



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 92

1st Session

35th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, November 8, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2022 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Jeremy Harper, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Annie Blake, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Emily Tredger, MLA, Whitehorse Centre

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Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Deputy Premier Minister of Health and Social Services; Justice
Hon. Nils Clarke	Riverdale North	Minister of Highways and Public Works; Environment
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Government House Leader Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Public Service Commission; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Minister of Economic Development; Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board
Hon. Jeanie McLean	Mountainview	Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate

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Yukon Party

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Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Yvonne Clarke	Porter Creek Centre	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Takhini-Kopper King
Emily Tredger	Third Party House Leader Whitehorse Centre
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, November 8, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.
We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of a change made to the Order Paper. The following motion has been removed from the Order Paper as it is now outdated: Motion No. 515, standing in the name of the Member for Lake Laberge.

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. McLean: I would ask my colleagues to help me welcome a number of very special guests who are here for the National Indigenous Veterans Day tribute that we will be doing in a few moments. I will start with: Major Greg Theriau; Captain Andrew Rector; Warrant Officer Andrew Macleod; Corporal, retired, Ian Angus, US Marine Corps; Sergeant, retired, Rose Davis, US Army; Sergeant, retired, Joe Mewett, who is also our Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, and he is joined by Jackie Mewett, his wife; EMS deputy chief, Ann-Marie Paquet; and Jon Trefry, retired, EMS. I would be remiss if I didn't mention our MLA, Wade Istchenko, Ranger sergeant, and our Sergeant-at-Arms, Karina Watson, who is a retired RCMP corporal as well.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We also have a number of guests here for World Town Planning Day and possibly for the ministerial statement on the Dawson City regional land use plan. Could we welcome, please, from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Jerome McIntyre, Kristi Horton, Mike Ellis, Joseph Petch, and Jocelyn McDowell. Also, from the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, we have Sam Skinner — I apologize that I don't recognize the guest beside you, but welcome everyone.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Indigenous Veterans Day

Hon. Ms. McLean: I rise today on behalf of our Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to National Indigenous Veterans Day.

Today we honour the important contributions made by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis veterans in service of Canada. It

is estimated that as many as 12,000 indigenous people served in the great conflicts of the 20th century, and at least 500 of them sadly lost their lives.

The rate of indigenous participation in Canada's military efforts over the years has been impressive. Many had to learn a new language, adapt to cultural differences, and travel great distances from their remote communities just to enlist.

The service of indigenous veterans is even more remarkable because it is underscored by the tremendous racism and social inequities faced by them and their communities.

National Indigenous Veterans Day is meant to remember the indigenous soldiers who put themselves in harm's way to fight against oppression, despite facing oppression from the very country that they were fighting for. At the time of the First World War, First Nations were exempt from conscription because they were not considered citizens and did not have the right to vote.

Yukon First Nations contributed to the war efforts through their vital role as guides and suppliers during the construction of the Alaska Highway. Disgracefully, though, for a long time, indigenous soldiers dedicated and sacrificed — were ignored or erased from our collective acts of commemoration. It is only since 1995 that indigenous veterans have been allowed to lay wreaths at the National War Memorial in Ottawa to remember their fallen comrades. The Government of Canada apologized and offered compensation to First Nation veterans in 2003 and to Métis veterans in 2019.

During Canada's wars, indigenous soldiers fought side by side with non-indigenous soldiers. They shared experiences, broke down barriers, and created a sense of camaraderie and unity. Elijah Smith was one Yukon soldier who was deeply impacted by his experiences in serving in the Second World War. For Elijah Smith, the experience of camaraderie that he found in the Second World War motivated him to fight for equality for Yukon First Nations upon his return. He led the long movement toward Yukon land claims and greater participation for First Nations in Yukon's governance and economy.

National Indigenous Veterans Day is meant to shine light on the incredible valour and sacrifices of the indigenous people who served in Canada's war efforts. It is also a day to better understand our history of racism and how that played out with regard to these veterans' recognition, support, and rights. National Indigenous Veterans Day is an opportunity to re-examine our history, salute indigenous veterans and celebrate their contributions.

Today I would like to thank all indigenous people who served in the wars and those who supported them at home.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Aboriginal Veterans Day, celebrated each year on November 8. When putting pen to paper to write a new perspective on this topic, it struck me to ask: Why is this important to remember and have a separate day to remember aboriginal veterans? We must remember the era — whether World War I or II, or the Korean War — aboriginal

people did not have the same rights. So, to join a force to fight for the good of all was not taken lightly.

This year, I will tell the story of Sergeant Tommy Prince. His name should be prominent in our minds as a stamp was just unveiled at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights on October 18 of this year in Winnipeg and issued on October 28, 2022. Tommy Prince was from the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation just north of Winnipeg and went on to become one of the most decorated soldiers with 11 medals, including the Military Medal and the American Silver Star. One might ask: Why an American medal?

When Tommy enlisted, it was found he was an amazing sniper and scout. His skills quickly put him into a special unit, called the Devil's Brigade, or as the Germans called them, the Black Brigade. This unit was an elite, special trained, US-Canadian commando unit organized in 1942 and trained near Helena, Montana. After landing on the Aleutian Islands, Italy, and southern France, word spread about this unit. There are many, but I chose one story about Sergeant Prince, who, along with his reconnaissance partner, trekked 24 kilometres behind enemy lines to scope out German outposts and camps. They came upon a group of Free French partisans who were surrounded by a German troop. Prince and his partner immediately took position and took out 12 and injured many. Retreat was in order for the Germans. The French asked where their platoon was, and Prince said: "here", pointing at his partner. They were amazed, and the story grew. They did return to the main unit two days later with the needed intelligence, and Prince lead his troop to take the German camp.

They never failed a mission — the stuff of legends and movies, for, in 1968, *The Devil's Brigade*, starring William Holden, Cliff Robertson, and more, outlined the formation, the training, and the first mission of the joint US-Canadian commando unit.

Tommy also fought in the Korean War, and as with many veterans, he suffered from a war trauma and could not cope well after leaving the military. He passed in 1977.

Our Yukon aboriginal vets are all gone, but here in spirit. Uncle Dan, Archie and Alex Van Bibber, John Adamson, and Elijah Smith all served with dignity and honour. Dan, Elijah, and John went overseas, and we were fortunate that they survived and returned home. Alex and Archie had trained, but then the war ended, so we were fortunate they did not see the front lines, but they had the camaraderie and learned so much during their time in service, and I am sure their lessons learned from a lifestyle of living on the land were shared with many soldiers.

May all their service and sacrifice never be forgotten. They have allowed me to live in a world of freedom and choice.

Lest we forget.

Applause

Ms. Blake: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to National Indigenous Veterans Day and to honour all indigenous Canadians who have served, and continue to serve, in Canada, both in times of war and in peacekeeping. Twelve thousand indigenous people volunteered for the First,

Second, and Korean Wars. Many came from the residential school system and were encouraged to join the military, some with the promise of post-education funding. Unfortunately, this just led to a further loss of identity, family, and community connections. It also resulted in loss of status for those who volunteered and joined the military.

Indigenous people were not allowed to join the Canadian Air Force until 1942 and the Canadian Navy until 1943. Both men and women enlisted, serving as soldiers, nurses, and in other roles. Many served with distinction, winning medals for bravery in action, but all was forgotten when they returned home. Having enlisted to serve their country overseas, many returned home to Canada to find that they were no longer accepted on their home reserves, because as enlisted people, they had become enfranchised and were no longer considered eligible for any of the programs or services that the federal government provided.

At the same time as they were unable to access those services, indigenous veterans were also not able to access the services provided to returning veterans through Veterans Affairs, because they were "Indians", a terrible and shameful catch-22.

Returning indigenous veterans, who had fought in overseas wars on behalf of democracy, who were denied the most fundamental exercise of democracy on Canadian soil until 1960, when they were given the right to vote. So, as we celebrate National Indigenous Veterans Day, let's remember that it wasn't until 1995, 50 years after the Second World War, that indigenous people were allowed to lay remembrance wreaths at the National War Memorial to remember and honour their lost comrades and family members.

Today, we remember all indigenous people and their families who have given their lives, and express gratitude to those indigenous members in the Canadian Armed Forces who continue to serve on behalf of all Canadians.

Applause

In recognition of World Town Planning Day

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Today is World Town Planning Day. This day was founded in 1949 to get people interested in the profession and the topic of planning. Today, more than 30 countries join in celebrating this special day that allows us to reflect on the places we live and how we shape our streets, our neighbourhoods, our communities, and our land.

At the heart of World Town Planning Day is land planners. For me, land planners are like librarians and recreation directors. They are unsung heroes, so I rise today to sing their praise. Planners connect us with walkways to schools and cafés, green spaces, grocers, and good food. They consider future trajectories and a vision of what we can be.

Planners have to be creative problem-solvers who balance the needs of many different perspectives and lifestyles. The challenge is often anticipating what a community will need in years to come, and figuring out how to reflect that in current proposals, projects, and plans.

Planning isn't easy. No two communities are the same, and a lot of planning centres are the voices at the heart of our

neighbourhoods. While a vision for an area guides the actions and tools used to achieve it, flexibility is often key to ensuring a final plan that reflects what citizens really want. Planning is complex. The places we plan change drastically, and we can never be truly certain of the future. The best planners know how to gather the most accurate feedback, analyze data in the proper context, research and interpret future projections, consider all the factors and competing interests, and then chart a strategic course forward.

Just think about how much the Yukon has changed over the past 10, 20, 30 years. From sidewalks to streets, green spaces to subdivisions, industrial districts to school districts, infrastructure and construction to resource extraction and remediation, conservation and ecosystem management to agriculture, and from recreation to tourism, and everything in between, planners have helped shape our world.

Planning affects our health, both physical and mental. It affects neighborhood safety, a sense of belonging, and community identity.

It can affect your commute, your overall quality of life, and your accessibility to services and social activities. The spaces we interact with every day can affect our view of the world, our choices, and our support networks. These aspects of our lives can be improved by ensuring that each decision we make is for the betterment of the community as a whole.

So, today, we are pleased to recognize the hard work, creativity, and dedication of the Yukon's professional planners and their contributions to our healthy, vibrant, and sustainable Yukon communities.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize November 8 as World Town Planning Day. Also known as World Urbanism Day, this day of recognition was founded in 1949 as a bid to look at urban planning from a global approach and to promote its role in creating liveable communities.

The accomplishments and contributions of planners are celebrated and it takes a unique set of skills to develop our communities to reflect changing circumstances such as population growth, infrastructure requirements, and demands on housing and neighbourhood amenities. Town planning requires technical skill and informed decision-making from our planners and leaders.

Effective town planning takes much more. It takes a combination of planning from experts in the field and consultation or engagement from leadership with those most affected — the residents. It is important to incorporate public feedback and needs in planning in order to allow residents to enjoy their neighbourhood and all that they offer. It is equally important to honour contractual agreements with homeowners based on that planning.

I would like to recognize the hard work that goes into town planning in each of our communities across the Yukon. We face common demands in many of our municipalities, such as housing and lot development, and work to develop official community plans to address these issues.

As the MLA for Watson Lake, I look forward to our municipality being able to implement our OCP, hopefully in the very near future, as it has been approved and accepted. Progress is important, and this type of planning will help move our small town, and others across the territory, forward.

Applause

Ms. White: It is a pleasure to rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to tribute the folks who aim to achieve sustainability. On this World Town Planning Day, we celebrate those who walk the tightrope of balancing different social, environmental, and economic issues. These folks work at making spaces that allow people, places, and environments to thrive together. These planners have many titles that cover many different areas from town and city, land use and environmental, urban and development, and so many more. They help make our towns and cities livable, and organize our values in the wilderness and surrounding areas.

We thank those professionals who work in the Yukon, planning for today, tomorrow, and into the future.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Dixon: I have for tabling two letters from the Yukon Outfitters Association to the Yukon government regarding Bill No. 20.

Ms. White: I have for tabling a letter directed to the Minister of Education, entitled "Loss of childcare at the Teen Parent Centre".

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I have for tabling a document showing that the Yukon led the country in 2021 in real GDP growth, with a rate of 10 percent.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Hon. Ms. McLean: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House congratulates Shadelle Chambers, Erin Pauls, Dana Tizya-Tramm, Jocelyn Joe-Strack, and Gillian Staveley, on their election as trustees to the first-ever First Nation School Board.

Mr. Cathers: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to take action to improve access to health care by working with partners in health care delivery to develop a wait-time reduction strategy that includes clear targets.

Ms. White: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support the teen parents seeking to finish their education by ensuring that on-site childcare remains available at the Teen Parent Centre beyond the end of 2022.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House congratulates the Yukon on leading the country in real GDP growth in 2021, with a growth rate of 10 percent.

Ms. Blake: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that mental health care positions in communities are fully staffed before and during the winter holiday season.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to establish a permanent crisis response team to support Yukon communities.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Dawson regional land use plan

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Last year, Yukoners had the opportunity to provide their feedback on the Dawson Regional Planning Commission's draft plan for the Dawson region. All that feedback was gathered and analyzed, and aspects of the plan were adjusted by the commission based on what was heard during the many engagements, stakeholder meetings, and consultation with First Nations.

The commission then produced its recommended plan, which was presented to the two parties to the plan — the Yukon government and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government — on June 10 of this year. The two parties released the recommended plan to the public for review this past September. We encourage all Yukoners to review the commission's recommended plan at onthelandwewalktogether.ca and to submit their feedback by filling out the survey or attending one of our community meetings. Yukoners' thoughts, opinions and ideas will help us to determine if they are supportive of the commission's recommended plan, which will help the parties decide whether to accept, modify, or reject it in its current form. Participating is the best way to ensure that their voices are heard.

This is an important step toward the implementation of the *Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement* and for reconciliation with First Nations. This will be a very important plan for the region, determining not only what the area will look like now, but also into the future. Regional plans like this one help to define the future trajectory for the area and can include economic development, conservation, heritage, community development, recreation, wildlife habitat, and future infrastructure.

The vision for the plan emphasizes shared responsibilities that centre on a diverse economy, protecting a rich cultural legacy, maintaining a healthy environment, and respecting use of natural resources. It has specifications for: access to roads; protection for caribou; conservation; culture and heritage values; cumulative effects; mineral development and exploration; stewardship; the co-management of implementation; traditional knowledge; and recognition of the importance of our wetlands.

Since regional planning is a highly collaborative, multi-party process, an approved plan will represent an array of different perspectives and considerations.

I want to thank everyone who has been involved in getting us to this stage. I also want to recognize all the hard work that has gone into developing the recommended plan for the Dawson region. This plan represents all the vibrant discussions that took place and the thousands of hours of hard work and participation by people who care deeply about the future of this region.

