works

- To check quality control the Government of Yukon has a fulltime team of onsite technicians and engineers who are based in Teslin to provide Quality Assurance.
- Inspections are happening at every step of the project and as defects or non-conformances are found they are rectified following an approved protocol to ensure compliance with the project specifications.
- It is also important to note that repairs during the work are a normal part of large construction projects.

Additional response: Project Cost

- The construction contract with Graham Infrastructure LP was originally awarded for \$159.96 million.
- Infrastructure Canada will contribute \$41.25 million through the *Building Canada Fund* and Transport Canada will contribute \$52.5 million through the *National Trade Corridors Fund*.
- The amended *Fisheries Act Authorization* resulted in a change order that increased the construction contract by \$23.89 million to a total of \$183.8 million to accommodate for additional work and services required. It also compensated the contractor for a delay in construction commencement and a 6-day extension to complete the project.

Additional response: Environmental Protection

- From the outset, environmental protection has been a major component of the project.

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Public Works

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- Under the project's *Fisheries Act* Authorization, we are required to establish a sonar enumeration project to make sure that the construction work is not negatively impacting fish populations or migrations.
 - 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.
 - This work is essential to monitoring salmon migration numbers and making sure the fish reach their spawning grounds while a new bridge is being built in the Nisutlin Bay.
 - The contractor and the Yukon government meet weekly to discuss any environmental issues on the project, such as underwater noise, water quality or spill reports, and mitigations are confirmed.
 - Environmental site inspections with the contractor, the Yukon government and environmental consultants are also conducted weekly to provide a high degree of environmental oversight.
 - The Yukon government has also retained an environmental consultant based onsite to monitor construction activities.
 - An Environmental Technical Working Group meets every two weeks, composed of representatives from Teslin Tlingit Council, the Yukon government and the contractor to review plans in advance of work commencing.

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Highways and
Public Works

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- Through this working group, we are able to address many environmental concerns of Teslin Tlingit Council and the community before they arise during construction.

Additional response: Granular Material

- This project will use over 100,000 cubic metres of aggregate for the various components. 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 cubic metres 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 the 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.
- Starting in November, travellers along the highway might notice environmental mitigation work being undertaken at the Ten Mile Pit located at kilometre 1258 of the Alaska Highway.
- This is necessary work to provide continued access to the granular material located in the Ten Mile Pit.

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Public Works

- The granular resources from Ten Mile Pit will be used by the Yukon government for other projects or construction activities in the surrounding area.

Additional response: Community Wellness

- The contractor has a dedicated liaison for their workers and community members to contact, with any health and wellness issues pertaining to the project they may have.
- The Community Wellbeing Working Group, with representatives from Teslin Tlingit Council and the Government of Yukon meet every two weeks to work through issues of wellbeing that might be arising for Teslin Tlingit citizens, and community members in general, from the project.

Additional response: Interesting Project Details

- The replacement of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a massive project, with an estimated cost of around \$180 million. This reflects the challenges posed by its remote location and harsh weather conditions.
- This is the longest bridge replacement in Yukon History.
- The new bridge will ensure improved safety and accessibility, especially given the anticipated wear and tear from decades of service and heavy transport use.
- The replacement of the bridge is being done in stages to allow traffic to continue flowing during the process. This phased approach minimizes disruption for both residents and travellers along the Alaska Highway.

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Public Works

- The new bridge will be wider and designed to accommodate modern traffic, including larger commercial vehicles. It will also improve safety features like better sightlines, wider lanes, and improved pedestrian and cyclist access.
- Though the current bridge will be replaced, there are efforts to preserve the historical significance of the original structure. The new bridge will reflect modern engineering while respecting the cultural and historical context of the region.
- Once completed, the new bridge will continue to serve as a critical link on the Alaska Highway, supporting the region's economy by facilitating the movement of goods and people. It's a vital lifeline for the community of Teslin and travellers heading to and from Alaska.
- These aspects highlight the bridge's importance not just as a piece of infrastructure but also as a cultural and historical landmark in the Yukon.
- This replacement project is a significant investment in Yukon's future infrastructure while balancing the historical and environmental factors tied to this iconic bridge.

Additional Response: Fun Facts

- Approximately 3,500 cubic metres of concrete is being used for the bridge. That's nearly 1.5 Olympic-sized swimming pools!
- Material for the new bridge includes concrete for the piers and deck, steel for girders and structural components, and wood for the temporary structures like the temporary bridge deck.

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Public Works

- There are 52 girders in total, making the bridge very strong and stable. They are made from weathering steel, which develops a rust-like appearance after exposure to protect against corrosion.
 - The new bridge has 6 piers and 2 abutments. Piers support the middle sections of the bridge and are in the water, while abutments connect the bridge to the land.
 - The piers each contain around 410 cubic metres of concrete and 71 tons of steel. Each abutment has about 235 cubic metres of concrete and 22 tons of steel.
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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:

- Maintenance costs of the existing bridge were between \$0.5 to \$1 million per year.
- In spring 2019, the Government of Yukon and the Teslin Tlingit Council signed a project charter to work together to design and build the replacement bridge.

Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy

- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement project was tendered shortly after the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy was implemented.
 - This project is in its third year and Teslin Tlingit Council continues to work with the Yukon government to make improvements to the implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy to help it meets its original intent.
 - The Government of Yukon is grateful to Teslin Tlingit Council for their ongoing participation in the implementation of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project.
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Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

- We continue to look at continuous improvement and incorporating the lessons learned from all projects into recommendations to strengthen the policy moving forward.

Authorizations

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

Approved by:	
T. Allen	November 12, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- For the first time since 2015, funding is secured to rehabilitate sections of the Alaska Highway between Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek that have been damaged by thawing permafrost.
- Through partnership with the State of Alaska and US Federal Highways, the Government of Yukon has secured more than \$37 million USD in project funding over the next several years.
- The funding has been approved through Alaska's Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program, also known as STIP, and also a grant under the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program.
- This is the result of cooperation between Alaska and the Yukon and a shared recognition of the influence that the North Alaska Highway has on the quality of life and well-being of northerners and its vital role in strengthening our mutual security, trade, and tourism.

Additional response: Tendering

- Highways and Public Works will be tendering and leading the construction projects throughout the corridor.
- All projects are planned to be delivered over several years with one construction tender issued per year before early spring starting in 2025
- The funding agreements are underway to enable money to start flowing in early 2025. The funds are committed by the U.S. and would not be impacted by the federal election.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**Highways and
Public Works

- The 'Buy America' policy does not apply to our projects because the projects take place in Canada and are being delivered by the Yukon government.

Additional response:

- Highways and Public Works is working collaboratively with the US Federal Highways Administration and State of Alaska to complete the funding agreements to begin project work in 2025 and continue implementation over the next several years.
- Road rehabilitation activities will primarily consist of the restoration of the existing pavement surfaces by removing the significant cracks, bumps and other deformations that result from permafrost thawing under the roadway.
- This approach for the Alaska Highway between Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek is part of a long-term strategy to keep the road in good repair while emphasizing value for money.
- The planned approach allows for an improvement to surface condition over the life of the road at a lower overall cost.
- The project will divide the highway between Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek into six zones and restore approximately 14-kilometres of road within one zone per year. The order of work will be prioritized based on current condition.
- After several years, the funding received is anticipated to repair approximately 90 kilometres of the 222-kilometre section of highway between Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek, addressing the sections most impacted by permafrost.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works**Third response:**

- Rehabilitation work on an existing highway within the right-of-way does not normally trigger a YESAB assessment.
- A YESAB assessment has been submitted to permit locating construction camps within existing Yukon government gravel pits.
- Highways and Public Works has also been sharing information and working together with Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation.
- In the meantime, until funding begins flowing in 2025, the Department of Highways and Public Works will continue to inspect and maintain segments of the North Alaska Highway.
- Each spring and fall, inspections take place to identify and prioritize areas of maintenance need. Some sections of road have been converted from Bituminous Surface Treatment, or BST, to gravel to mitigate the impacts of shifting permafrost.
- This past summer, the department resurfaced over 20 kilometers of the North Alaska Highway along the Shakwak corridor between Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek.
- Operations and maintenance expenses for the Shakwak portion of the highway vary from year to year and averaged approximately \$4.2 million per year since 2022-23.
- Capital expenditures for the North Alaska Highway are estimated to be nearly \$300 thousand for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works**Fourth response: Yukon innovation in permafrost mitigation**

- Given the ongoing challenges posed to Yukon's transportation infrastructure by permafrost degradation, Highways and Public Works Transportation Engineering Branch has been active in exploring innovative mitigation measures. One notable initiative in this regard is the sub-surface thermosyphon project near Beaver Creek.
 - In 2020-21, we completed the installation of thermosyphons at Dry Creek located at kilometre 1,841 of the Alaska Highway near Beaver Creek. The thermosyphons will help cool the underlying permafrost foundation and stabilize the highway. The thermosyphon project was partially funded by Transport Canada under the Northern Transportation Adaptation Initiative.
 - Highways and Public Works presented the findings from this project at the 12th International Conference on Permafrost, which was held in Whitehorse from June 16 to 24, 2024. The branch jointly presented a paper with Christopher Stevens who is the principal consultant of Northern Permafrost Consulting Eagle River, Alaska.
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Context—this may be an issue because:

- This year marks the first time stable core funding has been allocated for the North Alaska Highway in the Yukon since the Shakwak agreement ended in 2015. Yukoners have expressed concern with the condition of the road in recent years
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Background:

- The North Alaska Highway from the Alaska border at Beaver Creek to Haines Junction, and the Haines Road from Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska is the stretch we often call the "Shakwak".
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Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works

- These sections of highway have not benefited from significant capital investment since 2015, when stable funding under the U.S.-Canada Shakwak agreement ended, until now.
- Alaska's Governor and Commissioner dedicated time to visit the Yukon on February 8, 2024, to discuss highway funding for the Shakwak corridor.
- In February 2024, a Memorandum of Understanding between Alaska and Government of Yukon was signed to create an official partnership with Alaska's Department of Transportation to develop a project description that was included in Alaska's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- As the Memorandum of Understanding states, the Yukon government and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities will collaborate on specific work plans and financial agreements for the project term.
- The RAISE application was submitted by February 28, 2024, with letters of support from Federal Minister of Transport Canada, Pablo Rodriguez, and Yukon's Member of Parliament, Brendan Hanley.
- In April 2024, the State of Alaska confirmed funding for the Shakwak through their Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to allow much-needed work on the North Alaska Highway to begin in 2025. The project area falls between Destruction Bay and the United States and Canada border north of Beaver Creek.
- In June 2024, Alaska was informed that a \$25 million USD from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program had also been awarded to the project.

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 areas impacted by thawing permafrost can be up to six times higher per kilometre than in non-permafrost areas.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Shakwak – North Alaska Highway –
Haines Junction to Beaver Creek –
Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska**

Highways and
Public Works

- Inspections carried out in July 2020 confirmed significant distortions from permafrost degradations in the northern segments of the Alaska Highway.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 4, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Takhini River Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Our government is committed to integrating active transportation into our highway infrastructure projects wherever possible.
- In 2022, the Yukon government secured federal funding through the Active Transportation Fund to enhance safety and accessibility by adding separated sidewalks on both sides of the Takhini River Bridge, creating an active transportation crossing.
- The total project value was \$8.5 million with a federal contribution of \$6.2 million ending March 31, 2026.
- As the project advanced, detailed engineering assessments revealed that the bridge is not suited to support the additional weight of separated sidewalks on both sides.
- As a result, we are currently assessing options that would allow for the use of a single sidewalk with safe highway crossings.
- When the Takhini River Bridge is eventually replaced, we will ensure that active transportation pathways are fully integrated into the project. We will also ensure that bridge width, sightlines, and approaches are considered.

Additional response: Bridge Safety Actions

- Highways and Public Works recognizes that there are concerns related to sightlines leading to the Takhini River Bridge.
- Our government is committed to enhancing safety in this area which includes improvements to sight lines and line painting wherever possible.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Takhini River Bridge**Highways and
Public Works

- This fall and winter, we will conduct thorough assessments to identify effective solutions, and we will develop a plan to implement these safety improvements as quickly as possible.

Third response: Speed Display Signs

- The department installed speed display signs on the approaches to the bridge to reduce speed and help increase road safety. “Share the road” signs were also installed in both directions.
- The intent of the signs is to encourage drivers to be mindful of oncoming vehicle traffic and of other bridge users, such as cyclists.
- The condition of the bridge is regularly monitored as part of our bridge inspection program.

Fourth response: Yukon Specific Guidelines

- Promoting active transportation is important as it not only helps support healthy lifestyles, it also moves us toward a cleaner and more sustainable future for the Yukon.
- We are developing Yukon-specific design guidelines for active transportation infrastructure to ensure that any new construction, or changes to existing infrastructure, will be engineered with a focus on comfort and safety for users and ease of winter maintenance.
- The guidelines will align with national best practices and will also be tailored to the Yukon’s context which includes rural areas with lower populations and constraining topography. This work is expected to be completed by March 2025.

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Takhini River Bridge

Highways and
Public Works

- Currently, Highways and Public Works is incorporating active transportation options into our highway infrastructure projects wherever possible.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Upgrades to the Takhini River Bridge were announced in January 2024.

Background:

- In July 2017, an engineering review of the structure was completed.
- In September 2017, based on the engineering review, a strengthening project was completed to improve the bridge’s capacity for supporting heavy loads.
- The bridge assessments that were used for the initial project proposal were from 2017 and were conceptual in nature.
- Detailed engineering assessments revealed that the bridge piles will not support the additional loading of a cantilevered sidewalk on each side of the bridge.
- The bridge currently has a life expectancy of 10 to 15 years.
- 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.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 8, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Takhini River Road and Gully Road**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The safety of travellers is a priority for the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- The Takhini River Road conditions are regularly monitored, and the road surface undergoes scheduled grading at least twice per year, and more frequently as required, to maintain safe road conditions.
- Our highway crews are actively working to improve drainage to address erosion issues near the intersection of Takhini River Road and Gully Road.
- Over the summer, the department completed repairs, such as ditch and culvert improvements.

Additional response:

- The department is conducting preliminary design work and reviewing reconstruction options to improve safety and drainage for the Takhini River Road beyond the Gully Road intersection area.
- The reconstruction design will include strengthening the road structure, improving drainage and alignment, widening the road at particular narrow sections, installing culvert markers and steam pipes, cleaning and adjusting existing culverts, and improving soft spots in the road.
- On November 12, 2024, Highways and Public Works hosted an information session for Takhini residents. This was an opportunity to discuss the proposed improvements.
- Two packages will be submitted to YESAB this winter following the November 12 public information session.

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FALL 2024

Takhini River Road and Gully Road

Highways and
Public Works

- One package is for upgrades to the Gully Road intersection and the other for reconstruction of the maintained section of the Takhini River Road.
- Construction on the road will be prioritized in relation to our overall upgrade priorities. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor and provide maintenance to these roads as required.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Takhini River Road maintenance is a road that receives a lot of attention.

Background:

- During 2023-24, we invested \$81 thousand on the road.
- So far in 2024-25, the department has invested \$27.5 thousand on maintenance and upgrades to the Takhini River Road.
- In the past decade, large spring runoffs have caused significant erosion to the Takhini River Road and the Gully Road.
- The Government of Yukon uses a road classification system that considers traffic volumes and socio-economic factors when determining maintenance schedules and planning upgrades.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 13, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Vendor Performance Review Program is being designed to recognize and encourage vendors who deliver good performance on contracts and provide constructive feedback for those contractors who do not.
- We continue to evaluate all contracts over the \$50 thousand threshold, to have a mechanism to monitor and enhance performance.
 - In 2023, there were 500 eligible contracts, of which:
 - 141 were construction contracts;
 - 267 were services contracts; and
 - 92 were goods contracts.
 - As of November 20, 2024, for this calendar year, there have been 479 eligible contracts, of which:
 - 98 were construction contracts;
 - 304 were services contracts; and
 - 77 were goods contracts.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to collaborating with industry to ensure that the evaluation framework and implementation of the Vendor Performance Review program meets its intended goals.

Additional response: Engagement

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is actively engaged with the Yukon Contractors Association and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce's Procurement Committee to help vendors adapt to the program and to gather feedback for continuous improvements.

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

-
- We are committed to listening to industry's feedback and considering adjustments to the program that advance shared interests.
 - Highways and Public Works will continue to meet with industry to listen to their input and consider potential adjustments to the program.

Additional response: Scoring

- 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); and
 - functionality and training (for goods contracts).
- 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.

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

Third response: Implementation

- Implementation of the program has been phased to ensure that both the Yukon government project managers and vendors have sufficient time to become familiar with the new process.
 - The first phase was between October 2021 and October 2022 where scores were collected but not kept.
 - The second phase was between October 2022 and October 2023, which collected scores from vendors but did not apply them to procurements. This allowed us to create an overall score for a vendor.
 - With implementation of the final phase in October 2023, we have received feedback from industry that further refinements to the program will improve its effectiveness.
 - The Department of Highways and Public Works is reviewing industry feedback on the program and considering changes.
 - While this review is underway, the government will continue to collect Vendor Performance Review Scores but will not use scores to impact procurements.
 - Our government is eager to continue advancing this program and strongly encourages the industry representatives to join us at the table, helping to drive this work forward.
-

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 the program and want to make sure the implementation of the program delivers the anticipated results but have recently called for a halt to the program for one year.
-

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

Background:

- Before launching the first phase of implementation, the Government of Yukon spoke to industry at a Procurement Business Committee meeting in September 2021 and received input.
- The Procurement Support Centre has engaged with industry through live sessions throughout the phases of implementation to provide training and has provided an online training course available on YGLearn for government staff.
- In 2023, the Procurement Support Centre met with industry representatives on May 17, June 28, and November 2.
- On July 19, 2023, the Procurement Support Centre met with First Nation representatives to provide an update on the program's progress and will continue to meet as needed.
- In January 2024, the Procurement Support Centre developed a working group with industry members and Yukon government project managers to work through some of the detailed feedback that industry has provided on the program.
- On April 19, 2024, the Vendor Performance Review working group met at the Procurement Support Centre and shared drafts of new scoring methodologies.
- On May 14, 2024, the Procurement Support Centre sent an email that suggests our government's approach to developing a bidding impact methodology that focuses on excluding poor performers from future work was sent to the Vendor Performance Review working group.
- On August 27, our acting assistant deputy minister of Corporate Service met with the Yukon Contractor's Association and agreed to work together on a made-in-Yukon program while we continue to collect scores from evaluations and support contract management improvements.
- Following this, a facilitated session is planned for fall 2024 to understand the issues better.
- 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.

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

- Vendor Performance Review Programs are becoming more commonplace in Canada. Many jurisdictions are interested in creating a Vendor Performance Review Program to get better procurement outcomes by avoiding contracting with those who have a documented history of poor performance. Highways and Public Works is part of a Federal Provincial Territorial working group to capture lessons learned from other jurisdictions.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 20, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Water Quality in Yukon Schools - Joint Note

EDU-HPW

Recommended response:

- The safety of our schools is a top priority for the government. We are dedicated to creating a secure environment where students can learn and grow.
- If any concerns are identified, we take action to thoroughly investigate and address them, ensuring that the highest safety standards are maintained.
- Following the spring 2024 identification of lead levels in excess of the regulated thresholds at Del Van Gorder School in Faro, Highways and Public Works and Education worked together to isolate all affected fixtures at Del Van Gorder School for the remainder of the school year, while a plan to further test and mitigate could be coordinated.
- During the 2024 summer break, the departments of Highways and Public Works, Education and Health and Social Services collaborated to create a testing and mitigation plan for all Yukon schools.
- At the beginning of the school year, we made certain that each school had at least one water fixture that complied with the new guidelines. In cases where this wasn't achievable, we provided an alternative water source to ensure accessibility to potable water.
- All Yukon schools now have access to clearly identified fixtures with potable water.
- Education has contracted a third-party to complete water sampling and testing in all Yukon schools and the contract commenced on October 7, 2024.
- As an added precaution, Highways and Public Works has sourced lead filtration kits and expedited the procurement of, and delivery for, installation on all drinking water fountains in Yukon schools.

Water Quality in Yukon Schools - Joint Note

EDU-HPW

- With the exception of two fixtures requiring specific hardware that's been ordered, these filtration kits – more than fifty – have all been installed. The remaining two fixtures will be addressed very soon, bringing this phase of the project to a close.
- The departments of Highways and Public Works, Health and Social Services, Education and the Public Service Commission are collaborating on creating a continuous monitoring program for water quality in all Government of Yukon buildings.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In the spring of 2024, levels of lead in some schools exceeded recommended standards and while there is access to water that meets current Canadian guidelines at all schools, some fixtures are still under remediation.

Background:

- On April 23, 2024, the water testing and remediation action plan was shared with the Department of Highway and Public Works, Environmental Health and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- A meeting took place on May 27, 2024, where the departments of Education, Highways and Public Works, and Environmental Health, and Chief Medical Officer of Health discussed how Education and Facilities Management will manage to meet the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines.
- Weekly meetings continue to be scheduled with representatives from the EDU, HPW, EHS and the CMOH to ensure work remains on schedule.
- HPW has contracted a third party to install filters at all Elkay water stations. This work has been completed in Whitehorse and the surrounding communities and is underway in the outlying communities.
 - An Elkay water filter is a type of filtration system designed to improve the quality of drinking water. These filters typically work to reduce contaminants such as chlorine, lead, and other impurities, ensuring cleaner and better-tasting water.

Water Quality in Yukon Schools - Joint Note

EDU-HPW

- Education has contracted a third-party contractor to complete compliance and monitoring testing in all schools tested in 2018 -2020. This work commenced in October with an expected completion date by the end of the 2024 calendar year. All schools will be tested by the end of 2024.
- Results from the sampling and testing that occurred at schools' water bottle filling station are being received and this data will further inform which fixtures need remediation.
- A critical fixture is a fixture used for drinking water and food preparation. These fixtures are most likely to be used for consumption. Examples of critical fixtures are hallway drinking fountains, kitchen faucets in staff rooms, home education rooms, cafeteria, classroom sinks.
- Non-critical fixtures include custodial sinks and bathroom sinks. These fixtures are less likely to be used for consumption. These faucets are not designated for use for drinking or food preparation.
- In 2017, routine work on the water mains at the Del Van Gorder Faro School required a chemical parameter test which showed elevated lead levels in the school's water.
- As a result, the Department of Education began testing all Yukon schools. In 2019, the Government of Canada lowered the maximum acceptable concentration of lead in the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality from 0.01 mg/L to 0.005 mg/L.
- In 2019 the Department of Highways and Public Works and the Department of Education worked collaboratively to test for lead in the water supply for all Yukon schools and then remediated where required.
- Fixtures that exceed Health Canada's recommendations for lead in drinking water will be assessed based on the intended purpose, location in the building, and previous testing results. Where appropriate, mitigation work will be completed, and the fixture will then be retested.
- In some instances, further investigation is required to determine the source of the elevated lead concentration and to determine the approach to mitigation work. This

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Fall 2024

Water Quality in Yukon Schools - Joint Note

EDU-HPW

includes implementing alternative testing procedures and drawing samples from branch or main water lines.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-08

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 20, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy promotes a more inclusive economy by levelling the playing field for Yukon First Nations people and businesses.
- As a leading example of Indigenous procurement, this policy has been widely praised as a model for other jurisdictions to follow.
- This policy represents a positive step toward advancing reconciliation, as it was developed in close collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments as partners.

Additional response: Current state

- It has been more than three years since this policy was implemented, and the Yukon continues to lead the way in Indigenous procurement, setting a standard that others strive to meet.
- We are advised that many Yukon First Nation partners remain strong supporters of the policy and to collaboratively achieve its goals.
- Yukon's leadership in this area is being noticed across Canada. Other provinces, territories, and the federal government are looking to the Yukon to understand how they can leverage our experiences.
- For example, the Yukon government participated in a government panel at the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business Conference in October to share how the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy has been developed and is being implemented in the Yukon.

Additional response: Bid Value Reductions

- Bid value reductions play an important role in achieving the objectives of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy because they are

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

accessible to all businesses and help increase the competitiveness of bids that include Yukon First Nation participation and/or ownership.

- We are addressing recommendations from the 2023 two-year review such as improving public communications about how the policy is meeting its outcomes, improving data collection, and increasing accountability for contract delivery.
- Contractors who apply for bid value reductions are held accountable for the commitments made in their proposals to increase participation and partnerships with Yukon First Nation businesses.
- The report and its recommendations have helped us to understand that our approach is reasonable and fair while creating positive change for our Yukon First Nation partners.

Additional response: Yukon First Nation Business Registry

- Implementation of a bid value reduction program is a key early step in creating opportunities for more Yukon First Nation businesses.
- On December 1, 2021, the Yukon First Nation Business registry was launched, and has **over 140** verified Yukon First Nation businesses.
- We are committed to refining the verification process and the business registry in collaboration with our Yukon First Nation partners, and the Monitor and Review Committee.
- In order to make the verification process for businesses more robust, the Yukon government updated the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy in May 2023, and then released an updated guide for applicants in June 2024.
- Both improvements have provided more scrutiny in the verification process to prevent shell companies from being listed on the registry

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and preventing these companies from accessing the benefits of the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy.

Additional response: Enforcement of commitments around YFN involvement

- The Yukon government is committed to ensuring the benefits from the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy flow to the intended recipients.
- Contractors must understand that when they place bids, they are then responsible for upholding commitments, such as labour levels and Yukon First Nation business participation, outlined within their proposals.
- The Yukon government uses the tools within contracts to motivate the contractor to meet their obligations. When those commitments are not realized, funds are held back from the contract until these issues are rectified.
- To reinforce this, we also require contractors to provide sufficient proof that they met their Yukon First Nation Participation Plan commitments, which includes the submission of a statutory declaration.
- Highways and Public Works has heard concerns raised by industry and Yukon First Nations of misrepresentation in the bidding process, and potential over commitments to gain additional advantages.
- The department continues to engage with Yukon First Nations and industry representatives in a specific working group to develop additional tools and resources to support contractors being held to those commitments made.

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- The Vendor Review Program also provides oversight to those commitments. Contractors who do perform well in meeting their commitments can increase their evaluation scores.

Additional response: Monitor and Review Committee

- The Monitor and Review Committee reviews and assesses the progress of the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy.
- In 2023, the Monitor and Review Committee started receiving more detailed reports through the Performance Measurement Framework.
- Though there is still work for the Monitor and Review Committee and the Yukon government on the data, the framework gives us more insights into the performance of this policy.
- The committee will continue to conduct regular data analysis and to monitor for any market disruption.
- To date the committee has not indicated any recommendations involving market distribution.
- The third report, that details the period between April 2023 to March 2024 is available on Yukon.ca.
- Highways and Public Works is reviewing the report and its recommendations to determine if there are changes that can be implemented to achieve greater progress toward policy targets.

Additional response: Workforce Development

- Workforce development supports Yukon First Nations to fully participate and benefit from the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.

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Public Works

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- To support this, the Yukon government is providing funding for Yukon First Nations workforce liaisons to strengthen implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
 - For example, Highways and Public Works and Canada funds Teslin Tlingit Council to facilitate the delivery of benefits available through the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
 - The funding is used to connect Citizens to employment opportunities, contribute to job readiness and provides supports.
 - Highways and Public Works approved Ta'an Kwäch'än Council's proposal for one Workforce Development Liaison position for two years commencing April 1, 2025.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**History of Policy**

- The policy was developed through partnership with Yukon 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 implementing the policy as well.
 - The Yukon government listened to the public and took a phased approach to the implementation of this important policy to ensure that Yukon businesses, Yukon First Nations and Yukon government employees had adequate time to prepare for and understand the policy.
 - The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy was approved on December 9, 2020, and endorsed through a joint announcement with Yukon First Nation leaders at the Yukon Forum on December 11, 2020. The policy came into effect on February
-

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy**Highways and
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22, 2021, with added measures being implemented on April 26, 2021, and October 4, 2021, with the latest revisions made May 1, 2023.

- Yukon government won a national prize “Ten to Watch” in 2021 because of YFNPP from the Indigenomics Institute.