I want to thank the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government for their continued dedication, collaboration, and leadership throughout the process. Our commitment to the integrated planning approach ensures that we uphold our shared responsibility in the future of this land. Engagement has been extended until December 20, and I encourage all Yukoners to share their thoughts with us.

Mr. Kent: I am pleased to rise to respond to this ministerial statement on the Dawson regional land use plan. First, I would like to take the time to thank all of those individuals who served as members on the planning commission since it was first appointed in 2010. This list includes three distinguished Dawson City residents who have since passed away. They are: former Chief of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, Steve Taylor; former Member of the Legislative Assembly for Klondike and Mayor of Dawson City, Peter Jenkins; and, of course, very well-respected local businessman, Bill Bowie.

I would also like to thank all of the organizations and individuals who took the time to respond to the commission reports and participated in the process throughout the years that gets us to this point where consultation is underway on the final recommended plan. I would also take this opportunity to thank the staff, both past and present, of the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission and the Yukon Land Use Planning Council for their work as well.

I do have some questions for the minister regarding the plan, as this issue was on almost every meeting agenda when the Leader of the Official Opposition and I travelled to Vancouver in late September to meet with a number of mining companies. I'm hoping he can share answers with us in his response here today.

I have heard recently that industry is wondering where their comments and recommendations are reflected in the final plan or the draft plan. So, I'm hoping the minister can point to any changes that were made that reflect comments made by industry. Also, I'm wondering if the minister will grant relief

from assessment for all those claims that are located in areas that are currently off-limits for new staking as part of the temporary staking bans put in place by the Yukon government. I also have a written question on the Order Paper from last spring regarding compensation for mineral claims that are impacted by the plan. It is about claims in the Peel land use area but applies here as well. So, what it essentially asks is: What policy framework is used to choose the value of the claims that were given up? So, I'm hoping the minister will respond to that as well, when it comes to claims impacted in the Dawson area.

The plan says that existing claims in areas off-limits to new staking can continue. So, does that mean that road access to those claims will also be granted as part of that?

Industry shared concerns with us regarding cumulative effects and thresholds for development, so I'm hoping that the minister can give us an update if any changes are being contemplated to that particular part of the plan.

I also have a couple of questions regarding other land use planning initiatives. I'm hoping that the minister can update us on progress of the Beaver River planning process. It has been over two and a half years from the March 2020 deadline, and we are coming on five years, in March 2023, since this work was initially announced. I'm curious where it is at and when we can expect to see the final plan.

Finally, the NDP-Liberal confidence and supply agreement says that the pace of land use planning will be accelerated. It also says that adequate resources will be allocated to complete existing processes and start new ones. I'm hoping that the minister can update us on this work and the amount of new resources that have been allocated to it.

I look forward to hearing answers to the questions that I have posed here today.

Ms. White: We congratulate and thank all of those who worked so hard in getting the Dawson recommended plan to the Yukon government and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in earlier this year, and we agree that it's important for Yukoners to share their thoughts on the recommended plan before it reaches its final version.

Land use planning in the Yukon was a commitment and a promise that the Yukon government made when it entered into treaty negotiations with Yukon First Nation people. When the final agreements were negotiated, the land use planning process was clearly described in chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. The objective of land use planning is to ensure that the management and use of land, water, and resources is done in an integrated and coordinated manner so as to ensure sustainable development.

Currently, only two of seven land use plans have been completed, and as we have just heard, a third is in its recommended form. That means that no plans exist for the Kluane, Whitehorse, and Teslin regions, and despite waiting for nearly 30 years, there is also no regional land use plan for the Northern Tutchone region, an area that encompasses nearly 80,000 square kilometres.

So, although I appreciate the minister's words, one has to wonder why his government chose to step outside the

boundaries of chapter 11 when it came to the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. The final agreement set out clear guidelines for how all regional land use plans should be developed, yet this government chose to not follow those guidelines.

So, when the minister's government chose to forego land use planning and not use the existing subregional land use planning process, problems that the Yukon NDP warned about back in 2019 have come to fruition. I would suggest that, to the surprise of no one outside of this government, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun has taken the Yukon government to court over its planned Beaver River land use plan. The petition opens by saying that the Yukon's approach is deeply flawed, and closes by saying that the treaty promise of land planning is meaningless if there is no land left to plan when the planning finally begins. It is meaningless if nearly 30 years — an entire generation — can pass without the promise being acted upon.

Since the petition was initially filed, the Yukon government has tried various means to end the lawsuit. In September of last year, the government's petition to dismiss the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun's case was finally struck down. What is maybe most striking was the Yukon government's own lawyer arguing the wording of chapter 11 — that regional land use planning is voluntary. In other words, the government is not obliged to ever begin the process. This should be a concern to all other nations still waiting for land use planning to begin and for all those who have signed final agreements where the signatories participated in good faith.

Because, even with a signed final agreement that clearly laid out the required steps, this government has chosen to step out of bounds, arguing the intention behind wording — wording, I might add, that was painstakingly chosen by negotiators at the time.

So, what does this mean for Yukon, and more importantly, where does this leave Yukon First Nations trying to ensure a future for their children, their traditions, and their cultures?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I thank the members opposite for their comments. I appreciate that everyone here is saying that they support land use planning.

When it comes to meeting with First Nations, we recently met with the Selkirk First Nation to talk to them about a range of subjects, including land use planning. Falling out of that conversation, I reached out to the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation. We are setting up a meeting with me and other ministers to put land use planning on the agenda.

Every time I meet with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, we talk about land use planning. I am very happy to work on both — a regional use plan that will be driven by those First Nations when they are ready to go. Of course, for Northern Tutchone, there are three First Nations within that region — and also work on the Beaver River land use plan, which I have had a briefing on recently. I have been informed that it is on track for next year, for 2023.

What are some of the differences, though, around how land use planning is being done? When the Peel land use plan was underway, the Yukon Party basically got a failing grade from the Supreme Court of Canada. We don't want to make that

same mistake. We have done a very different approach to land use planning. What we have done is that we have said that, as the plan is in development, we would withdraw lands that are identified by the commission.

So, we did that twice with the Dawson regional land use plan — at the draft planning stage — well, sorry, three times actually. We did some at the beginning, based on conversations with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. After the draft plan was given to us, we put in place withdrawals on the lands that were identified for conservation, and then finally, when the recommended plan came out, we did that again, and this is an important way to try to reduce or prevent nuisance staking. We think that it has been successful and we think that it is a much better approach. There are differences between the draft plan and the recommended plan regarding cumulative effects. I am happy to draw those to the attention of the Member for Copperbelt South — no problem.

So, overall, land use planning is a commitment. I met recently with the Land Use Planning Council and we talked about how to accelerate the planning process across the four remaining regions, how to work on implementation across all of our plans, and how to use the supports from the Land Use Planning Council in order to enable that. I want to thank the Land Use Planning Council for their hard work on land use planning in general.

So, Mr. Speaker, overall, we are going to accelerate land use planning here in the territory. We know that it is very important and we appreciate working directly with First Nations on it.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Diesel generators

Mr. Dixon: The most defining aspect of the Liberals' energy policy is their long-term reliance on renting diesel generators to keep up with Yukon's electricity needs, and it is that reliance that the Yukon Utilities Board is so critical of in their October 18 report that we tabled yesterday. The report highlights the 2018 decision that the Liberal government made to forego the construction of a permanent thermal electrical plant, which led to the issue that we now face.

The report points out, on page 30, that this decision had the effect of — and I quote: "... cementing its reliance on the diesel rental option." Does the government now recognize that the decision to cancel the permanent plant in 2018 cemented Yukon's reliance on rented diesel generators?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Last fall, we had the Yukon Energy Corporation here in the Legislative Assembly as witnesses with the Yukon Development Corporation. This spring we welcomed them again. The Yukon Party said, "No, thanks." They said that they didn't want to hear from the Energy Corporation.

When those witnesses were here, the president of the Yukon Energy Corporation said — and I quote: "How much does it cost you to obtain a kilowatt of capacity? That is a really important metric, because those kilowatts are important — and

how much is it going to cost over the life of the asset. So, if you look at the cost of renting — the numbers that we presented in the battery hearing, when there was full transparency on those different options compared — the cost of rental was \$211 per kilowatt year. That's the metric that gets used. The cost of the most recent diesel plant analysis we did, which was a 12.5-megawatt facility, ended up at \$212 per kilowatt year. So, it's almost identical."

So, the president of Yukon Energy has said that the price is the same for rentals and for building a plant. The Yukon Party wants to build a fossil fuel plant. We do not. We want to displace those fossil fuels with renewables, batteries, et cetera.

Mr. Dixon: Starting back in 2018, when that decision was made, the Liberals claim that they were only relying on rented diesels in the short term. According to the independent regulator that looks out for the interest of ratepayers, that is not the case. Here is what they say on page 11 — and I quote: "... YEC has been renting diesels since 2016 and expects to be renting diesels past 2030. Renting for at least 14 years is not a short-term event or solution. YEC has not shown the rentals to be a least-cost solution on a short-term or a long-term basis."

Most Yukoners won't be surprised to learn that renting diesels for at least 14 years is not a wise decision. Now, we also have the independent regulator pointing out this obvious fact. Will the Liberal government finally admit that relying on rented diesel generators well into the 2030s does not make any sense?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The reason we have rented diesels is because we are working to displace them. For example, the grid-scale battery project, which is invested in by the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and the Yukon Energy Corporation, will replace four of those diesel gensets. If the Yukon Party was in power, they would build another — a second — liquefied natural gas plant, and then you would have that plant and pay for it anyway. No, we want to replace those diesel gensets.

I thank the Utilities Board for their work. They also said, on page 45 — and I quote: "... permanent diesel..." — generation — "... is not an alternative to the..." — energy purchase agreement.

Mr. Dixon: Well, what the minister forgets to say is the second part of that quote, which is that it is a complement to the renewable energy future.

Now, beyond the cost, the Utilities Board also agreed that rented diesels are an inadequate solution for reliability. Here is what they say on page 10, quote: "YEC also confirmed at the hearing that rented diesel units are not as reliable as more permanent solutions. The Board is persuaded that only relying on rented diesel generators would be challenging and would not be a reliable way of closing the capacity shortfall gap." So, we can add unreliable to the list of problems with the Liberals' plans to rent diesels well into the 2030s.

Will the minister now accept the findings of the YUB that, not only are rented diesels not the least costly option, but they face issues of reliability and operational challenges as well?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Here's the difference: The Yukon Party wants to build a second liquefied natural gas plant. We want to invest in renewables. That includes Atlin, but it also

includes Moon Lake; it also includes grid-scale battery; it also includes Haeckel Hill; it also includes solar at Sima and solar up in Dawson — and the list goes on.

So, we think that it is wrong to build a second liquefied natural gas plant. The first one jacked up our electricity rates. We think it's wrong to build a second liquefied natural gas plant, because it will tie us to fossil fuels. We think the future is not fossil fuels.

Question re: Diesel generators

Mr. Dixon: What the Liberals have tied us to is a future of renting fossil fuels. The independent regulator that looks out for ratepayers does not stop there, Mr. Speaker. Here is what they say on page 39: “Although the Board agreed with the rental of diesel-generation units on an urgent short-term basis for YEC’s 2021 GRA, the evidence of YEC in this proceeding is that the diesel rentals are not a good solution and that the need for additional capacity is for more than the near term.”

You can almost hear the regret in the words of the YUB there — regret that they bought the story that the Liberals have been pushing that renting diesels will be a short-term solution.

Will the minister now agree with the Yukon Utilities Board that renting diesel generators is not a good solution and that the government has no idea how long we will be renting them?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I can say is that, as soon as this grid-scale battery comes on, we’ll have four less rented diesels. If the Yukon Party was in power, they would be building a liquefied natural gas plant. How much does that cost? Quite a bit, it seems. I mean, that price is definitely more than we’re investing in the Atlin hydro project.

Second of all, the price per kilowatt hour for the Atlin hydro project is 13.5 cents per kilowatt hour. The price for LNG is over 20 cents a kilowatt hour. I don’t get how the members opposite don’t see that math, but that’s fine. The Yukon Party wants to invest in fossil fuels; we want to invest in renewables.

Mr. Dixon: What the minister conveniently forgets about on all the renewable projects he cites is that fossil fuel backup is a necessity for any new renewable project; therefore, permanent Yukon-owned thermal generation capacity is not mutually exclusive with the development of renewables.

In the words of the YUB on page 40, regarding a permanent generator, here’s what they say, and I quote: “... is not an alternative to the EPA but complementary to it.” It seems that only the Liberals don’t understand that, and their lack of understanding is going to increase rates, harm the environment, and put our energy security at risk.

Will the minister now acknowledge that the Liberals’ plans to rely on rented diesel generators makes no sense for the environment, for ratepayers, or for taxpayers?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I wish I had more than a minute and a half. By the way, we would have more time if the members opposite would have welcomed Yukon Energy in here as witnesses. Then we could hear from the technical experts, but I will say flat out that diesel as backup — or thermal as backup — is required, because we are an islanded grid, but in terms of growth, in terms of what we need for the development of this territory — whether it is new homes, new

folks, new mines, whatever it is — we should not go for thermal; we should not go for LNG. That is a mistake. That’s the wrong direction, and we want to go with renewables; the Yukon Party wants to go with fossil fuels.

Mr. Dixon: All that the Liberal government has secured is that we will be renting diesel generators well into the 2030s. The YUB report makes that clear. The overwhelming theme of this report, by the independent regulator that is tasked with looking out for ratepayers, is a thorough deconstruction and criticism of the Liberals’ energy policy. It shows that not only will this adversely affect ratepayers going forward, but the decisions the Liberals have made to date have locked us into a long-term future of relying on rented diesel generators to meet our growing electricity needs.

Does the minister really think that is what Yukoners want?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What do I think Yukoners want? I think they want us to invest in renewables. I think this is absolutely what Yukoners want. I think, as a government, we are listening to Yukoners regarding the direction they want us to go. I don’t think Yukoners are asking us to invest in fossil fuels, in a new or second liquefied natural gas plant. No, I don’t think Yukoners want that at all. I also think it makes more economic sense to invest in these renewables for the long term.

I think the Yukon Party believes that we should have an investment in fossil fuels that we will have to have for the long term — no. We are going to work to get off the fossil fuels.

Question re: Health care services

Ms. Blake: Just months ago, the Yukon Employees’ Union created and fully costed a community health care investment fund. This fund would have increased recruitment, retention, and training for health staff, like nurses, home care workers, and paramedics in almost every community outside of Whitehorse, and it would have cost just \$1.5 million, which is less than what this government spent on the parking lot outside of this House. But when the union presented this plan to the government, the Liberals gave them a hard “no”.

Why did the minister turn down a chance to get more health care workers in communities?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will be looking very closely into the facts just presented in that question. What I should be speaking to Yukoners about, and what this issue is about, is really community nursing and health care provided in the Yukon communities.

The Government of Yukon is taking steps to recruit and retain nursing staff and to ensure that Yukoners have access to quality, essential health care services across the territory. What I should also say is that I will not be making any comments with respect to the union position that has been expressed by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, because it wouldn’t be appropriate to do so here. Community nursing staff have continued to work tirelessly to provide Yukoners with health care services and play an integral role in our ongoing response, not only to COVID-19 and the substance use health emergency, but in addition to the daily care they provide for Yukoners across this territory. We must continue to support them. We must continue to make sure those services, and the hubs, and

the *Putting People First* recommendations are implemented to the care and benefit of Yukon citizens.

Ms. Blake: While this government refused to spend \$1.5 million on better public health care in communities, they spent over \$5 million on new management positions. The Yukon is losing health care workers every day from burnout and stress, and yet this government thought the best solution was to hire more managers to manage fewer and fewer health care workers.

Why is the minister prioritizing management positions over health care positions and training in communities?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak about the importance of our medical professionals — doctors, physicians, nurses, lab technicians, and others — here in the territory, and the service that they provide to Yukoners. Again, I will be carefully checking the facts, because they are not, certainly, as I understand them to be.

We continue to mitigate the increased pressures resulting from the local, national, and global shortage of health care providers. As a matter of fact, as I stand here, the Ministers of Health are meeting in Vancouver and having these conversations, in which I participate every moment that I haven't been here in the Legislative Assembly in the last number of days, since Sunday morning. As a result, I can assure Yukoners that these issues are on the top of mind, not only of citizens across this country, but of those individuals who are responsible for health care services across the country.

We continue to mitigate the increased pressures that are before us all. The Department of Health and Social Services has undertaken several actions to attract and retain not only nurse practitioners — we have registered nurse positions, licensed practical nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, and health care aides in all Yukon communities. We are working to serve Yukoners.

Ms. Blake: Most communities in the Yukon do not have a resident social worker, or even a visiting social worker who serves them regularly. Communities like Dawson City, Haines Junction, Faro, Ross River, and Old Crow are left to share only two regional supervisors among themselves. From youth justice, to mental health supports, to family and children's services, community social workers are a safety net for many situations.

When and how will the minister address this shortage and high turnover of social workers in communities?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I can indicate, of course, that social workers are an integral part of services that are provided across Yukon, and in Yukon communities, but it is a different question than the ones I have been addressing, which deal with nursing issues and shortages.

This fiscal year, we are investing \$17.74 million in the Community Nursing branch of Health and Social Services. The Community Nursing branch has 52 FTEs for registered nurses. Community Nursing is currently experiencing a vacancy rate of over 40 percent of primary health care nurses.

We have worked diligently to make sure that no community health care centres have closed. In fact, we have

maintained health services with very few interruptions. On one or two occasions, there have been emergency requirements only, but the opportunity for us to use nurses moved from location to location — or the results of using four agency nursing organizations — has allowed us to meet our staffing needs due to the high demand across Canada and across the territory.

I look forward to continuing to uphold our Community Nursing staff.

Question re: Municipality funding and support

Ms. McLeod: Last week the Premier issued a statement congratulating the federal government on their fiscal update and highlighted a number of new spending commitments made by the federal government.

We did notice that there was nothing in the fiscal update about the federal government's commitment to infrastructure funding. As I noticed last month, the federal government's Investing in Canada infrastructure program — also known as ICIP — is coming to an end soon.

Can the Minister of Community Services tell us what federal funding for municipal infrastructure will be available once ICIP ends?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can report to the House that, just yesterday as a matter of fact, I was in a federal-provincial-territorial meeting on infrastructure. We were discussing, as a nation, where the next focus of the nation is going to be as far as infrastructure funding. That funding is currently being developed, and I'm sure the federal government will have more information when they table their next budget.

Ms. McLeod: Okay, right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister does not know.

On October 20, the Minister of Community Services said this in response to questions about infrastructure spending — and I quote: “We have actually spent all of our ICIP money in the territory.”

Can the minister confirm if this is correct? Has all the ICIP money been allocated? If so, what happens to projects that haven't yet received support?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am very, very proud. What we are talking about is the investments that this government has made in the infrastructure in the territory with our federal government over the last six years. It has been profound. We have invested in every single community, and we have done so to make our communities stronger, to make our citizens more prosperous, to give them access to more recreation facilities — ice hockey arenas, pools. We have invested — bridges, roads — in every single community to make our communities stronger, more economically sustainable. We have done it fairly and with an eye to the future, and we are going to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. It is important that we continue to invest in our communities to make sure that they can prosper into the future. We're going to continue to do that.

I can tell the member opposite — she asked about the ICIP — the Investing in Canada infrastructure fund. We have actually invested all of the money that we were allocated from the federal government. We are one of the jurisdictions to have

done that. I know that there are other jurisdictions that decided not to do that, but we decided that investing in our communities was important, and we have done that. I'm quite happy to report on that at any time.

Question re: Dawson City recreation centre

Ms. Van Bibber: The current five-year capital plan includes \$18 million to \$25 million for the new Dawson City recreation centre. According to a joint statement on October 3, the total cost is expected to be \$60 million. Can the minister tell us how the Government of Yukon intends to fill that funding gap?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: It is expensive — it's not expensive; it is what it is, Mr. Speaker. We are seeing supply chain issues across the country; we're seeing, in every jurisdiction — in the federal-provincial-territorial meeting that we had yesterday, every single jurisdiction is talking about the increasing cost of infrastructure in the country. It is something that the entire Canadian nation is dealing with. I can also say it is an issue that the entire North American economy is dealing with.

So, yes, the cost of building the Dawson City recreation facility has gone up from the initial estimate. It is certainly a lot more money today than it was in 2011, when the Yukon Party had their sod-turning event up in Dawson to announce that they were going to build the facility right before the election, but guess what? They didn't get 'er done, Mr. Speaker, and today, we're having to build a recreation facility for Dawson because, quite frankly, the existing facility is not up to the task, and we have to step in and build a new one. I'm proud to do it.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I didn't get an answer. In the joint statement issued on October 3, the government said that it was exploring federal funding opportunities to help offset the cost of the new facility.

Can the minister tell us if the federal government has committed to fund the Dawson City recreation centre yet, and when does the minister expect a response from the federal government about this project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We have invested in all of our communities. The Dawson City recreation centre is one of the other facilities that we have agreed — working with the municipalities, we have, and my predecessor has, as well — to identify the projects that are most important to the communities. The Dawson City recreation centre is one of those facilities. We are actually going ahead with that project, unlike the Official Opposition, the former Yukon Party government, which actually made a promise and didn't follow through and deliver on that promise. That has cost this government probably tens of millions of dollars. We are not going to make that same mistake.

We have gone to the federal government; it is part of the ICIP allocations that we have made. We are going through to make sure that the Investing in Canada infrastructure program is backstopping now. We have made the application. Once we have word from Ottawa, I will let you know, but I have no indication from Ottawa that this project wouldn't be approved, as many of the others have.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are getting support from the federal government to build this important piece of infrastructure for Dawson, and we are going to do it to make the lives of people in Dawson — as we have with the rest of the territory — better.

Ms. Van Bibber: If the minister does not get a commitment from the federal government, will construction still commence in the 2024 construction season?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Our intention is to make good on the commitment that this government has made to the citizens of Dawson and build the recreation centre that they deserve. They have been without, really, a functioning recreation centre for far too long. If you go into that recreation centre today, you will hear about how they are shovelling snow off the roof. They are working very diligently to try to keep that facility open for the citizens of Dawson. They have been doing this for far too long — since 2011, in fact, when the promise was made and not delivered. Well, we are not going to do that. We have the program in our capital plan, we have made the commitment to build it, and we are going to build it.

Question re: Canada Winter Games infrastructure

Ms. McLeod: I have some questions for the Minister of Community Services about our bid to host the Canada Winter Games in 2027. The Yukon government has made it very clear that we will need to receive considerable support from the federal government to make this happen.

One of the biggest ticket items is a proposed \$115-million replacement of the Takhini Arena. On September 15 of this year, the *Whitehorse Star* reported that this new venue would be the location of the opening and closing ceremonies.

So, can the minister tell us if the federal government has committed to funding this massive project and, if so, how much funding has been committed?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We believe in the power of sport to keep young people active and to build strong communities. Our government has been working with the City of Whitehorse and the Government of Canada and the Bid Committee over the last 16 months to get the bid to this stage. We are currently awaiting word from the federal government. Once we have word from the federal government, we will have more to say on this matter.

Ms. McLeod: Now, the other large capital investment that was included as part of the bid package was housing for the athletes. On September 16, the CBC reported that the chair of the bid committee estimated that it would probably be something in the neighbourhood of \$60 million. Can the minister tell us whether or not the federal government has committed to funding this project and, if so, how much has been committed?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Once again, we're talking about support for sport in the territory. We have invested in sporting facilities across the territory. Like our colleagues — the Yukon Party opposition — we have committed to pursuing a games bid. We have done that, and we worked diligently over the last 16 months. Part of that bid is to actually build housing for athletes in Whitehorse, with the host society. We are pursuing that with federal housing authorities. That is part of our bid

package, and we are going to explore those funding options fully and completely.

Ms. McLeod: Now, on October 13 of this year, the Yukon government did a joint statement with the City of Whitehorse and our MP about the visit of the bid evaluation committee to Whitehorse. So, can the minister provide an update for Yukoners on what feedback the bid evaluation committee provided? Did the committee indicate whether they found our bid proposal satisfactory or did they seek changes? Can the minister tell us when we will have a formal response from them as to whether our bid was accepted or not?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: It was great to gather down at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre to meet the bid committee when they came up here, around the sacred flame. We had a very good meeting with the committee. At that time, they were very impressed with the City of Whitehorse and the amenities that we have here. In order to host the games, we need a certain number of facilities to be able to do it, one of which is a fourth sheet of ice. They also want to make sure that we have housing. Both of those needs were put forward by the bid committee. As we worked through that with the bid committee, we took them through a tour of Whitehorse. We showed them the university site. We showed them the facilities that they had, and I can report that they were very impressed with the City of Whitehorse, and they are very excited about the potential for hosting the games here in Whitehorse.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members' business

Ms. Tredger: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, November 9, 2022. They are Bill No. 306, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, and Bill No. 305, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin.

Mr. Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Official Opposition to be called on Wednesday, November 9, 2022. It is Motion No. 519, standing in the name of the Member for Kluane.

Speaker: We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. Blake): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 206, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2022-23*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 206: *Second Appropriation Act 2022-23* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 206, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2022-23*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Kent: I want to thank the Deputy Minister of Finance for being here as well today to support the Premier this afternoon as we continue with general debate on the supplementary estimates.

I mentioned at House Leaders this morning that the focus of our questions this afternoon will be education and then, if time permits, housing. So, I'll jump right in to my questions.

I will start with the mandate letter that the Premier sent to the Minister of Education, dated July 5, 2021, shortly after the new government was sworn in and responsibilities were set for ministers. Obviously, some of the stuff in here has been implemented, so I'm not going to go through the responsibilities that the Premier set for the Minister of Education.

I guess the first question that I would like to ask is: Does the Premier receive progress reports with respect to the mandate letters from his various ministers? If so, are they made public anywhere as the work on the mandate letters progresses after they were sent, as I said, in July of 2021?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, as the member opposite will probably know from his experience in government, a lot of this work, as far as progress goes, comes to the DMRC table, and, from that table, there are bilaterals from the Executive Council Office.

Mr. Kent: So, the progress on the mandate letters is discussed at the deputy ministers' level and shared at bilaterals, I guess, with the ministers. Am I correct in assuming that? If I could just get the Premier to confirm that for me, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: That's correct and, of course, I think it would be no secret as well that, as progress goes through the mandate letters and things happen, I don't know of a minister worth their ilk who wouldn't then use that as an opportunity to announce these things to the public.

Mr. Kent: So, I will just ask a few questions with respect to the mandate letter here, as I mentioned. So, at the top of this particular portion of the letter, it says: “As the Minister of Education, you will work to create successful learning outcomes for all Yukon learners by...” — and then there is a series of bullets.

One of them says: “Improving educational programs, services and outcomes for Yukon students, in collaboration with First Nations and educational partners. This includes...” — and the second bullet under that is: “Developing and implementing a student outcomes strategy.”

Can the Premier explain to us what exactly that work he envisioned would involve, and are there any timelines on when that strategy will be ready? If it is ready now, where can we find it?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We continue to work with Yukon First Nations to ensure that all schools meet the needs of First Nation students and offer all students the opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nation ways of knowing, doing, and being. Really, this is a lot of the reason why I left the classroom — as a rural educator, seeing what I considered to be a lot of work that we needed to do to make the system a lot more equitable to all of all citizens in the Yukon. I could spend a lot of time talking about some of the stories that I have seen, opportunities that are found in certain parts of our community but not in others — especially when it comes to First Nation communities.

I spent my career working mostly with rural, indigenous folks. Knowing the opportunities — when I would see a student in grade 7 and then see folks being able to cross the finishing lines with a lot less impedance than some folks in the rural communities, for one, but also some of the impediments to a quality education for our indigenous youth. That is something I definitely wanted to see more action on.

We know that there were recommendations from the 2019 audit that stated that the department should complete and implement its policies to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to meet the *Education Act* requirements. So, a lot of the work has been done by the minister and her team in that pursuit. We also know that, just in February of this year, for example, department officials and members of the Yukon First Nations Education Commission finalized the Yukon First Nation collaboration framework, which is extremely important to note as well.

Many factors are contributing to a student’s success at school, including, obviously, high- quality education and instruction, engaged learning, and a student’s support network, both at and away from school. When it comes to learning outcomes, students, and working with First Nation partners, the department contracted a well-known name in education, Tosh Southwick, from IRP consulting, to engage with Yukon First Nation governments on the initial development of a student outcome strategy. That strategy, of course, is going to help us to develop a deeper understanding of how we can best support Yukon First Nations and make evidence-based decisions to ensure that every student in the territory has an opportunity to succeed — Tosh being no stranger to curriculum and pedagogy, but also to the importance of decisions being made on a

community basis, especially when we have the opportunity, through the British Columbia curriculum, to develop that locally developed curriculum, which is extremely important.

So, working collaboratively with Yukon First Nation governments, as well as our education partners, will help to sharpen our focus and also target some supports to basically help with the outcomes of all of our students. We will also work with our partners on the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education and with students to ensure that there is a youth voice also reflected in the student outcome strategy.

I don’t have a lot more in general debate to add on this. I would encourage the member opposite, if he has more questions on this specifically, to e-mail or send a letter to the minister responsible, who would be chomping at the bit to talk more in-depth about this particular issue.