Bid Value Reductions

- As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, an independent contractor conducted a two-year review of the bid value reduction measure that was completed in October 2023. The consultant produced a report that is available on Yukon.ca/growing-together. The report found that:
 - bid value reductions have led to an increase in the number of contracts awarded to Yukon First Nation businesses and an increase in bids from Yukon First Nation businesses;
 - there is no evidence of unintended negative consequences for bid value reductions such as large market disruptions;
 - while some perceive that loopholes might be exploited to benefit from the policy; very few specific examples of potentially problematic procurements were identified;
 - socio-economic and cultural changes are long-term endeavors that require ongoing relationship building, education and communication. The Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce administers the registry.
- Feedback from Yukon First Nation partners and industry has focused on ensuring that Yukon First Nation businesses are properly designated, and that the definition of a Yukon First Nation business aligns with the policy's intent.

Monitor and Review Committee

- The Monitor and Review Committee is made up of representatives from Yukon First Nations governments, industry and Yukon government. It provides data and recommendations through reports, with the first report released in March 2023 and the third issued in October 2024.
- The Monitor and Review Committee 2023-24 annual report's recommendations include:

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Public Works

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- the Government of Yukon consider how to increase the number of Direct Awards going to Yukon First Nations Businesses;
 - that to achieve greater progress toward the policy targets, the Monitor and Review Committee recommends that appropriate incremental targets are created and reported on, as highlighted in GAM 2.6 section 11(11)(e); and
 - the Government of Yukon make additional efforts to collect additional data, to report on the remaining metrics, to automate certain reporting functions, and to enhance standardization of data entry practices.
- We share the view that improving data collection and reporting will better inform future policy insights.
 - Some of the recommendations from the first annual report included advancing workforce development, improving data collection, raising awareness about the policy, strengthening relationships, confidence and buy-in among First Nations and industry. Progress has been made on each of these items since the recommendations were brought forward.
 - Vendors will also be evaluated on how well they fulfilled their Yukon First Nation commitments through the Vendor Performance Review program.
 - With funding from Highways and Public Works, the Council of Yukon First Nations has hired a consultant to design the workforce development program with direct engagement with Yukon First Nation governments.
 - With funding from Highways and Public Works, the Yukon Contractors Association has hired a consultant to work with Yukon First Nations and Yukon government on policy issues and implementation.

Fast Facts

- Between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024;
 - 659 tenders closed.
 - 224 of these tenders included submissions where bid value reductions were applied encompassing:
 - 57 goods tenders;

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Public Works

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- 115 tenders for services; and
 - 52 construction tenders.
 - 26 tenders with bid value reductions applied resulted in re-ranking.
 - \$55.6 million has been awarded through contracts to Yukon First Nation businesses.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024**Kêts'ádań Kù
(Burwash Landing School)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is excited that a new school will be built on the Traditional Territory of the Kluane First Nation.
- Kêts'ádań Kù (Ket-zah-Done-coo) -which means “house of learning” in the Southern Tutchone language will be built in the community of Burwash Landing.
- The new school will provide learning and community space that meets the needs of residents in the surrounding area.
- We look forward to working together – government to government – throughout this important project.

Additional response:

- The \$26.5 million contract was awarded on August 22, 2024, to GenMec ACL Inc.
- \$5.7 million, or 21 per cent of total contract value, from the project being allocated to Yukon First Nation businesses through subcontracting opportunities.
- This approach reflects the government's commitment to enhance outcomes for Yukon First Nations Citizens and businesses.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Kluane First Nation has long requested a new K-12 school in Burwash Landing.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

**Kêts'ádań Kù
(Burwash Landing School)**

Highways and
Public Works

- The Department of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Kluane First Nation in June 2020 committing to build a school and establish an Oversight Committee.
- The contract for Consultant Services was awarded in April 2021.
- The community was consulted on the conceptual design in 2022 and the best options were moved forward.
- In July 2022, a Yukon Asset Construction Agreement was signed with Kluane First Nation that will provide benefits to the community from the construction of the school.
- On May 31, 2023, a land clearing ceremony was held on the site to celebrate the partnership between the Yukon government and Kluane First Nation.
- Construction of the road and parking lot, as well as drainage improvements, were completed in 2023 under the Kluane First Nation Yukon Asset Construction Agreement.
- Funding is provided in part by both the Government of Yukon and Infrastructure Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- This project is jointly funded by the governments of Canada and Yukon. The Government of Canada is contributing just over \$10.8 million through its Rural and Northern Infrastructure Stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program and the Government of Yukon will provide \$21.6 million. The total investment for construction and project costs is just under \$32.5 million.
- Officials have been meeting regularly with the Kluane First Nation to discuss the design and construction of the school.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 3, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Whistle Bend Elementary School

TAB# 15b
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- We are excited that Whistle Bend subdivision now has its very own elementary school that welcomed students at the start of this school year.
- Building a new school for the community of Whistle Bend is a great and necessary addition to a fast-growing neighbourhood.
- This is the first new elementary school to be built in over 20 years and can accommodate up to 425 kindergarten to grade seven students.
- A Project Advisory Committee was established in summer 2019 to guide the project, and included representatives from Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, City of Whitehorse, and the departments of Community Services, Education and Highways and Public Works.
- The Project Advisory Committee collaborated throughout the project to achieve a school design that is modern yet nurturing and features natural light and collaborative spaces.
- While the building was ready to receive students at the start of the school year, some sections of landscaping were seeded late in the summer and will take longer to be fully usable.
- Some ponding has also been observed, which the contractor has been made aware of and will work to rectify by improving the landscape drainage.

Additional response: Cost increase

- The contract was awarded to Ketz Construction Corporation for \$42.8 million.

Session Briefing Note**Whistle Bend Elementary School**

Highways and
Public Works

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

Additional response: Active transportation

- Active transportation infrastructure is an important component of reducing emissions and fostering healthy communities.
 - The new Whistle Bend School has been constructed to accommodate children riding bikes in front of the school, and the trails behind the school integrate into the Whistle Bend trail system to allow students to actively commute to school.
 - We are also installing traffic lights this fall 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:

- Ketz Construction was granted substantial completion on the school building on April 17, 2024. The building is under a one-year warranty, and the incomplete landscaping work is under warranty into next summer.
 - The contract amount reflects increased costs for building materials such as lumber and steel.
 - The design-build contract was a value-driven procurement. Value-driven procurements help ensure that the project brings as much value as possible to the community and the territory.
-

Session Briefing Note
Whistle Bend Elementary School

TAB# 15b
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Highways and
Public Works

- 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.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is investing in the Yukon's education system by building new schools and renovating existing ones to meet the needs of Yukon students for years to come.
- Whitehorse Elementary School needs to be replaced due to the age and condition of the building, its energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and the need for significant seismic upgrades.
- The new school is currently in the early planning phase.
- 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:

- The replacement school is proposed to be located on the Northwest corner of the Takhini Education Land Reserve, where Softball Yukon's T4 and T5 fields are currently located. This is option 1 of the options presented at the March 2024 meeting with stakeholders.
- The Project Advisory Committee and stakeholders will provide input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can meet community needs through functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- The Government of Yukon will continue engaging with the First Nation School Board, the Project Advisory Committee, and Softball Yukon to determine the best plan for moving forward on the site.
- Kobayashi + Zedda Architects, the company hired to plan the design of the replacement school, completed the first phase of the project – a site analysis and test fit, for a total cost of \$272 thousand.

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

- Kobayashi + Zedda have proceeded to phase 2 of the project, which includes:
 - a geotechnical study;
 - a topographic survey;
 - phase 1 environmental site assessment;
 - a school specific functional and spatial program and business case; and
 - a traffic impact assessment.

Third response: Traffic Study

- We are proceeding with a traffic study as part of the work during the current pre-design phase.
- The Kobayashi + Zedda Architects consultant team includes a civil engineering consultant that is currently undertaking this assessment.
- As part of the study the consultant will review the project's location, current traffic demands, and the estimated traffic demands the new school will add, as well as the parking demands.
- This assessment will include vehicle, public transit, pedestrian and bike traffic considerations.
- It will then make recommendations for managing mitigation changes in the traffic flow.
- We are also interested understanding the impacts of the school to the larger community, and how we can mitigate the school's effects on the Takhini community.

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

- Now that the proposed school location is known, we can complete a traffic study for the area.
- We anticipate to have the traffic study completed by the end of November 2024.

Fourth response: Green Space

- The second most important development issue was the risk of a road through green space.
- McIntyre Creek is an important green space that holds significant ecological, recreational, and cultural value for the community.
- The proposed location results in the least impact on our natural ecosystem, with the least number of healthy trees being removed, potentially none.
- We are open to further discussions on how to mitigate the impact on the public.

Fifth response:

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

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Whitehorse Elementary Replacement School

Highways and
Public Works

Sixth response: Site Selection on the Takhini Land Reserve

- The selected location on the site is the highest scoring in our consultant's assessment report.
- Compared to other options it scored higher due to:
 - Having a low impact on the Takhini Elementary School, as it does not encroach onto the school's space, protects existing programming, and provides them with a new soccer field.
 - Having a lower impact on traffic on Range Road by having access to the new school located on University Drive and provides appropriate queuing space.
 - Being closer to the biomass facility at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre across the road, for a potential connection which would contribute to Our Clean Future goals.
 - Require smaller ground upgrades, which saves cost, due to the location being outside of the poor drainage and flood prone treed area of the lot.
 - The proximity to existing municipal services.
 - The location outside of the treed area also allows for more of the healthy trees on site to be kept.
 - Having staging and construction across the lot from the Takhini School will mitigate impacts to that school while the new Ecole Whitehorse Elementary School is being built.
- The next phase of the project will involve several critical assessment such as the comprehensive traffic study and detailed environmental site review.

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

-
- Following completion of these assessments we will move into the conceptual design phase where the plan for the school will start to take shape.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- The building itself is over 70 years old and nearing the end of its useful life.
 - The size of the current Whitehorse Elementary School lot would make it extremely difficult to build a new school on the current lot. Working around the existing building would heavily impact design decisions and would mean loss of school parking and playgrounds for a minimum of 2-3 years during construction.
 - We also want to increase students' ability to learn and participate in experiential opportunities outdoors which the downtown site makes more difficult.
 - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve will be ideal to accommodate French Immersion students from around the city and has a number of advantages, including better access to green space.
 - We will have plans in place to manage noise, traffic and dust during construction.
 - A Test Fit and Site Analysis meeting was held in March 2024, presented by Kobayashi and Zedda, and shared the three location options on the Takhini educational land reserve and provided an opportunity to receive feedback from stakeholders.
 - A traffic study was included in the scope of the Kobayashi + Zedda contract to be completed as part of Phase 2, the pre-design portion of the contract. We anticipate that Phase 2 will be completed in the fall.
 - 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.
-

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

- Following construction of the replacement school, an assessment will be performed on the existing building downtown to determine whether to move forward with a demolition.
- Highways and Public Works will consider factors such as public health and safety, ongoing maintenance costs and the value of the land for potential development in making such a decision.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 22, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Dawson City Airport**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Dawson City airport is a hub for many important operations including Air Ambulance, Wildland Fire, mineral exploration, tourism, and outfitting.
- Over the past few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has made several improvements to the Dawson City Airport, including:
 - paving the runway;
 - building a second apron;
 - constructing a new maintenance facility;
 - upgrading operational areas; and,
 - relocating the Canadian Border Services Agency building to better support airport operations.
- Work is underway at the Dawson City Airport to develop additional surface water management improvements such as ditching around the airport to ensure it remains operational during potential local flood events.
- The Yukon government has worked closely with Air North and Transport Canada to enable Air North to provide seasonal scheduled service to Dawson using larger 737-500 aircraft.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Dawson City Airport

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- The Dawson City airport was built in the 1930s.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works prioritizes operations, maintenance and capital spending based on several factors, with safety being the most important. Regulatory requirements, costs, traffic volumes, impact on communities and impact on industry are also considered.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 28, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Haines Junction Aerodrome

Tab# 17
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Haines Junction Aerodrome is a small airport located in the community. It is situated near the Kluane National Park and Reserve, which is known for its stunning wilderness and outdoor recreation opportunities.
- The aerodrome primarily serves general aviation and seasonal commercial operations and provides access to this rugged and scenic region.
- Infrastructure and equipment at all Yukon public airports and aerodromes are regularly inspected and maintained to ensure safety and adherence to aviation regulations.
- Emergency Response Plans are in place for certified airports as required by regulation in Whitehorse, Dawson City, Watson Lake, Old Crow and Mayo.
- Government of Yukon employees are provided training according to their roles and responsibilities.

Additional response:

- On June 10, 2024, there was an incident involving a commercial aircraft at the Haines Junction Aerodrome which sadly led to injuries and a loss of life.
- Passengers were cared for by Haines Junction nursing station and air ambulance staff.
- The Transportation Safety Board and the Yukon Coroner's Safety Service are currently investigating the incident.

Session Briefing Note
Haines Junction Aerodrome

Tab# 17
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Transportation Safety Board and the Yukon Coroner’s Safety Service are investigating a fatal plane crash that took place in Haines Junction on June 10.

Background:

- Following an accident at the Haines Junction Aerodrome on June 10, 2024, involving a Cessna U206G aircraft, operated by Rocking Star Adventures Ltd., the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) deployed a team of investigators to the site to gather information and assess the occurrence.
- There was one fatality and multiple other injuries.
- Passengers were treated at the Haines Junction Health Centre prior to being medevaced.
- Applicable procedures are under development for other aerodromes such as Haines Junction, which will detail staff roles and responsibilities and include additional details on how to initiate a response.
- For this incident, onsite Yukon Government staff responded appropriately by calling 911.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 29, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Whitehorse Airport Restaurant**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport is the aviation gateway to the Yukon, welcoming passengers from across the country and around the world.
 - Air North was the successful proponent of an open public tender for new food services at the airport.
 - The Black Wolf Bistro opened in June 2024 and provides food and beverages to passengers and the community, including many locally sourced options.
 - The Black Wolf Bistro is open daily between 5am and 5pm except for Saturday when it closes at 4pm.
 - Outside the Bistro's operating hours, food and beverage options continue to be available within the airport gift shop, vending machines and at nearby hotel restaurants.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Airport users have been interested in food service providers in the airport. The reestablishment of food services, following the closure of the previous restaurant, was delayed by pandemic-related restrictions, and significant renovation and outfitting requirements.
-

Background:

- The opening date was postponed from February 2024 to May and then June due to unforeseen delays in receiving kitchen equipment and supplies.
 - In June 2019, the last operator requested release from their agreement to provide food services at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. The Yukon government took this opportunity to remove obsolete and non-functional
-

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Whitehorse Airport Restaurant

Highways and
Public Works

equipment and upgrade the former restaurant and lounge areas and kitchen space.

- In late 2019, the Government of Yukon began working on securing a new agreement for food services at the airport.
- Unfortunately, active negotiations for the primary food services agreement were paused in March 2020 due to pandemic-related public health directives, a decrease in passenger traffic and a decrease in airport terminal use in general.
- In August 2021, discussions resumed on the food services agreement. Discussions were placed on hold again in October 2021 when the food services space was temporarily repurposed as a COVID-19 testing facility to satisfy Transport Canada regulatory requirements.
- The department resumed engagement with Air North, the highest ranked proponent in the Negotiated Request for Proposals process, in March 2022.
- In late 2023, an agreement was signed with Air North to open a new restaurant. Air North began their renovations and outfitting which concluded in June 2024.
- The airport hosts approximately 400,000 passengers a year, and food services are an important part of the service offered at the airport.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Ross River Aerodrome
Maintenance**

Highways and
Public Works**Recommended response:**

- The Ross River Aerodrome is located near the community of Ross River.
- It operates as a regional airstrip for the area, which is situated approximately 200 kilometers northeast of Whitehorse.
- The aerodrome primarily serves general aviation, including light aircraft and private flights, charter flights, as well as some government and emergency services flights.
- After a snowfall, our main highways are cleared, followed by airstrips and other roads as quickly as possible. This ensures that access to the aerodrome from our highway network is maintained.

Additional response:

- During the winter season, our highway maintenance camps operate seven days a week.
- Highways and Public Works is equipped to take on the challenging conditions with the required plows, graders and snowblowers needed for clearing the roads and aerodromes.
- Highways and Public Works is committed to maintaining airports and aerodromes to ensure safe flight operations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may have questions about aerodrome winter maintenance.
-

Background:

- **Type:** Registered aerodrome; lighting (day/night); Night time operations restricted to emergency use only.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Ross River Aerodrome
Maintenance**Highways and
Public Works

- **Maintenance:** Performed by TMB after highway opened.
- **Use:** MEDEVAC (primarily day use/night time MEDEVACs usually go to Faro Aerodrome), RCMP, travelling public, locals, mineral exploration and natural resource management.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	November 6, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The impacts of climate change are evident in the north, whether it be wildfires, flooding, landslides, increased precipitation, permafrost thaw or avalanches.
- It is important that the infrastructure built today will withstand the climate impacts of tomorrow.
- To mitigate the effects of climate change on the built environment, Highways and Public Works is developing new processes and tools to consider climate risk in new and existing infrastructure across the Yukon. These tools will help connect complex climate change data, and project-level requirements.
- In March 2024, the department completed a climate change vulnerability study of the road transportation network. This study is the first step to understand where our roads are most exposed to long-term climate related risks (OCF Action T25).
- This assessment looks at our highway's current exposure to climate related geohazards and forecasts where they might occur over the next 50 years.
- The results of this study will target areas of interest for monitoring, support requests for capital funding applications, and include a mitigation and adaptation package to support our project prioritization for capital planning and asset management.
- We will use the information from these projects and studies to help build safer and more resilient infrastructure for years to come.

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

Additional response:

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

Third response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is conducting climate risk assessments of all major transportation and building infrastructure projects over \$10 million, under OCF Actions T28 and H15.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

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

Highways and
Public Works

- Unlike the Yukon-wide climate risk assessment that looks broadly at the climate hazards of the territory, these project-level assessments influence the design of new infrastructure so they can better withstand climate hazards over the next several decades.
- Climate risk assessments consider the potential damage, how likely it is to occur, and what options exist to mitigate that threat.
- Since 2019, the department has completed climate risk assessments for the following eight major construction projects:
 - Dempster Fibre Line;
 - Carmacks Bypass;
 - North Klondike Highway reconstruction;
 - Whitehorse Airport Airside Improvements;
 - Alaska Highway Safety Improvements Through Whitehorse;
 - Takhini Thaw Slump;
 - Dawson City Yukon River crossing; and
 - Kêts'ádań Kù (Kay-et-zah-Done-coo) the new Burwash Landing school, under OCF Actions H15 and T28.
- The assessments were conducted during the design stage of these projects, helping the department predict climate change impacts to inform decisions.
- For example, the foundation of the Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing School) project, was modified due to the presence of permafrost, and the overall building shape was designed to address changing weather patterns.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

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

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- The “Assessing Climate Change Risk and Resilience in the Yukon” report was released in September 2022 and can be found on Yukon.ca.
- The Yukon-wide climate risk assessment had three main objectives:
 - build an understanding of climate resilience across the Yukon;
 - highlight the priorities for reducing risks; and
 - identify the factors that contribute to resilience.
- This report outlines the impacts of climate change that pose the highest risk to Yukoners and will be a key resource for the government to assess, adjust and accelerate climate actions under Our Clean Future.
- Climate risk assessments 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:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 4, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

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

Additional response:

- The updated Our Clean Future Action T2 commits Highways and Public Works to continue the electrification of the Government of Yukon's fleet and incorporate emissions reductions into vehicle replacement decision-making as available and suitable.
- By the end of the 2024-25 fiscal year, we will have 64 electric vehicles, or 9 per cent of our light duty fleet with scheduled replacements for aging equipment.

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*.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Electric Fleet Vehicles OCF Action T2

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

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

Total Electric Fleet Vehicles		
Type	Number	Acquired
Plug-in hybrid SUVs	12	2022
Hybrid pick-up trucks	13	2023
Full battery-electric cars	3	2016+2021
Full battery-electric vans	4	2023+2024
Full battery-electric trucks	2	2023+2024
Full battery-electric compact SUVs	30	2023+2024
TOTAL	64	

- In 2016, the Yukon government purchased its first zero-emission vehicle as a pilot project.
- Progress on this commitment includes:
 - 2 battery-electric passenger cars were delivered in 2021;
 - 12 plug-in hybrid SUVs were delivered in 2022;
 - 13 gas hybrid pickup trucks and the two full battery-electric pickup trucks were delivered for use across the fleet in 2023;
 - 3 battery-electric cargo vans were delivered in 2023 and used by our mail and courier services and education facilities support;
 - 15 full battery electric compact SUVs were delivered in 2023;
 - 15 more full battery electric compact SUVs were delivered in May 2024.
 - 4 per cent of the light duty fleet were electric vehicles – 28 vehicles in total.
 - 1 more battery-electric cargo van and one battery-electric pickup truck were delivered to the fleet in April 2024.
- Now there are electric vehicle cars and electric hybrid SUVs available for government use from Fleet Vehicle motor pool services.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Electric Fleet Vehicles OCF Action T2

Highways and
Public Works

- Market supply chains have improved, and electric vehicles are now being received quickly.

Fleet-owned EV Range estimates

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

- The federal program for zero-emission vehicles provides incentives of up to \$5,000 for the purchase or lease of eligible zero-emission light-duty vehicles and up to \$10,000 for medium or heavy-duty vehicles, such as full battery-electric vans.
- Procurement of zero-emissions vehicles will follow the federal rebate standards set by Natural Resources Canada to determine vehicle eligibility. Federal rebates will be applied to the Yukon government purchases through the procurement process.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 23, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- One of the ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to meet *Our Clean Future* goals is by switching to electric vehicles.
- In the Yukon, on-road gasoline and diesel vehicles accounted for 39 per cent of our territory's 2021 greenhouse gas emissions.
- Under Action T4 of *Our Clean Future*, the Government of Yukon has committed to making it possible for electric vehicles to reach all road accessible communities in the Yukon, by 2027.
- The Department of Energy Mines and Resources has installed fast charging stations available for public use within the following Yukon communities and Whitehorse:
 - Beaver Creek – Visitor Information Centre;
 - Burwash Landing – Kluane Energy Café;
 - Carcross – Carcross/Tagish First Nation Learning Centre;
 - Carmacks – Tantalus Community Centre;
 - Dawson City – Visitor Information Centre;
 - Faro – Campbell Region Interpretive Centre;
 - Haines Junction – Da Kų Culture Centre;
 - Marsh Lake – Army Beach water treatment plant;
 - Mayo - Government of Yukon Administration Building;
 - Mendenhall Subdivision – Mendenall Road;
 - Pelly Crossing – School Avenue;
 - Ross River – by the Ross River School;
 - Stewart Crossing – Rest Stop at kilometre 213;
 - Teslin – Boat Launch;

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

- Watson Lake – Northern Lights Space and Science Centre;
- Whitehorse – Yukon Centre Mall, Yukon Transportation Museum, Yukon Visitor Information Centre.
- For those travelling through northern British Columbia, electric vehicle charging station locations include:
 - Alaska highway at Liard Hot Springs, Toad River, Tetsa River, Fort Nelson, Prophet River, Pink Mountain, Wonowon, Fort St John, and Dawson Creek
 - Stewart Cassiar Highway at Good Hope Lake, Dease Lake, Iskut, Meziadin Junction, and Kitwanga.
- Drivers can now check 511 to determine where charging stations exist along the Yukon highway network.

Additional response:

- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Energy, Mines and Resources are working closely to install a total of eight additional electric vehicle fast charging stations along the Alaska, North Klondike and Robert Campbell Highways.
- These new stations will provide charging opportunities in between community charging locations to ensure that electric vehicles can safely travel the long distances between communities along the highways.
- Installation timelines are dependent on necessary electrical and communications infrastructure for each site and requires coordination with Yukon Energy Corporation, ATCO Electric Yukon and Northwestel.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations OCF Action T4

Highways and
Public Works

- We anticipate up to 5 installations will be completed in 2024, and the entire project will be completed by 2026.

2024 Installation Completion	
Sites	New or Existing Rest Stop
Alaska Highway and South Canol Road intersection;	Yes
Alaska Highway Swift River	Yes
Dempster Highway and North Klondike Highway intersection	No
North Klondike Highway, Braeburn Kilometre 281	No
Alaska Highway and Highway 37 intersection	No
2025 Installation Completion	
Sites	Rest Stop
Jake's Corner	No
2026 Installation Completion	
Sites	Rest Stop
North Klondike Highway Gravel Lake Kilometre 622	Yes
Robert Campbell Highway Drury Creek Area	Yes (New)

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations OCF Action T4

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Investing in the Yukon’s roadways to support low carbon transportation, such as electric vehicles, is a Government of Yukon commitment under Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy.
- Energy, Mines and Resources installed Yukon’s first Level 3 electric vehicle fast-charging in 2019.
- 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 (DC chargers) that can charge a vehicle in 30-60 minutes, also known as fast charging stations.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 24, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response: Energy Retrofits (OCF Action H1)

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is making significant progress toward reducing the energy use of our public buildings and meeting the greenhouse gas reduction commitments in Our Clean Future (H30).
- Highways and Public Works is investing in retrofits to government buildings to reduce energy use and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Since the launch of Our Clean Future, 31 building energy retrofits have been completed using the Small Communities Fund. These projects are estimated to reduce 225 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year.
- The Yukon University roof replacement is also underway and is anticipated to be complete in 2026. This project is estimated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 137 tonnes per year.
- As we complete the remaining energy assessments, we will incorporate the resulting projects into the existing project list and adjust the priority and sequencing as required.

Additional response:

- Highways and Public Works plans on spending approximately \$500 thousand in 2024-25 and \$450 thousand in 2025-26 on the design of energy retrofit projects to ramp up construction in future years.
- These designs will facilitate the construction of several energy retrofit projects planned for 2025-26. These projects include high efficiency boiler and furnace upgrades at various sites including Porter Creek

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Energy Retrofits

Highways and
Public Works

OCF Actions H1, H2, H30 and L4

Secondary, Swift River Grader Station, JV Clark School, and Tantalus School.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Completed retrofits include HVAC, lighting and envelope upgrades. The retrofits aim to improve equipment efficiency and reduce the amount of energy required to heat the buildings.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- Under the commitments outlined in Our Clean Future, Highways and Public Works is improving energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening our resilience to the ongoing impacts of climate change.
- Some of the actions we have undertaken include:
 - energy retrofit projects and renewable energy projects in government buildings;
 - increasing the number of electric fleet vehicles;
 - project-specific climate risk assessments and permafrost monitoring to improve climate resilience of infrastructure construction projects; and
 - modernizing heavy equipment in the government fleet.

Additional response:

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

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

- T34 - Undertake a climate adaptation study to understand the risks imposed on the Yukon's aviation infrastructure, operations, and maintenance from climate change.
- T35 - Develop a 20-year transportation network plan that incorporates emissions reductions and resilience in planning for future changes in transportation demand.
- H31 - Develop and implement a recommissioning program that focuses on energy efficiency and staff education for lasting performance improvements in Government of Yukon buildings.
- L18 - Incorporate climate change considerations throughout Government of Yukon's asset management process for buildings.
- Highways and Public Works is now responsible for 33 actions in Our Clean Future. Many of these are progressing ahead of schedule and 10 have already been completed.
- There was a shift last spring, action L15 – ‘develop and implement a framework to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions and climate risk into government infrastructure investments in 2024’ is now under the responsibility of the Department of Finance.

Additional response: Green investment and planning

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

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

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

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

currently powered by diesel-generated facilities. These sites are in off grid, isolated locations.

- The final commissioning of the Klondike and Ogilvie battery and solar power sites is now achieved, with substantial completion anticipated by mid-November.
- Contracts for the solar powered systems at the Tuchitua and Blanchard Grader Stations were awarded in June and work is underway.
- In March 2024, the department completed a climate change vulnerability study of the road transportation network. This study is the first step to understand where our roads are most exposed to long-term climate related risks.