Mr. Kent: From the Premier’s response, I gather that this work is underway on the development. Obviously, it has to be developed before it’s implemented, so we are still in the development phase of that student outcome strategy. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It’s on its way in earnest, I would say. Implementing the implementation phase of work to develop the student outcome strategy, which will also look at root causes of poorer student outcomes, developmental targets, and evaluation progress on closing gaps — that work is ongoing right now. That’s also including the completion of the engagement with Yukon First Nations, and that’s going to be followed by a broader educational partner engagement that’s happening this fall.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Premier for that response, and we look forward to following up with the minister at a future time. One of the other bullets that is included in the mandate letter for the Minister of Education is to begin the planning process for the next elementary school to be replaced in Whitehorse in consultation with stakeholders. Obviously, that decision has been made to build a new École Whitehorse Elementary School. The location that has been chosen up in the Takhini subdivision on what is now three ball diamonds that Softball Yukon uses — of course, it is on an educational reserve, I understand that. But, during Question Period earlier in this Sitting, I did ask the minister — she did make a commitment for a stakeholder meeting this fall. So, I don’t believe that I got a response at the time so I’m curious if the Premier can let us know when that stakeholder meeting is expected to take place.

There is \$200,000 in the current main estimates for consultation and design of an aging Whitehorse replacement school. So, I believe that money is earmarked for this, so I’m also curious how much of that money has been spent so far as we move toward next year’s budget.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, our government is investing in school infrastructure. I’m not sure if I can give too much more of an update from just last week when the minister was on her feet answering this question.

The École Whitehorse Elementary School has been identified, as we all know, for replacement with a new modern facility that will meet the needs of the community for years to come. This school has to be replaced; it is very obvious. It was

originally built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among other Whitehorse schools. The current facility is not able to keep pace with current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative and inclusive and experiential learning.

The Takhini education land reserve has been identified as a central location that can accommodate French immersion students from around Whitehorse. When it comes to renovating or replacing the current facility, that is not going to be viable for on-site, and so the Takhini education land reserve provides a central location that has better access to greenspace, desired for modern learning. The minister also spoke about the project advisory committee that is established to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas between key partners and stakeholders and also the Government of Yukon. Now, that advisory committee met on October 3, and representatives from the school administration, council, and the City of Whitehorse were in attendance. Engagement with the broader Whitehorse community and partners is planned, as the member opposite said, for the fall to determine a long-term plan for replacing and renovating other aging Whitehorse schools.

That is about all that I have for an update for the member opposite on this topic for now.

Mr. Kent: I don't have the budget document for next year in front of me, but I know that there is a significant multi-million-dollar investment that would suggest that the government is planning on construction beginning on this next year. Obviously, the immediate challenge is with respect to Softball Yukon and the use of those diamonds. Has there been any engagement yet with Softball Yukon on an alternative plan for them, once those diamonds are no longer available for their use?

Hon. Mr. Silver: No update from the last time the Minister of Education stood during Question Period to answer this question — I will recognize, as do the member opposite and the minister, how important our baseball and softball teams are as recreation and the important work that has been done there over the years. It's a great activity for connecting communities all over the Yukon as well, but I don't have anything new to report from when the minister was on her feet, speaking about this engagement. I think it was either last week or the week before.

Mr. Kent: I have pulled up the five-year budget document that was tabled in the spring — elementary school replacement, Whitehorse, \$200,000 to \$500,000 for this current fiscal year, which is 2022-23. As I mentioned, in the Education briefing notes, it says that there is \$200,000 allocated for this year. Next year, that jumps to \$5 million to \$6 million, then \$15 million to \$20 million, and then \$25 million to \$30 million in the 2025-26 fiscal year. I am hoping that the Premier can understand the urgency of the question.

We are already into November. It looks like construction, with these kinds of numbers, is scheduled to begin in the next fiscal year and next construction season. So, can the minister tell me what engagement took place prior to the decision being made to locate the school on that Takhini educational reserve? Were there discussions with — well, we'll stick with Softball

Yukon. Were there discussions with Softball Yukon prior to that decision being made?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Our government is investing in the education system by building new schools or even renovating existing ones so that they do meet the needs of all Yukon students for years to come. We are at a bit of deficit here when it comes to replacing schools. Also, with the increase in population that we have and the booming economy, these are very important projects to be putting the taxpayers' dollars toward. In addition to new schools like the one in Whistle Bend and Burwash Landing, we will continue to replace or renovate existing schools on a priority basis.

The Whitehorse Elementary School is the highest priority for replacement because of accessibility, lighting, and acoustic issues — and the age and condition of the building — as well as its energy use and its greenhouse emissions, and the need for significant seismic upgrades, which is a whole different list of things that are prioritized here, compared to what I just spoke about, because we are talking about two different departments.

We are talking about Highways and Public Works when it comes to the tendering of these projects and prioritizing the five-year capital plan, and also, of course, when you talk about programming inside the schools, the Department of Education would be talking about the deficits internal when it comes to its ability to provide excellent education opportunities for the folks that would be in that school.

The new school will be much more energy efficient, and when we talk about budgeting and the dollars that we will be using — and could see a reduction of up to 260 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions compared to the current school. Again, it is a reason for us — I'm wearing my Management Board Secretariat hat a bit here for the justification and the prioritization and the process that we go through there. So, the new school is in the early planning phase, which is being led by the Department of Education, but it's important to add into this a whole-of-government approach when it comes to how we prioritize the capital plan and how we work with a multitude of different departments when we are planning the replacement and the renovations to these schools. Also, just to mention — the project advisory committee is continuing to provide us with input on key aspects of school planning and design as we move through this process.

When it comes to the five-year capital plan and Education projects, we see that in the elementary school replacement, Whitehorse category, \$200,000 to \$500,000 in 2022-23, and then, with that replacement moving forward, 2023-24, we still have, on forecast, \$5 million to \$6 million in that year. But again, there are also then two more years in there — there is 2024-25 at \$15 million to \$20 million, and finally, for 2025-26, it would be \$25 million to \$30 million.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Premier for mentioning that. I think it is essentially what I had said in my previous question. So, I guess in the four fiscal-year time horizon, my question for the Premier would be: When does he expect the construction of this new school to start within that time frame?

Hon. Mr. Silver: When it comes to scheduling major capital projects, we go through a yearly cycle where we talk

about the priorities — what hits the capital. We compare it to the mains of previous years. We are still figuring that this is on schedule as far as the five-year capital plan. I don't have any updates right now for the member opposite in general debate, as far as speculating as to when things are going to maybe veer or move forward on those particular years, but that would maybe be a question for the Minister of Highways and Public Works when it comes to the tendering process there. I don't have anything to speculate on as far as changes in those numbers at this time.

Mr. Kent: I think the question that I was hoping the Premier would respond to is: When, during that four fiscal-year time horizon that is set out for this elementary school replacement, would he expect construction to start? Obviously, it has a bearing on a number of things but, most urgently, is the use of those softball diamonds for Softball Yukon. However, I will follow up with the Minister of Education or the Minister of Highways and Public Works on that particular issue.

I did have some questions — but I think I will leave them to the Member for Whitehorse Centre — with respect to plans for the existing land downtown where the school currently sits, once that facility is no longer needed for the school — so what the plans are for the building and the land that is there.

I do have a number of other capital budget questions, however, for the Premier with respect to Education. I am going to leave those for a second and just finish off with the mandate letter. I have just a couple of quick questions for the Minister of Finance. Again, in the mandate letter that he sent to the Minister of Education, it says: "Working with communities and stakeholders to develop and implement school safety transportation plans." This is following up from the Liberal election platform in the last election, essentially saying that it will cover safe drop-off and pickup areas, snow removal, safe crosswalks, speed control and proper lighting.

I know there are some schools that have had this done. I am hoping I can get an answer from the minister here this afternoon with respect to how many of the schools have been completed with the school safety transportation plans and how many are still left to be done.

Hon. Mr. Silver: This is, again, one of our top priorities — the safety and health of our students. The school buses are considered to be one of the safest modes of transportation available, but yet we still need to plan accordingly.

Our current contract, as the member opposite knows, is with Standard Bus. We have additional safety features such as strobes on the top of those vehicles, and dash cameras on some vehicles. It is great to see the modernization of these buses, especially when we know the climates that we are dealing with, and also some of the aggression of some drivers on our roads. I could tell you some horror stories as I peeked out my window and watched the buses stopping at Robert Service School, and people driving by these buses with their lights out. So, as much as we can do with these strobe cameras is extremely important to really get people's attention about the safety of our students.

We are participating in a Transport Canada national Task Force on School Bus Safety, and, of course, our school buses must meet the federal requirements for buses. Just for the

record, at this time, the installation of seat belts is not required or recommended from national codes.

We are working with Standard Bus, the RCMP, and committees to promote driver safety near the school buses and to reduce risks on these bus routes. I am not sure if I am going to be able to give an update, other than what the minister has already spoken to about the safety issues. Basically — also to share that if parents do have concerns, they can contact their school, the student transportation office, or even Standard Bus as well, in that regard.

As a refresher to folks' memories, as well, in the Legislature, Motion No. 332 was passed in October, which was that the House urges the Minister of Education, in partnership with all stakeholders, to participate in the recently announced Transport Canada assessment of seat belt safety and continuing to review the school busing in Yukon.

I figured that I would give that response as far as the national safety organization and their recommendations as well.

Mr. Kent: My understanding of this particular request in the minister's mandate letter — I'm sort of cross-referencing it with the 2021 Liberal election platform — is that it would be more about infrastructure improvements on the ground at schools rather than the school bus safety issues. I know we have touched on that, so that is sort of where I was focusing the question. The school that I am most familiar with, because my son goes there, is Golden Horn Elementary School. I know there has been a lot of work done with respect to the drop-off and pickup areas, crosswalks, proper lighting, and that kind of thing. That was the focus of the question that I was asking the Minister of Finance to respond to. What schools are similar to Golden Horn where that work has been completed, and then what schools are planned for additional work in the future to meet this mandate letter commitment and the election platform commitment that the Liberals put forward?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I wouldn't have an update right now with the work. As the member opposite would know, this would be individual conversations with the department and these individual schools, based on the geography and the different layouts in each of these communities and each of these schools. When you take a look at what would be constant among all these schools would be the school buses themselves. Recommendations from the task force focusing in on four recommendations — infraction cameras to prevent dangerous incidents by passing motorists, extended stop arms, exterior 360-degree cameras, and bus emergency braking — would help with the severity of collisions. These are issues that are going to be affecting each of the school communities as the department works with all the individual schools when it comes to their entrance and egress when it comes to dropping off our students.

Mr. Kent: I will take the opportunity again to follow up with the minister, either in the Legislature or by letter or written question, with respect to those improvements on the ground at schools and the prioritization.

I do want to ask a couple of questions with respect to Yukon University. Again, in the mandate letter is a request for the minister to work with the Yukon University to support their

new science building. I know that, a number of years ago, the federal government made a budget announcement around supporting the construction of a new science building. I don't believe that the construction has started yet. Is the Premier able to update the House on that particular project, and how much money — it's not currently in this fiscal year's budget, so when does he anticipate that expenditure to take place?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have any update for the member opposite as far as timing, other than what the department has already spoken about as far as the importance of these assets. We know that the Yukon University has gone through an awful lot of transition and it's really important for us to follow that transition as a hybrid university. It is really great to see that the university is offering degrees, diplomas, certificates, careers, trades training, second language support, and upgrades to meet the diverse learning needs of Yukon communities. I am not going to speculate on any future announcements that the department will be making.

In the 2022-23 budget, our government has allocated \$1.5 million in operation and maintenance, with \$200,000 in capital, to further support the transition as we work through getting these opportunities — degrees, diplomas, and certificates — to fruition. I am very proud of the bachelor of indigenous governance program — the notorious “BIG” as I like to call it — and also all of the work that is being done on advancing strategic initiatives through the joint agreement management committee that's with the Department of Education and the university as well.

So, we're looking forward to continuing to collaborate with the university to help it achieve the commitments that are outlined in the strategic plan.

Mr. Kent: So, with respect to the federal funding that was announced to support the construction of the new science building, is the minister aware of any sunseting of that funding? I know it was announced a number of years ago, and we have yet to see the project begin. So, is there any deadline with respect to that funding being available or, I guess, has it already been transferred to the university in support of their work on the science building?

Hon. Mr. Silver: That's a 2019 commitment, I believe, and I don't have any updates on that right now, but I will look into the member opposite's question as far as how permanent that funding would be.

Mr. Kent: Thank you very much for that, and I'll look forward to getting that information from the Finance minister when he has it available. He did mention that there is \$200,000 in capital support for the university in the main estimates for this year. So, I do have that note in front of me that says \$100,000 of that is for Yukon University transition signage — to install new signs at YU campuses — and then another \$100,000 for equipment and furniture upgrades for lab equipment and classroom equipment that is outdated. However, the minister also mentioned a \$1.5-million O&M investment. I do not have that note in front of me, so can he explain what that expenditure is for?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As far as the breakdown for that, I would have to go back and take a look. Of course, this would

have been a conversation in the spring when the opposition parties would have had a full briefing from the department explaining all of the different line items. We also had the university in here as witnesses, and the minister also was on her feet for the mains when this appropriation was deliberated and discussed, but I don't have that at my fingertips here in general debate.

Mr. Kent: Again, hopefully we get an opportunity to get that information from the minister and the department in either a legislative return or a letter back to MLAs. We never had a chance, I don't believe, in the spring to discuss that particular aspect of the budget, so I'm curious about what that entails.

One of the other pieces from the mandate letter with respect to the university is to ensure that the demand for early childhood educators and licensed practical nursing is met. So, have there been any additional resources allocated to the university since this mandate letter was sent in 2021 to assist in meeting the demand for ECEs and LPNs?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Not to date — otherwise, we would have a line item in the supplementary budget for that purpose. We were continuing to support the university to provide annual intakes to the practical nursing program, and that program provides opportunities for up to 18 new students each year pursuing health care careers. The graduates of this program provide a lot of much-needed talent to fill vacancies in this important health care role in the Yukon. As we know, we are seeing shortages right across the country, if not the world. The Bow Valley College provides the course curriculum to the university cohorts — they did until this year — and the university is engaging in seeking new curriculum for future cohorts as well — so, pretty exciting times with the departments as they work with the Department of Health and Social Services, as well, to consult and to update to make sure that the successor program is developed.

There could be some work going on internally where the department funds internally, but, as far as from the Minister of Finance's perspective, any extra requests for this program have not been asked for to date. Education contributes, annually, very close to \$750,000 to support the program, within its allocation currently — very specifically, \$740,780 to the program.

Also, the graduates receive a nursing diploma and they are very successful in finding employment in their fields. Hopefully, all of them find that employment in Yukon.