Additional response: Key accomplishments

- 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.
- In coordination with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, we've recently completed the installation of public charging stations at the Jim Smith south parking lot for Yukoners to access.
- We also 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.
- Climate risk assessments are being conducted on an ongoing basis for major building and road infrastructure projects above \$10 million.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Our Clean Future – HPW Actions

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 12, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Biomass Renewable Energy
Projects**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

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

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Biomass Renewable Energy
Projects**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response:

- Biomass systems use renewable fuels to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower overall emissions.
 - As part of our commitment to clean energy under *Our Clean Future* (Action H17), the Yukon government continues to invest in renewable energy projects, including installing renewable heating systems in government buildings.
 - Highways and Public Works is moving ahead with projects based on the completed renewable energy feasibility studies.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**Biomass systems:**

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

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Biomass Renewable Energy Projects

Highways and Public Works

Biomass – Elijah Smith Elementary School

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

Biomass – Whitehorse Correction Centre

- In November 2022, a contract was awarded for the Whitehorse Correctional Center biomass expansion project.
- The project will connect underground piping from Takhini Haven and the Young Offenders Facility to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre that has an operational biomass boiler with additional capacity.
- The system currently uses low-carbon wood pellets made from the waste of a sawmill in Northern Alberta.
- The number of wood pellet deliveries will increase from 5 to 10 per year for this project. The emissions from these trips will be primarily offset by the corresponding reduction in heating oil and propane deliveries from Northern BC and Alaska.
- Final commissioning and substantial completion is anticipated for Fall 2024.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

List of Buildings with Ongoing Energy Assessments in 2024

Highways and
Public Works

#	Building Name	Year Built
Beaver Creek		
1	Beaver Creek Airport Terminal	1983
2	Beaver Creek Grader Station	1987
3	Beaver Creek Health Centre	1983
4	Nelna Bessie John School	1961
Blanchard River		
5	Blanchard Highway Maintenance Camp	1985
Burwash Landing		
6	Burwash Landing Airport Terminal	1965
7	Burwash Landing Firehall	1980
Destruction Bay		
8	Destruction Bay Grader Station	1969
9	Destruction Bay Health Centre	1990
Drury Creek		
10	Drury Creek Grader Station	1970
Faro		
11	Del Van Gorder School	1969
12	Faro Health Centre	1969
13	Faro Liquor Store	1979
Haines Junction		
14	Haines Junction Administration Building & Library	1975
15	Haines Junction Grader Station	1960
16	St. Elias Community School	1966
Ross River		
17	Ross River Grader Station	1988

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

List of Buildings with Ongoing Energy Assessments in 2024

Highways and
Public Works

18	Ross River Health Centre	1996
19	Ross River Multi Use/Community Hall	2003
20	Ross River Recreation Center	1987
21	Ross River School	2000
22	Ross River Water Treatment Plant and Firehall	2012
Tuchitua		
23	Tuchitua Highway Maintenance Camp	1982
Watson Lake		
24	Fire Control Centre	1993
25	FMRS Office - EAST Region	1987
26	Johnson Elementary School	1962
27	Watson Lake - District Office	2013
28	Watson Lake - District Office EMR	1974
29	Watson Lake Airport Terminal	1943
30	Watson Lake Grader Station	1950
31	Watson Lake Grader Station - Storage	1965
32	Watson Lake High School	1964
33	Watson Lake Storage Maintenance	1989
34	Watson Lake Weigh Station	2004
Whitehorse		
35	Shed Sand Storage	2017
36	Transportation Museum	1942

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 8, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

List of Completed Sites with Renewable Energy Feasibility Studies

Highways and
Public Works

Site Name	# of Buildings	Buildings
Dawson City		
Dawson Biomass system expansion	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PMD Office (FMRS Location) • Old Territorial Admin Building • Dawson Hospital • Dawson City Swimming Pool • Alexander McDonald Lodge • RCMP and Parks Can
Haines Junction		
Haines Junction District heating system	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration Building / Library • Health Center Haines Junction • Grader Station • Duplex Haines Junction
St Elias Community School, Haines Junction	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Elias School
Mayo		
Mayo district heating system	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayo Health Centre / Nursing Station • JV Clark School • Administration Building Mayo • Mining Recorder's Office
Whitehorse		
2 Mile Hill Complex, Government of Yukon buildings	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada Games Center (CoW) • Environment and Climate Change Canada • Environment and Climate Change Canada • POL Shed • Central Operations Complex • Cold Storage Building • Small Engine Repair Shop • Propane Shed

Session Briefing Note

List of Completed Sites with Renewable Energy Feasibility Studies

9029 Quartz Road Complex	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response Centre
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage Marwell (Parks Br. Gar.) • Storage Building Grader Station • Main Grader Station • Workshop/Offices Wildlife • Pol Storage • Liquor Corp Building • Mechanical Workshop • Supply Services and Stores • Storage Supply Services • Welding Shop and Storage • Storage - Hazardous Waste container • Shed Open Storage • TMD Storage Facility Shed • Storage Facility Shed - TMB
Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Electrification Building • Wildland Fire Building • Combined Services • Whitehorse Airport • NAV Canada Air Operations Building • Transportation Museum • Shed Sand Storage • Beringia Centre
Jim Smith Building	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Smith Building • Visitors Information Center
Porter Creek Secondary School	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porter Creek Secondary School
Yukon University	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yukon University (includes Archives and Art Centre) • Yukon University - Arctic Research Lab • Yukon University - Centre of Northern Innovation in Mining • Yukon University – Multipurpose

Session Briefing Note
List of Completed Sites with
Renewable Energy Feasibility
Studies

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yukon University - New Residence • Yukon University - Northern Science Centre • Yukon University - Residence
Riverdale district heating system	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Building • Storage Education Compound • FH Collins Secondary School • FH Collins Tech Ed Wing • FH Collins Weight Room • Selkirk Elementary School • Paul-Emile Mercier Francophone School • Teen Parent Center • Gadzoosdaa Residence
Whistle Bend district heating system	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistle Bend Place • Whistle Bend School

Approved by:

T. Allen

September 3, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

**List of Small Communities Fund
Building Energy Retrofits**

Highways and
Public Works

31 SCF Projects Completed	
Building	Project Description
Beaver Creek	
Grader Station	Heating Plant Upgrade
Blanchard	
Crew Residence	Window Replacement
Carcross	
Ghuch Tlâ Community School	Lighting Upgrade
Dawson City	
Grader Station	Heating Plant Replacement
Robert Service School	Lighting Upgrades
Haines Junction	
Administration Building/Library	Fuel Tank Replacement
Airport Terminal	Boiler Replacement
St. Elias Community School	Boiler Replacement
Keno	
Firehall Garage	Heating System Replacement
Mayo	
Administration Building	HVAC Upgrade
Tuchitua	
Crew Residence	Air Handling Unit
Watson Lake	
Watson Lake High School	Wall and Roof Envelope Upgrades
Whitehorse	
Yukon Justice Centre	HVAC Upgrades

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

List of Small Communities Fund Building Energy Retrofits

Highways and
Public Works

Building	Project Description
Whitehorse	
Education Building	Window Replacement
Elijah Smith Elementary School	Lighting Retrofit
Elijah Smith Elementary School	Wall and Roof Envelope Upgrades
F.H. Collins Tech Ed Wing	Lighting Upgrade
F.H. Collins Tech Ed Wing	Wood Dust Collector System
Field Operations Office Building	Fuel Tank Replacement
Hidden Valley Elementary School	Generator and Boiler Exhaust
Holy Family Elementary School	Generator and Boiler Exhaust
Mechanical Workshop Marwell	Lighting Upgrade
Supply Services & Stores	HVAC System Upgrades
Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School	Lighting Upgrade
Saint Francis of Assisi Secondary School	Wood Dust Collector System Replacement
Supervised Consumption Site	Envelope Upgrade
Teen Parent Centre	Fuel System Replacement
Tourism Business Centre/VIC	Controls Upgrade
Workshop Offices Parks	HVAC System Replacement
Yukon Arts Centre	Lighting Upgrades
Yukon Justice Centre	Atrium Skylight Replacement

Session Briefing Note

**List of Small Communities Fund
Building Energy Retrofits**

Highways and
Public Works

SCF Projects – In Progress		
Building	Project Description	Status
Whitehorse		
Yukon University	Roof Replacement	Complete by March 2026

Projects	tCO2e GHGs
SCF Completed	225
SCF Underway (YU Roof)	137
Total	362

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Energy Assessments
OCF Action H2**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Energy Assessments (OCF Action H2)

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is making significant progress toward reducing the energy use of our public buildings and meeting the greenhouse gas reduction commitments in Our Clean Future (H30).
- The department is continuing to complete energy assessments of Government of Yukon buildings to identify energy retrofits that reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from buildings (OCF Action H2).
- To date, we have assessed 81 high-emitting Government of Yukon buildings. These assessments identified more than 600 possible building energy retrofit projects.
- Of these projects, 116 have been selected based on our prioritization methodology that looks at greenhouse gas emissions, business case, and operational improvements (OCF Action L4).

Additional response:

- In February 2024, the department awarded a project to conduct energy assessments on the 36 remaining buildings that are currently classified as high-emitting government buildings.
- The site visits for these energy assessments were completed in July 2024, and the development of the final reports is expected to be completed by December 2024.
- Once completed, we will have assessed all 117 high emitting buildings. These buildings account for over 90 per cent of our portfolio's total emissions.

Session Briefing Note

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Energy Assessments OCF Action H2

Highways and
Public Works

- Highways and Public Works is also partnering with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to improve the energy use data in Old Crow.
- In 2023, fuel and electricity meters were installed in all 11 Government of Yukon buildings in Old Crow. This information will allow us to further identify energy conservation and renewable energy opportunities in Old Crow.
- As we finish the remaining energy assessments, we'll add the resulting projects to the current project list based on our prioritization methodology.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Energy assessments are action items under Our Clean Future.

Background:

- A building energy assessment identifies retrofits to reduce energy costs and lower greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing overall building energy efficiency.
- Energy Assessments create retrofit recommendations that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy costs.
- Retrofits are scored and prioritized based on magnitude of greenhouse gas reductions, business case analysis and operational and reliability improvements. Retrofits that score highest are recommended for implementation.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Solar Renewable Energy Projects

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Renewable Electricity

- Investing in renewable energy projects is one of the many initiatives that the Yukon government is undertaking to meet the goals of *Our Clean Future*.
- One of the commitments of *Our Clean Future* (Action E4) is to install renewable energy systems in off-grid government buildings to reduce reliance on diesel-generated electricity.
- The final commissioning of the Klondike and Ogilvie battery and solar power sites is now achieved, with substantial completion anticipated by mid-November.
- These two projects will offset approximately 103,000 litres of diesel fuel each year and reduce emissions by 270 tonnes.
- We are also moving forward with solar energy projects at the Tuchitua and Blanchard highway maintenance camps.
- A contract for the installation of these systems has been awarded to Solvest. These projects will offset approximately 98,000 liters of fuel and reduce emissions by 260 tonnes per year.

Additional response:

- Solar energy systems use the sun's energy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower overall emissions. Inclusion of battery storage allows the system to optimize the reduction in generator use and prolong the availability of the energy captured by the solar panels.
- The four sites represent the most suitable locations for battery and solar power systems and ensure resources go toward providing the greatest impact for this action.

Session Briefing Note
Solar Renewable Energy Projects

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Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- The four sites, Ogilvie, Klondike, Blanchard and Tuchitua, are not connected to the Yukon power grid or local community grids. Without these projects, all power would be provided by onsite generators at each location.
- The solar energy projects were initially identified during a solar feasibility study completed in 2021.
- The systems are designed to reduce the run time of the onsite generators. This results in reduced fuel consumption, fuel costs and greenhouse gas emissions.
- The solar projects involve installing photovoltaic solar panel arrays, battery energy storage systems and control apparatus as well as integration with onsite generators and commissioning.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 12, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response

- The Yukon's ATIPP Act came into force in 1995. Since the Act was proclaimed, it has been amended in 2009, 2012 and most recently in 2018 when our government introduced an amended ATIPP Act, which came into force recently, in 2021.
- Yukon's legislation is one of the strongest access to information regimes in the country, and represents our commitment to increase government transparency.
- As we work through ATIPP requests, both the departments and the ATIPP officers are always balancing privacy with access to information and transparency. This is particularly relevant in a small jurisdiction like ours.
- Each year the ATIPP office handles on average 660 access to information requests.

Additional response: 2023 Ombudsman Report

- The Government of Yukon is committed to increasing government transparency, and the Yukon's Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act is one of the strongest access to information regimes in Canada.
- We are continually updating our processes and many of these improvements have been guided by complaints received in the complaint resolution process.
- Since April 2021, Highways and Public Works has processed over 1,800 information requests, with only 6 cases going to formal adjudication, and only one case reaching court.

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

- The low number of adjudications to date suggest the system generally works well for applicants.
- When developing the ATIPP Act, our government made sure to include checks and balances in the legislation.
- As the Minister responsible for the ATIPP Act, I must ensure that a review is completed every six years.
- The 2027 legislative review of the ATIPP Act is a good opportunity to consider and propose changes to ensure the Act continues to meet the needs of Yukoners.

Additional response: IPC Recommendations

- In the current ATIPP Act system the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner has the power to make recommendations, not binding orders. This is in line with access to information laws in most other Canadian jurisdictions.
- If a public body rejects the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendations, the applicant can seek a judicial review in the Yukon Supreme Court.
- There are a number of legitimate reasons why a public body may choose not to disclose certain information despite a recommendation made by the IPC, including whether releasing the information could be harmful to a third party's interests.
- If an applicant has a concern about an ATIPP response or anything related to it, they can exercise their right to make a complaint to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to launch an

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

Informal Investigation resolution process with the department involved.

- The Information and Privacy Commissioner holds a valuable role in the Yukon, and we take their recommendations seriously.
- Each department head must decide what will be released based on a variety of factors, such as potential harm to private sector companies should their competitors have access to it.

Additional response:

- Through the ATIPP legislation we are also being more transparent by proactively releasing information that was previously unavailable.
- This includes making public all of the session notes after a sitting has finished, the organizational charts of how departments work and their associated policies.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**ATIPP Information**

- Since April 1, 2021, there have been approximately 2,650 ATIPP access requests processed.
- On average there were 661 access requests processed annually from 2018 to Mar 31, 2024.
- 24% of access requests in 2022-23 were granted in full, with no information withheld.

Session Briefing Note
Access to Information and
Protection of Privacy

Highways and
Public Works

- 97% of access requests in 2022-23 paid no fee for access to the information.
- 602 or 95% of access requests in 2022-23 were completed within the legislated deadline.
- 41% of access requests in 2022-23 had information withheld to protect the privacy of individuals.
- Since August 2021, 480 access requests have been posted to the Access to Information Registry. Most include the actual records in addition to the request and outcome.
- The registry can be found on [Open.Yukon.ca](https://open.yukon.ca).

Approved by:	
T. Allen	October 23, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**AI and ChatGPT**

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Artificial Intelligence

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- ChatGPT is one of many manifestations of AI that are and will continue to emerge in the coming months and years.

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AI and ChatGPT

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Public Works

- These platforms can provide seemingly factual or authoritative information that can be erroneous and must be independently verified.
- The basic ChatGPT is free to use, making it widely accessible.
- The federal government’s proposed Artificial Intelligence and Data Act (Bill C-27) is in the committee stage and is Canada’s first attempt to regulate AI.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Cyber Security**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- A key objective of our government is keeping information systems and government-held information secure.
- Over the last decade the number of cyber attacks around the world affecting governments and private companies has increased.
- Critical infrastructure is increasingly being targeted by state-sponsored cyber threat actors.
- This trend is also consistent for the Yukon. In recent years, the Yukon government, like other governments across Canada, has experienced an increase in cyber attacks and risk.
- We take cyber security seriously, and 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;
 - providing information security awareness training to all YG employees;
 - conducting security threat risk assessments on systems and regularly mitigating vulnerabilities;
 - working with a security operations contractor to monitor our IT infrastructure 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and
 - actively collaborating with the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security and provincial counterparts to share information on threats and activity.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Cyber Security**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response: Distributed Denial of Service Attack

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

Third response: Approach to Ransomware

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

Session Briefing Note

Cyber Security

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

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

Fourth response: Working with Partners

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Cyber Security

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

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

Additional response:

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

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

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

- When there is a suspected privacy breach, we notify those individuals who it may effect so that they are aware and can take further action to mitigate any potential impacts.

Third response:

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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Privacy Breaches

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

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

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon strives to create tenders and contract documents that clearly outline the requirements and deliverables for contractors.
- Our government expects that contractors will fulfil all commitments made in the tendering process during contract delivery, including pricing, delivery of the project and Yukon First Nation participation through subcontracts or labour.
- We hold all contractors to account and, when there are challenges, work with them to resolve issues in line with the contract.

Additional response:

- To have effective contract management, there must be continuous communication between the government and the contractor. Our project managers have regular check-ins throughout a contract to track the progress of commitments.
- 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.

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 Government of Yukon and the contractor cannot resolve the performance issues, legal action is sometimes required.

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Contract Management

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon government's contract management approach is being criticized by the Opposition, raising concerns that contractors are not being held to account to carry through on bid commitments to Yukon First Nation businesses or hires.

Background:

- Through the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy, 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.
- During the tender period, contractors can ask for clarification of the expectations in the tender documents. Once the tender closes, a post-tender review meeting is often held where the contractor who is eligible for the award confirms that they will meet the commitments in their tender.
- After the contract is awarded, the Government of Yukon's role during contract performance is to actively manage the contract to verify that all deliverables and commitments are being met. This includes the schedule, the price, and any Yukon First Nation participation.
- Yukon First Nation participation commitments are contract deliverables in government contracts and are being managed as any other deliverable would be.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Office of the Auditor General of
Canada Audit**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Office of the Auditor General of Canada is finalizing a procurement and contracting performance audit within all of Yukon government and a draft audit report was received on October 15.
- The audit focuses on how the Department of Highway and Public Works managed procurement and contracting on behalf of the Yukon government, as well as how departments across government created a competitive procurement environment and made decisions that resulted in value-for-money for Yukoners.
- The final audit report, including the recommendations as well as the government's response, will become public on November 26.
- The audit team will also have an in-camera meeting with Members of the Legislative Assembly, host a press conference and meet in-camera with the Public Accounts Committee on November 26.

Additional response:

- Highways and Public Works is working collaboratively with all departments involved to develop an approach to addressing audit recommendations.
- Recommendations point to areas for process improvement, such as post-project evaluation, documentation of such evaluations, risk assessments, conflict of interest declarations, value for money and creating a competitive procurement environment.
- The Government of Yukon procurement practices are being audited because of significant changes in the way procurement and contracting activities take place due to changes to the procurement

Session Briefing Note**Office of the Auditor General of
Canada Audit****Highways and
Public Works**

policy in 2019 and 2021, and the introduction of an online bidding system in 2020.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The audit report will be become publicly available on November 26 and members of the public and the media might have questions.
-

Background:

- The audit plan scoping document was finalized March 14, 2024, and includes the criteria for how the audit is conducted.
 - Within the Yukon government, 16 departments are involved in the procurement and contracting **performance** audit including: Community Services, Economic Development, Education, Executive Council Office, Energy, Mines and Resources, Environment, Finance, French Language Services Directorate, Health and Social Services, Highways and Public Works, Justice, Public Service Commission, Tourism and Culture, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, Yukon Liquor Corporation and Yukon Development Corporation.
 - Each department is audited for its role as a procurement authority because, as per GAM 2.6 section 1(5), all departments are responsible for understanding the strategic purpose of procurement and its role in achieving outcomes for all of government, as well as complying with all aspects of the procurement policy.
 - In addition to being audited for its role as a procurement authority, the Department of Highways and Public Works is being audited for its role as the central agency responsible for procurement and contracting oversight for all of Yukon government.
 - The Minister of Highways and Public Works has the overall responsibility and authority for Government of Yukon procurement, and the department is tasked with managing the tendering system and providing procurement and contracting advice, guidance, training and templates to all organizations.
-

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Office of the Auditor General of
Canada Audit

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Public Works

- The period covered by the Audit is April 1, 2019 to January 31, 2024. Sample contract files audited include contracts that started on or after April 1, 2019 and ended on or before October 31, 2023.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	November 20, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Online Marketplace and
Central Stores**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- In May 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works launched the Government of Yukon Online Marketplace, a new digital platform for government employees to purchase office supplies from local vendors online.
 - The platform replaces the old Central Stores catalogue, making it easier and more efficient to order and pay for commonly used supplies.
 - Orders placed through the Online Marketplace are delivered directly by local suppliers.
 - The platform also allows electronic communication so that suppliers receive and confirm purchase orders, send shipping notices, and email invoices directly to Government of Yukon employees, creating a more streamlined process.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Online Marketplace may generate questions on the change from Central Stores and any resulting service changes.
-

Background:

- Until 2020, Central Stores provided warehouse and ordering services for general office supplies, cleaning materials, basic safety clothing and equipment, furniture, and paper products. A commitment to create an alternative supply system was made when Central Stores' closure was announced in late 2019.
 - Online Marketplace is the modern method used to replace a central stores model.
 - Online Marketplace is the first procurement tool for the Yukon government using the electronic signing authority application for all stages of the transaction
-

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Online Marketplace and Central Stores

Highways and
Public Works

process. It also facilitates workload optimization, cost savings for supply runs by individual employees, warehouse space savings, and error reduction in the payment systems.

- The Department of Highways and Public Works has been working on this platform since 2021 and included vendors in planning as early as fall 2022.
- Online Marketplace soft launched in January 2024, with a phased rollout to Highways and Public Works in February, followed by the rest of the departments in May.
- The development of this system cost approximately \$370 thousand. Maintenance of the system is estimated to cost \$100 thousand each year.

Approved by:

T. Allen

September 4, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Procurement of YG Local Food Purchases

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Since 2021, the Government of Yukon grocery purchasers have supported local farmers and food producers by committing to purchase locally grown products.
 - The Government of Yukon also purchases local products directly through retailers and catering services.
 - We have been working with a group of local farmers and food producers to better understand their perspective and explore other procurement options.
 - The government launched a pilot program with a small group of local food producers in July 2024. This pilot lets purchasers buy local food products on the Online Marketplace.
 - We are working with local food producers and institutional and program services to address supply challenges and to make purchasing easier.
 - The departments of Highways and Public Works and Community Services include local food preferences in the catering contracts issued for camp food services.
-

Context — this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Local Food Standing Offer Arrangements are a multi-departmental effort to increase the use of locally produced foods in government-run facilities, to support local farms and other Yukon food producers and keep money in the territory.
-

Session Briefing Note

Procurement of YG Local Food Purchases

Highways and Public Works

- We are currently piloting small Standing Offer Arrangements directly with producers to sell through the Yukon government's Online Marketplace platform. This fall we will evaluate how it has worked with three vendors selling eggs, grain products and potato chips. If vendors and buyers are satisfied, we will seek additional producers.
- Increasing government purchase of local food aligns with the vision and objectives of Cultivating Our Future: 2020 Yukon Agriculture Policy; actions identified in the Our Clean Future strategy; and was identified as a key priority in the 2016-2021 Local Food Strategy for Yukon.
- In 2021 we launched the Local Food Standing Offer Arrangement. This Standing Offer Arrangement ended in May 2024.
- Through a publicly advertised tender, the Government of Yukon contracted with Takhini River Ranch in 2021 to create a government ordering portal through their existing website and offer set pricing on a variety of local foods.
- Under that Standing Offer Arrangement, the Government of Yukon committed over \$325,000 in purchases under the Standing Offer Agreement, with eggs and meat making up most of sales to date.
 - 2021-22 – Health \$125,000; Education \$10,000 (\$44 thousand spent)
 - 2022-23 – Health \$115,000 (\$52 thousand spent)
 - 2023-24 – Health \$65,000 (\$28 thousand spent)
- The Government of Yukon spends approximately \$3,000,000 per year on food, mainly with the Wholesale Grocery SOA.
- The Government of Yukon food purchasers surveyed in March 2022 reported that issues limiting the use of the local Standing Offer Agreement include budget concerns, limited selection of local food, and a preference to use one ordering tool for simplicity.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Yukon government is helping boost economic development across the territory through trade agreement exceptions.
- The exceptions allow us to restrict competition in procurement for up to ten projects per year to invited, qualified Yukon businesses.
- Since 2018, Yukon businesses have competed for and secured 60 Yukon-exclusive government contracts worth \$29 million in manufacturing, construction, and consulting.

Additional response: This year's projects

- So far in the 2024-25 fiscal year, we have already awarded three projects to Yukon businesses: Hidden Valley School – Public Address, Phone & Clock System Upgrades, the boat launch upgrades in Teslin and the last for the culvert replacement at kilometre 23.2 of the Silver Trail, Highway 11.
- Four more projects will be tendered in winter 2024.
- The Yukon government strives to maximize its allocation of 10 projects every year.
- We post details of awarded contracts on Yukon.ca.

Additional response: Evaluating local benefits

- 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 2024****Regional Economic Development
Exceptions (10x\$1M)**Highways and
Public Works

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- The following contracts were awarded for the 2024-25 fiscal year:
 - Hidden Valley School – Public Address, Phone & Clock System Upgrades for \$256,915.00;
 - Boat Launch Upgrades in Teslin Lake for \$360,600.00;
 - Culvert replacement at kilometre 23.2 of the Silver Trail, Highway 11 for \$625,256.00.
 - The total value of these contracts is \$1,242,771.00.
 - Four projects will be tendered in the winter 2024:
 - Local food procurement project targeting Whitehorse will support the production of high quality, local food products by increasing government procurement opportunities.
 - Access road construction for the Murray Agriculture Subdivision, phase 2, in Ibex Valley.
-

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

- o Seismic & Structural Upgrade at Nelnah Bessie John School.
- o St. Elias School: Public Address, Bell Clock System in Haines Junction.
- 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.
- In recent years, there have been significant changes to the procurement landscape and fewer projects fall under the \$1 million threshold.
- Highways and Public Works continues to work alongside departments to find projects that are suitable for the exception.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 20, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon regularly requires third-party heavy and light equipment rentals for various short-term projects.
- For decades, the Department of Highways and Public Works issued one annual tender for equipment as a Standing Offer Arrangement but is piloting a Qualified Source List approach this fiscal year that allows for regular additions of contractors and equipment to the list.
- The Qualified Source List allows for flexibility and competition to increase opportunities for community-based contractors while ensuring the Yukon government's contracting responsibilities are met.
- Awarding contracts to local community providers is a main consideration for contracts below the direct award threshold, balanced with seeking a fair price for those services.
- The Request for Qualifications accepts online submissions on the Yukon Bids and Tenders platform.
- In the initial Request for Qualifications this past April, 62 contractors were added to the third-party qualified source list.
- Additional intakes occurred between May and October. There are currently 78 contractors on the Qualified Source List.
- The Yukon government is encouraging as many contractors applying to the list as possible to increase access to equipment and operators in all areas of the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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

Background:

- Department officials have acknowledged the challenges with the previous system that required submissions through both MyYukon and Yukon Bids and Tenders and are hopeful this one-window approach will reduce rejections of contractor submissions.
- Typically, around 80 Yukon-based contractors submit, and in recent years we have had to reject around 10 of those submissions due to non-compliance.
- Highways and Public Works proactively informed contractors of this change prior to posting the Request for Qualifications and met with the Yukon Contractors Association to discuss the approach and consider their input on ensuring transparency and fairness.
- Once contractors are on the qualified source list, they may be engaged in the second stage for this type of procurement which is:
 - a direct award to a contractor on the qualified source list;
 - an invitational tender – which requires a minimum of 2 contractors; or,
 - an open tender to only the qualified source list contractors from the equipment group who have indicated they can work in the project area.
- Under the Request for Qualification, qualified contractors will be asked in the second stage to provide an all-inclusive, real-time estimate for the job based on the location and project as outlined in the scope of work rather than hourly rates and complex mobilization and demobilization calculations.
- The Yukon government has observed that approximately 80 per cent of contracts under the Third-Party Equipment Rental List last year were direct awards below the current services threshold of \$50 thousand.
- The Yukon government's procurement policies are mandated by various trade agreements such as the Canada Free Trade Agreement and Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

Session Briefing Note

Third Party Heavy and Light Equipment Rentals

Highways and
Public Works

- Contractors have asked for more transparency for planned opportunities, increased bid information sharing through posting online on Yukon Bids and Tenders, and more information regarding awarded contracts.
- The new QSL approach is being piloted this year with these goals in mind and are highlighted within the instructions for project managers. To do this:
 - the project supervisor must ensure written documentation is kept using the “Contract Tracker” which records several items related to these contracts.
 - the contract tracker can be found on the Third-Party SharePoint Site in the documents section.
- Updated information from Third Party QSL from April 2024 to October 2024.
 - Current number of Contractors on QSL: 78
 - Number of intakes since original RFQ issued: 5 (May, June, July, Aug, Fall)
 - Number of contracts listed on public contract registry connected to the QSL as of October: 71 (including change orders)
 - Estimated total value of contracts April – October: \$2,554,000.
 - Numbers of Contractors issued contracts April – October: 24
- Summary of Third-Party SOA from April 2023 – March 2024 (Previous Year)
 - Estimated number of contracts connected to Third Party Equipment Rental SOA (12 months): 94 (including change orders)
 - Estimated total value of contracts April 2023 – March 2024: \$3,900,000.
 - Numbers of Contractors issued contracts April 2023 – October 2024: 24

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

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

Additional response:

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

Third response:

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

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

- We have many examples of tenders that were posted early so contractors could prepare for the work in advance. Some examples include:
 - the Requests for Bids for the Snow Removal from Yukon Housing Corporation Properties in Carmacks and Ross River were tendered in spring 2024 for the winter season 2024-25;
 - the Request for Proposals for the Dawson City Recreation Centre was tendered in spring 2024 with an anticipated construction mobilization in summer 2025;
 - the Request for Bids for the Deep Creek Solid Waste Facility Maintenance was tendered in spring 2024 with a start date of July 2024 for maintenance and for the winter season for the snow clearing;
 - the Request for Bids for the Outdoor Learning Spaces Design Build at Various Yukon Schools was tendered in spring 2024 with a completion date in fall 2024; and
 - the Request for Bids for the Supply and Delivery of Three Class 5 Diesel Trucks to Yukon government Fleet Vehicle Agency was tendered in spring 2024 with a delivery date of March 2025.
- This is just a short list of some examples that demonstrate how we are issuing tenders early to help vendors prepare for the short construction season.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Timing of Tendering and Forecasting

Highways and Public Works

Background:

- Tender forecasts are posted as “Notice of Planned Procurements” within the Yukon Bids and Tenders eProcurement platform.
- Emails are sent to bidders with accounts when new planned procurements are added.
- The Yukon government right-time tendered 117 projects totalling \$113 million before March 31, 2024.
- Between April 1 and July 31, 2024, the Yukon government right-time tendered 49 projects totaling \$124,309,872.95.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Indigenous Training Program

Tab# 44
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon values reconciliation and we are working with First Nations to honour our commitments.
- We are building strong government-to-government relationships with First Nations and taking meaningful actions that support Yukon First Nations.
- Increasing Indigenous representation in the Yukon government is another crucial step toward reconciliation.
- Highways and Public Works is committed to supporting the implementation of Breaking Trail Together – a 10-year strategic plan to achieve Yukon First Nation representation.
- One way we are breaking trail together is through the Indigenous Training Program, which Highways and Public Works implemented in 2023.
- I am happy to share that this program is now an award-winning and innovative new initiative at Highways and Public Works that provides training and career development opportunities for Indigenous youth through short-term employment.
- Through the program, participants gain coaching and mentorship, valuable work experience and support for reaching their potential.
- Supervisors in participating branches also receive support and training for working with Indigenous youth.

Session Briefing Note

Indigenous Training Program

Tab# 44
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Additional response:

- The Indigenous Training Program was piloted within the Supply Services Branch. The first two trainees successfully graduated from the pilot program in June 2023.
- During the second round, the cohort doubled to four positions and provided opportunities within two branches.
- To-date, feedback from program trainees and department employees has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Highways and Public Works is now exploring opportunities to expand the Indigenous Training Program to other areas of the department.
- I am looking forward to the third cohort beginning this winter.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Indigenous training Program is a positive initiative for the public's awareness.

Background:

- The Indigenous Training Program started as a pilot project in 2022-23.
- Breaking Trail Together was developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and addresses the Yukon government's legal commitment under the Yukon Final Agreements to develop and implement a representative public service plan.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

October 15, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is planning a new Whitehorse Grader Station, with construction expected to begin in 2028-29.
- The existing buildings that make up the grader station are over 70 years old, and have high energy and maintenance costs which makes replacing them the most economical solution in the long term.
- We have identified land along the Alaska Highway as a possible site for the future replacement.
- The current Marwell location is on land that may be better suited for other types of development.

Additional response: Kwanlin Dün First Nation

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

Additional response: Assessment Remediation

- The Marwell Grader Station has been in use since World War 2 and has a large amount of contaminated soil.
 - The Department of Environment has completed assessments that will be used to plan for remediation after the buildings are demolished.
-

Session Briefing Note

SPRING 2024

Marwell Grader Station - Relocation

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Minister Clarke’s March 2, 2023, mandate letter includes: “Advance early work alongside Kwanlin Dūn 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 project is in the public five-year capital plan to begin construction in 2028-29. The total cost is estimated at \$33 million.
- The Department of Environment completed a Phase 2 environmental site assessment and remedial options analysis in 2024. Remediation costs are estimated at \$14.2 million.
- 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 Dūn First Nation to promote development of the area.
- While Kwanlin Dūn First Nation has right of first refusal should the Yukon government choose to dispose of the Marwell site; however, the Yukon government is not obligated to dispose of the land.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works received a Hazardous Building Materials Assessment and Air Quality test results in April for the Nelnah Bessie John School in Beaver Creek which indicated the presence of mould.
 - We immediately reviewed the findings and developed options for remediation, keeping in mind the safety of staff and students and educational requirements.
 - Officials from Education and Highways and Public Works met with the First Nations School Board and parents of students attending the school to discuss the report and remediation options.
 - The chosen option was to remain in the school for the rest of the school year with restricted access to the most impacted areas.
 - Over summer break the remediation work was completed.
 - A final air quality test was conducted in early August to confirm the remediation work was effective.
 - Final work to install flooring and finishes in the affected area were completed at the end of August.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- On February 20, 2024, Highways and Public Works staff were advised of a leak from an upstairs bathroom into a bulkhead space in the basement of Nelnah Bessie John School.
-

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

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- Since July 11, Old Crow has had their own Health and Wellness Centre, as well as a 10-plex to support service delivery and housing needs in the community.
- The 10-plex was substantially complete at the end of January, and the Health and Wellness Centre was substantially complete in May. The Government of Yukon and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation are excited to see the two beautiful facilities constructed in the Yukon's only fly-in community.
- Construction between March 2021 and May 2024 enabled the Vuntut Gwitchin community to benefit from \$13.67 million in employment, training, and business opportunities related to these projects.
- Both buildings were designed and built to high standards, including air tightness, insulation, energy efficient heating, ventilation, and lighting.
- They are constructed to exceed our energy performance target of 35 per cent below the 2017 National Energy Code standard.
- The Health and Wellness Centre's energy performance target was 37 per cent and the 10-Plex's energy performance target was 41 per cent.
- As a result, greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced for the Health and Wellness Centre by 40 per cent and the 10-Plex by 37 per cent.

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

If asked about Operation and Maintenance issues**Additional response: Operation and Maintenance**

- The Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre is a groundbreaking facility in our most remote Yukon community providing a wide range of services to the community. This building marks a significant milestone in establishing standards for future health centres.
- As new systems and technologies are introduced into our northern environments, maintenance issues can sometimes arise during the handover of newly constructed buildings.
- In September, the Health and Wellness Centre septic system was filling up at a faster rate than anticipated, requiring the tank to be drained every 1-2 days
- To resolve the issue, Highways and Public Works worked with a contractor to deliver building management system training remotely on September 19, 2024. The training was recorded for continued reference within the Facilities Management team.
- The issue has since been mitigated and the septic system is working as it should.
- Additionally, in mid-November the department will conduct an in-depth training session with staff on continued monitoring and maintenance of the system.

Additional response: Oil Transfer Pump

- Oil transfer pumps in remote northern communities are crucial for transporting oil and other fluids efficiently. These pumps are designed

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

to handle various viscosities and are often used in severe environments.

- Highways and Public Works became aware of an issue with the oil transfer pump at the Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre on October 18, 2024. The issue does not affect the 10-Plex.
- The oil transfer pump system was fixed on October 30, 2024, through the coordinated effort between Highways and Public Works and Ketza TSL using remote access to the building mechanical controls system.
- Additional staff have been recruited within the community to support the new facility.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Highways and Public Works was responsible for the procurement and management of the Health and Wellness Centre and the 10-plex housing unit design and construction.
- A combined procurement was used for the two facilities to simplify construction resource demands in this small community and decrease the cost of both projects by realizing the benefits of economies of scale and shared resources.
- Stantec Architecture and Engineering completed the conceptual design and is staying engaged during the final design and construction of both facilities.
- The design-build contract for the project was awarded to Ketza TSL Construction in March 2021, for \$44.8 million. Higher shipping costs and a greater number of air freight loads, changes in market conditions have resulted in an increased contract amount of \$55.08 million.

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

- The design-build procurement was value-driven to look beyond the price to make sure the project brought as much value as possible to the community and to the territory. In this case, the winning proponent received points for the schedule, training plans, subcontracting plans, northern and Old Crow specific experience, and First Nations participation.
- A 60-year land lease to accommodate both facilities on one site was signed in spring 2021 with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.

Shipping

- To assist with this project and other projects in the community, a winter road was constructed during the winters of 2021-22 and 2022-23 between Eagle Plains and Old Crow.
- In 2022, 67 truckloads of material were transported to and from Old Crow.
- In 2023, a total of 54 truckloads were shipped to Old Crow on the winter road, including:
 - 41 for Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation; and
 - 13 for the Yukon government and other parties.
- The first loads arrived in the community on February 22, 2022, and the last convoy left Old Crow on March 13, 2023.
- The winter road was used to haul 13 loads out of the community on behalf of Yukon government and other parties.
- These loads included construction equipment, old and outdated machinery, vehicles, and equipment no longer needed in the community, waste oil, batteries and other miscellaneous materials.
- Air North Partnership has transported 794 loads of materials by air for the Old Crow Health and Wellness Center and 10-Plex project.
- The vast majority of shipping was by air and was carried out beginning in summer 2021 through to project completion. Air North is a Yukon company, partly owned

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

by the Vuntut Development Corporation, and is helping to keep the benefits of this project flowing within the Yukon.

- As of July 2024, direct air freight costs totaled approximately \$9.7 million.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 1, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Polarettes Gymnastics Facility

Tab# 52
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The expected March 2025 completion of the new Polarettes and Climb Yukon facility in Whistle Bend will mark an exciting milestone in recreation facilities for the territory and Whitehorse.
- There is now interest from user groups who wish to use the former gymnastics space in Saint Francis of Assisi Secondary School once the Polarettes have relocated to their new facility.
- The Government of Yukon is carefully evaluating the best future use of the space.

Additional response:

- Highways and Public Works' project team met with school employees and those who have expressed interest in the space to discuss potential options.
- The outcomes from these discussions will help inform our next steps.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may have questions about the current space occupied by Polarettes and their future space.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon is constructing a new Polarettes and Climb Yukon facility in Whistle Bend.
- Construction of the new space is scheduled to be completed in March 2025.
- Highways and Public Works led a feasibility study to help determine the best use of the Polarettes space in Saint Francis of Assisi Secondary School.

Session Briefing Note
Polarettes Gymnastics Facility

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Public Works

- The feasibility study includes recommended building upgrades, space needs for each potential user group, and planning level cost estimates.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Pool in Ross River

Tab# 53
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon understands the importance of the community swimming pool in Ross River.
- Highways and Public Works is aware of the concerns with the swimming pool building's structure, such as uneven columns and shifting ground.
- Over the summer Highways and Public Works conducted a detailed structural and geotechnical investigation along with a site survey to explore repair and releveling options.
- As part of this assessment, a team of structural and geotechnical engineers will help determine the options with associated costs for the pool's future.
- Our top priority is ensuring that all government facilities, including schools, offices, and recreational centers, are safe and secure for everyone.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Ross River pool has been closed for several years due to COVID-19, ongoing issues with the building envelope and structure, and the pool system required upgrades, repair and replacement. There are concerns that should the pool be filled, it may not be able to support the weight of water and that this would further deteriorate the condition of the building.

Background:

- The Ross River Pool is an in ground, concrete pool with a liner. Built in 1999, the structure has shallow concrete strip footings with concrete knee walls that support the pool shell and decking, wood frame amenities block, and the metal framed pool enclosure.

Session Briefing Note
Pool in Ross River

Tab# 53
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

- The Ross River community is built on changing permafrost that has contributed to the need for structural assessments and repairs to other buildings in the community, for example the Ross River School and daycare. Highways and Public Works has established a permafrost monitoring program for the community.
- Three reports on the pool enclosure and changerooms were reviewed by the Yukon government. The first was prepared by Stantec on January 22, 2018. The second was prepared by Wood Canada Ltd. on November 27, 2018. The third was prepared by Chuck Austin Engineering, on July 20, 2023.
- The first 2018 Stantec report indicated that work should be undertaken prior to operation of the facility. Since that time the building has remained unused with outstanding repairs.
- The second 2018 Wood report indicated some areas with serious distress and damage to the structure, but the facility did not yet need replacement.
- The third 2023 Chuck Austin report indicated that the degree of structural components and material deterioration is such that the facility cannot be opened immediately as serious structural stability issues exist that require immediate attention and repair.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

School Maintenance

TAB# 54
FALL 2024

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

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

Session Briefing Note
School Maintenance

Highways and
Public Works

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

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:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Ross River community is built on changing permafrost that has contributed to the need for structural assessments and repairs to the Ross River School.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works continues to make sure the school is kept safe by mitigating structural movement, and by performing repairs to lessen the effects of building shifts.
- The Ross River School has been 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 July 26, 2024, confirmed the school remains safe for occupancy.

Additional response:

- The Yukon is experiencing many climate impacts that affect our buildings and Highways and Public Works is implementing a routine structural monitoring program for Yukon government buildings that are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.
- The program is expected to be operational by the end of 2024 and will include those buildings, such as the Ross River school, that may be exposed to foundation and structural distress through permafrost degradation.
- Building on permafrost is challenging as the degradation to the permafrost destabilizes the structure. As temperatures continue to warm, these buildings will likely continue to be affected in the future by permafrost thaw created by climate change.

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

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

Third response: Status of current projects

- During spring 2023, over 200 permanent jacks were installed underneath the Ross River School. The new releveling system can be re-used in the future to address any further movement of the school.
- The project provided significant Yukon First Nation Participation Plan opportunities for the Ross River Dena community.
- The construction of a new modular mechanical room to replace the existing mechanical plant was completed and operational in 2023. The heat emitted from the old mechanical plant was contributing to the deterioration of permafrost under the school.
- This year, the school is undergoing a major roof repair and installation of a new septic field, as well as design for remote level and temperature monitoring systems.
- In 2025, we are planning to complete the roof repair, install a remote level and temperature monitoring system and complete additional work on the heating piping system to protect it from building movement.

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.

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Ross River School

Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- Permafrost conditions at the school have resulted in many structural assessments and repairs over the years.
- The contract for installation of the new septic system, awarded to United North Construction Group in May 2024, was 169k.
- The contract for the installation of the relevening system, awarded to T. Moon Construction in July 2022, was \$3.55 million.
- The contract for the new mechanical room, awarded to Cube Construction in June 2022, was \$1.29 million.
- Other maintenance works projects at the school in the last 5 years include:
 - 2023 – Lighting Upgrade (Gymnasium and Library) - \$59 thousand
 - 2023 – Passive Crawlspace Cooling – \$66 thousand
 - 2023 – Domestic Hot Water Tank Replacements - \$25 thousand
 - 2021 – Water Trough Installations – \$44 thousand
 - 2020 – Structural Upgrades – \$82 thousand
 - 2019 – Structural Upgrades – \$268 thousand

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 26, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response: Parking Lot

- With an increasing population, the Government of Yukon is also growing our infrastructure and making improvements.
- Construction of a new staff parking area behind Selkirk Elementary School began in summer 2023. The parking area is now complete and was available for staff parking and school drop off at the start of the 2024-25 school year.
- The design of the new parking lot allows for the future installation of electric vehicle charging stations and includes bike parking stalls for active transportation users.
- The project was successfully completed on budget and on schedule.
- During the last few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has also made upgrades to Holy Family, Golden Horn, Christ the King and Hidden Valley school parking lots.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Selkirk Elementary School parking lot project was deferred until 2023, as the City of Whitehorse identified a need to install new storm water infrastructure to carry run-off from the future parking lot offsite.

Background:

- The proposed parking lot is within the City of Whitehorse's aquifer protection zone, and existing storm water infrastructure in the area is at capacity. The new storm water infrastructure was required before any further construction in the area.

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

-
- The City of Whitehorse has developed an Active School Travel design for Selkirk Street to encourage active transportation, enhance road safety, and improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Construction of an addition to the school was completed in April 2023.
 - This addition has allowed for the expansion of the French Immersion Program and freed up a classroom that is needed for Grade 7 students.
 - Two modular classrooms were previously completed for Selkirk Elementary School in 2020 and 2021.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Water Quality Testing in YG Buildings**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon prioritizes the safety of Yukoners.
- We are taking a risk-based approach toward water quality monitoring in our buildings, as well as other hazards in our buildings, to adhere to occupational health and safety requirements.
- Municipally fed water lines are tested at water treatment facilities and again at many of the fixtures.
- Out of an abundance of caution, Highways and Public Works has purchased special lead filtration kits for installation at all drinking water fountains in schools even if there have been no exceedances noted.
- Highways and Public Works is now completing water sampling at day cares and group homes located within Yukon government buildings and the youth correctional facility.
- The Yukon government is committed to ensuring clean drinking water in all our buildings and is currently collaborating with the Department of Health and Social Services to build a water quality monitoring program for Yukon government buildings.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may be interested in an update from lead in all government buildings.

Background:

- The Departments of Education and Highways and Public Works are progressing through the following work plan:

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Water Quality Testing in YG Buildings

Highways and Public Works

Building Type	Actions	Timeline
Schools	Locations have been marked in all schools where students and staff can get potable water.	Complete
	Communications have been sent to school staff and partners prior to the start of school.	Complete
	Samples collected at water bottle filling stations in schools.	Complete
	Contract awarded for testing of water bottle filling stations.	Complete
	Contract will be awarded for sampling and testing of all potable water sources.	Complete
	Elkay filters ordered (for schools, daycares, and group homes).	Complete
	Results from the sampling and testing that occurred at schools' water bottle filling stations are being received and this data will further inform which fixtures need remediation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Yukon school has access to at least one water source that meets the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. 	Complete
	Signage is being updated above fixtures that been confirmed to meet the Canadian guidelines.	Complete
	Fixtures requiring remediation to meet the drinking water guidelines are being replaced.	October 2024
	Contract awarded for Elkay filter installation (for Whitehorse schools).	Complete
	Installation of Elkay water filters on fountains and water bottle filling stations.	October 2024
	The departments of Health and Social Services and Education are working to determine next steps for water quality analysis in privately owned daycares.	Complete

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Water Quality Testing in YG Buildings

Highways and Public Works

Daycares ¹ and Group Homes	A notification that water quality analysis will be commencing has been prepared to notify the occupants of YG-owned daycares and group homes.	Complete
	Samples will be collected at daycares and group homes.	October 2024
	Installation of Elkay water filters on applicable drinking sources and/or water bottle filling stations to ensure equal access to filtered water.	October / November 2024
Remaining YG-Owned Buildings	<p>The Departments of Health and Social Services and Highways and Public works are building a water quality monitoring program for Yukon government buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program will be designed to meet occupational health and safety requirements. • In addition to testing for lead, the program will assess a suite of parameters in water samples based on the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. • The Yukon government is not aware of any concerns. 	November / December 2024

- The Yukon government monitors small drinking water systems, as these systems have the highest risk of not consistently meeting the drinking water guidelines, including for microbiological parameters.
- For these water systems, we follow the Environment Canada Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. This means we complete:
 - quarterly bacteria testing at all locations on well systems that are secure;
 - monthly bacteria testing at all locations on well systems that are groundwater under the direct influence of surface water, and therefore more vulnerable to contamination;

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Water Quality Testing in YG Buildings

Highways and
Public Works

- testing for minerals in well systems when a new well is developed; and
- annual cleaning of holding tanks.
- If lead is confirmed in any drinking water, we disconnect the affected water fixture and post signage to not drink the water.
- Remediation work including replacement of the fixture and/or replacement of piping is then completed, and another test conducted.
- Only once test results indicate safe drinking water is the fixture reactivated and signs removed.
- The departments of Highways and Public Works, Health and Social Services, Education and the Public Service Commission are collaborating on creating a continuous monitoring program for water quality in our buildings.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	October 23, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Propane Incident at Whistle Bend Place**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- On Friday, January 19, 2024, Government of Yukon officials, Superior Propane and the Whitehorse Fire Department responded to a propane leak at Whistle Bend Place.
- The Whitehorse Fire Department were on scene within thirty minutes and turned off the propane system with the proper safety gear to activate the emergency shut off.
- Superior Propane then repaired the leak and conducted an inspection of the system to make sure there were no other issues.
- Superior Propane reported that the safety gauge was broken, and propane was vaporizing and dispersing into the air and then into Whistle Bend Place through the air intake vents.
- In collaboration with the Government of Canada, Highways and Public Works continues to review all propane systems in our portfolio and make improvements where necessary to ensure they meet all updated regulatory standards.
- Highways and Public Works will resolve any outstanding non-conforming issues, and incorporate the regulations in our Design Requirements and Technical Standards Manual moving forward.

Additional response:

- Ensuring the health and safety of Yukoners is a priority for our government.
- Propane leaks are uncommon, and Yukoners rely on propane in the north.

Session Briefing Note**Propane Incident at Whistle Bend Place**Highways and
Public Works

- All propane tanks at Yukon government facilities are installed and inspected regularly by the propane fuel supplier.
- Our government takes incidents like this very seriously. I commend the employees of Whistle Bend Place who took quick action by following the health and safety procedures to ensure the well-being of everyone in the building.
- Due to the estimated quantity of propane vaporizing into the air, it was immediately considered a serious incident and was reported to the Yukon Worker's Safety and Compensation Board by the Health and Social Services' OH&S Coordinator.
- Also, due to the level of concern, all Whistle Bend Place employees and residence contacts were notified to ensure that if they experienced symptoms, adverse effects, or illness due to propane exposure to:
 - complete a worker's report of injury;
 - seek medical attention;
 - inform your direct supervisor immediately to complete an employer's report of injury; and
 - complete an incident report.

Third response:

- The Yukon government retained a third-party contractor, **Associated Engineering**, to conduct an in-depth assessment of the propane infrastructure management at Whistle Bend Place.
- The report was received by Highways and Public Works in September 2024, which included seven recommendations for improvements. The

Session Briefing Note**Propane Incident at Whistle Bend Place**Highways and
Public Works

department has accepted the recommendations and is currently implementing them.

- Highways and Public Works confirms that the propane system at Whistle Bend Place is in good condition and receives regular attention from the propane fuel supplier during fill-ups.
- Highways and Public Works relies on local engineers to design all systems in conformance with all applicable codes and standards. The current propane system is code conformant to a specific set of standards, guidelines, and best practices.
- The propane systems maintenance practices were in place, with recommendations to update our practices with available technology and new practices, which the department will be undertaking.
- As an additional measure to guard against future leaks at Whistle Bend Place, Associated Engineering has identified modifications to the propane system.
- Actioning the recommendations includes changes to design that will be completed this winter with execution of the work to be completed this coming spring.
- In the interim, Highways and Public Works is working collaboratively with the Department of Health and Social Services to support in the creation of a robust Emergency Response Plan for responding to a potential propane related incident, which will be functionally tested on a regular basis, similar to a fire drill.
- In addition, the Yukon government is reviewing its practices and procedures to ensure there is continuous improvement.

Session Briefing Note**Propane Incident at Whistle Bend Place**Highways and
Public Works

Fourth response:

- In addition to the assessment conducted by Associated Engineering, the Department of Health and Social Services undertook a review of the incident.
 - From this review there were recommendations for Highways and Public Works. These have been included in HPW's response along with the Associated Engineering recommendations and WCB Orders.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may have concerns about the propane incident at Whistle Bend Place and other buildings reliant on propane.
-

Background:

- At approximately 03:00 on January 19, 2024, security began receiving reports from employees in multiple areas that they could smell propane.
- Security investigated and determined that there was a propane leak from the main propane tank outside the building.
- By approximately 03:25 the Whitehorse Fire Department was on scene.
- At approximately 05:00 MG Support Services and Security Officers attended all areas in Whistle Bend Place to again communicate with staff an update on the situation.
- By 05:30 the incident was resolved.
- Issues with propane tanks, including broken gauges, can be more common in winter months due to temperature fluctuations and increased usage for heating. Cold temperatures can affect the gauge's accuracy, and condensation can lead to ice formation around fittings, which might also affect performance. Regular checks and maintenance are especially important.

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Propane Incident at Whistle Bend Place

Highways and Public Works

Associated Engineering recommendations on the propane incident at Whistle Bend Place includes:

Recommendation	Description	Status
Propane System local Alarm and Manual Shutdown	It is recommended that the vaporizer and the pumps are integrated into the building management system so that the status and alarms can be viewed on the building management system interface.	Planned design – Winter 2024-2025 Tender – Winter 2024-2025 Execution - Spring/Summer 2025-2026
Automatic Leak Detection and Valve Control	Automatic leak detection would have prevented the large volume of propane from escaping from the tank. These systems sense quick changes in pressure, or propane gas to close the emergency valve and sound an alarm.	Planned design – Winter 2024-2025 Tender – Winter 2024-2025 Execution - Spring/Summer 2025-2026
Assessment of all Property Management Division (PMD) Managed Sites for E2 Threshold	Several sites that are under the management of the PMD have tanks that are larger than the E2 threshold and should have E2 plans developed. Currently PMD is in the process of implementation of E2 compliance paths for all sites that meet the propane volume threshold. This process was started in August 2023.	By summer 2025 E2 Regulations will be incorporated into PMD Design Requirements and Technical Standards Manual

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Propane Incident at Whistle Bend Place

Highways and Public Works

Become Certificate of Recognition (COR) Member	<p>The program involves yearly safety audits and external audits every three years.</p> <p>This creates a culture of continuous improvement and has been proven to make a workplace safer.</p>	PMD has engaged HPW corporate Health and Safety to initiate discussion on the necessity or value in becoming COR certified.
Remote Alarm and Emergency Shutdown	It is recommended that another emergency shutdown is located a safe distance from the propane tank. The operations staff would be notified by a remote alarm in a location that is audible for the staff.	<p>Planned design – Winter 2024-2025</p> <p>Tender – Winter 2024-2025</p> <p>Execution - Spring/Summer 2025-2026</p>
Propane detection	It is recommended that a hydrocarbon gas sensor be installed near the tank to either notify the operations staff so they can investigate the cause, and to automatically shut off the propane storage tank supply valve when the concentrations reach the lower explosive limit (LEL).	<p>Planned design – Winter 2024-2025</p> <p>Tender – Winter 2024-2025</p> <p>Execution - Spring/Summer 2025-2026</p>
Investigation into exterior pipe materials	It is recommended that the pipe materials are confirmed and that the pipe is replaced with ASTM A333: Seamless Carbon steel pipe for low temperature standard. This will prevent future failures caused by loss of caused by temperatures below the temperature rating of the steel.	Being reviewed and will be included into PMD Design Requirement and Technical Standards Manual.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Propane Incident at Whistle
Bend Place**Highways and
Public Works

Health and Social Services Recommendations for Highways and Public Works

1. Complete a formal root cause analysis to determine the causes of this incident and implement corrective actions to prevent future similar incidents.
2. Complete an in-service inspection of the propane system with an assessment of all components and potentially an altered maintenance schedule.
3. A review of current maintenance and reliability program to determine additional corrective measures needed to support the safe and reliable operation of the buildings and systems they are responsible for.
4. Implement recommendations from the Superior Propane investigation.