Mr. Kent: I was jotting down some notes as the minister was speaking. There is just over \$740,000 for the licensed practical nurse program in the main estimates. Is there any money in the mains for the early childhood educators program, which is also referenced in the mandate letter that he sent the minister?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would have to get an updated number for the member opposite. All of the ELCC providers signing on to universal childcare have committed to collaborating on all improvements, activities, quality measures, professional development for their staff in collaboration with early learning specialists, all of which have expenses attached.

The ELCC launched the online early childhood educators learning hub, and that was this summer. Then, in late summer, in late August, they started hosting open houses for professional development for educators and operators, both in-person and online, with over 100 educators attending as of October 22, which is great to see.

The Professional Diploma Pathway, which is PDP for short — as of August of this year, 43 students are enrolled in this program. In addition to the partnerships with Yukon University, the ELCC is partnering with La Garderie to support their French-speaking, level 3 equivalent educators to become qualified. All of these, of course, come with expenses, but it's great to see these programs continuing throughout the summer and into the fall.

Mr. Kent: So, I will again follow up with the minister or the university about which aspects the Premier just mentioned are part of the university program as set out in the mandate letter. One final question about the mandate letter is: Is the Premier able to give us an update on the feasibility study for a varsity sports program at Yukon University? It's a partnership, obviously. It is being led by the Department of Education with support from the Department of Economic Development. I'm curious if there are any updates on expenditures so far with respect to this particular commitment in the mandate letter.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I don't know if I would have much of an update for the member opposite on the work that's being done by both Education and Economic Development. However, because it is done by both, Economic Development will be appearing here.

If we get through general debate and talk about a department that has some funding in this budget — then the minister will be here and available to answer questions for the member opposite, as this is a joint project between the two. They are working with the university as well to assess the feasibility of establishing the varsity sports programming. The study is expected to be completed at the end of this year, trying to examine things like measurable and intangible benefits of varsity athletics for small- to mid-sized Canadian universities and colleges, as well as to host communities.

To me, this question begs to be part of the index of well-being, as we have worked on expanding that to local parameters over the last few years, so being able to compare how our institutions and communities work with other parts of Canada and other institutions that are of similar sizes.

Also, it's tasked with examining things like the process by which the university would gain and maintain administration to regional athletic associations, or staffing requirements and O&M requirements — those types of things — and the viability of most likely entered sports — is that curling, futsal, or badminton — along with costs or infrastructure and also other supports. That work continues, looking into things like requirements, including costs, to estimate an athletics department at the university. What would that look like and what is the necessity therein?

It's also a process by which the university could scale up a varsity sports program to participate in a regional athletics association. There are other unique factors as well that they are

considering and are expected to complete this year — things like opportunities and challenges in general, and also opportunities for Yukon First Nation participation or partnership in a varsity sports program.

Also, the contractor that was selected is Sidekick Consulting. They were selected to provide the feasibility study and a road map as to how Yukon University may develop a varsity sports program, including the estimated costs for all the stages and these considerations that I'm talking about. We are hoping to see this very soon. The minister and department can report on the progress therein as we complete this important work before heading down the road of varsity sports and looking at that feasibility.

Mr. Kent: So, I will look forward to following up on that if we have questions for the Minister of Economic Development when we get to his department, or perhaps, as it is an Education lead, questions for the Minister of Education at some point.

I do have some questions now about some of the expenditures that are in the 2022-23 capital budget for Education. There are four different questions, but I will just go through them one by one. The first one is a \$2-million expenditure on a modular classroom. Can the Minister of Finance tell us how many modulars this will give us and where they will be located? Are they complete and in place at those schools, as we speak?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am going back to my notes from the main budget on this and looking at — there were just some highlights of that. I am not sure if I have any updates for the member opposite as far as modulars are concerned, other than what has been spoken about in the Legislative Assembly in the past. We know that Schools and Student Services had a total increase of \$12.5 million there. In that, there was an increase of \$300,000 for modular classrooms — the goal being to increase projected costs associated with procurement and just continuing to work with the school communities on planning for their facilities over all different terms — short-term, long-term, and medium-term needs and options. Modular classrooms in a lot of different communities provide more flexibility to meet short-term and medium-term school space requirements.

I recall that in Dawson, when I was teaching, there were times when we were getting so close to a smaller population that we were actually in a situation where we had to kind of do more with the number of teachers that we had to continue to provide K to 12 education when we had smaller populations, and then, of course, when the population booms like now — something like 12.5-percent Yukon-wide over the last five years — it is really important to be able to meet that short term — but also knowing that the population is increasing here in the Yukon.

The department is currently assessing the various needs, and the total estimated capital expenditures for the department is \$2 million in 2022-23. For modular classrooms, there are needs in Selkirk, Hidden Valley, and Robert Service School. Rather than install a third portable at Selkirk in 2022-23, a modular addition is being added, which will free up an additional classroom in the school as well. This project is being

funded from our capital budget, and the project is anticipated to be completed this year — in December, hopefully.

We are working with the Kluane First Nation to relocate Kluane Lake School into Burwash. It would be another one of those items that was developed in our Student and School Services amount of \$12.5 million. Of course, there would be monies in there for some of the other projects that we spoke about in the Legislative Assembly over the last year, including increases of \$100,000 for experiential learning spaces, for example.

That's about all I have for the member opposite when it comes to modulars.

Mr. Kent: I have a couple of questions based on the minister's answers — \$2 million, as I mentioned, has been allocated in the current budget for modular classrooms. The Minister of Finance mentioned that Selkirk was getting an addition. Could he clarify whether or not that addition is coming out of that \$2 million, or is that a separate line item?

He also mentioned a need at Robert Service School for modulars; however, in a separate line item, there is a \$2.7-million expenditure at that school. I will ask some further questions about that, but I am just curious if that Selkirk addition is coming out of this \$2 million that is earmarked for the modular classroom line item in the current mains?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, it is.

Mr. Kent: Can the Minister of Finance tell us how much of that \$2 million is allocated to the addition at Selkirk?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would hope that the member opposite would understand that, in general debate, I don't necessarily have that granule detail, but I will endeavour to get that back for the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to getting that amount for Selkirk and then whatever is leftover. Perhaps in that response, we can also get an idea of where other modular classrooms are being established — which schools they will be located at. Those are the words I am looking for.

Just bumping down to the Robert Service School, the \$2.7 million in the capital budget in the spring when it was tabled — the Robert Service School modular/addition was scheduled to be completed in June 2022. We know that this was bumped out a couple of months, I believe, delaying the start a little bit of the school year in Dawson City. If the Premier can just confirm for us that this project is indeed now finished, and \$2.7 in this fiscal year — if he can give us an idea of the overall cost of that addition to the Robert Service School for the project life, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, continuing to work with school communities on planning — there is no difference here when it comes to the Robert Service School expansion. As the member opposite did mention, there were delays in obtaining certain building components. That definitely pushed the anticipated date to later in October. The building is looking fantastic right now, which is a really good complement to not only the school — but also the bright colours that the school has been painted in. If you ever get an opportunity during sunset or sunrise, come up to Dawson to take a look at Robert Service School.

We are working to getting that full occupancy — and the goal was by the end of October, beginning of November. That is my update here — making sure that our school can occupy that space as soon as possible, knowing that we have had some delays here. I am looking forward to seeing how these four new classrooms will enhance and complement the school learning space, basically replacing something that should have been replaced a long time ago at Robert Service School as a temporary solution for decades — those modulars that were there. I believe there were, like, two classrooms there before; now we have four.

So, the delay of this building, based upon the supply chain management issues that we are seeing, basically, around the world — I do not have much more of an update for the member opposite. I do know that there is an estimated cost for the complete project that was \$6.4 million, and Canada is providing funding under the Investing in Canada infrastructure program for their share of that. This was a contract by Wildstone Construction. I think that's about all that I have for any update for the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Just to go back to Robert Service School — and I want to make sure that I heard the Minister of Finance correctly that the final occupancy has not been granted yet for Robert Service School. So, if he can just indicate whether or not that's what he mentioned in his remarks and, if it hasn't, does he have any idea when that part of the school will be available for the students?

Then, one final question with respect to the current capital budget — there is a \$2-million expenditure on Ross River School remediation. I'm just looking for confirmation that all of that money was spent, and if the Premier can let us know what exactly it was spent on, or if he anticipates it being spent before the end of the fiscal year.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As I said, the project is nearing completion, with occupancy for staff and students targeted for November. The work is continuing and expected to be completed as soon as possible, in the fall, here. The project was targeted for completion, obviously, prior to the school year. However, as we spoke about the equipment and material shortages due to global supply chain issues, they have delayed that occupancy until November.

When it comes to the Ross River School, as the member opposite knows, the school was built on changing permafrost, as much of the community is, actually. Changing permafrost has contributed to the need for structural assessments and repairs over the years, but we continue to ensure that the school is kept safe by mitigating structural movement through upgrades like a re-leveling system and by performing repairs to lessen the effects of the building movement — as we spoke about in the Assembly a few different times here.

The school is inspected quarterly by a multidisciplinary team that includes architects and structural engineers, geotechnical engineers, and also a surveyor. The latest building condition inspection report that we received was in late August, and it confirmed that the school remains safe for occupancy. The next inspection is to occur this month, and so I don't have an update on that yet but will be expecting that update to come

in — as I said, trying to do this quarterly to make sure that the health and safety of the students in Ross River is the utmost — in our endeavours here.

We are currently building a re-levelling system at the school that will mitigate effects of further permafrost deterioration, and we are also building a new modular mechanical room to replace the existing mechanical plant. The heat emitted from the mechanical plant was a contributing factor to the degradation of permafrost under the school, so we are trying to remedy that with some upgrades to that system.

Work for both of these projects is underway and scheduled to be completed in 2023.

As far as what amount of the appropriation has been spent by the department, I would have to ask the department for an update on that.

Mr. Kent: We look forward to getting that information from the department as far as that estimated \$2-million expenditure because I know that, in past years, a significant portion of that has been lapsed — identified in the mains and then lapsed in the fall supplementaries — so we were curious as to how much of it has actually been expended this year or if it will be expended prior to the end of the fiscal year.

I want to take the Premier back a little bit. So, I'm going to read from their initial five-year planning document in March 2018. It says: "Beginning in 2018-19, the Government of Yukon will release a Five-Year Capital Plan as part of the annual budget process. The Capital Plan summarizes the Government of Yukon's priority infrastructure projects."

So, obviously this plan has evolved over the years since it was first introduced. As we talked about earlier, it now includes dollar figures, but when this first one came out, it just included the fiscal year that was targeted. So, it started in 2018-19, and this fiscal year, 2022-23, is the last year for this initial five-year document that was tabled with the budget.

So, I just have a couple questions with respect with some Education projects that were identified back then. The first one is Christ the King Elementary School, which was to have started in 2020-21 and concluded in this fiscal year. But, you know, unless I'm missing something, I can't find any expenditures. I'm hoping that the Premier can give us an idea of what exactly that expenditure was for.

I will ask, as well, about Holy Family School that was anticipated to have expenditures in 2021-22 and 2022-23. Again, we can't find those expenditures. So, when this initial five-year document came out, those two projects were identified, and I'm curious if the Minister of Finance can provide us with an update on those two projects, and what was envisioned back then, and what work has been done in the case of Christ the King Elementary School over the last three fiscal years and Holy Family School over the last two?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, the five-year capital plan for this current fiscal year builds on our commitment to communicate those capital spending intentions to Yukoners, municipalities, the private sector, and First Nation governments. It has always been billed out as a window to the future that didn't exist in the past. Also, as we have seen over the years, projects will move and shift from that plan for a

myriad of different reasons. I have been in communities with two different ministers of Community Services, where conversations are always about "if your plans change, or if your priorities change, then ours will as well, and we will reflect that in our capital plan". This is one example of changes we have seen in this plan.

We have been through a pandemic during this five-year capital plan as well, which definitely has some impacts on people's ability to build, which also would affect things. We have definitely seen evolving priorities and circumstances and needs that have changed community-wide.

We spoke today about a project in the Legislative Assembly that really, for me when I became Premier, was one of the most important pieces of why we need a five-year capital plan. When a government commits to build something like a community asset such as a rec centre, making sure that knowing where those things are on a five-year basis is extremely important. We came into government and realized there was no commitment from the perspective of the departments for a rec centre, so that was extremely important for us to showcase in the budget forecasts these priorities on a five-year capital plan basis.

As capital plans change and mature, our government will work to meet both project and vendor needs. For example, departments may spread out major projects that have several components, such as, for example, a bridge project, rather than tender them all at the same time. Again, we are trying to support our local businesses — especially now that we have the ability to work with the First Nation procurement policy to get some more sticky dollars in those subcontract trades — fuel, you name it. It's extremely important that we keep in mind local capacity in our five-year capital plan, and over a five-year period, those capacities will change.

It also supports the implementation of, as I mentioned, that First Nation procurement policy through information-sharing on projects and through direct engagement with Yukon First Nation governments. I have to say, as well, that the Yukon Forum is instrumental in including information about not only priorities, as we take a look at dedicated federal funding, but also First Nation priorities and what they want to accomplish inside of their own budgets, working with our government as well.

So, laying out that long-term capital investment strategy, we believe, is extremely important. We know that the two projects that the member opposite mentioned both had parking lots that were done in those schools in that five-year capital plan — that would be what the member opposite is referring to — and we are continuing to have conversations with school councils right now on priorities for Whitehorse school capital planning, when it comes to some of these school projects the member opposite mentioned, but I don't have any other update, as far as direction, for some of these projects right now.

Mr. Kent: When this initial document was tabled, those were two of the schools singled out in that initial document. Again, there is no dollar figure, so we can't tell what the expenditure was that was envisioned at the time, but I just wanted to confirm with the Minister of Finance that Christ the

King Elementary School and Holy Family Elementary School, when they were mentioned here, those were for parking lot improvements. Is that what I understand? When this was first tabled in 2018-19, that was what was envisioned — a parking lot? It doesn't mention that. It just says, "Christ the King Elementary School — Whitehorse" and "Holy Family Elementary School — Whitehorse". It doesn't say, "parking lot improvement", so I just wanted to confirm with the Minister of Finance that this is what they were including in this planning document.

I think in subsequent years — I will have to look back, as I only have this first one — but those two projects disappeared from the five-year plan at that time. I am just trying to get a sense of what was envisioned back then that appears to no longer be included in capital projects that the government is committed to.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Correct. In both those schools, parking lot work was done, and that was listed in those capital plans. I will endeavour to get back to the member opposite, if these allocations include anything else.

Mr. Kent: I wanted to move on to some issues I wanted to talk about with respect to the minister's spring briefing binder, which I have with me here today. The first one is just a question — or, I guess a concern — around the session briefing note with respect to Jack Hulland and the Grove Street concerns and investigation around holds. So, I'm just going to read a couple of bullets for the Minister of Finance and the Premier from this briefing note.