Code Brown

- Health and Social Services has emergency protocols for different types of events that may occur in their facilities including a code brown.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Snow Clearing
Around YG Buildings**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- While the Yukon is experiencing unprecedented weather, Highways and Public Works recognizes the importance of snow clearing and accessibility.
- As Highways and Public Works is responsible for clearing snow and ice at the majority of Yukon government-owned buildings we have procedures in place to address snow removal as swiftly as possible.
- 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.
- At each of our buildings, we prioritize the clearing of accessible parking spots, main entrances, main walkways and fire exits.
- Highways and Public Works is committed to addressing challenging weather events when conditions require our crews to go above and beyond to ensure accessibility during major storm events.
- We strive for the safety of all Yukoners both on our roads and around our buildings.
- If there is a pressing concern with snow clearing at one of our buildings, the public can contact our hard-working team at 667-8721 or email hpw-info@yukon.ca and we will prioritize the request.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public may be interested in snow removal around government buildings.
-

Session Briefing Note
Snow Clearing
Around YG Buildings

Tab# 58
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Highways and
Public Works

Background:

- Highways and Public Works crews are working as quickly and efficiently as possible to clear walkways after a snowfall.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	October 30, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Yukon University Polaris Project
(Science Building)**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Yukon University is managing the new science building project, also known as the Polaris Project, and has issued a tender to invite subcontractors to bid for planned construction in the spring of 2025. The tender will close on December 10, 2024.
- The Polaris project includes \$26 million in funding from the Government of Canada and will bring the following benefits:
 - The Polaris Project is a new 2,834 m² Zero-Carbon science building, including:
 - two wet laboratories, two dry laboratories, a research laboratory and four teaching rooms;
 - instrument laboratory, specimen workshop, and collection room;
 - knowledge sharing and ceremony room;
 - 150-person lecture hall and lounge; and
 - outdoor learning spaces.
- The Yukon government remains supportive of the Yukon University's Polaris Project and will continue to engage with and support Yukon University moving forward.
- Yukon University seeks investment by Yukon government (YG) in the Polaris project, which will construct a science building, the university's first new building since its transition from a college to a university in 2020.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Yukon University Polaris Project
(Science Building)**Highways and
Public Works

- **Context—this may be an issue because:**
 - Questions around this project may be raised in the Legislative Assembly.
-

Background:

- The Yukon government has included Yukon University's \$13 million capital request in the 2024-25 five-year capital plan.
- In March 2024, the Ministers of Highways and Public Works wrote to Yukon University requesting the project teams resolve the following outstanding pieces:
 - Land tenure and ownership/lease;
 - Annual operations & maintenance costs for the facility;
 - Annual operations & maintenance program costs for the facility; and
 - The parking lot consideration.
- Yukon University, in response to our March 2024 letter, has responded with the following:
 - Ownership of the land upon which Polaris will be situated will be transferred to Yukon University.
 - O&M of the building will be the responsibility of Yukon University.
 - A funding request will be made for \$646,512 for additional O&M.
 - Parking and any associated funding will not be made to the Yukon government.
 - O&M funding related to programming will not be made to the Yukon government.
 - The capital funding request for this project is \$13 million and no further funding requests will be made to the Yukon government.
 - Language to clarify accountability, liabilities and associated risks for this project rests with Yukon University.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Yukon University Polaris Project
(Science Building)**Highways and
Public Works

- In April 2024, the Chair of Yukon University's Board of Governors wrote to the Ministers of Highways and Public Works and Education requesting both parties sign a formal agreement committing both parties to transferring the parcel of land on which the Polaris project would be situated.
 - This response also includes confirmation of what was communicated to Highways and Public Works and Education by Yukon University's project team on March 24, 2024.
- In September 2024, Yukon University wrote to the Ministers of Education and Highways and Public Works to inform them that a construction tender will be issued in the coming weeks.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 12, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for the safe and efficient movement of travellers and goods over Yukon highways.
- The department is also responsible for maintaining the highway system so that it is safe, clean and free from roadside obstructions.
- Abandoned vehicles pose a potential safety risk to the travelling public and can impede the efficiency of the maintenance conducted by our crews.
- At times, vehicles are left abandoned and can interfere with the flow of traffic, impede visibility, prevent proper snow removal and present an environmental hazard.
- Highways and Public Works, in conjunction with peace officers, towing operators, impound yards and disposal facilities are working together to ensure all vehicles declared as abandoned in the Yukon are removed in a timely manner.

Additional response:

- On average, every week 2-3 vehicles are abandoned somewhere in the Yukon.
- In 2023-24, 125 abandoned vehicles were towed.
- Highways and Public Works, the RCMP and local towing companies 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

- 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.

Third response:

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

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Abandoned Vehicles

Highways and
Public Works

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background

- Vehicles must first be reviewed before they are towed to ensure the vehicle is not part of an active investigation nor is stolen.
- In 2023, Highways and Public Works renewed its efforts to identify and remove abandoned vehicles in key highway corridors as quickly as possible. The department made a concerted push to identify and remove vehicles from key Highway Corridors; namely the Alaksa Highway and North Klondike Highway.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

August 30, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The safety of the travelling public is a priority of Highways and Public Works. As such, the department is making substantial investments in roads across the territory.
- Active thawing permafrost is causing the ground to slump in the Ibex Valley and the slump expanded into the highway right-of-way.
- In 2023, we invested in a section of the highway near the Takhini River in the Ibex Valley. This section of the Alaska Highway was facing increasing risk of damage due to permafrost thaw.
- The highway is now realigned, away from the active thaw area.
- Two smaller segments of highway in the Ibex Valley were also impacted by permafrost thaw and were repaired. BST was applied to all sections in this area in July 2024.
- Further mitigation work was also completed this past summer to reinforce the ditches to reduce further permafrost degradation.

Additional response:

- The permafrost underlying the highway is thawing at an increased rate and has resulted in settlements and cracking in several areas that affect highway safety and performance.
- Long tension cracks formed between the thaw slump and the highway, as close as 20 metres from the road embankment.
- The Alaska Highway has now been moved further away from the active thaw slump which is located between the Takhini River and the existing highway.

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Alaska Highway Thaw Slump

Highways and
Public Works

- The realignment is to protect highway infrastructure and public safety by increasing the buffer between the active thaw slump and the highway.
- The department has been working with Yukon University to understand thaw slumps and to develop options for mitigation, including installation of ditches, spring water diversion, consolidation of the sediment, and realignment of the highway away from the thaw slump.
- While this project is completed, we will continue to monitor this area for a number of years.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- The thaw slump was first identified in April 2019, and since then it has advanced significantly and is now within the highway right-of-way.
- Thawing permafrost causes the ground above it to slump, which could cause significant damage to the road surface if corrective actions are not taken.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

August 30, 2024

Date Approved

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

Recommended response: New Bridge Opening

- On October 5, 2024, the new bridge opened to traffic after successful completion of the repairs to the deficient work.
- Through the remainder of October, the contractor completed the construction of the new road alignment and installed the new guiderail for the bridge approaches.
- The contractor is now advancing work to demolish the old bridge in this fiscal year.
- During next construction season, the Contractor will complete paving of the highway approaches on each side of the bridge.

Additional response:

- Construction of a new bridge began in 2020, however, due to deficient work, the original contractor, Julmac Contracting Limited was terminated from the project in the spring of 2023 for breach of contract.
- In August 2023, Julmac Contracting Limited filed a statement of claim against the Government of Yukon claiming wrongful termination of the contract.
- The Government of Yukon has counterclaimed for the as-yet-undetermined costs to complete the project and repair the deficient work, with the bonding company being partied to the claim.
- Legal proceedings are continuing, and we will be looking to recover the costs of fixing the deficient work through the litigation process but to comment further would not be appropriate.

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

- As this project is fully funded by the Yukon government, there are no applicable federal recoveries.

Third response:

- In 2023, we worked with the project engineer to perform a full assessment of the partially constructed bridge. The assessment provided details on what work would be required to ensure the bridge could be safely opened for the public.
- The contract awarded this June to complete the project included both road work and bridge work.
- The road work included:
 - excavation, ditching, construction of sub-base and base coarse aggregates;
 - supply and installation of a structural plate corrugated steel pipe;
 - paving, supply and installation of guiderails; and
 - demolition of the existing bridge.
- The bridge work included:
 - concrete repairs for bridge deck and abutment walls;
 - repair of bearings, bridge end fills; and
 - cast in place concrete for bridge rails and approach slabs.

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.
-

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

Background:

- 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 June of this year, the Government of Yukon awarded a contract to Formula Contractors Ltd. to complete the remaining road and bridge remediation works.
- Following completion of the project, we will be working to recoup the costs of fixing the deficient work from the original contractor.
- The Big Creek Bridge is a critical piece of infrastructure for the Yukon as it connects the Alaska Highway to Northern BC and the rest of Canada.
- The contract with Julmac Contracting Ltd. was terminated due to poor performance.
- Prior performance and deficiencies under the original Big Creek Bridge contract were part of the considerations in the procurement for the remaining road and bridge remediation.
- One of the purposes of Yukon's procurement system is to procure services using public money, efficiently, economically, effectively, and in a fiscally responsible manner.
- The project to replace the existing bridge started in 2020.
- In 2020, the tender to construct a replacement bridge was awarded to Julmac Contracting Ltd. and the original planned completion was in 2022.
- However, in 2022 defects within the concrete deck were discovered during inspections of the new bridge.
- The contract with Julmac Contracting was terminated in May 2023, on the basis of a breach of contract.
- The bonding company was immediately notified and asked to step in to fulfill their obligations under the bond.
- The Yukon government paid approximately \$6,000,000 to Julmac.

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

- 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.
- For the procurement to complete the project, language is included in the tenders to restrict parties that previously performed deficient work from bidding.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 6, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The safety of the travelling public is a priority of the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- Throughout the year our crews and contractors are out brushing, improving lane markings, removing hazards in the right-of-way, and installing and maintaining roadside barriers.
- Vegetation control plays a key role in keeping road signs visible, reducing snow accumulation and drifting snow on the road, and improving drainage.
- Frequent brushing also increases visibility for drivers, helping them better see wildlife and avoid collisions.
- Since the launch of the Roadway Safety Improvement Program in 2019, we have installed over 9 kilometres of new barriers, painted over 3,500 kilometres of highway lines, and cleared approximately 4,200 kilometres of vegetation in the right-of-way.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon uses a Request for Qualifications process as an efficient way to quickly and effectively tender contracts to a list of prequalified bidders. Currently there are 30 companies on the qualified source list with 15 contracted in 2024.
- In 2024, the Government of Yukon awarded \$2.8 million in vegetation control contracts and will complete 314 kilometres of brushing and 330 kilometres of mowing for a total of 644 kilometres by the end of October.
- Depending on size, projects are offered by direct award, invitational, or open tenders to the full list of qualified companies.

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

Third response:

- Roadside barriers are an important safety feature along our roads.
 - In 2021, Highways and Public Works increased the annual spending budget for roadside barriers to \$800 thousand, reinforcing our commitment to enhancing road safety.
 - To boost industry awareness and participation, an information session was held on February 23, 2023, to inform the contracting community and seek feedback on tendering options.
 - This proactive approach has led to an increase in the number of bids and greater efficiency in the delivery of barrier repairs. In 2023 seven bids were received on two tenders. In 2024 eight bids were received on three tenders.
 - Tenders for 2024 barrier repairs closed in August. Work to repair 15 barriers is expected to be completed by October 31.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**Judas Creek vegetation control**

- After engaging with the Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council, Doehle Drive in the Judas Creek subdivision was brushed from the highway to the fire hall in July 2024. This work improves sightlines for emergency vehicles serving the Marsh Lake area.

Engagement and online portal

- Prior to each field season, letters are sent to property owners who live close to planned projects to inform them of upcoming brushing and mowing work.
-

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FALL 2024

Brushing and Roadway Safety Improvements

Highways and Public Works

- The letters direct owners to an online platform that outlines the locations where vegetation control is anticipated to be taking place, shares the specifications of planned vegetation control and explains the benefits.
- The online platform is live, and letters were sent to property owners on April 5.

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.
- The Roadway Safety Improvement Program will schedule maintenance using our highway classification guide that considers traffic volumes, type of use and other socioeconomic factors.

Vegetation Control

- Vegetation control is completed through contracts and through Memoranda of Understanding with First Nations and municipalities.
- Each contract contains detailed specifications for vegetation control that include stem height, clearing widths, steep slopes, riparian zones, inside curves for sight line distance, and salvageable wood, which is available for the public.
- Brushing must meet or exceed specification set out in "*Preventing Wildlife Injuries from Right-of-Way Vegetation Control*." These specifications were recommended by the Yukon Department of Environment, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Southern Lakes Caribou Steering Committee.

Approved by:

T. Allen

September 24, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The safety of Dawson City residents and the travelling public is our government's priority when considering the timing and construction of the ice bridge.
- This past winter proved challenging for the residents of West Dawson as the ice did not form to a thickness that was safe for the construction of an ice bridge.
- The Yukon government understands the importance of the ice bridge for the Dawson community and is actively exploring options to improve its success in future years.
- Highways and Public Works supported the early opening of the US/Canada border in the spring by launching the George Black Ferry ahead of schedule, and providing Canada Border Services Agency personnel with priority crossings.
- Based on feedback from the community, the department also began a review of alternate options to the traditional crossing.

Additional response: Alternative Crossing

- An engineering consultant was hired to examine possible alternative route options and performed on the ground investigation of the locally created routes.
- The consultant travelled to Dawson City in March 2024 and reviewed the locally built, ice routes to determine if any of these routes could be developed as an authorized alternate route in years that the regular crossing location did not freeze.
- Of the three alternate routes examined, only one was recommended in terms of meeting safety and ease of use considerations.

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

-
- Given that there is no highway right of way in place for this crossing, more work is required before an alternate access to West Dawson can be constructed.
 - The department will not be in a position to construct this access this season, but is committed to continuing this important work and will consult with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the City of Dawson and local residents before submitting a YESAB assessment.

Additional response:

- 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.
- Ice bridge construction is dependent on several environmental factors, including river hydrology, ice conditions, and temperature.
- Typically, each year, the ice bridge opens in December or January, and closes mid-April.
- A tender for ice bridge construction was posted in late September for the construction of this season's ice bridge.

Additional response:

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

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Dawson City Ice Bridge

Highways and
Public Works

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Once an ice bridge is constructed and in use, Highways and Public Works staff monitor the condition of the ice bridge to determine when to close and decommission it for the season.
- The City of Dawson was without an official ice bridge in the winters of 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2023-24. This was because environmental conditions did not allow for a safe crossing to be constructed.

Historical opening and closing dates:

Year	Opening Date	Closing Date
2023-24	No bridge this year	-
2022-23	Jan 5, 2023 – Light Duty Vehicles (5,000 kg) Feb 2, 2023 – Heavy Duty Vehicles (40,000 kg)	April 20, 2023
2021-22	Dec 13, 2021 – Light Duty Vehicles (5,000 kg) January 8, 2022 – Heavy Duty Vehicles (40,000 kg)	April 20, 2022
2020-21	Dec 14, 2020 – Light Duty Vehicles (5,000 kg) January 6, 2021 – Heavy Duty Vehicles (40,000 kg)	April 15, 2021

- Light traffic includes vehicles that are up to 5,000kg in weight. Heavy duty vehicles include vehicles up to 40,000kg.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 6, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended Response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works understands the challenges and uncertainties West Dawson residents face with regard to crossing the Yukon River each winter.
- Last winter, environmental conditions, unfortunately, prevented our department from constructing a safe, sanctioned ice bridge for light duty traffic.
- While the department had secured engineers to design the ice bridge and issued a Request for Proposal for construction, the lack of ice formation and other factors, including water flows made it impossible to proceed.
- The department is assessing potential options for the Dawson City Yukon River crossing over the long-term given the uncertainty around construction of an ice bridge over the past several years.
- Department officials met with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Dawson City residents last year to hear their views on the crossing. The feedback received was mixed and will be used to guide discussion on what options are feasible.
- As such, there is currently no reference to a bridge in Dawson City in the Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plans as we are continuing to engage with residents to help develop plans for the future.

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

Additional response: Public Engagement

- Given the impacts of climate change along the Yukon River, we proactively started discussions with the residents of Dawson City on the future of the river crossing.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief and Council met in September 2022 to begin discussions on community engagement and the future of the river crossing in Dawson.
- On March 15, 2023, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders Council hosted and Highways and Public Works officials attended an engagement session with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Citizens.
- On March 16, 2023, Highways and Public Works hosted two engagement sessions for Dawson City residents.
- These sessions focused on what is important to residents when planning for the future of the crossing.
- The sessions were well attended, and we received a lot of helpful feedback from residents.
 - 462 Dawson City residents responded to the public survey and approximately 120 residents attended the open house sessions.
- A follow-up survey was sent to Dawson City residents in June 2023 to request further feedback.
- A What We Heard report was shared with the public on Friday January 12, 2024.

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

- The report provides valuable feedback that will serve as a resource for Government of Yukon staff and guide discussions on the future of the Yukon River crossing in Dawson.
 - Many Dawson residents had ideas for what the future of the crossing could look like. Ideas included: a vehicle bridge, a pedestrian bridge, an energy-efficient ferry, a cable car, and a gondola.
 - Department officials met with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief and Council on May 10, 2024, to discuss the findings in the report.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:**Prime Minister's Remarks**

- In February 2024, the Prime Minister made reference to funding earmarked for a bridge in Dawson during question period.
 - The Prime Minister's office later issued a statement clarifying that the funding had been reallocated for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project as it was in urgent need of replacement.
 - The Department of Highways and Public Works continues to work with Transport Canada to ensure the Prime Minister's Office has the most up-to-date information on the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project and other Yukon-based infrastructure projects moving forward.
 - In 2021, the department's application for funding was approved under the National Trade Corridors Fund for Phase 2 of the North Klondike Highway Reconstruction Project, which included the potential construction of a new bridge in Dawson City and an additional 110 kilometres of highway reconstruction.
-

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FALL 2024

Dawson City Yukon River Crossing

Highways and
Public Works

- This Phase 2 project would build on the critical highway and bridge upgrades that are part of the ongoing North Klondike Highway Reconstruction Project originally approved by National Trade Corridors Fund in 2019.
- In 2022, Yukon requested that the National Trade Corridors Fund funding secured for the Yukon River bridge be instead allocated to the Nisutlin Bay Bridge replacement project.
- This scope change was approved by Federal Minister Alghabra in June 2022 and formalized in updated agreements:
 - for the North Klondike Highway in May 2023; and
 - for the Nisutlin Bay Bridge in September 2023.
- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a valuable link along our busiest trade route, the benefits of which are seen by all Yukoners.
- In the winter of 2013-14, an alternate route for the ice bridge was necessary because the ice conditions did not allow it to be built at the usual location.
- In the winters of 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2023-24, 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.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Early Mining Road Opening

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FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

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

Additional response:

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

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Early Mining Road Opening

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Highways and
Public Works

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

August 30, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Electronic Logging Devices

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon prioritizes the safety of all drivers. To keep Yukon's roads and the travelling public safe, commercial drivers are required to operate only a certain number of hours per day. These hours must be tracked accurately.
- As of January 1, 2023, the *Canadian Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* requires drivers of heavy commercial vehicles to use automated electronic logging devices, also known as ELDs, that have been certified and approved by Transport Canada.
- In concert with Transport Canada, the Yukon provided an 18-month education period prior to the adoption of ELDs.
- The Yukon used this time to assist carriers with this transition and to provide information and education to carriers.

Additional response:

- No other changes have been made related to driver hours.
- Currently, there are approximately 100 different certified devices available across Canada at a variety of price points, that commercial vehicle drivers may use.
- The federal *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* have identified several scenarios in which carriers are exempt from the electronic logging device requirement, if certain conditions are met.

Third response: Exemptions for ELDs

- The Yukon provides an exemption from maintaining an electronic logging device for vehicles that carry commercial goods under 11,794kg and operate solely in the Yukon, as long as the carrier

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Electronic Logging Devices

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maintains a record-of-duty status, and drivers have 8 hours of rest between shifts.

- As per the federal regulations, drivers of commercial buses who carry 10 passengers or more, or drivers who carry commercial goods, do not need an electronic logging device if:
 - the model of their vehicle is made in 2000 or earlier;
 - the vehicle is being operated within a 160-kilometre radius of its home terminal and returns to its home terminal at the end of each day;
 - the vehicle is subject to a rental of no more than 30-days without extension or renewal;
 - the vehicle is being operated under a motor carrier permit, typically an oilfield exemption or emergency declaration; and,
 - the vehicle is operated by a motor carrier for which an exemption has been issued by Transport Canada.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some stakeholders asked that the Yukon delay implementation along with certain provinces.

Background:

- There are delays in implementation in certain provinces. However, these are tied to delays in updating provincial regulations related to electronic logging devices for intra-provincial carriers. For inter-provincial carriers the new federal requirements are being enforced.
- In June 2021, Highways and Public Works began providing information on electronic logging devices and the new regulations to carriers and the public.
 - Handouts were given to carriers who passed through the weigh stations.

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Electronic Logging Devices

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Public Works

- 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, 2023, Carrier Compliance has stopped issuing warnings and started enforcement. Carriers are allowed 14 days to become compliant if they are not operating with an electronic logging device.
- Beyond these educational activities, Carrier Compliance has provided electronic logging device handouts when performing Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance inspections. Over 1,300 inspections were completed in the last 24 months.
- Following best practices, the Yukon government has adopted the Federal *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* by reference in legislation. Adoption by reference helps the Yukon avoid implementation issues, and helps with ongoing alignment, while minimizing the necessity to update regulations when future amendments are made to the federal laws.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

August 30, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note
Flood PreparednessHighways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is working to minimize the impact of climate change on our transportation infrastructure by investing in adaptation and planning along our transportation network. This is a priority to address the increasing impacts of climate change.
- For example, we are conducting climate risk assessments on all major transportation infrastructure projects over \$10 million.
- These project-level assessments influence the design of new infrastructure so they can better withstand climate hazards like flooding over the next decade.
- In March 2024, department officials completed a climate change vulnerability study of the road transportation network. This study is the first step to understand where our roads are most exposed to long-term climate related risks.
- This assessment looks at our highway's current exposure to climate related geohazards and forecasts where they might occur over the next 50 years.
- The results of this study will target areas of interest for monitoring, support requests for capital funding applications, and include a mitigation and adaptation package to support our project prioritization for capital planning and asset management.

Additional response:

- At the Dawson City Airport and other airports and aerodromes where flooding is a risk, we are continuing with our on-site mitigations such

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Flood Preparedness

Highways and
Public Works

as digging new trenches to direct water away from critical site infrastructure while also protecting the environment.

- Work is also underway at the Dawson City Airport to develop additional surface water management improvements such as ditching all around the airport to ensure it remains operational during potential local flood events.
- Our highway crews are also continuously monitoring the Yukon's highway network for any potential signs of flooding and efforts are being made to proactively prepare.
- For example, culverts are inspected daily as part of flood preparedness in the Klondike, and in some cases, culverts are equipped with heat tape and a beaver guard to ensure water continues to flow through.
- The department has emergency contracts in place to ensure the availability of additional equipment to respond to flood events if needed.
- If water begins to overflow onto a main road highway engineers will assess and decide whether the best approach is to close the road or operate pumps and lower water levels.

Third response:

- The department closely monitors weather conditions, snowpack levels, and river flows.
- Efforts are made to enhance infrastructure resilience. This includes maintaining and upgrading dikes, levees, and flood barriers where necessary.

Session Briefing Note**Flood Preparedness**

Highways and
Public Works

- Last spring while monitoring the snowpack melt an engineering team was on the ground assessing options for other measures we can take to prepare.
 - Highways and Public Works is monitoring and maintaining drainage channels along the Hunker Creek area by removing debris from culverts as required to prevent overflow on the highways.
 - The department have installed a berm-like mechanism to prevent water from flowing into the Bear Creek Subdivision.
 - In the long-term, the department will begin designing and permitting the replacement of culverts in the area this year, with construction planned to take place in 2025.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The impacts of climate change are evident in the north with increased precipitation and permafrost thaw increasing the risk of flooding.
-

Background:

- 2023 Arctic Report Card confirmed that between October 2022 to September 2023 was the sixth-warmest year in the Arctic and the continues to exceed the 1991-2020 average.
 - The Yukon is experiencing many climate impacts that affect our transportation network.
 - Spring 2023 brought multiple washouts along the Klondike Highway that caused traffic disruptions and some highway closures.
 - In May 2023, there was a highway washout near the Oglivie River that required repairs, resulting in a highway closure lasting for several days.
 - We have also opened a seasonal bypass road to 4x4 light duty trucks around the area susceptible to landslides near Rock Creek on the North Klondike Highway.
-

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Flood Preparedness

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Highways and
Public Works

- When conditions improve, the seasonal bypass road will be available to light duty traffic.
- Last summer, Highways and Public Works performed proactive maintenance activities on the seasonal bypass road from All Gold to Hunker Summit Road, which allows alternate access to the City of Dawson, if required.
- This was done to provide emergency access for non-commercial vehicles to support the movement of supplies and support personnel in the event that additional slides occur in this area in the future, similar to those experienced in 2022.
- We will monitor the seasonal bypass access road throughout the summer.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Resource Gateway Program supports infrastructure upgrades for up to 650 kilometres of existing roads in areas with high mineral potential and active mining in the Yukon.
- Jointly funded by the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon and the mining industry, the program aims to improve safety, reliability and accessibility of the Yukon's road network.
- These upgrades will create short and long-term employment, training opportunities and benefits for Yukon First Nations, Yukoners, local communities, and industry.
- In August 2024 we awarded a contract to replace a culvert at kilometre 23.2 on the Silver Trail to a First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun business.
- A Regional Economic Development exemption was used for this procurement as agreed in the Project Agreement signed with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- The existing culvert at this location was failing and putting the road at risk.
- The department plans to fully spend the \$4.2 million budget on the Yukon Resource Gateway Program this year.
- This year's budget has also funded Silver Trail heritage studies, fish studies, and an engineering assessment of the Mayo River Bridge.
- In October 2024, we submitted the Silver Trail component, between kilometre 0 and kilometre 57, to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board.

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

- The project submitted into YESAB is currently in the adequacy phase. It includes repairs to sections of the highway, rectifying areas with safety, geometric design and drainage deficiencies.

Additional response:

- In 2025, efforts will be focused on preparing for construction on the Silver Trail and advancing construction of a section of the Robert Campbell Highway between Ross River and Faro.
- In addition, preparation is underway to support the environmental assessment of the Robert Campbell Highway component, which runs just past the Tuchtua River Bridge to the Frances Lake campground, from kilometre 114 to kilometre 171.
- This preparation work is focused on collecting environmental information in the project area to ensure responsible and informed decision making.

Third response: Broadened Goals under Gateway

- Improving transportation infrastructure along our remote northern highways is important to our government.
- Our transportation infrastructure across the Yukon will be improved as the Yukon Resource Gateway Program is implemented.
- Roads will be constructed to enhance safety by improving the line of sight, reducing travel time and increase vehicle load limits. Bridges will also be constructed or rehabilitated.
- Through the delivery of these projects, we aim for significant employment and training opportunities for Yukoners and Yukon First Nations.

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

- These opportunities are not limited to only construction services, they include many indirect services required to support construction.
- With this work happening in and around Yukon First Nation communities, the project agreements are in place to help ensure that their citizens and businesses see the benefits of these construction projects.
- In our discussions with Yukon First Nations with project agreements, we are discussing how to prepare citizens for these employment opportunities through training and skills development.
- During the tendering phase of the projects, contractors submitting bids will be asked to outline their First Nation participation plans that align with community interests and capacity.
- Our government then uses the tools within contracts to motivate the contractor to meet their obligations.