So, the first one is: "Education provides Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training — an industry standard training — to school staff to provide them with the tools to de-escalate situations and protect themselves and others from student outbursts." So, I mean, that's obviously something that we feel, and I know the government feels, is extremely important training to provide to school staff. My question isn't about that. I know the RCMP investigation is still ongoing into the situation there, and there is an active court case, but the one thing — when I was reading through these briefing notes in preparation for the Fall Sitting — that jumped out at me is on the bottom of that same page, where it says: "On February 23 and 24, the minister used her authority under CEMA to close the school for two days to allow for the training to occur..." So, that's where I have a concern — the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* and the authority under that act — my understanding was that it was used for COVID-related aspects and COVID-19. So, the minister used her authority under CEMA to close the school for two days for this important training to occur. I guess my question for the minister, in his capacity as the Premier, is: Was he aware that CEMA authority was used to close down the school for Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Of course, we all have a mutual interest, as the member opposite mentioned, in the safety of our students and our staff, and also in supporting Jack Hulland as a school community. The investigation and litigation matters — these are of a very serious nature. Our priority is to support the students, the families, and the staff, as we navigate these legal matters and ongoing investigations in a way that protects

individuals' privacy and upholds the principles of justice. Again, we are fully cooperating with the RCMP — that cooperation is ongoing. They have communicated to the families, and it is being led as a priority, and it is extremely important work that they are doing.

We are going to continue further internal fact-finding and investigating into workplace conduct, which is also extremely important. Of importance to the member opposite and others listening in, there is a dedicated team of teachers and staff, and the administrative team, focused on moving the school forward in a very positive way. That is extremely important. A permanent principal is in place now, and we are continuing to work with school administration, school council, parents, and staff — supports and initiatives. We have communicated the serious nature of the investigations into the use of holds and restraints at the school, from the outset of the investigation, through direct communications to parents and to guardians of Jack Hulland Elementary School, and we are going to continue to do so as well.

In May, the Deputy Minister of Education provided staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School with a letter, clarifying the employer's expectations of educators, in respect to managing student behaviours. Information was also shared with families at a meeting that was held in participation with Victim Services, Family and Children's Services, the Family Resource Unit, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services. We also focused in on supporting families and staff — conversations are continuing on how to move forward, as I said, in a good way with the school community.

We know, also, that the Child and Youth Advocate's involvement in this matter is extremely vital, and we are working with the Child and Youth Advocate to uphold the rights of children and youth, and to ensure that families have the supports that they need. The school branch officials and school administrators have been working on a case-by-case basis to support past and present students and families directly.

When it comes to the Grove Street program directly, we acknowledge that this program has caused concerns for staff and for families at Jack Hulland Elementary. New applications into the Grove Street program are on hold at this time as part of reimagining inclusive and special education. All shared resources programs in Yukon, including the PASS program and Grove Street will be examined to ensure that they are best meeting the needs of students in the most inclusive and least restrictive environments.

The member opposite asked about non-violent crisis intervention training and industry standard training, for the record, for school staff to provide them with the tools in the de-escalation situations and to protect themselves and others from student outbursts. On February 23 and 24 of this year, the minister did use her authority, under CEMA, to close the school for two days to allow for NCI training to occur. Completion of that NCI training resulted in staff being provided with the expectations and limitations around the use of holds with students. I am aware of this. If the member opposite has some specific questions to the minister as to how she used her authority, I would ask him to write her a letter so the department

can walk the member opposite through this particular non-violent crisis intervention training.

They were under CEMA school operations at the time in remote learning because of the high absenteeism that was happening at that time due to illness. Again, if the member opposite has a more specific question for the minister responsible, I would ask him to send a letter so we can respond to him appropriately through the department.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 206, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2022-23*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Kent: Before the break, we were talking about the minister's use of CEMA to close Jack Hlland down for two days to conduct some non-violent training. The Premier seemed to indicate that he was aware of that closure at the time and approved of it. He mentioned that I should follow up with the minister, so I will certainly find some time before the end of this Sitting to do that, either in the House or by letter.

I do have some quick questions with respect to the education recovery plan. CBC did a cross-jurisdictional analysis about education recovery plans earlier this year. They asked the same questions of each jurisdiction. The one question that I wanted to ask with respect to budgeting is in line with this document. They asked how much funding is going to the recovery plan and how it will be allocated. The response from the Yukon government was that the Yukon created an additional 23 teaching positions in the 2020-21 school year to support students and existing staff. The department also earmarked \$150,000 for tutoring, I believe, at the time.

I just wanted to ask the Premier, in his role as Minister of Finance, if those 23 additional teaching positions that were created in the 2020-21 school year were kept beyond that school year. Were those teaching positions added to the base of teaching positions for subsequent school years?

Also, the \$150,000 allocated for tutoring — is that in addition to the existing tutoring amount for that fiscal year, or is that the overall amount that was allocated for tutoring?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe those are time-limited. When it comes to the two-year recovery strategy, we are committed to addressing the impacts that the pandemic has had on our students.

I had the honour of giving a grad speech this year at Robert Service School for the graduating students. Part of what I said is that I can't imagine — I mean, these are difficult enough times for students at high school in general, but to put on top of that a global pandemic — to see the students at cap and gown successfully going through what would normally be just a really hard time in their life anyway, and to have that resilience

to make it to that stage — truly commendable — at all schools right across the Yukon. I did my speech to recognize that the impacts of COVID-19 have not been the same for all students. For some, learning has been lost. For others, their mental health and well-being were negatively impacted. It is so important that we continue to provide supports for recovery and use best practices to do so.

So, we developed and shared a two-year pandemic recovery plan that educators are using to support their learners. The plan focuses in on key priorities, including inclusion, inclusive and special education, mental health and wellness, numeracy, literacy, and core competences as well. It is extremely important for educators to continue to meet learners where they are, and to provide students with tailored supports.

When I was in the classroom — it seems like a long time ago now — just going to personal development days and speaking with other educators about getting away from a western system where the teacher is in the front of the class, with a chalkboard, dictating to the students how to learn. Those days are so gone; they are so far gone. The education as, of, and for learners — being something that I was successful in implementing in my classroom. That transition is hard. Also, as an educator, to know all the different types of learning — the spectrum of learners — is also something that educators spend a lot of time over the summer months, and at other times — honing their skills and being able to meet students where they are. Add on top of that the pandemic — it just focuses that we really have to support our students with tailored supports, and to understand a student's overall needs as we look at them academically, culturally, emotionally, and physically — all extremely important that we have strategies in these pursuits.

Now, the recovery plan includes continuing work on the reimagining inclusive and special education — or RISE, for short — implementing recommendations of the 2019 audit, decolonializing the Department of Education, and implementing the safer schools action plan. These are priorities of my minister and her department — all of this important work to support the recovery of our Yukon students — again, now extremely important.

The member opposite was asking about some FTEs that were in the 2021-22 main budgets. In 2022-23, there was an increase of \$400,000 to support mental health and wellness for that school year — and that's in place. So, the FTEs and the \$100,000 was time-limited. However, there was also an increase of, as I mentioned, \$400,000 to support mental health and wellness in the 2022-23 school year.

Mr. Kent: So, just to be clear then, those 23 additional teaching positions that were in the 2020-21 school year are no longer there? I'm just looking for clarification from the Premier, because looking through the previous budgets and Public Accounts, it appears that money for tutoring is around \$150,000 per fiscal year. So, I just wanted to get the Premier to say if this \$150,000 that Yukon mentions as part of their response on education recovery, if that was in addition to what was already there, or is that the total amount that was earmarked for tutoring in that school year?

My final question, with respect to the K to 12 education pandemic recovery plan that the Premier and Minister of Finance has mentioned, the priorities in the document — I do have a copy of the most recent one from October 18, 2022 — I'm just curious if the Premier can tell us how much money or how much resources have been committed to the pandemic recovery plan as well.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, my understanding is that it is time-limited. I don't know the specifics of when that time limitation happens. The member opposite is asking some very specific questions about funding that I don't have at the tips of my fingers, so I would ask him to ask that question of the minister for a more fulsome response.

The FTE count for the Department of Education did increase from the 2020-21 mains to the 2021-22 mains. We had a change, year for year, of 51.6, which is a 4.5-percent increase.

As far as the budgeting, again, there is nothing in the supplementary budget to talk about, so if I could direct the member opposite to the minister for those specific questions, that would be the best place to get the most up-to-date information.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Minister of Finance for his time here this afternoon. I know my colleagues from the New Democratic Party have some questions, so I will turn the floor over at this time to the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Ms. Tredger: Before continuing with Education, I want to ask about an issue that has come up quite recently, and that is the issue of funding for trans health care in the territory. A letter released by Queer Yukon last week, which is from — or I should say, it was shared by Queer Yukon from the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, confirms what I had been hearing from a lot of people, that many procedures for trans health care have been cancelled outright or paused until the coming year — until the end of 2022, is what it says in the letter. My understanding is that was about funding that was being provided to private clinics to do these surgeries, and that there are regulatory changes coming to address this.

I guess, my first question is: When did the department first realize that there was a regulatory issue that needed to be addressed?

Hon. Mr. Silver: With due respect to the member opposite, regulatory changes in all of the departments is not something that I have here to discuss in a general debate. I know that the member opposite did ask this question in Question Period, and the minister answered the question, and the department is continuing to work out the delays — the situation — but I don't have anything new, compared to what the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services responded to in the questions in Question Period.

Ms. White: We are talking about funding for health care services, which I think is relevant to the budget, but I understand that some of the particular regulatory issues might not be familiar. This is a really incredibly difficult situation. I mean, we are talking about a safety issue for people transitioning. It's not safe for many people to be left mid-transition, trying to navigate the world, not to mention just — this is something people have worked toward for years, and to

suddenly have the rug kind of pulled out from under them and to be left in this state of uncertainty is incredibly, incredibly difficult.

One question I have, because this does appear to be related to private health clinics, is: Has funding also been paused for other private health services? So, for example, I know Yukoners access sleep apnea testing through a private sleep clinic in Whitehorse. Has that funding also been paused?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, a very specific question. I don't necessarily have the answer for the member opposite. We are absolutely committed to supporting Yukoners in creating reproductive care plans and expanding access to reproductive and gender-affirming care. This is something our department is extremely proud of. Again, we are leading the country in some of these pursuits. It's extremely important to us, and any new programming is not without its hiccups. It's important to remember, though, that again, we are working to support Yukoners' access to those reproductive care and services by trying our best to remove those barriers to access fertility treatments, birth control, period products — there is a whole gamut of things. To ask if any of these are on pause, or if there are any issues inside a regulatory process or in funding gaps — not to my awareness, but at the same time, this would be a great question to write down to the Minister of Health and Social Services for a very specific, timely answer.

Ms. Tredger: So, I would actually love a timely answer from the Minister of Health and Social Services, but I wrote her about this back in September and have not had an answer. I, too, was very proud of this policy, and would have said it was leading in Canada, until it was not happening anymore, at which point I hardly can think we can say that we're leading in Canada for a policy that is not happening. The people are not having access to these services.

I guess, one final question that I will ask — it is, like I have this letter from the Department of — sorry, the Minister of Health and Social Services, saying that these services — and I quote: "... coverage from some services under the gender-affirming care policy has been paused..."

So, given that this is a really significant blow to a lot of people, I am wondering, have there been any additional supports provided to the people who had their services paused? Do they have any increased access to mental health care, to anything that could help them get through this time?

Hon. Mr. Silver: If the member opposite does have a letter that is being processed through Health and Social Services, that is great, because that is where the member opposite will get the most up-to-date information from. I apologize that this is taking too much time, in their opinion. Again, this is new programming from the department — something that we are very proud of — and, again, without really speculating on why we are seeing some delays here, we have provided \$1.54 million to support sexual and reproductive health care in the Yukon Sexual Health Clinic and also in the Women's MidLife Health Clinic as well. We have provided funding through a whole bunch of different services and working with our partners in the NGO, the non-government organization communities, and we are going to continue to

work with our stakeholders and our partners, including the federal government, health care providers, the Yukon Medical Association, the Yukon Registered Nurses Association, and also First Nations Health, as well, to implement as many of these initiatives as we can and as timely as is possible. I am sorry that I don't have any other update for the member opposite, but I will look into the caseworking of that letter for the member opposite.

Ms. Tredger: I am actually just going to pick up the thread a bit that my colleague used.

You know, the Premier said that if we felt that a response from September is taking too long, the concern is that this is a real issue that is affecting people in a real way. So, there has been a pause put on trans health care procedures, which means that people who were in the steps — who were going through the steps, and seeing doctors, had gotten approvals — that has been put on “pause”. There is a positive, I would say, which is that we are hopeful that everything will start again in the new year, but what my colleague was asking was, had additional mental health supports been offered. You know, since that first-time funding for All Genders Yukon. All Genders Yukon has actually dissolved, and so, where there used to be an organization where folks could access the mental health support that they needed, that pathway no longer exists.

So, with the announcement that these surgeries and procedures were being put on pause, what my colleague is trying to seek is additional information. Has everyone been reached out to? Have they been offered the counselling services that they may need to bridge? I actually think that not hearing back since September is too long, because people are reaching out to us. If the minister has additional information, we would appreciate that.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I concur that it is a while to wait. I have made an overture to the member opposite that I will look into the casework, but I don't have anything extra to add right now on that at this time.

Ms. White: I just wanted to clarify a bit. Yesterday in Question Period, actually, I asked a question about the Teen Parent Centre. In recent memory, I believe that we have tributed the 25th anniversary of the Teen Parent Centre. I know plenty of folks in the territory who have really been served by that educational facility. One of the big things that folks always say is that it is having access to the childcare centre within the facility that is so important.

Yesterday during Question Period, I asked — because I had a conversation with young people who told me that they had met with officials from the Department of Education who actually suggested that they could start a new society and manage the daycare within the Teen Parent Centre. Today, I tabled the letter that actually came from the students themselves. The minister indicated in Question Period yesterday that these students could access daycare facilities in other places in the city, but my point is their point, which is that the daycare centre needs to remain in the school itself, so in the Teen Parent Centre.

I will just give the minister a minute and wait for that response.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I probably don't have too much more to add from the questions in Question Period and the response from the Minister of Education at that time. We are committed to supporting our teen parents, and the centre brings together a variety of supports for students during and after pregnancy, including providing a safe and caring environment. It is extremely important — access to health, healthy meals, academic supports, on-site childcare.

I do acknowledge that the Department of Education staff and the early learning educators from the Teen Parent Centre who provide extremely important supports to teen parents and ensure their learning successes. The Teen Parent Access to Education Society operates and manages the daycare that is located at the Teen Parent Centre. Teen parents can also access free childcare at other licensed childcare facilities in Yukon as well. We do acknowledge that the Teen Parent Access to Education Society has done, for many years, extremely important and dedicated work for our students and their young children.

As the member opposite knows, the Teen Centre Access to Education Society is not in good standing with the *Societies Act*, and, as a result, the government can't provide funding to the society for the operation of that daycare located at the Teen Parent Centre. That's not a full stop. The department is working very hard to help the society. I know that the society hosted a public meeting and a plan for next steps. That was mid-October — I believe on October 13 at the Whitehorse Public Library, and the director of ELCC attended the meeting and was available to answer questions as well. The meeting was positive and acknowledged the support of the Department of Education, but there is more work to be done at this time.

Ms. White: I do appreciate that answer. It's true. The wraparound services that the early childhood educators provide to the students attending the Teen Parent Centre are critical. I have had the pleasure of going before. It's the ability to have snacks together. It's the ability to have lunch together, and it's a whole slew of other things. One of the things that the students highlight is that it is critical that the childcare centre remain in that space. That is part of what makes it successful. I also think one of the reasons that it is successful is that there is also the parenting support. There's the ability to learn with the support of other caring and trained adults.

One of the questions that the students ask in the letter that the minister received yesterday is: Is there a commitment that childcare will be available on-site for student parents wishing to continue and complete their education after the end of this year?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, this is a letter that was sent in yesterday to the minister. I wouldn't have an update on that here for the member opposite, but I will endeavour to find out from the department how they plan on responding.

Ms. White: I guess, even without talking about the letter, the question becomes this: Does the Premier believe that having a childcare centre within the Teen Parent Centre is important? Without talking about the money or how it's going to be done, does the Minister of Finance believe that having a

childcare facility within the Teen Parent Centre is important to both the parents and their children attending that institution?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think that the service is extremely important. As far as the logistics of the current situation go, I am not going to speculate. However, the Teen Parent Access to Education Society — again, not being in good standing with the *Societies Act* — is where we are focusing our attention right now to make sure that we support the society to work through these licensing matters.

As I said, the society recently hosted a meeting. We are there to look at options and to work with them to remedy the situation. But again, if the member opposite is asking me as a former educator, as a Minister of Finance, and as a Premier, I do believe that these supports are extremely necessary. I am not going to speculate as to where the conversation is going to go from there with the good work that the society and the department are doing to remedy this situation.

Ms. White: I do appreciate that, as a former educator, the minister has indicated that it is important to have the childcare within that facility. I guess the next point that I will make is that it is not that we have these schools — there is not a teen parent centre in every municipality or every town that has a high school. There is one that exists in the City of Whitehorse. To the best of my knowledge, it has had two employees for the daycare since a good amount of time. With the fact that there has been a society that has run that daycare for 25 years and they have run into problems, is there any kind of conversation happening internally about making those two positions Yukon government positions? I am not saying that we do that for every daycare in the territory because I realize that this would not make any sense, but this is a very specific situation. It's early childhood educators working within a school to support students within their school.

Have there been any internal conversations about making those government positions?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm not aware of any of those conversations right now. Again, that would be something I would have to speak to my Minister of Education about as far as any of those conversations.

Ms. White: I do appreciate the answer from the minister. It was one of my suggestions yesterday in Question Period, so it's out in the universe and I hope that it grows legs. I think the work that happens at the facility is incredibly important and should continue into the future for those folks who need it.

Another concern that I recently heard is, of course, going around the Gadzoosdaa residence. So, what is being highlighted to us is that, with some recent retirements, there isn't any backfilling happening with positions of folks who have just left. The support that staff are able to give students has declined in recent weeks — actually, to the point that the Teslin Tlingit Council and others have reached out, asking for what next steps are.

As a matter of fact, I shared an e-mail that actually came from the superintendent of Education talking about the Gadzoosdaa renewal of mandate. But within that entire e-mail, it doesn't talk about a timeline. So, right now, we have heard concerns from the union around the safety of staffing numbers.

I know, anecdotally — I was having a conversation with someone the other day, and they actually got called in from one position into Gadzoosdaa to cover so that a student could be taken to the hospital, which seems kind of like a situation that is bananas — that you would call someone over from another school to cover so that you could take a student to hospital. I would like to think we would have enough coverage there that you wouldn't have to call in backup.

There are concerns from families outside of Whitehorse who have sent their high schoolers in — that their kids won't have access to extracurricular activities in the same way and that they won't be able to work jobs in the same way because there is not the support to get them to and from those activities. So, even though there is the Gadzoosdaa renewal of mandate e-mail that has gone out to everyone, there is no timeline included. So, what is the timeline on figuring out the current situation at Gadzoosdaa residence on a go-forward basis?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, we offer a lot of different supports to families and students who leave their communities to attend schools in other locations. We do recognize that concerns have been raised regarding the service delivery model, resourcing and supports. Additional supports have been provided in the interim.

The annual operating budget of \$1.39 million has not been reduced, and there is no intention to reduce — or to even close the residence — and we are going to continue to work with our partners to address the concerns through a student-centred approach. When I first got to Yukon, I spent two years working at F.H. Collins and I understand the importance of Gadzoosdaa to address the needs of folks who want to continue their education if they are in situations where they need to be in Whitehorse, as opposed to in the communities — a lot of times only because there is no high school in a lot of these specific communities.

We have been working with the Gadzoosdaa advisory committee to ensure that student learning and well-being is being supported and effectively resourced through the delivery of this program. An advisory committee meeting was held on October 28 to discuss recent concerns raised and to identify immediate next steps, as well as mid- to long-term actions as well. Staffing levels have been increased — well, from 2012 to 2018, we had 10.8 FTEs. That continued, like I said, from 2012 to 2018.

In 2019-20, there was an additional FTE — to 11.8 — and that has been the level since. Then, at the advisory meeting on October 28, the committee advised — recommended — restoring previous staffing schedules to pre-COVID schedules. So, as you can imagine, with the turmoil of COVID, things are always going to change. Pre-COVID was three to five staff from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., and two to three staff from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. — so 24-hour service.

We are working with the advisory committee to address student transportation concerns as well, and also options as part of the recommendations. Also, when program evaluation happens, the original five First Nations must be included as partners in the process, as well as union considerations.

Also, I think that a very important recommendation was for more indigenization through programming and staff — in a partnership approach in that initiative. So, it is extremely important to do so, in our opinion.

I don't think that I have too much more to update as far as timelines, but that is what I have for the member opposite at this time.

Ms. White: I appreciate that answer.

So, in the e-mail that was sent out on November 4, it talks about the next steps. It says: "Our next steps are to begin the procurement process to identify the appropriate group or individual." One of the concerns highlighted about that e-mail is that there are no timelines as to when that procurement process will start, so, as of right now, folks are unclear as to when those next steps start. Does the minister have any idea or any indication when the procurement process will start to identify the appropriate group or individual to do that consultation?

Hon. Mr. Silver: At this point, I don't — no.

Ms. White: I guess I will give a pitch to anyone who may be listening that the more information we can share with folks, the better off it is, and then they will know the next steps and I won't be asking those questions in general debate on the Department of Finance.

A number of years ago, the American Sign Language program was started in the Yukon, which is really important. Initially when that program started, people were able to access the translation services when they needed it. They could schedule an appointment, or they might have an activity that they wanted to do, or at times we would have people attending in the gallery or at public meetings. It was really important to have that flexibility because it meant that families could fully participate in different activities — whether for parent-teacher interviews or medical appointments or activities.

Since that program started, there have been some changes — and change isn't a bad thing — but when will that program be evaluated? The reason I ask is: When will clients who access it be interviewed as to what works and what doesn't work — and maybe looking at a redirection or trying to figure out how to best support the deaf community in the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do not know if there is a timeline for a review of this programming, but, I will look into it for the member opposite.

Ms. White: Thank you, Deputy Chair, and I appreciate that Premier. We think it's just good, when we have new programs and we are trying to figure them out, to figure out what works best and how to support folks. Again, that was pretty groundbreaking. The Premier and I will remember when the deaf community started to be served in that way and how important it was — and the participation. I'm sure, like me, he wants to see good things happen.

I am just going to go all over the place, actually.

I have recently been trying to support someone who has a degenerative disease, under Chronic Conditions, but one of the challenges is that the nature of the disease means there are constant changes to this person — physically — and the equipment that they need to support them needs to be adjusted

and changed and repaired. One of the challenges that this person is running into is the length of time for a response — and, from the department, the lack of understanding of the nature of the disease.

I wanted to better understand how Chronic Conditions works with patients who have some of those outlier diseases — ones that aren't so commonly known in the territory.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I hope the member opposite would understand that this is a very specific question for general debate, and it is something that I will bring up with the minister. Hopefully, the member opposite will correct me if I'm wrong, but she mentioned a specific case. Is this something that the member opposite has some e-mail correspondence on, or is this just a general question? Again, it's very, very specific in how the engagement process works, and I wouldn't be able to answer it here on the floor during general debate of the supplementary budget.

Ms. White: It is a very specific case, but what I wanted to know is how Chronic Conditions works with individuals who have outlying chronic diseases. We are not talking about type 1 diabetes, which we have a lot more of an idea on — but diseases that are less common. The reason why I was asking that is that I just wanted to understand how the department learns to understand what those conditions are and how those things can work. I understand that it is a specific question, so I will move on.

I have asked questions before about the home-building loan in Whitehorse. I know that the Premier has experience with the home-building loan from when he built his house in Dawson City.

One of the reasons I am bringing it up right now is to honour a friend of mine. My friend Mike Nixon was the one who first reached out with me. Not the previous Minister of Health and Social Services, but David Mike Nixon, previous nurse. He worked in Continuing Care for a long time and he actually just passed away. He reached out because he was trying to support a friend of his. I was told the last time I asked that it was in front of Management Board or that it was going to go there for a conversation, but the owner-build program is still in existence outside of the City of Whitehorse, but it ceased to happen in Whitehorse.

Lots of changes happened, of course. I would suggest that, with the onset of Whistle Bend and the hundreds of lots that have been sold there, Whitehorse was actually in a position to have folks that would require that. The interesting thing with that program is that, really, it is a bridging program. A person gets pre-approved by a bank for a house, but they need to build the house before they can actually access that mortgage. I wanted to know if the Premier could tell me where those conversations are right now. Are we going to see that loan program become available again for folks in the City of Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The Government of Yukon is taking several steps to improve the affordability of home ownership through the lead of the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation and the dedicated public servants in that department increasing the housing supply by incentivizing new

residential construction and private sector and First Nation land development projects, supporting affordable housing initiatives, and providing the loans and grants for homeowners to complement federal programming that is also under that national housing strategy.

Partnerships with private landowners could provide Yukoners with hundreds of new units. We anticipate that over 150 single detached homes will result from the Kwanlin Dün First Nation development up there — the Copper Ridge West project. So, I'll just put in a little plug here before I get into the rural versus urban splits. The grants and homeowner — sorry, loans and grants for home ownership, there are several different things to speak about therein. Also, we talked about the Northern Community Land Trust the other day and did a tribute — a very exciting, innovative process, never before seen in the Yukon. We are seeking an organization to build new, affordable housing with affordability in perpetuity, which is a great new concept for the Yukon.

So, federal first-time buyer incentives — there is a suite of different programs here. That provides a shared-equity mortgage between five and 10 percent of the house value — a difference from the Yukon government approach, which provided a loan program. There is also the federal rent-to-own, which is \$200 million in funding announced, requiring Yukon Housing Corporation to work with federal partners to explore how Yukoners can capitalize on this funding of a rent-to-own initiative. The Housing Corporation also complements these federal programs through Yukon-specific loan and grant opportunities to fill identified gaps in the market. So, as you can see, as I'm painting the picture, as federal funding changes, we augment to maximize bang for buck with these federal initiatives.

Also, in particular, the Yukon Housing Corporation provides support to households in rural areas, who can't obtain financing through traditional lenders, through the Yukon Housing Corporation's rural home ownership program. Twenty-two families have been supported to either purchase or build a home. Many houses in the Yukon require significant upgrades and repair, and since 2020, Yukon Housing has provided 160 homes with funding through ownership repair programs.

The member opposite is correct — back in the early — at the turn of the century, I would say — I was working as an educator in Dawson City. At that time, I was living in a Yukon Housing unit, and I thought, "You know, I have been in this community long enough. I really should have my own option outside of a government-subsidized situation." We made some changes to that program, as well, which I think are extremely helpful in transitioning to like a community approach, and, you know, recognizing as well that the needs in one community versus another community are going to be completely different.

Also, that program, at the time, for the homeowner-build, had its own issues that needed upgrading — I will leave it at that.

As far as any plans for the department to reconsider how they are allocating the ownership programs or the loan programs, I guess what I could say in general debate would be

that the department does a good job of matching and pairing from different federal pursuits and dollars that come out, making sure that we match that with our own initiatives as well. I don't know any more as far as the specific question about access to that program Yukon-wide, but hopefully, with some of the explanations of the grants and the loans that are offered through Yukon Housing, in cooperation with the federal government, helps to kind of paint a picture of the different options that are currently out there.

Ms. White: I do appreciate a walk through a lot of those federal programs, but this is specific. Currently, there is the rural home ownership loan program for folks living in a community in the Yukon outside of Whitehorse to buy or build a home. I am asking about this, because again, you can get preapproved for a mortgage, but that's to purchase an existing home. If you buy a lot, for example, in Whistle Bend, and you don't have the equity to build that home, you are left in this grey area. The rural home ownership program says that if you are building or purchasing a new home outside of Whitehorse — I'm looking for inside of Whitehorse — you fall within the debt-to-loan ratios. You have been declined for your builder, or by a bank. You need a 2.5-percent down payment. Then it says that you must have the required skills. You have to be able to show that you have the skills.

The reason why I bring this up again, is for folks that may have been lucky in the land lottery and gotten a lot, and have been preapproved for a mortgage, that mortgage doesn't often extend toward a building loan. There are differences there. The reason why I'm asking about extending the loan to build a home in Whitehorse is that bridging opportunity.

Again, it's not giving away money; the money comes back. It's actually, I would say, a pretty short-term investment. Typically, people want to move into homes, so they don't go on in perpetuity. That's the specific program I was asking about, so in case the Premier has any additional information about that specific program and it getting reinstated in Whitehorse.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, not only just highlighting the federal programs, but also how we complement that with our own programming. Our particular loans and grants programs do target Yukoners in highest need by providing the supports to secure stable, affordable housing without competing with traditional lenders.

Interestingly enough, back when I had my loan, when I was a teacher, for a mortgage, some of the parts of that program that were helpful were, you know, if you went through a regular bank, you are in a situation where you have to get to rooftop, and then you get some money, and you have to start considering lines of credit. It was really easy to get through that system. The interest rates, however, at the government were a little bit higher than the market at that time, and the ability to then transfer over to a mortgage was a highlight of that program. Again, that's going back 20 years now.