Fourth response:

- For each component identified, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources negotiates a project agreement with the affected Yukon First Nation in whose Traditional Territory the project resides.
- These agreements provide a process by which the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments will work collaboratively.
- They also outline how we will structure procurements to align with the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy and to ensure there are benefits for each community.
- Once an agreement is signed, the Department of Highways and Public Works starts implementing the agreement.

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

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

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon Resource Gateway Program includes several high-profile projects with multiple stakeholders and First Nations involvement.
 - The Victoria Gold Eagle Gold Mine failure might negatively impact the perception of road improvements undertaken through this Program.
-

Background:**Silver Trail km 0 to km 110 (Stewart Crossing to Keno City)**

- A Project Agreement for the Silver Trail component was signed with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun in February 2021.
- The Silver Trail component includes the rehabilitation of the Mayo River bridge as well as road reconstruction and spot repairs from kilometre 0 to kilometre 110 between Stewart Crossing and Keno City.
- Officials from the Department of Highways and Public Works are working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun through a committee and are meeting monthly to collaboratively develop an implementation plan.

Robert Campbell Highway km 354.9 to km 414.4 (Ross River to Faro) and the North Canol Road

- In April 2020, a Project Agreement was signed for two projects within the traditional territory of the Ross River Dena Council: highway reconstruction between Ross River and Faro on the Robert Campbell Highway, and bridge upgrades and safety improvements on the North Canol Highway.
-

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Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

Highways and
Public Works

- Officials from the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources, and the Department Highways and Public Works have been working with the Ross River Dena Council to determine the next steps of the Robert Campbell Highway project over the summer months.
- Currently a 4-kilometre section of this project is designed and permitted. The aim is to tender this piece of work for construction to start next year.
- The department is advancing work to tender the clearing of this 4-kilometer section of highway, with the work to be completed before spring 2025.

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.
- In July 2024 we awarded two contracts to a Liard First Nation business for vegetation control and clearing work along Robert Campbell Highway.

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.
- In July 2023 we awarded a contract to a Liard First Nation business to replace the timber deck for the bridge located at kilometre 143 on the Nahanni Range Road.

Yukon First Nations involvement

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

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

Funding

- A Contribution Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada resulted in the Yukon Resource Gateway Program's completion date being extended from 2025 to March 2031.
- The program budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year is approximately \$4.2 million and as project agreements are implemented, spending is expected to increase in 2025-26 to \$14.5 million and continue to grow in following years as construction advances.

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 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.

Freegold Road Phase II – Termination of the Project Agreement with Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation

- Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation recently made the decision to terminate the Freegold Road Phase II Project Agreement.
- Nothing precludes our governments from working together on a new agreement for the Freegold Road, and we will be reaching out to the First Nation to discuss a path forward.

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Gateway (Yukon Resource Gateway Program)

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Public Works

- The recent completion of the Carmacks Bypass route is an example of how the Yukon Resource Gateway Program can ensure Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation participation in infrastructure projects.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	November 18, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- The safety and well-being of Yukoners, visitors and employees is always our first priority when operating the George Black Ferry.
- The ferry typically for the May long weekend and is operational until Thanksgiving.
- The ferry's opening is dependent on factors such as weather conditions and water levels.
- This season, Highways and Public Works was able to launch the George Black Ferry on May 15 to align with an early opening timeline of the Little Gold Border Crossing.
- Thanks to our skilled crews, ferry operations ran smoothly this season.
- Their experience in regular maintenance and inspections helped to prevent disruptions, while also ensuring a positive experience for passengers.
- The crews conduct weekly and annual maintenance on the George Black Ferry to ensure appropriate upkeep is performed and to avert any unforeseen impacts to ferry operations.
- The George Black Ferry officially closed for the season on October 15, 2024.
- Once the temperatures begin to drop below freezing, the fire suppression equipment on the ferry begins to ice up, hindering its function, the temperatures in Dawson are forecasted to be below freezing for the foreseeable future.
- The rescue boat cannot be operated safely once pan ice begins to form across the Yukon River.

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

- Ice will also accumulate on the deck, ramps and landings making it a slip hazard for everyone on board.
- Our crews work to ensure the vessel is taken out of operation at the right time to prevent damage and maintain the safety for both the crew and passengers.

Additional response:

- Before launching, a significant amount of work is required to prepare the ferry for the upcoming season. This includes:
 - onboarding ferry staff and providing extensive training;
 - painting and cleaning the ferry; and
 - ensuring necessary supports are in place.
- Mechanical systems are reviewed and repaired as necessary, and parts inventory is reviewed to ensure essential spare parts are on hand.
- Additionally, the ferry is inspected by Transport Canada to ensure compliance with federal legislation.
- We assess river conditions before launching to ensure that water levels are high enough, and that there is no risk of major ice impacts.

Third response: Ferry Refurbishment and Replacement Evaluation

- While regular maintenance is performed to ensure the George Black Ferry can continue to operate effectively, we recognize there is a need to be proactive to ensure continued operation for years to come.
- Highways and Public Works has been working to identify and evaluate options for refurbishing or replacing the George Black Ferry.

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

- Refurbishment would involve installing more modern engines that meet stringent emissions standards as well as corresponding upgrades to the engine systems.
- Replacement would involve commissioning a newly built ferry that would have more space and load-carrying capability than the current ferry.
- The department is exploring these options, and I expect to see a recommendation this fall.

Fourth response: Statistics

- The crossing takes about 10 minutes, excluding wait times.
- Approximately 60,000-70,000 vehicles cross each season.
- During peak operating times the ferry may see an average of 1,208 passengers per day.
- During the last five years, the George Black Ferry was pulled one the following dates:
 - 2019: October 15
 - 2020: October 19
 - 2021: October 21
 - 2022: October 19
 - 2023: October 16

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Additional Response:

- Although an ice bridge was not built in 2023-24, funds were spent on hiring a consultant to review alternative options.
 - Any funds that were unused from the lack of an ice bridge would be directed back to Highways and Public Works.
 - The George Black Ferry also undergoes significant maintenance every year and this is planned for under a separate budget.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On April 25, it was announced that the border crossing at the Top of the World Highway would open on May 17 rather than on June 1.
-

Background:

- The ferry is over 50 years old and was transferred to the Government of Yukon by the federal government.
 - The ferry can haul about 143 thousand pounds, is 83 feet long and 17 feet wide.
 - During the 2023 season, the ferry ran well and there were no long stoppages in service.
 - Highways and Public Works has undertaken many activities to keep the George Black Ferry in the best condition possible to continue to provide river-crossing services in Dawson City.
 - After an inspection in 2022, the engines were rebuilt in April 2023.
 - A lightship survey, which involves measuring the performance of the ferry while in the water, was completed in the fall 2023 and the ferry passed inspection.
 - To mitigate against the risk of service disruption from a mechanical failure, Highways and Public Works maintains a supply of critical spare parts in Dawson City.
-

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

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- This supply includes spare drivetrain parts such as propellers and propeller shafts, couplings, and marine gears.

Approved by:

T. Allen

November 7, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

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

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.

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

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- Additional features are added to 511 Yukon as they are developed. Recent updates include:
 - in spring 2022, weight restrictions for highways and bridges were added;
 - in December 2023, Yukon's electric vehicle charging stations were made visible; and,
 - in February 2024, Yukon's highway rest stops were included.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The improved 511 Yukon system is an example of how the government is making online services easier to access for Yukoners. Some travellers have noted gaps in information during key road closures.
-

Background:

- 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.

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 30, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The North Klondike Highway is a vital link for industry and a well-travelled route for Yukoners, and tourists from around the world.
- The project includes a total of 209 kilometres of planned highway reconstruction between Carmacks and the Dempster Highway.
- These upgrades increase safety, improve driving conditions, better connect the Yukon's resources to markets, and increase the resiliency of the highway to the impacts of climate change, such as thawing permafrost.
- This will also provide economic opportunities for Yukon First Nations through the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
- We will expand the use of technology that collects data on traffic, road conditions and weather – all of which helps to improve safety for road users.
- We are also planning to install additional electric vehicle charging stations along the North Klondike Highway to support the growing use of electric vehicles.

Additional response:

- Upgrades between Stewart Crossing and the Dempster Highway involve the planned reconstruction of 73 kilometres of highway valued at approximately \$82 million.
- In 2024, construction began on a 16.3-kilometre section of highway from kilometre 542.3 to kilometre 558.6. This area is approximately 8 kilometres north of Stewart Crossing. This will be a 2-year project

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and
Public Works

valued at \$29 million, with an anticipated completion of October 2025.

- During the 2024 construction season the department completed 20 kilometres of Bituminous Surface Treatment, or BST;

Additional response:

- Upgrades between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing involve the reconstruction of 144 kilometres of highway between the communities of Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Stewart Crossing, valued at approximately \$155.7 million.
- Once complete, this reconstruction will allow the removal of seasonal weight restrictions for heavy trucks on this section of highway.
- The new Crooked Creek Bridge between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing was completed in summer 2023 for a total cost of approximately \$24 million.
- The rehabilitation of McCabe Creek Bridge was completed this summer for a total cost of approximately \$1.8 million.
- Road construction between kilometre 414 (South of Stewart Crossing) and kilometre 431 (Minto Flats) is the next anticipated highway construction project.

Additional response:

- In spring 2023, there were multiple washouts along the Klondike Highway that caused traffic disruptions and some highway closures.
- A culvert washout occurred near the Dempster Cutoff at kilometre 670.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****North Klondike Highway and Upgrades**Highways and Public Works

- Highways and Public Works crews repaired the washouts and opened the roads to traffic within a few days.
 - Last spring, Highways and Public Works crews repaired the road near Dawson Airport, Henderson Corner and Clear Creek Bridge because the roads were beginning to washout.
 - Highways and Public Works has performed proactive summer maintenance activities on the All Gold to Hunker Summit Road, which allows alternate access to the City of Dawson, if required.
 - This will provide emergency access for non-commercial vehicles to support the movement of supplies and support personnel in the event that additional slides occur in this area in the future, similar to those experienced in fall 2022.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The North Klondike Highway is an essential transportation corridor.
-

Background:

- Through the federal government's National Trade Corridors Fund, a total of \$267.6 million will be invested to upgrade critical sections of the North Klondike Highway, including three bridge improvements and Intelligent Transportation Systems components, over a 10-year period.
- The federal government's contribution is \$200.7 million with Yukon contributing the remaining \$66.9 million.
- Since 2020, a total of approximately \$72.3 million has been spent to reconstruct 64.5 kilometres of the highway, of which approximately \$54.2 million is recoverable from Canada.

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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 Nacho Nyak Dun and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.

2022 Mudslide near Rock Creek and Flat Creek

- In September 2022, heavy rainfall affected slope stability in the Rock Creek and Flat Creek areas resulting in a number of landslides onto the highway.
- This area is highly susceptible to precipitation-induced slides due to the surface layer detaching from the shallow permafrost layer underneath.
- In this case, once the ground became too saturated, the upper layer of the slopes became unstable and resulted in landslides.
- Slide activity may continue in this area until all the detached surface layer above the rock face slides down.
- The department continues to work with the Yukon Geological Survey to study and monitor climate-driven slope movements near Rock Creek and in the Klondike valley to improve predicative capability and response times for mass movement events.
- The equipment for this slope-monitoring project with the Yukon Geological Survey was installed in fall 2023.
- It includes roadside cameras to remotely monitor the slide area along the highway, as well as thermistors and tiltmeters on the slope to measure ground temperatures and detect movements.

Approved by:

T. Allen

September 3, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Rest Area Strategy

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FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Safety rest areas along Yukon highways are an important part of our transportation network and provide travellers with a safe and appropriate area to rest.
- As such, the Government of Yukon is developing a rest area strategy to provide a consistent, high level of service for travellers.
- The strategy will standardize the distance between safety rest areas, allowing highway travellers to predict and rely on the Yukon's rest areas for their travel plans.
- The rest area strategy will also include service standards that will guide changes to amenities, locations, and the inclusion of fast-charging stations for electric vehicles.
 - One of the commitments of our government under Our Clean Future is to make it possible for electric vehicles to reach all road-accessible communities by 2027, and creating electric vehicle charging stations at safety rest areas in remote locations will help fulfill this goal.
- As the department develops and implements the rest area strategy, we will continue to ensure the needs of those travelling on our highways are met.
 - For example, to assist travellers in knowing where rest areas are located and planning their trips accordingly, rest areas were added to the 511 Yukon platform in February 2024.

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Rest Area Strategy

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Additional response: Criteria for new Rest Areas

- There are several criteria that go into constructing new rest areas.
- First, a Safety Rest Area provides defined services: at minimum outhouses and garbage bins, at defined intervals to provide predictable, dependable service to highway users.
- Second, these rest areas need to meet certain engineering standards, including the ability to have clear lines of sight, multiple accesses, sufficient turning radius, and space for amenities and large commercial vehicles.
- Third, new safety rest areas should minimize environmental impacts by using existing sites where possible.

Third response:

- Highways and Public Works released a Request for Information in March 2024 seeking an improved model of outhouse, and to determine the level of market interest in supplying outhouse buildings.
- We will be replacing wooden outhouses in poor condition with more durable recycled polymer outhouses and installing new ones at Swift River in 2025. We will be evaluating their performance and cost effectiveness for potential widespread adoption at our rest areas.

Fourth response: Drury Creek Project

- There is a need for a new safety rest area between Carmacks and Faro.
- There are currently outhouses at the Mitchell Road Junction/Campbell Highway kilometre 414 and Eagle Rock/Columbian Disaster kilometre

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Rest Area Strategy

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555. This 141-kilometre gap necessitates another rest area in between.

- Based on comments we received from Yukoners during the spring's cancelled YESAB submission, we are evaluating alternative sites, and will resubmit a proposal for this area once we have collected feedback from affected stakeholders.
 - We remain committed to working with all partners and stakeholders to ensure that a consistent set of services, such as rest areas and electric vehicle charging stations, are available along Yukon roads.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The closure of outhouses has generated media attention.
-

Background:

- Some rest areas have outhouses, garbage bins, and interpretive messaging on the Yukon's history and environment.
 - Most highway rest areas in the Yukon fall under the domain of Highways and Public Works. Forty-four of the 64 sites with outhouses are owned by Highways and Public Works.
 - The 3 site closures in 2023 were in alignment with the development of the Yukon government's rest area strategy.
 - The three rest areas permanently closed on the North Klondike Highway:
 - The Conglomerates point of interest at kilometre 297.8.
 - There are outhouse facilities within 10 to 20 kilometers on either side of Conglomerates near Braeburn and Montague Roadhouse.
 - Yukon Crossing at kilometre 395.2.
-

Session Briefing Note
Rest Area Strategy

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Public Works

- There are outhouse facilities at Five Finger Rapids which is within 13 kilometres of Yukon Crossing.
- Stewart River viewpoint at kilometre 551.
- There are outhouse facilities in Stewart Crossing at kilometre 535 which is 16 kilometres away.
- The three outhouses were removed in October 2023 by Highways and Public Works.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	September 3, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Rural Roads Program**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response: Rural Road Upgrade Program

- The Government of Yukon is committed to continuing our work to construct and maintain public infrastructure.
- The Rural Road Upgrade Program provides financial support to Yukoners for the improvement of maintained and unmaintained rural Yukon roads.
- Applications can be found on Yukon.ca.
- In 2024-25, 8 projects were completed for approximately \$230,000.
- In 2022-23, the program funding was reallocated to address flood mitigation requirements in various locations.

Additional response: Resource Access Road Program

- The Resource Access Road Program provides support for industry to develop transportation infrastructure to support commercial activity.
- We know how important this is to industry as resource access roads enable exploration and extraction activities across the Yukon.
- This year the Resource Access Road program committed approximately \$200,000 in funds to road improvements on the Goldfields roads in the Dawson area as well as replacing the deck on the Indian River Bridge, also in the Goldfields area.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

- Rural Road Upgrade Program objectives:
 - to serve the transportation needs of Yukoners;
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Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Rural Roads Program**Highways and
Public Works

- 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.
- In 2024-25 we completed projects on 3-Mile Road, Ten Mile Road, Annie Lake Road, Pennycook Lane, Ta'an Village Road and the Yukon Wildlife Preserve.

Resource Access Road Program

- The Resource Access Road Program funds transportation infrastructure improvements that support industrial activities.
- 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.
- The road must also provide an economic benefit to the Yukon.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Rural Roads Program**Highways and
Public Works

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

September 4, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Spring Weight Restrictions and
Speed Reduction**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Every spring, weight restrictions are imposed to preserve the integrity of the road.
- Weight restrictions prevent heavy loads from travelling on specified Yukon roads during the vulnerable spring thaw period when they are more susceptible to damage.
- This is done by reducing allowable legal axle loading. The possible ranges include unrestricted, 100 per cent legal axle loading, 75 per cent legal axle loading, or 50 per cent legal axle loading.
- Weight restrictions are implemented and removed in phases depending on temperature and road conditions.
- Having weight restrictions in place is the most viable way to reduce the impact of heavy vehicles on the road surface during the spring melt.
- Other actions, such as lowering the speed limit, will not prevent rutting and damage to the road surface and may in fact make it worse.
- If we delay or do not implement weight restrictions, it can result in millions of dollars of damage to the road network and possible failure of the road surface.
- The two Yukon weigh stations have the most up to date information and can answer questions from the industry.
 - Whitehorse weigh station number is (867) 667-5729.
 - Watson Lake weigh station number is (867)-536-7400.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Spring Weight Restrictions and
Speed Reduction**Highways and
Public Works

Additional response:

- This year the first phase of weight restrictions went into effect on March 28 and the second phase on April 2.
- Restrictions are still in place on the Takhini River Road.

Additional response:

- The surface of many roads in the Yukon is more vulnerable during spring melt.
- This is particularly important for roads such as the North Klondike Highway with its minimal sub-base.
- In practice this means that heavy loads deflect the road surface creating rutting in the road and negatively impacting the resiliency of the road's surface.
- These repair costs take away from other projects or necessary upgrades to infrastructure, hence the need for seasonal weight restrictions.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Seasonal weight limits impact businesses and carriers as they cannot carry the legal loads.

Background:

- Weight restrictions are implemented when the ground temperature reaches 0°C. The department provides the trucking industry with two days advance notice before imposing the restrictions.
- The temperature of the road surface is determined by in-ground sensors called thermistors placed in key locations, and observations from Transportation Maintenance staff. Thermistors measure temperatures at multiple depths in the ground.

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FALL 2024

Spring Weight Restrictions and Speed Reduction

Highways and Public Works

- The Department of Highways and Public Works bases the decision for the entire highway segment from the warmest thermistors, as the one soft section in the segment may be impacted by heavy traffic.
- Weight restrictions change from 75 per cent to 100 per cent legal loads when the road surface is thawed within the top 1.0 metres of the road surface and over-weights are permitted when road surface is thawed below 1.4 metres.
- In 2020, the department delayed weight restrictions on the North Klondike Highway between Carmacks and Dawson. This delay resulted in several impacts to the road's surface. A follow-up evaluation estimated that this delay resulted in

Approved by:

T. Allen

August 29, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Standard Bus Testing

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Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is working hard to support testing for standard bus drivers as well as other commercial licences.
- The road test team is fully staffed with two full-time driver examiners as well as auxiliary on-call staff for testing in the communities.
- Highways and Public Works actively collaborates with Yukon Standard Bus to ensure drivers are tested in an expeditious manner.
- There is currently no backlog of school bus drivers awaiting testing and the current demand for school bus driver road tests has been met. Any requests continue to be actioned on a priority basis.

Additional response:

- Throughout the summer, Highways and Public Works have consistently provided road tests for Standard Bus on an on-demand basis, approximately every two weeks.
- A standing two-week time slot has been created specifically for Standard Bus. The arrangement is that Standard Bus will confirm the need for a test at least one week in advance. If no confirmation is received, the slot will be made available to others.
- Highways and Public Works will continue to prioritize school bus drivers for testing.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- While Yukoners currently experience significant wait times for driver tests, standard bus drivers are prioritized and tested soon after the demand is identified.
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Session Briefing Note
Standard Bus Testing

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FALL 2024
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Public Works

Background:

- In late 2023 and early 2024, department officials from Highways and Public Works reached out to the Standard Bus General Manager to determine needs for driver testing. Standard Bus confirmed that drivers who were currently on a waitlist. Department officials had the bus drivers tested shortly after.
- The concern regarding the backlog in testing bus drivers was brought up by the Opposition in the 2023 fall session.
- There is currently no backlog of school bus drivers awaiting testing and the current demand for school bus driver road tests has been met. Any requests continue to be actioned on a priority basis.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 24, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Engagement**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Engaging with First Nation governments and organizations, stakeholders, and the public has been instrumental in the development of the new Traffic Safety Act.
- Since 2019, the Department of Highways and Public Works has held multiple public and targeted consultations to gather input from Yukoners, which has shaped policy direction.
- Throughout the project, the team has also maintained continuous dialogue with the RCMP and other key stakeholders.

Additional response: 2019 Public Engagement

- In April and May 2019, the project team launched a comprehensive public engagement on key topics related to the new Traffic Safety Act, including impaired driving, cyclist safety, and automated enforcement technology.
- As part of this effort, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics conducted an online public survey on behalf of the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- The survey received responses from over 2,800 Yukoners, generating more than 5,000 comments. At the time, it was the second-highest response rate ever recorded in a Yukon government public survey.
- Letters were also sent to 23 First Nation governments and organizations, 30 community groups, including municipalities and associations, as well as key stakeholders, such as members of the business community. Both in-person and virtual meetings were held with several of these groups.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Engagement**Highways and
Public Works

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- Additionally, the project team hosted community open houses in 13 Yukon communities, providing residents with an opportunity to meet staff, ask questions, and offer feedback on key issues.

Additional response: 2023 Stakeholder Engagement

- In June and July 2023, the project team re-engaged key stakeholders to discuss proposed policy changes for the new act and regulations.
- As part of this effort, the department distributed information packages to municipalities, First Nation governments and organizations, and various other stakeholder groups.
- These packages provided updates on the project's progress, outlined proposed changes, and invited further discussion.
- The goal of sharing these policy shifts was to address any new policy or implementation concerns that may have emerged since the 2019 public engagement.
- The department also held meetings with organizations that requested further discussions, including two municipalities, one First Nation government, one community association, and four other stakeholders, to present the proposed policy shifts and answer any questions.

Additional response: Engagement with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

- The new Traffic Safety Act contains narrow provisions to allow the use of facial recognition technology to prevent identity fraud.
- These provisions are in line with other jurisdictions in Canada and without them Yukon could be one of the more vulnerable jurisdictions to this kind of fraud.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Engagement**Highways and
Public Works

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- Other jurisdictions in Canada have approved the use of this information in very narrow cases like what the Traffic Safety Act is proposing.
 - In March 2024, we shared a draft provisions of the new Traffic Safety Act concerning the collection and disclosure of personal information with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.
 - The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner responded with comments and the project team acknowledged receipt of the email and thanked them for their comments.
 - On October 10, Highways and Public Works received a letter from the OIPC regarding the use of facial recognition technology as part of the new Traffic Safety Act.
 - Highways and Public Works officials worked with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to understand their concerns and to jointly formulate a path to addressing them, while also achieving government's policy goal of safeguarding against identity theft and fraud.
 - Amendments to the Bill were drafted to add additional constraints to the scope of the authority to use facial recognition technology.
 - Highways and Public Works officials shared the proposed amendments with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, which confirmed that the proposed changes would, in fact, allay their concerns.
 - We appreciate the important role that the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner has in safeguarding the privacy interests of Yukoners and welcome their input.

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Traffic Safety Act Engagement

Highways and
Public Works

- We commit to engaging further with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner on issues of joint concern during regulation development and to sharing with them any future Privacy Impact Assessments that are required as part of that process.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The new Traffic Safety Act will impact all Yukoners and the topic of engagement is commonly raised on bills such as this.

Background:

- The Department of Highways and Public Works conducted two distinct rounds of engagement on the new Traffic Safety Act, one in 2019 and one in 2023.
- Additionally, the project team regularly discussed proposed policy direction with key stakeholders such as the City of Whitehorse, the RCMP, federal prosecutors and other affected Yukon government departments.

Facial Recognition

- Section 215 of the Traffic Safety Act provides transparency respecting the use of facial recognition technology under the new Traffic Safety Act, and constrains its use to key applications
- In addition, the administration of the Traffic Safety Act will rely on the safeguards provided by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which also limits the government's ability to collect, use and disclose personal information.
- Further, existing policies are in place within Motor Vehicles to ensure that personal information is used for the purposes for which it was collected, by authorized personnel, and is not disclosed to other organizations.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 28, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act
Impaired driving and deterrence**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Impaired driving continues to be a significant public safety concern in the Yukon. Whereas rates have declined substantially across the rest of Canada since the mid-1980s, the Yukon has not experienced that same decline.
- The per-capita rate of police-reported alcohol-impaired driving in the Yukon was 10 times the national average in 2019.
- The current Motor Vehicles Act does not sufficiently deter poor driving behavior, as evidenced by the high rates of impaired driving, speeding, and other traffic safety infractions on Yukon roads.
- This is largely due to out-of-date fine levels, enforcement challenges, and the lack of a robust roadside administrative sanctioning regime for particularly unsafe behaviours, such as impaired and high-risk driving.
- The maximum allowable fine amounts under the new Traffic Safety Act have been raised to a level that restores their deterrent effect, and we intend to raise the fines for key ticketable offences in 2025 to do the same.
- The new Act also introduces a new immediate roadside administrative sanction regime so that drivers who are impaired by alcohol or drugs, or driving dangerously, face meaningful consequences on the spot.
- Additionally, the new Act enables the use of automated enforcement technology which will create a more powerful deterrent effect for offences like speeding and running red lights.

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Traffic Safety Act Impaired driving and deterrence

Highways and
Public Works

Additional response: Impaired Driving

- The new roadside administrative sanctions regime works in conjunction with the *Criminal Code of Canada*, as it does in other jurisdictions such as British Columbia and Alberta.
 - The administrative sanctions under the new Traffic Safety Act will be imposed in addition to penalties applied under the *Criminal Code* for the same incident.
 - The Traffic Safety Act also authorizes an officer to sanction a driver affected by alcohol, or a drug such as cannabis, at an amount lower than the thresholds set out in the *Criminal Code*.
 - This new authority is necessary because a growing body of evidence shows that drivers experience impairment and are more likely to be involved in a collision, even at even low levels of alcohol or drug impairment.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns about impaired driving were expressed by Yukoners during the MVA rewrite public engagement sessions.
 - Jurisdictions that employ stronger impaired driving laws with roadside administrative sanctions, such as British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario, have experienced a marked decline in motor vehicle collisions and deaths.
-

Background:

- In 2017 and 2018, the Yukon had triple the average Canadian rate of collision fatalities per capita.
 - Rates of impaired driving in the Yukon are consistently significantly higher than the national average.
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FALL 2024

Traffic Safety Act Impaired driving and deterrence

Highways and
Public Works

- The *Criminal Code* does not include offences that capture impaired drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) below 0.08%.
- Every province in Canada except Quebec makes it an offence to drive at some blood-alcohol concentration below that of the *Criminal Code* (0.05% - 0.08%).
- The current *Motor Vehicles Act* provides limited tools to peace officers to sanction learner (GDL) drivers driving at low levels of impairment (i.e., below criminal-impairment level of <0.08% BAC).
- Details regarding periods of disqualification and impoundment, monetary penalties and other information regarding programs or conditions on a licence such as the alcohol ignition interlock program, will be established in the regulations.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 25, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Overview**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works has tabled the new Traffic Safety Act this session, to replace Yukon's *Motor Vehicles Act*.
- This new modernized Act addresses longstanding safety and administrative issues and fills gaps that have arisen in the time since the existing *Motor Vehicles Act* was proclaimed in 1977.
- The new Act will enhance the safety of road users and deter dangerous driving behavior by increasing penalties, updating enforcement authorities, and modernizing programs.

Additional response: Reducing Red Tape

- Reducing red tape has been one of the key goals for this project from its outset, as decades of experience administering the *Motor Vehicles Act* have revealed multiple areas in which processes could be improved and efficiencies realized.
- While developing this Act, the department sought ways to streamline motor vehicles processes, enable digitized services and generally reduce red tape and administrative burden for drivers and commercial carriers.
- Additionally, the Act introduces a new regime of immediate roadside administrative sanctions which will allow RCMP officers to process impaired and other dangerous drivers more quickly, so the RCMP can get back on the road.

Additional response: Enabling Drafting

- The Traffic Safety Act is written in a modern, enabling drafting style.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Overview**Highways and
Public Works

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- This means that the Act contains general rules, authorities and prohibitions that function as an overall framework to accomplish the objectives of the new law.
 - This style permits the specific rules and processes needed to operationalize the Act to be written into regulations rather than in the Act itself.
 - Regulations can be updated more quickly and easily than amending the Act, making the legislation more responsive to the needs of Yukoners in the future.

Additional response: Timeline

- This Act will be accompanied by at least 11 regulations, all of which are necessary before the Act can come into force in its entirety.
- Work is underway on the regulations, but more research and discussion with stakeholders will need to take place before they can be completed.
- Once the 11 regulations have been developed, the department is planning a robust communications campaign to inform the public and affected stakeholders of changes in the new regime.
- This process in other jurisdictions has taken place over several years.
- The department will endeavor to expedite the process, but the regulations development process, along with the associated implementation activities is expected to take a few years.

Additional response: Transitional Provisions

- However, it is recognized that it is critical to advance road safety in the territory without delay.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Overview**Highways and
Public Works

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- This is why some areas of the Traffic Safety Act are planned to come into force earlier than the rest.
 - The two areas coming into force early are higher fines that will apply to some unsafe driving offences and municipal bylaw-making authorities.
 - These pieces will come into force within a year of the Act passing.
 - Higher fines will help to deter bad driving behaviour, especially for repeat offenders who will pay a higher fine on a second conviction.
 - Enabling municipalities to more broadly govern traffic will help to advance road safety by authorizing municipalities to expand their bylaws now without having to wait for the entire Act to be in force.

Additional response: Cost

- The implementation of this Act is anticipated to generate costs to government in some areas, although a large portion of these costs is anticipated to be covered within current operational budgets.
- Specific costs are largely dependant on the content of the regulations, which have not yet been fully developed.
- As such, specific financial implications will be determined during the development of the regulations in the coming years.
- Some parts of the Act which are anticipated to generate costs to government include:
 - IT upgrades;
 - new processes for abandoned and impounded vehicles;
 - the transition of the current Driver Control Board to the new Traffic Safety Board including hiring adjudicators;

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Traffic Safety Act Overview**Highways and
Public Works

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- the implementation of new remedial programming and ignition interlock programming for those convicted of impaired driving;
 - updating court services systems and policing processes; and
 - training those responsible for administering the Act on the changes we are bringing into effect.

Additional response: Vulnerable Road Users

- One of the goals of the Traffic Safety Act is to address the safety issues associated with cycling and other vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and motorcyclists.
- We have amended the preamble to acknowledge the importance of protecting vulnerable road users as well as including a clear definition of vulnerable road users that will serve to inform our traffic safety laws moving forward.
- These amendments are in addition to initiatives that we are already considering to increase safety for cyclists including a minimum passing rule for cyclists; increased fines for unsafe driving; increased penalties to deter poor driving behaviour; and new equipment requirements such as mandatory helmets.
- As we engage on regulation development we look forward to continue to work with important stakeholder groups that represent vulnerable road users.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The rewrite of the Motor Vehicles Act is a mandate letter item.
 - The new Traffic Safety Act will be tabled during this session.
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Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Traffic Safety Act Overview

Highways and
Public Works

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 has engaged with stakeholders, municipalities and First Nations to ensure their interests are taken into consideration in the development of the new Traffic Safety Act.

Vulnerable Road Users

- Though the City of Whitehorse Bicycle Bylaw currently requires the driver of a motor vehicle to leave at least one metre of open space between a vehicle and a cyclist, a rule in the regulations would expand the applicability of this rule to all roads in the territory.
- Although mandatory helmet use is not without controversy, the available research suggests that helmets help prevent serious and fatal injuries.
- Most jurisdictions in Canada legislate mandatory helmet use, either for all ages, or for children under 18 years old.
- Some jurisdictions in Canada have created exemptions for helmets based on medical or religious grounds.
- The new Act includes a regulation-making authority to allow for similar exemptions to be created in the regulations.
- Government intends to use that authority to create a religious exemption to the requirement to wear a helmet while operating a motorcycle or a bicycle on a highway.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 28, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

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

Recommended response:

- Yukoners seeking any class of driver's licence must apply for and pass a written test, as well as a road test.
- Licence Classes 1 to 4 also require a medical examination certificate in addition to the written and road test.
- Yukon Motor Vehicles Services have experienced a significant surge in demand for road tests and as a result, testing wait times for Class 1 to 5 licences are approximately 7 weeks at this time.
- The department is fully staffed with two Yukon examiners working full-time to perform tests for Class 5 and commercial licences and has recruited an additional part-time position to address demand during the peak time of April through September.
- Additionally, the department has auxiliary on-call staff for conducting testing in communities.

Additional response: Road Test Wait Times

- Reducing wait times is something the department is working hard to achieve.
- Road tests have been streamlined allowing the branch to process more road tests daily.
- We expect our wait times will decrease when the current surge in requests lessens.

Third response: Commercial licences for tourism operators

- To expedite the Class 4 licensing process for tourism operators, Transport Services and Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon

Session Briefing Note

FALL 2024

Wait Times for Commercial and Class 5 Drivers Licence Road Tests

Highways and Public Works

have entered into a pilot project to allow combined Class 4 and 5 road tests.

- This pilot project eliminates the need for one of the road tests and therefore the associated wait time.
- In an effort to reduce wait times for those that already have their Class 5 license, Class 4 road tests for drivers that already have a Class 5 licence will be expedited to the extent that is practicable.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There have been concerns around wait times for road tests, and the need to hire additional licensing examiners.

Background:

- In the Yukon, wait times for a driver's test can vary based on demand and location. The Yukon has experienced significant population growth and Motor Vehicles' business is directly tied to population. The current road test capacity is struggling to keep up with higher demand.

Approved by:

T. Allen

October 21, 2024

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Driver Licence

Tab# 80
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon introduced new driver's licences and general identification cards on May 21, 2024.
- The new Yukon licence is now the most secure in Canada and meets all North American standards for licensing.
- The new cards:
 - are produced on laser-engraved polycarbonate, rather than laminated plastic, a feature that increases the long-term durability and security of the IDs;
 - include cardholder photos in black and white, as well as updated Yukon design elements; and
 - contain specialized security features unique to the Yukon.
- The Yukon's previous driver licence no longer met the national driver's licence design standard and were considered less secure than ID from other Canadian jurisdictions.

Additional response:

- In addition to updated security measures, new imagery is included as part of the updated ID cards. Design elements on both ID cards include a wolf and a crow.
- The frontside of the driver's licence shows a boreal forest and the backside shows an image of the Tombstone mountains.
- The front and back of the general identification card contains mountains in the Kluane National Park, with a fireweed overlay on the back.

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Driver Licence

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Public Works

- The new IDs are the first of their kind in North America to allow for the inclusion of Indigenous names in Athabaskan characters.

Third response: Delivery standards for new IDs

- Due to the enhanced security features required to meet national standards, driver's licences and general identification cards are now printed in a secure facility in Ontario and mailed to the recipient's home address.
- Yukoners can generally expect to receive their new card in the mail within 10-14 days and will be given a temporary driver's licence in the meantime.
- For Yukoners planning to travel, it is best to allow up to 4 weeks for the new card to arrive.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- It is likely that some members of the public and advocacy groups will be unhappy with longer wait times than when cards were printed in-house.

Background:

- Yukon ID cards were last updated in 2010, while the fee structure was last updated in 2002.
- Yukon ID cards can be renewed up to 6 months before they expire.
- Licence fees increased for the first time since 2002 from \$10 to \$20 per year, a rate that is comparable to the national average.
- The fee increase reflects the higher cost of production and more advanced security features which prevent these cards from being replicated and prevents fraud.

Session Briefing Note
Yukon Driver Licence

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Public Works

- The price of general identification cards will remain the same to ensure that everyone has access to a form of photo identification.
- The Yukon government has engaged Veridos Identity Solutions, a secure printing vendor with a facility in Ontario, to produce the Yukon’s driver’s licences and general identification cards.
- This company currently produces Driver’s Licences and ID cards for Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as card programs for BCAA, Alberta Motor Association and the International Aero Transport Association in the U.S. This company produces more than three million driver’s licences and one million ID cards annually.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	August 28, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Watson Lake
Highway Safety Improvements**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon prioritizes the safety of travellers and pedestrians. In Watson Lake, Highways and Public Works has been making several safety improvements within the community.
- Safety improvements include installing streetlights along the Robert Campbell Highway and upgrades to pedestrian crossings along the Alaska Highway.
- \$1.5 million is budgeted for Watson Lake pedestrian safety improvements, and approximately \$1.1 million is funded through Canada's Active Transportation Fund.
- Highways and Public Works met with the Watson Lake Chief Administration Officer in fall 2023 regarding a needs assessment for connecting pathways to the new crosswalks in anticipation of construction in 2024.
- The two overhead crosswalks – one near the Robert Campbell Highway intersection and the other in front of Andrea's Hotel – have been installed and will be activated by the end of November 2024.
- In 2025, the department will be installing additional side-mounted crosswalks at key locations along with connecting trails. All crosswalks will have pedestrian-activated flashing beacons.
- Highways and Public Works has been delivering the construction work in coordination with the Department of Community Services' Watson Lake Infrastructure Upgrades project.

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FALL 2024

Watson Lake Highway Safety Improvements

Highways and
Public Works

Additional response:

- Construction of streetlights along Robert Campbell Highway between Ravenhill Drive and Two and One-Half Mile Village were completed in November 2023.
- The pedestrian-activated flashing beacons to the crosswalks improve pedestrian safety and visibility and alert drivers.
- We will also be installing four new pedestrian crosswalks along the Alaska Highway and Robert Cambell Highway to provide safer connections between the school, local businesses, tourism and walking trails on the opposite side of the highway.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Improving pedestrian safety in Watson Lake is a topic of interest for its citizens.

Background:

- On January 10, 2024, the Government of Yukon announced federal funding for active transportation being used for pedestrian safety improvements in Watson Lake. The \$1.5 million announced was allocated toward the new streetlights and for upgrading crosswalks.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	November 18, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Pelly Barge

Tab# 82
FALL 2024

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The Pelly Barge is important to the community of Ross River; the Ross River Dena Council, visitors who want to experience this unique region of the Yukon; and, to industry that works along the North Canal Road.
- The safety and well-being of Yukoners and visitors is always our first consideration. The barge typically operates between early June and early October.
- Opening for the season is based on water levels, which must be high enough so the barge can be safely operated.
- The barge is pulled from the river at the end of the season due to river conditions including low water and ice formation.
- During the off season, the barge undergoes inspection and any necessary repairs. Over this winter, Highways and Public Works will conduct any necessary maintenance and repairs.

Additional response:

- Climate change has caused greater fluctuations in water levels, which impacts the barge. When water levels are low the barge is more likely to become stuck on a sandbar and when water levels are high, debris can damage the vessel.
- There are specific Transport Canada requirements for operating the Pelly Barge, as it falls under the regulations governing commercial vessels in Canadian waters.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Pelly Barge**Highways and
Public Works

- These regulations ensure the safe operation of barges, proper equipment, crew qualifications, and adherence to safety and environmental standards.

Additional response: First Nations Engagement

- Highways and Public Works met with Ross River Dena Council in January 2023 to provide an update on the status of the Pelly Barge and the renewal of its *Fisheries Act* Authorization.
- The current *Fisheries Act* Authorization is in place until 2027, and Highways and Public Works will be engaging with Ross River Dena Council over the coming year to discuss the crossing.
- Highways and Public Works is also committed to collaborating with Ross River Dena Council to discuss long term options for the river crossing. Once a preferred option is selected, the formal Consultation process will begin.
- A possible new barge system would require assessment under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, First Nation consultation and preliminary design.
- In the meantime, Highways and Public Works will continue to inspect and make improvements to the barge to ensure it is safe to use.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Outfitters, mining companies and the public depend on the Pelly Barge for vehicle access to the North Canol Road.
- Kaska First Nations depend on the Pelly Barge for access to traditional territory, however Ross River Dena Council and other Kaska Nations have expressed concerns about facilitating increased industrial and recreational access to their traditional territory.

Session Briefing Note
Pelly Barge

Tab# 82
FALL 2024
Highways and
Public Works

Background:

Fisheries Act Authorization

- In 2013, the permanent ramps for the Pelly Barge were washed out during a high-water level event. Since then, Highways and Public Works has had to add gravel material to the river to create temporary ramps to prevent the barge from running aground.
- Changes to the Fisheries Act in 2019 have resulted in greater restrictions on the deposit of sediment to the water and the need for a Fisheries Act Authorization to construct temporary ramps in the river.
- Highways and Public Works has received a Fisheries Act Authorization to authorize the Pelly Barge operation until 2027.

Long Term River Crossing Solution

- In early 2022, Highways and Public Works began engaging with Ross River Dena Council on potential long-term river crossing options.
- Development of a long-term river crossing solution requires cost and feasibility analysis, engagement with First Nations, engagement with stakeholders and other Yukon government departments.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	October 17, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Highway Winter Maintenance

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- Highways and Public Works prioritizes the safety of travellers and continuously monitors the Yukon's highway network for potential risks and road safety hazards and performs maintenance activities accordingly.
- The Yukon's winter precipitation is increasing the regularity of freeze-thaw cycles which can increase the frequency of icy road conditions.
- After a snowfall, our main highways are cleared based on priority, ensuring school bus routes and high-traffic areas are addressed first, followed by all other roads as quickly as possible.
- The department aims for all roads to be cleared between 24 and 48 hours, however delays may occur.
- During the winter season, our highway maintenance camps operate seven days a week.
- Highways and Public Works is equipped to take on the challenging conditions with the required specialized graders and snowblowers needed for clearing the roads.

Additional response: Robert Campbell Highway

- Highways and Public Works operates 21 highway maintenance camps throughout the territory.
- Five maintenance camps along the Robert Campbell Highway are staffed by crews working seven days a week.
- On October 22, 2024, the crews from the Carmacks grader station worked overtime to address conditions.

Session Briefing Note

Highway Winter Maintenance

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

- On October 29, one truck made two passes between Carmacks and Fox Lake, while another truck completed two passes between Carmacks and Minto.
- To provide context, it typically takes about four hours for a truck to complete a single pass, and two passes are usually necessary to fully clear the road.
- Our dedicated crews stationed at grader stations across the territory work tirelessly year-round, ensuring safe and efficient use of the highway network.

Third response:

- Highways and Public Works has invested in a network of Road Weather Information Systems which allow highway maintenance camps to monitor road conditions.
- This provides more accurate and timely road condition reporting to Yukoners.
- Highways and Public Works updates Yukon 511 on an ongoing basis as conditions dictate.
- Yukoners are encouraged to check the website before heading out on the road and can view camera images of road conditions, travel advisories or closures, and weather forecasts in order to make a more informed decision about travelling in the territory.
- We are using digital highway signs to help keep the travelling public informed of road closures and advisories.

Session Briefing Note

Highway Winter Maintenance

FALL 2024

Highways and
Public Works

- During the winter driving season, we ask that people travel with caution, drive to the road conditions and watch for crews and equipment working.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Winter road conditions create increased safety risks for the travelling public.

Background:

- The Yukon government encourages and supports active transportation and is committed to ensuring the safety of all trail users.
- Our department collaborates with the City of Whitehorse to clear active transportation routes as quickly as possible.
- Highways and Public Works blended 55,000 cubic meters, about 20 Olympic sized swimming pools of sanding material with salt for use during the 2023-24 winter. The purpose was to reduce the freezing of sand piles due to internal moisture content within the sanding material itself.
- Highways and Public Works has additional sand resources available should they be needed.
- Highways and Public Works purchased new highway maintenance equipment every year. These new purchases replaced aging equipment.

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

November 4, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

Recommended response:

- The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$150.1 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$20.7 million in recoveries. The net increase in new O&M spending is forecast at \$129.4 million.
- Capital spending for Supplementary Estimates No. 1 reflects a slight overall gross decrease of \$299,000 in spending and a \$4.2 million decrease in recoveries, resulting in a net increase in spending of \$3.9 million. These adjustments are mainly the result of updated cashflow forecasts for various projects.
- Revenues are projected to decrease by \$8.8 million, primarily due to a revenue forecast update from Canada which revised the projection for Corporate Income Tax downward by \$6.7 million as well as a reduction in royalty payments from Victoria Gold of \$2.5 million. This is partially offset by a \$350,000 increase for driver licenses due to recently increased fees.
- The Yukon government continues to maintain a surplus. As part of the 2024-25 Main Estimates, the Yukon government budgeted for a \$50 million contingency to address emergency pressures. \$50 million of the contingency has been applied towards the pressures identified in the Supplementary Estimates No. 1.
- The use of the contingency fund allows the government to present a revised surplus of \$75.4 million as part of these Supplementary Estimates. Changes in the Supplementary Estimates result in a revised year-end net debt of \$530.4 million

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

Additional response:

- The Supplementary Estimates reflect an O&M increase mainly for:
 - \$50 million for payments to the Receiver for environmental protection work at the Eagle Gold Mine;
 - \$34 million for pressures in Insured Health reflecting support for the wellbeing of Yukoners;
 - \$21 million for wildland firefighting costs in response to the significant fire season experienced in the territory and which helped ensure the safety of Yukoners; and
 - \$10 million for various Yukon Hospital Corporation funding requirements including the added O&M costs of converting ten beds at the Thompson Centre for Acute Care use.
- For the Supplementary Estimates, updates to the 2024-25 Capital Plan have resulted in a decreased allocation of \$299,000. Notable changes include:
 - \$1.9 million towards the completion of the Mental Wellness Unit at Whitehorse General Hospital;
 - \$1.9 million for long-term and acute care bed optimization at Whistle Bend Place and Whitehorse General Hospital;
 - Decrease of \$3.2 million due to cash flow revisions for the construction of the school in Burwash Landing;
 - Decrease of \$600 thousand for the creation of new campsites aligning costs with the revised project timeline.

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

- There is an increase of 46.6 in FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) for Supplementary Estimates No. 1. These are primarily to hire new long-term care staff in support of additional care beds at Whistle Bend Place, for the Aging with Dignity initiative and new FTEs for schools including teachers, clerical and custodial staff.
- There is also an increase in FTEs related to a transfer in the Capital Planning Office from Highways and Public Works capital budget to Finance in the O&M budget.

Corporate approach to fiscal sustainability:

- We continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- To meet these priorities, departments continue to follow established processes to ensure that funding is distributed efficiently and effectively across public services and programs.
- This means regular financial scrutiny is applied to decision-making and that new requests for funding are approved in a financially sustainable way, while continuing to provide the services that Yukoners expect.
- This coordinated approach to funding ensures that government can respond to new and evolving challenges, while managing resources responsibly.

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2024-25 Second Appropriation Act is tabled in the fall session and will be the subject of debate.

Background:

- Supplementary Estimates are used annually by a government to account for unforeseen spending at the time of tabling the annual Budget. It is common to have one or two spending updates throughout the fiscal year.
- They are tabled during the fall and spring sessions, debated and voted on in the legislature and provide departments with increased spending authority for O&M and Capital for the current fiscal year.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

September 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date approved

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

Recommended response:

- Since its introduction in 2019, the Government of Yukon has been supportive of carbon pricing as a policy to help us reduce emissions and move toward our ambitious climate targets.
- We take a balanced approach to carbon pricing in the territory, one which considers the need to reduce emissions as well as the fair return of carbon pricing revenues to Yukoners.
- The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue neutral. We are committed to both reducing carbon emissions in the territory and to returning all the federal government's revenues to Yukoners.
- Returning proceeds to individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations, businesses, and mining operations is a critical part of our approach to carbon pricing in the Yukon.
- We are returning 100 per cent of the federal carbon levy to these five rebate groups who receive more, on average, than they pay in carbon pricing levies.

Additional response:

- The departments of Environment and Finance work together to coordinate with our federal counterparts to assess the implications of carbon pricing in the territory and to ensure the needs of the territory are recognized in national policy.
- This includes retaining control over how revenues are distributed back to Yukon individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations and businesses.

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

- It also includes excluding the carbon price from electricity generation and aviation, in recognition of the unique constraints of our northern jurisdiction.

Third response:

- Carbon pricing is just one tool in our toolkit to address the climate emergency.
 - We continue to implement Our Clean Future to reduce the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and, more broadly, to reduce the impact of the carbon levy on Yukoners.
 - In December of last year, we announced 42 new actions under Our Clean Future as part of the third Our Clean Future annual report outlining the progress we have made on the strategy.
 - Although we have made progress on many of our commitments, there is still significant work required to meet our target of reducing our emissions by 45 per cent by 2030.
 - Ensuring that we utilize every policy lever at our disposal, including carbon pricing, is essential to meet our goals.
 - Together, we are finding solutions to reduce our emissions while strengthening our economy and supporting our industry partners.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Carbon pricing remains a highly sensitive topic across the country with many provinces and territories voicing their own perspective on how they would like to see this pricing mechanism handled moving forward.

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

- In October 2023, the federal government announced a temporary 3-year exemption for home-heating oil from the federal carbon price, with the intention of helping Atlantic Canada in particular.
 - While Atlantic Canada welcomed this change, the exemption has received considerable backlash. Most provincial governments (except for British Columbia) have called for extending the carbon price exemption to all home-heating fuels (including natural gas).
 - Critics also argued that the exemption undermines the credibility of the carbon tax and may weaken the incentives to switch to lower carbon heating options.
-

Background:

- The federal Draft Regulations Amending the Fuel Charge Regulations stipulate that all heating oil will be exempt from the fuel charge starting November 8, 2023, until April 2027.
- This means that light fuel oil consumption in all buildings, including residential, commercial, and institutional, will be exempt from the fuel charge.
- Nearly half (49.2% in 2022) of Yukon homes use oil-based heating.
- In Yukon, individuals, businesses, placer/quartz mining operations, Yukon First Nations governments and municipal governments are all eligible for a rebate for carbon pricing.
- Individuals who live outside of Whitehorse receive a remote supplement, which was recently increased from 10 to 20% (and is now in line with the federal remote supplement for backstop jurisdictions including Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Saskatchewan).
- On September 12, 2024, British Columbia's Premier David Eby announced that if the federal government were to remove the carbon pricing backstop, then British Columbia would end the carbon levy in the province.
- British Columbia has had its own carbon pricing system in place since 2008.

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

- British Columbia and the Yukon were the remaining supporters of carbon pricing as a climate change policy, with all other provinces publicly opposing the federal system. In late 2023, the newly elected Premier of the Northwest Territories also called for an exemption from the federal carbon levy for the territory.
- To date, Canada has been firm on granting no exception to the backstop.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

October 2, 2024

A/Deputy Minister of Environment_____
Date approved

Jessica Schultz

October 1, 2024

Deputy Minister of Finance_____
Date approved

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon recognizes the seriousness of the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine on June 24 and is treating the response as a government priority that reflects the urgency of the situation.
- Our priorities are to ensure the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and to protect the environment.
- An Independent Review Board has been established to investigate the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine. Three highly qualified experts are on the Independent Review Board. The objective of the investigation is to determine the causes of the heap leach facility failure.
- We are committed to working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun to develop remediation strategies for the failure. A joint team of technical experts hired by the Government of Yukon and the First Nation meet on a regular basis to inform our actions.
- For the most up to date information on the situation at Eagle Gold Mine and actions we are taking, you can visit Yukon.ca/victoria-gold-updates.

Additional responses:

- On August 14, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. was appointed by the court as Receiver of the assets and property of Victoria Gold Corp.

Eagle Gold Mine -

ECO-FIN-EMR

Impacts

The Receiver is responsible for overseeing remediation of the heap leach failure and its environmental impacts, including compliance with territorial and federal orders.

- The Government of Yukon is committed to a thorough accounting of events leading up to the failure and the development of recommendations so that a similar event does not happen again in the Yukon.
- Once the causes of the failure are determined by the Independent Review Board, this information will inform the most appropriate subsequent steps and potential investigations, including consideration of a public inquiry.
- As of September 4, 2024, there are 27 liens against Victoria Gold worth over \$58.7 million.

Environmental and health impacts:

- The Department of Health and Social Services is monitoring impacts on human health. This includes ongoing review of any technical information and water sampling results, as well as situational reports, as they become available. Results from surface water samples taken show that the regulated drinking water system serving the area continues to meet the guidelines for drinking water quality.
- Water is sampled both at the site and downstream of Victoria Gold's Eagle Gold Mine. Water samples are collected regularly at select sites to monitor water quality. The results of the testing will let us know the

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

impacts and inform next steps.

- Technical experts from the Government of Yukon, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans are working closely together to monitor the fish and wildlife in the surrounding areas of the Eagle Gold Mine.

Economic and labour market impacts:

- Operations ceased at Eagle Gold Mine after the heap leach failure occurred. This situation has changed the outlook for mineral production in the Yukon and resulted in a notable downward revision in the medium-term outlook for the Yukon's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The 2024-25 Interim Fiscal and Economic Update released in early October includes the latest forecasts for real GDP.
- At the close of 2023, Victoria Gold had 471 direct hires and another 134 on contract.
- Of the more than 600 employed, the company reported that about 34 per cent were local, amounting to approximately 200 local workers. This represents about 0.8 per cent of the territorial labour force.
- Any possible negative impacts on the labour market are expected to be short-lived, as many displaced workers are likely to be reabsorbed into what is currently a tight labour market. The Yukon's unemployment rate is about half the national figure and the local job vacancy rate has been among the highest in the country throughout

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

2024.

- Monitoring of labour market data, such as the number of unemployed and the number of Employment Insurance claimants, for potential impacts of the mine closure is ongoing.
- As the Eagle Gold situation continues to unfold, we should have a better understanding if there may be longer-term impacts for the local economy.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The June 24, 2024 heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine affects the environmental and socio-economic wellbeing of Yukoners – from an environmental and business perspective.

Background:

- On June 24, 2024, a failure occurred at the heap leach facility of the Eagle Gold Mine operated by Victoria Gold Corporation.
- On July 30, 2024, the Premier provided remarks to the Council of Yukon First Nations' General Assembly on a variety of topics including mining and the incident at Eagle Gold Mine
- On August 5, 2024, the Premier provided a statement on mining activity in the Traditional Territory of First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- On August 14, 2024, the Government of Yukon with First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, submitted an application for receivership of Eagle Gold Mine.
- On August 16, 2024, the receivership was granted. It was appointed to PricewaterhouseCoopers. Implementing a receiver is an established process under federal bankruptcy legislation. Decision making and responsibility has

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

shifted from Victoria Gold to PricewaterhouseCoopers, with direction from the Yukon government.

- As of September 20, 2024, the Government of Yukon has done 10 technical briefings to continue to keep Yukoners informed with up-to-date information.
- The Yukon.ca website is updated on a regular basis along with weekly information bulletins to inform the public on the Victoria Gold heap leach failure's current situation.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

[Date approved]

Lauren Haney

October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources

[Date approved]

Jessica Schultz

October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

[Date approved]

Recommended response:

- Yukoners continue to face challenges across the housing continuum, which include:
 - Homelessness and a lack of access to housing with services;
 - A lack of affordable rental supply; and
 - High house prices and mortgage rates.
- Exceptionally high building costs and high borrowing costs due to interest rates are creating significant challenges for both Yukon Housing Corporation and partners.
- The corporation's five-year strategic plan, Creating Home, will help transform affordable housing service delivery through the adoption of a more client-centred and collaborative approach that integrates support and leads to better outcomes for Yukoners.

Additional response:

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

Context:

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

Background:

General housing information in the Yukon

Homelessness

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

Rental housing

- According to the Census 2021, within the renter population in Whitehorse:

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

- 22.7% of households live in unaffordable housing;¹
- 17.9% live in unsuitable housing; and
- 10.5% live in inadequate housing.

Rents and vacancy rate, Yukon (YBS)

	October 2022	April 2023	October 2023	April 2024
Median rent (all types)	\$1,300	\$1,325	\$1,350	\$1,420
Vacancy rate (all types)	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%

Housing construction

- Labour shortages contribute to higher construction costs and are leading to lower residential construction output.²

Residential building construction, Yukon (YBS)

	January-June 2023	January-June 2024
# residential permits issued*	518	329 (-35% decrease)
\$ value of new permits*	\$59.4 million	\$47.6 million (-20% decrease)

*In addition to new dwelling units, residential permits include renovations, garages, and additions. The totals do not include permits issued for plumbing or stoves.

House prices

- Yukon Bureau of Statistics reports that there were 84 real estate transactions recorded in Whitehorse in the first quarter of 2024 – a decrease of 35 compared to the first quarter of 2023 (119).
- While average prices for single-detached homes in Q1-2024 had fallen relative to Q1-2022 and Q1-2023, condo prices for Q1-2024 had increased 13% since Q1-2023.

Average House Prices, Whitehorse (YBS)

Residence type	Whitehorse Average House Prices		
	2023 Q1	2024 Q1	% Change
Single-detached house	\$635,000	\$629,500	-0.9%
Condominium	\$403,800	\$456,400	13.0%

¹ Housing costs are considered “unaffordable” when they exceed 30% of household income.

² Northern Housing Report, 2023

Yukon Housing Corporation Approach to Address Housing Issues

Creating Home – YHC’s new strategic plan

- Creating Home draws on a recognized framework intended to re-design and transform health care delivery, called the Quadruple Aim, and adapts it to housing.
- This innovative approach to housing delivery will lead to better outcomes by:
 - Improving the client and provider experiences;
 - Strengthening community wellbeing; and
 - Contributing to a sustainable future.
- Creating Home represents a significant shift in how Yukon Housing Corporation operates and delivers housing services.

Capital builds recently completed by YHC or partners:

- Since 2022, 10 YHC-led projects have been completed, creating a total of 77 new residential units; and
- 8 major partnership projects have been completed through the Housing Initiatives Fund, creating over 276 new units.

YHC projects completed 2022-2024

YHC Project	Construction Start Date	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
401 Jeckell Street, Whitehorse	May 2020	December 2022	47
RHI affordable triplex, Whitehorse	June 2021	June 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Watson Lake	June 2021	March 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Mayo	June 2021	March 2022	3
Accessible duplex, Mayo	July 2022	June 2023	2
Accessible duplex, Carmacks	August 2022	July 2023	2
RRDC staff trailer, Ross River	June 2023	December 2023	3
10-plex*, Old Crow (*Asset owned by HPW and managed by YHC)	Summer 2021	January 2024	10
Accessible duplex, Faro	Summer 2023	Spring 2024	2
Affordable duplex, Dawson City	August 2022	June 2024	2
Total units completed (YHC projects):			77

Major partnership projects completed 2022-2024

Project (Lead)	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
Bringing Citizens Home, Whitehorse (Champagne and Aishihik FN)	Summer 2022	20
Cornerstone multi-use building, Whitehorse (Opportunities Yukon)	July 2022	53
Normandy Living seniors supportive residence, Whitehorse (KBC)	December 2022	84
Boreal Commons apartments, Whitehorse (536754 Yukon Inc)	January 2023	87
Affordable modular housing, Mayo (Na-Cho Nyäk Dun FN)	March 2023	8
Jëje Zho 12-bed men's shelter, Dawson City (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in FN)	July 2023	8
VGFN elders complex, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	January 2024	9
VGFN mobile homes, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	March 2024	7
Total units completed (major partnerships):		276

Underway or upcoming housing capital projects for YHC and partners

YHC – Underway (113 units):

- 10-unit Supported Living Residence in Watson Lake
- 34-unit residential building with 8 accessible units in Dawson (former Korbo Apartments)
- 45-unit residential building, which includes 9 accessible units in Whitehorse (former Ryder Apartments)
- 6 staff units across three duplexes in Burwash Landing
- 18 two-bedroom units – purchase of 190 Olive May Way in Whitehorse

YHC – Upcoming (37+ units):

Community housing	Staff housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 units in Mayo • 6-plex in Teslin • 6-plex in Carcross • 6-plex Haines Junction • Accessible triplex in Whitehorse • Accessible duplex in Ross River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible duplex in Destruction Bay • Accessible duplex in Pelly Crossing

Major partnership projects underway (299 units):

Project	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Safe at Home Society's permanent supportive housing project "The Hearth"	March 2024	Spring 2026	67
Safe at Home Society's temporary housing project at 408 Alexander	May 2024	October 2024	17
DDDC's affordable rental project "Winter Crossing"	Spring 2024	Spring 2026	105
Northern Community Land Trust Society's "Project 1096"	June 2024	December 2025	32
HIF-7 funding recipients	Spring 2024	Fall 2026	78
Total units			299

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

- July 2023, the corporation acquired an additional 16 units for lease from Normandy, for a total of 26 units to lease to clients through its rent supplement program.
- Since 2020, the corporation has supported over 300 households pay rent through the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit. As of September 2024, 170 clients are receiving monthly support.

Support for homeowners

- March 8, the corporation announced the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Homeowner Stream for homeowners in severe core housing need³ with annual household incomes under \$100,000:
 - Clients received a one-time payment of \$1,000.00 for Whitehorse homeowners and \$1,500.00 for homeowners living outside of Whitehorse.
- June 2023, the Yukon government launched an \$8.25 million flood recovery program for residents and businesses affected by flooding in the Klondike Valley.
- April 2023, Yukon Housing Corporation launched the expanded Yukon Home Ownership Program to provide qualified households with mortgages to build or buy their homes across the territory, including Whitehorse.
- The program was recently discontinued due to low uptake and the corporation is currently exploring alternative program options to support homeownership.

³ Severe core housing need is spending 50% or more of a household's income on shelter costs.

- In 2020, Yukon Housing Corporation launched the revised Home Repair Program to support low to moderate-income Yukon homeowners to remain in their homes and age in place by providing funding to address mobility requirements, repairs or core housing needs.

Support for new residential land development

September 2024	<p>As part of the Government of Yukon's ongoing commitment to increase land and housing availability and support business growth, new residential and industrial lots were released in partnership with municipalities and Yukon First Nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> seven residential lots in Haines Junction, Mayo and Watson Lake; and three industrial lots in Teslin and Haines Junction <p>This was the sixth lot release this year and is a direct result of the Government of Yukon's historic investment in land development. Through the lotteries and tenders process, the Government of Yukon has released 685 lots across the territory since 2021 and is on track to release over 1,000 lots by 2026 (TAB #59).</p>
August 2024	<p>As part of its efforts to work in collaboration with municipalities and Yukon First Nations governments to address housing and business space needs across the territory, the Government of Yukon released 33 new residential lots across the Yukon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve lots were made available in Carmacks and Faro 21 country residential lots were made available in the Lone Tree subdivision north of Teslin.
June 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with the Government of Canada and the City of Dawson to develop four new residential lots in Dawson.
February 2023	120 lots, including single family, multi-family and townhouse lots in Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
March 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with Liard First Nation on developing 43 new residential lots on Frances Avenue in Watson Lake.
March 2023	74 residential lots in Logan, Mayo and in Whitehorse's Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
November 2022	Signed a loan agreement with Kwanlin Dün First Nation's arm's-length development corporation, Chu Níkwän Limited Partnership, for a new

	residential land development project at Copper Ridge West in Whitehorse, the first large-scale residential land development on settlement land in the Yukon. An amended loan agreement was signed August 2023 with Chu Níkwän for the same development.
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Approved by:



President, Yukon Housing Corporation

August 30, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Recommended response:

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

Additional response:

- The Main Estimates for this year has continued to build on existing supports for Yukoners by making sure they can access essential services at prices they can afford.
- Budget 2024-25 included investments to advance affordable housing projects across the territory. From the Housing First Project in Watson Lake to the recently awarded replacement of the Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse, the Yukon government is taking action to build more affordable homes for Yukoners, especially those in vulnerable situations.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

- There is also over \$42 million in continued funding for early learning and childcare. This includes funding for the universal childcare program, which has reduced childcare fees to less than \$10 per day, on average.
- We are also making life more affordable and leading the nation with our Yukon-wide dental program, which has \$5.4 million in continued funding for 2024-25.
- To make sure that more people have the option of staying home when they are sick, the Temporary Paid Sick Leave was extended.
- We also extended the Interim Electrical Rebate, which provides welcome relief from power bills to Yukoners across the territory.
- In addition to items included in the 2024-25 Main Estimates, additional initiatives in many departments are continuing to assist Yukoners with the cost of living.
- The Department of Community Services, for example, is developing a program that will see free transit passes provided to non-governmental organizations, vulnerable populations and youth.
- The Department of Health and Social Services will also provide additional funding of \$777,000 for Safe at Home to provide temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

- These are just a few examples of the many programs and initiatives that continue to support Yukoners.

Third response

- The Government of Yukon has also remained responsive to higher inflation in recent years through its various grants and subsidies, which are indexed to inflation. These include:
 - Subsidies for medical travel
 - The Yukon Child Benefit
 - Social Assistance Payments
 - Student Financial Assistance
 - Seniors' benefits
 - The Pioneer Utility grant
 - The Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation
 - Residential rent caps
- The Yukon's minimum wage is also responsive to price changes, as its annual change is tied to inflation in the previous year.
- After growing 6.8 per cent in 2023, the minimum wage increased a further 4.9 per cent to \$17.59 per hour on April 1, 2024.
- The Yukon's minimum wage is the second highest wage in Canada, behind only Nunavut's minimum wage of \$19.00 per hour.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

- These increases also contribute towards the strong earnings growth we continue to see in the territory, where average weekly earnings grew 6.1 per cent over the first half of 2024. This is the strongest growth in the country.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Inflation has fallen from historical highs, but Yukoners are still dealing with higher prices for a variety of goods and services following a lengthy period of elevated inflation.
- The moderation of inflationary pressures that began to take hold late last year has continued into 2024. Growth in the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been much lower in every month in 2024, and inflation in recent months has been near or below the historic average of 2 per cent.

Background:

Inflation – Recent performance and outlook

- Following ten increases in the overnight rate since March 2022, the Bank of Canada has made three 25 basis point cuts in 2024, with the overnight rate dropping from 5.0 per cent to 4.25 per cent. Expectations of further rate cuts this year and in 2025, could further reduce pressure on shelter prices as mortgage rates decline.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

- Both locally and nationally, price pressures have lessened, and inflation continues to trend towards historic norms. The current outlook for the Whitehorse CPI reflects expectations of a return to 'normal' levels of inflation, with the inflation forecast of 2 per cent in 2024, much improved from 4.9 per cent in 2023 and 6.8 per cent in 2022. Beyond 2024, annual inflation is expected to remain at 2 per cent over the remainder of the five-year forecast.

PROGRAMS AND OTHER MEASURES THAT SUPPORT AFFORDABILITY

Five-Year Capital Plan projects supporting housing affordability (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The **Old Crow 10-Plex Mixed-Use Housing** facility is complete and opened in April 2024.
- Construction of the **10-plex Housing First Project in Watson Lake** began in the summer of 2023. It is scheduled to be completed in the fall 2024.
- Construction of the **Faro and Dawson Duplex** projects started in summer 2023 and is now complete.
- Groundwork began at the old **Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse** in September 2024 and we are aiming for completion in spring 2026. When completed, the new complex is anticipated to deliver over 45 new units.

Universal Child Care Program (Education)

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

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Dental Care program (Health and Social Services)

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

Paid sick leave program (Economic Development)

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

Yukon Child Benefit (Health and Social Services and Finance)

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

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement (Health and Social Services)

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

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

- The Inflation Relief Rebate, a \$50 rebate that was automatically applied to electrical customers' bills, was a temporary measure to address inflation. The Inflation Relief Rebate was most recently applied to all ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy bills for November and December 2023 and January 2024.
- The Interim Electrical Rebate continues to provide residential electrical customers with a maximum rebate of \$22.62 per month based on the electricity they consume, up to 1,000 kilowatt hours (up to \$271.44 per year). This affordability measure will continue until March 2025.

Social Assistance Review (Health and Social Services)

- Health and Social Services is undertaking a review of the Yukon's Social Assistance rates to inform options to improve the delivery of the program and ensure it is meeting the needs of program clients.
- While the review is underway, the department is providing a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

Out of Home Childcare Increases (Health and Social Services)

- To offset inflationary cost of living increases and provide sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of children placed in their care, Health and Social Services provided an ongoing 10 per cent increase to monthly payments to caregivers of children in out of home care in 2023-24, on top of the annual indexed increase.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

- Combined, this amounted to a 16.46 per cent rate increase for community and extended family caregivers. The new rates are as follows:
 - o Whitehorse: \$46.86 per day
 - o Rural Communities: \$50.16 per day
 - o Old Crow: \$86.40 per day
- Rates are indexed annually to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index, with an increase of 2.4% scheduled to take effect in October 2024.

Supportive Housing (Health and Social Services)

- \$777,000 for Safe at Home will go towards establishing temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Rental Subsidy (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit offers a rental subsidy for low-to-moderate income renters.

Comprehensive Municipal Grant (Community Services)

- The Comprehensive Municipal Grant is how the Government of Yukon directly funds municipal governments. This core funding supplements municipal resources and pays for vital services, like the provision of fresh drinking water, the collection of solid waste and recycling, recreation programming and other services as required under the Municipal Act and other legislation.
- The high inflation seen in 2022 (6.8 per cent) increased the grant payments provided in April 2024. This resulted in a \$2.3 million increase for Yukon municipalities with overall contributions of over \$24.5 million for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Session Briefing Note
Inflation and Affordability
(Corporate Note)

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

- Energy efficiency rebate programs are available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, and the construction sector focusing on high efficiency buildings.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy rebate program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows, and high-performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money on their energy costs.
- Between January 1, 2018, and June 30, 2024, 286 high-performance retrofits to residential, commercial and institutional buildings have been completed across the territory.
- Innovative programs like the Better Buildings Program that offer up-front funding, combined with our Good Energy rebates, make energy retrofits more accessible and affordable for Yukoners.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

September 25, 2024

 Deputy Minister
 Department of Finance

 Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- We recognize the urgency of the climate emergency and launched Our Clean Future in September 2020 to map our route forward.
- The Government of Yukon continues to make significant progress on implementing Our Clean Future.
- In 2023, we announced the addition of 42 new actions to help us reach our climate goals, which brings the total number of climate actions to 178.
- These new actions are a product of the important work of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change, Navius Research and the findings in the Climate Risk Assessment report.
- We continue to track our progress on goals, targets and actions. Information on our progress was most recently published in [November in the 2023](#) Our Clean Future Annual Report and on the Our Clean Future website.
- Since releasing Our Clean Future in 2020, the Government of Yukon has completed [68](#) Our Clean Future actions, [105](#) are in progress or ongoing and [5](#) have not yet been started.

Additional response:

- As we continue to address climate change, it is important for us to look back on our progress as we diligently work towards our objectives.
- Under Our Clean Future, the government is focused on ensuring the Yukon is highly resilient to climate change impacts by 2030. (See ENV BN #21)

Session Briefing Note
Our Clean Future
Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- This year, we:
 - Completed flood maps for the Southern Lakes region, [Teslin](#) and Carmacks. Flood hazard mapping for Old Crow and the City of Dawson and the Klondike Valley are expected to be completed in 2025. [A flood hazard mapping study for Mayo is also underway and will be completed in 2026.](#)
 - Worked with municipalities and First Nations governments to finalize the Community Wildfire Protection Plans in Faro, Haines Junction, Teslin, the [City of Dawson and Whitehorse](#). [Plans for Beaver Creek, Mayo, Old Crow, Watson Lake, Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing are underway.](#)
 - Advanced climate change preparedness by initiating development of a permafrost monitoring system for key public buildings, and guidelines to address climate hazards in major infrastructure projects.
 - Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks from climate change to the Yukon's transportation corridors.
 - Completed flood risk mapping for all transportation corridors in the Yukon.
- We are committed to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we support Yukoners in the transition to cleaner transportation options and energy efficient homes and buildings.
- This year, we:
 - Began providing rebates for medium-duty electric vehicles.
 - Passed an electric vehicle charging station regulation under the *Public Utilities Act* to allow First Nation governments, private

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

businesses and municipalities to sell electricity through electric vehicle charging stations.

- Installed electric vehicle chargers in every road-accessible community in the Yukon, enabling zero-emissions travel throughout the territory. 19 fast charging stations are now operational throughout the territory, [and one new Level 2 charger in Swift River](#). (See EMR BN #30)
- Since 2020, we have provided rebates for 518 energy efficient new homes, exceeding our 2030 target of 500.

Third response:

- Existing actions put us on track to reduce the Yukon's emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. However, there is still significant work required to meet our target reduction of 45 per cent by 2030.
- [One of the major drivers of emissions is population – more people means more cars on the road and more homes to heat.](#)
- [However, as the population of the Yukon continues to grow, we aren't seeing the rate of emissions increase that we would expect.](#)
- [We are seeing lower emissions per Yukoner than we saw in 2010.](#)
- [This is a promising sign that the emissions intensity of everyday life for Yukoners may be starting to decrease.](#)
- We [passed](#) legislation to set a target of a 45 per cent reduction in mining sector emissions per unit of production by 2035.
- We will continue to build on Our Clean Future as we learn more and implement new actions. This will be reflected in future annual reports.

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- We will continue to find opportunities to reach our targets as we work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond.

Context — this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- Our Clean Future was released on September 14, 2020, and now has 178 actions, of which 136 are original actions and 42 are new actions. These actions seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030.
- The Government of Yukon reports annually on progress for the implementation of Our Clean Future. Four Annual Reports have been published to date, with the latest report released on [November 12, 2024](#) (capturing [2023](#) data).
- The Our Clean Future website was launched in December 2023, which shows the government's commitments and successes towards fighting climate change.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

November 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Environment

Date approved

Paul Moore

November 13, 2024

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

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

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Our government is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Indigenous governments and groups.
- We continue to share our progress toward addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, most recently through a progress report and Pathways magazine both released in Fall 2023.
- The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across the Yukon government and in collaboration with First Nation governments and groups in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- While there is still work to do, targeted investments are resulting in meaningful change and creating better programs and services for all Yukoners.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including through work on the Yukon Forum joint priorities and by implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023 mandate letters include a commitment to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action.
- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes a commitment to working with Yukon First Nations to continue to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through targeted investments.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

Background:

- The TRC report *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* was released in 2015 and contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from Residential Schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- The Government of Yukon has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
 - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 20

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Session Briefing Note

HPW Accomplishments

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

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

Our Clean Future

- Highways and Public Works is responsible for 33 commitments in Our Clean Future, also referred to as OCF.
- Since the launch of OCF, we have completed many initiatives including:
 - Reduced work travel by installing new teleconferencing systems in 48 boardrooms and implementing a new remote work policy.
 - Invested \$46 million in capital expenditures toward building energy retrofits and renewable energy projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Government of Yukon buildings.
 - Of this, \$35 million of the energy retrofit projects were 75 per cent recoverable from the federal government's Small Communities Fund;
 - Recognition from Natural Resources Canada in February 2024 for the launch of an ISO-50001 -based energy management system.
 - This is an internationally recognized voluntary standard that gives organizations a structured framework to manage energy.

Session Briefing Note

HPW Accomplishments

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

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- This achievement showcases the Government of Yukon's commitment to sustainable practices and efficient energy use in accordance with industry best practices.
 - We are the first government jurisdiction to achieve ISO-50001 Ready Canada recognition and are also the organization with the most buildings under this program.
 - We have completed energy assessments for 81 high-emitting Government of Yukon buildings in Whitehorse and the communities.
 - A contract was awarded in February 2024 to Dune Engineering Inc to conduct energy assessments for the remaining 36 high-emitting buildings;
 - A total of 31 energy retrofits to Government of Yukon buildings have been completed reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 225 tonnes per year;
 - 12 renewable energy feasibility studies have been completed to evaluate biomass, geothermal, and other renewable heating options at 66 sites across the territory;
 - We have constructed a biomass energy system at Elijah Smith Elementary School to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 153 tonnes per year
 - To offset approximately 103,000 liters of diesel fuel each year and reduce emissions by 270 tonnes, we are constructing two solar power systems at Klondike and Ogilvie highway maintenance camps.

Session Briefing Note

HPW Accomplishments

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

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- We have entered into a heat purchase agreement with Teslin Tlingit Council to use biomass to heat the Khàtìnas.àxh [Kaw keen ah sa] Community School, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 106 tonnes per year;
 - Eight climate risk assessments have been completed for major construction projects happening across the Yukon;
 - We have completed an assessment of our highway's current exposure to climate related geohazards and are forecasting where they might occur over the next 50 years; and
 - \$2.7million has been invested in electrifying Government of Yukon's fleet vehicles.

Infrastructure investments

- Our department recognizes the importance of investing in infrastructure that supports and connects Yukoners, including our buildings, roads and airports.
- We are working with the Department of Education to build three new schools in the territory. We are making sure they reflect a modern learning environment that meets the needs of their communities.
 - We are excited that Whistle Bend subdivision now has its very own elementary school and welcomed students at the start of this school year.
 - In Burwash Landing, we've started work on the Kêts'ádań Kù (Ket-zah Done-COO) school.
 - The Whitehorse Elementary replacement school is also currently in the early planning phase.

Session Briefing Note
HPW Accomplishments**FALL 2024**Highways and
Public Works

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- The Old Crow Health and Wellness Centre and 10-plex housing complex is complete. These buildings will improve services in Old Crow by providing much-needed housing for service providers and the community along with a modern health centre.
 - We have also made major investments in our transportation infrastructure.
 - The Carmacks Bypass project under the Yukon Resource Gateway Program was successfully finished a year ahead of schedule and within budget. This project included building a new road and bridge to divert large mining trucks away from the community of Carmacks and increase safety.
 - We are over one year into the replacement of the main runway at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. This project is vital to our territory, as the airport keeps us connected, allows for critical medical services, supports our tourism and resource sectors and contributes to Arctic security efforts. By replacing the main runway, we will continue to ensure the airport meets the needs of the territory. The main runway replacement is on schedule and expected to be completed by 2026.
 - We have also made significant progress on upgrades to critical sections of the North Klondike Highway. To date, highway sections between kilometres 613 to 651 and between kilometres 558 to 577 have been reconstructed. Construction is currently underway on the section between kilometres 542 and 558.
 - 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.

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HPW Accomplishments

FALL 2024Highways and
Public Works

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- We are also 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 such as renewing their vehicle registration or applying for a commercial driving permit through one single log-in. This platform will continue to expand over the coming year to offer more services.
- We successfully completed the construction of the Dempster Fibre Project in September 2024. Following construction, Northwestel will commission the line. This project involved creating a new fibre optic line from Dawson City to Inuvik, which will provide Yukoners with more reliable internet and cellphone services in the event of a disruption to our current fibre line.
- Lastly, in 2021 the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* came into force which was designed to make government more transparent and accountable to the public and protect the personal information of Yukoners.

Advancing Reconciliation

- A priority for our government is to advance reconciliation through our everyday work.

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HPW Accomplishments

FALL 2024

Highways and
Public Works

- The Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy is a great example of this commitment - designed to bring more economic opportunities to First Nations across Yukon.
- Highways and Public Works introduced the Indigenous Training Program in 2023. The goal of this program is to help young Indigenous people gain experience, learn about the variety of work the department offers, and expose them to the types of careers available with the Yukon government.
- To date, six Indigenous youth have gone through the Indigenous Training Program.
- Another way we are advancing reconciliation is through our Yukon Resource Gateway Program that supports infrastructure upgrades for up to 650 kilometres of existing roads in areas with high mineral potential and active mining in the Yukon.
- The Yukon government is committed to having agreements with Yukon First Nations governments affected by projects to provide benefits to their Citizens and governments. This sets a high standard for partnership and collaboration.

Context—this may be an issue because:

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

Approved by:

T. Allen

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 27, 2024

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Capital Planning Office Transfer**Finance & HPW

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to making infrastructure investments that support the health and well-being of Yukon residents, while providing opportunities for growth and investment by the territory's private sector.
- For the past seven years, the Capital Planning Office has been located within the Department of Highways and Public Works where it has provided valuable project-based expertise on the government's capital plan. During that time, the Capital Planning Office saw a significant expansion of the Five-Year Capital Plan to provide detailed information on capital investments to Yukoners.
- The Capital Planning Office also established valuable relationships between government and the private sector, as well as with First Nations partners, as it developed its annual plan.
- With this foundational work in place, the responsibility for ongoing capital budget development, planning, and forecasting has returned to the Department of Finance where it can more directly incorporate this important knowledge and expertise into government's budget decisions.
- The alignment of operations and maintenance and capital budgets under one department allows the Department of Finance to leverage these strengths leading to a more efficient and robust budget development process.

Session Briefing Note

Capital Planning Office Transfer

Finance & HPW

- With this work well-established, the Department of Finance remains committed to ensuring that the Five-Year Capital Plan continues to support the implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy.
- We also look forward to continuing to build on strong relationships with our partners by meeting with all Yukon First Nations to discuss the capital plan and associated opportunities for cooperation and coordination on capital projects.

Additional response:

- This transfer has no impact on the financial framework since it is a budget transfer from the Department of Highways and Public Works to the Department of Finance.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is some public awareness of the Capital Planning Office amongst First Nations governments and municipalities because of annual engagement sessions conducted by this program.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz	September 20,2024
_____ Deputy Minister, Finance	_____ Date approved
Tracy Allen	September 20, 2024
_____ Deputy Minister, HPW	_____ Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Highways and Public Works (Ross River)/Economic Development Human Resource Issues

Public Service
Commission

Highways and Public Works (Ross River) response:

- We cannot provide information or confirm details about confidential internal human resources matters. This protects the privacy of individuals and ensures the integrity and impartiality of our processes.

Economic Development response:

- The Government of Yukon is unable to comment on confidential human resource matters.

General response:

- Yukoners expect that Government of Yukon public servants deliver programs and services with the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professionalism.
- In the summer of 2023, the Government of Yukon introduced a *Values and Ethics Code* for all public servants, outlining the common values that guide their work, the behaviours expected of them, and the legal and institutional frameworks in which they operate.
- We have also established an internal Investigations Office within the Public Service Commission to address allegations of serious workplace misconduct.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On August 22, 2024, Economic Development received a media inquiry about the employment status of an Economic Development employee.
- On August 6, 2024, Cabinet Communications received a media inquiry about allegations against a Highways and Public Works employee in Ross River.

Background:

- Employees' ethical obligations are already outlined in the Government of Yukon's corporate human resources policies, the *Public Service Act*, and other legislation.

Session Briefing Note

Highways and Public Works (Ross River)/Economic Development Human Resource Issues

Public Service
Commission

- However, before the launch of the *Values and Ethics Code*, there was no single document that clearly defined professional conduct for the Government of Yukon public servants in plain language.
- The *Values and Ethics Code*, now a corporate human resources policy in the General Administration Manual (GAM) Volume 3, provides clear guidance on the common values and behaviours expected of all employees, as well as the legal and institutional frameworks within which they operate. It also enhances the employer's ability to resolve human resources issues effectively.
- The development of the *Values and Ethics Code* was a key action led by the Public Service Commission as part of the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- The creation of an internal **Investigations Office** aims to enhance the investigative process, making it more timely, cost-effective, trauma-informed and integrated with other services provided to the Government of Yukon employees.
- Previously, the Respectful Workplace Office managed investigations into disrespectful conduct, including discrimination and harassment, covering a range from interpersonal conflict to more severe cases, while external parties investigated serious allegations, such as sexual harassment.

Approved by:

Lyle Dinn

2024-08-27

A/Public Service Commissioner

Date Approved