I think that the department has done a great job of augmenting and analyzing their programs to make sure that they fit the specific needs of Yukoners currently. Also, I think that, back then, before my loan, you actually had to get denied

by a bank before you got these loans. That is going way back. Again, as we take a look at the subprime mortgage issues that ran amuck in our financial systems, you can also see why certain programs have been augmented and changed over the years.

Now, our loan programs are designed to complement those federal initiatives and to support that fiscal responsibility in there as well. There are a lot of things to consider. In that, we have the developer-build loan program, which supports that bridge funding for construction and land development for residential housing. We also have the home repair and loan grant, including a home repair loan, and accessibility and emergency repairs grant. The particular loan that the member opposite is speaking about — the rural homeowner loan — aims to help Yukoners in rural Yukon to buy a house through a first mortgage, or build a home through an owner-build mortgage.

You know, some of the things are harder in rural communities. I have seen developers come to me with this. Let's say you have a private developer who wants to build in a rural community, if they are building a home at a certain price that has never been built before, again, there are huge issues when it comes to CMHC and getting financing there as well. So, all things are not necessarily equal in Whitehorse, where we have some beautiful homes at higher prices than you might see in a rural community, so they do have to take these things into consideration, as they are developing these programs, but again, that rural home ownership program is specifically designed to help people in the rural communities with a first mortgage, or build a home through that owner-build mortgage.

Municipal matching rental construction is worth mentioning here as well. That provides a one-time capital grant to help increase the supply of rental housing in municipalities, and again, as the housing landscape within the Yukon and the country continues to change, Yukon Housing Corporation has been very proactive.

So, a little bit of a trip down memory lane to where we are currently — that proactive engagement with stakeholders is extremely important — stakeholders such as local bankers — to be able to hear about insights that would allow us to better target our programming. So, that is extremely important. As far as expanding that program, I will say that it is worth an analysis of this idea, and it is something that we could look into, but I just wanted to give a little bit more background on the programs that we do have available and some of the rationale for it.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that.

So, just talking about that rural home ownership loan program, it has two intakes — it has the first intake and the second intake. Can the Premier let me know how many applications there were for both the first, and then the second intake?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Not in general debate, I don't have those numbers, but I could take a look into them.

Ms. White: My next question, although there won't be an answer: I am curious as to, of those applications, how many were accepted, but I appreciate that might not be possible to answer right now.

So, I am going to switch course again, and I am going to talk about the better building program. You know that there has been lots of talk about the better building program. Is the Premier familiar with the federal NRCan greener homes loan program? The reason I ask is that it seems that the terms are better. That program offers \$5,000 to \$40,000 loans, with 10-year interest-free loans, which is better than what I imagine the Bank of Canada rate would be right now. Is the Premier familiar with that federal program, which appears to be quite a bit better than the better building program that has been brought forward?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would say that I am surface aware, but not in-depth.

Ms. White: The first thing I will say is that I wasn't aware of the program at all until a neighbour of mine sent it to me, saying that it appeared that the federal program was maybe going to hit the mark better than the better building program. I guess the next question is: When the government was working on their better building program — you know, I have highlighted some of my concerns, such as the fact that the assessment of my house, for example, is about \$100,000, which means that, at 25 percent, I could access just \$25,000. I think probably everyone here is tired of me saying that I have spent \$75,000 on my home in energy retrofits, but it's true.

Did the government look around at the programs that were available federally before they landed on the proposal and now the program for the better building program?

Hon. Mr. Silver: This would be a conversation that has been debated here in the Legislative Assembly quite a bit as far as how the program was built — the engagement and the process that they went through.

Just for the record, the program will enable homeowners and commercial property owners to access that low-interest financing to undertake energy retrofits. The program furthers our goals laid out in *Our Clean Future* by making it easier for Yukoners to undertake targeted improvements to increase the energy efficiency of homes and commercial buildings. That program, as we all know, has been through a lot of different stages, working to establish municipal and client agreements. We struck a working group with municipalities. In those conversations, we were looking at best practices around the nation and how that fits into being Yukon specific has been the topic of a lot of debate in the Legislative Assembly.

To answer the member's question, yes, that would be the process.

Ms. White: I will just put in a pitch that, for folks who are interested, the Canada greener homes loan has better terms and for greater amounts of money than can be accessed through the Better Buildings when that is available. So, depending on what kind of renovations you want to do, it's probably well worth a look, actually.

The next question I have is, actually, going to go back in time a bit. So, when the COVID restrictions were in place, I think there were times when people got caught. For example, if someone had been injured prior to the vaccine mandate — was off work, wasn't vaccinated — what was the process within WCB? So, if a person wasn't able to return to work, how was that looked at? If, for example, a person was coming home from

a trip and was told that they had to self-isolate for two weeks and it turns out that was wrong, how can people appeal decisions that were made in that time?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, this is a very specific question to the workers' compensation folks. I do know that all claims will be investigated and decided on by a case-by-case basis. If there's a specific situation of somebody getting caught and the member opposite needs me to do casework, I would be happy to help.

Ms. White: I thank the Premier for that. In this case, two of these are already beginning casework, but I will reach out for additional support. I thank the Premier for the conversation, and I'm sure that there will be other opportunities.

Ms. Clarke: I wanted to ask a few questions around the new Whitehorse rapid housing initiative triplex in Porter Creek. From what I understand, this triplex was completed in the summer. It is now November, and these units are still sitting empty. Can the Premier please provide an update on the status of this triplex? Have residents been selected? If not, what are the criteria for individuals to qualify for these units? Why have these units sat empty for so many months when we are facing a housing crisis and there are over 500 people on a list for social housing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We, as a government, have recognized the immediate benefit to Yukoners from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's rapid housing initiative program. The initiative is providing huge opportunities to build affordable, energy-efficient, community housing for Yukoners with urgent housing needs.

The rapid housing initiatives, round 1, approved the Yukon Housing Corporation to build three triplexes in Mayo, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse, contributing nine units of affordable community housing options. Eight of those units are barrier-free, with two units specifically for women and children.

Units are allocated based upon rapid housing initiative eligibility criteria, and the allocation policy for vulnerable — Yukon Housing Corporation. Now, Whitehorse and Mayo have now become homes for our tenants, while, in Whitehorse, tenants will be calling the triplex home later this fall.

Ms. Clarke: I thank the Premier for that answer.

Earlier this Sitting, we asked the minister to please provide the number of seniors currently waiting for housing on the list for social housing. The minister provided a current number on the social housing list, but not the total number of seniors waiting on that list. Can he or the Premier provide that number now?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have any update from the number that the minister gave earlier, but I will speak with him later to get a qualification.

Ms. Clarke: Currently, the Yukon Housing Corporation offers a loan to buy or build a home in rural Yukon. This loan program replaces a previous Yukon Party government's program that was available and was exclusive to Whitehorse residents to assist them in obtaining a mortgage.

As with the previous program, applicants had to be declined by a bank for a mortgage. We have heard from individuals who would like to see this program expanded, to be

once again available to Whitehorse residents who are unable to secure a mortgage through their bank.

So, during the Spring Sitting, I had this conversation with the minister, who said that he was having conversations with the president about a different model for a more urban program, such as the one that was previously in place. Does the minister or Premier have any information that he can update this House with, in terms of considering a return to a program that is available for Whitehorse residents?

Hon. Mr. Silver: With all due respect to the member opposite, I just answered this question from questions from the Leader of the Third Party.

Ms. Clarke: Thank you, Madam Chair. Another program that was erased by this government was the down payment assistance program, which assisted Yukoners buying a home by providing them a low-interest loan to put money down on a bank-approved mortgage. There is currently no such program in place — a program that was very beneficial to Yukoners looking to get into the housing market, but having trouble coming up with a down payment. So, on April 19, during the Spring Sitting, I had asked the minister whether he had given consideration to creating a similar program. He said yes — he was considering this.

Can the minister or Premier please provide an update on what has been done to date on reinstating that program, and can the minister or Premier provide information as to why the program was discontinued in the first place?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, with all due respect, we just went through — just five minutes ago — with the Leader of the Third Party all of the Yukon Housing Corporation's loans and grants programs. We spoke in-depth of how we are making sure that our programming is best encapsulated with federal funding. We spoke about historical trends in the Yukon Housing Corporation when it comes to how they have done a brilliant job of developing and redeveloping their programs based upon the needs over the last 20 years. So, I would ask the member opposite to take a look at the Blues. If there is anything there that we didn't touch on, we could get back to the member opposite on that.

Ms. Clarke: I thank the minister for that answer, and I will definitely review the Blues.

Can the minister or Premier provide some background on the process to create the community land trust?

Hon. Mr. Silver: In October 2021, the housing summit provided an excellent forum for innovative partnerships, and also solutions to help with the growing housing stock to address the affordability gap, and also to support a fuller housing continuum across the Yukon. Again, we spoke earlier on today — just a couple minutes ago — about the changes that the Yukon Housing Corporation had done to be in that housing continuum, and that is some very great work that the minister has been doing to make sure that every single specific community's needs are encapsulated, when we take a look at this programming.

During that two-day event, we learned about the potential for a new Yukon opportunity, which is the Northern Community Land Trust. As the member opposite knows, we

had the opportunity to tribute these initiatives here in the Legislative Assembly. The proponents of the trust are proposing to develop a 20- to 40-unit affordable housing option over the next three years, and the Yukon Housing Corporation is currently working with a couple of different departments — Energy, Mines and Resources, Community Services, and also the Department of Justice — to ensure that the model being proposed for ongoing affordability will be effective in being used in a brand-new way here in the Yukon. So, we are definitely exploring options to support the project, should it be approved to proceed.

We know from the recent Office of the Auditor General report that addressing Yukon's housing needs will require us to adopt innovative approaches and leverage strengths in partnerships, and I believe that the minister is doing that with initiatives like the community land trust — a model where the land is being held in trust, by a community land trust, which then protects the affordability of the home by allowing the owner to re-sell at the rate of inflation. The key to the success of a CLT model definitely relies on an original grant of land and a non-profit approach to construction.

As far as next steps, I am not going to speculate too much on that, but we are continuing to work with the departments that I mentioned to make sure that we can move forward on this in a timely way. I know that there are some options to consider in maybe Riverdale or Whistle Bend to support these projects, and I look forward to the minister having more information to share on this incredibly exciting proposal for Yukon and the housing continuum.

Ms. Clarke: Does the ownership model require legislative changes to the *Land Titles Act*, or regulatory changes?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Very specific question — again, as we continue to work on options, we will have to see what those options are before we decide which way we go, either with regulatory changes, if necessary, or legislative changes.

Ms. Clarke: Are there other issues that need to be addressed before the project can move forward?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would ask the member opposite to, if she has anything specific —

Ms. Clarke: No, I'm asking the government if they have any other issues that need to be addressed before the project can move forward — any issues that you know of.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, it's a very vague question. I don't know how to comment on it. In general debate, I am not aware of any issues, but again, a little context would be very helpful.

Ms. Clarke: I will move on.

What is the most recent status update for the housing project at 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street? What are the criteria to be considered for housing in this facility?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We are extremely excited to see this project nearing completion. The 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street project, as members will know, will provide 47 units of much-needed affordable housing to the downtown area of Whitehorse. The project is scheduled to be substantially completed this fall. Like other projects throughout Canada,

there have been delays due to COVID-19, supply chain considerations, and labour shortages across all trades; however, the project has a budget to move forward on — \$21.7 million over three years for both the design and construction.

The tenanting process of the building will follow the corporation's community housing policies. This approach will allow us to respond to dynamic housing needs, with a focus on creating vibrant communities within multi-unit buildings. Tenant allocation also does include a mixed-use and a mixed-income approach that will see families, seniors, and single people living in the building, which is a good mix.

Additionally, the housing development helps us to achieve our goals in the *Our Clean Future* strategy, as the building has been designed to exceed National Energy Board of Canada minimum requirements for energy efficiency, which is extremely important — especially living in the north.

We have been speaking about this every time we have an opportunity locally, but also on international and national stages — about being the canary in the coalmine in the north and experiencing climate change at a different rate than the rest of the world. It's extremely important that we're not just building back to regular standards; we need to exceed those standards. Within that consideration, there are extra costs for that.

The project is a concrete action in addressing recommendations that were made, as I mentioned earlier, by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada — by adding more affordable homes in Whitehorse. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2022.

Like other projects, again, there have been a lot of delays. As I mentioned, the most recent delay is resulting from — and the minister spoke about this in the Legislative Assembly when asked in Question Period — a flooring deficiency and challenges with scheduling fire alarm verification. The corporation is working with the contractor, Wildstone, to resolve these issues and to provide an updated timeline for completion.

Ms. Clarke: What will the mix of units be in this building? What percentage will be for social housing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Could I get the member opposite to repeat that, to ask that question again?

Ms. Clarke: I would like to know what the mix will be of units in this building. What percentage will be for social housing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The makeup would be 15 bachelor suites, 14 one-bedroom units, 13 two-bedroom units, and five three-bedroom units, supporting various household needs, and nine of the units are being built with low-barrier accessibility, as I mentioned earlier. These are all social housing, no market housing in there. The various design considerations, including size and shape of the lot, and the intent to include common gathering spaces — and that's the resulting number of 47 units, when all these things were taken into consideration

Ms. Clarke: I'll move on to another question. There has been a lot of interest from the public around plans for the land where Macaulay Lodge stood. Can the minister or Premier

please confirm what the government's current plans are for this land, going forward?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm not sure if I have any new information for the member opposite. I know this was a conversation debate in past sessions. We, in 2022, determined that the lodge was beyond its use and proceeded with the demolition, and that was completed, and we know that this property offers our territory significant potential in addressing the housing pressures that we are faced with. That's why, once the remaining site mitigation is complete, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will use the information gained during a recent expression of interest on the property to inform a tender to sell the property.

Just a little bit more background on this: The demolition of this building — it definitely opens up a variety of options for how we could move forward using this land — again, subject to the City of Whitehorse zoning requirements. Now, the department — the corporation — is collaborating with Energy, Mines and Resources and the City of Whitehorse to ensure that lot zoning is appropriate and to prepare the lot for redevelopment in the future.

Now, this past spring, our government issued an expression of interest for what options could be reasonably done in the Riverdale area. The intent is to tender the site for subsequent redevelopment by the private sector as a mixed-use site, subject to, again, existing zoning with a significant affordable housing option in it.

The reason I say that I don't have too much more to add, I believe most of that information has been shared by the minister in the Legislative Assembly this session. I will leave it at that.

Ms. Clarke: I do have a question about Normandy. In Question Period, the minister mentioned that the Yukon Housing Corporation was considering taking more units in Normandy for social housing. Can the minister or Premier please elaborate on this? How many more units might be acquired by the corporation, and would the corporation be purchasing or leasing these units?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We are very committed to this development — well, to a wide range of housing options, really, especially when it comes to our seniors. That is all in line with our *Aging in Place Action Plan*, which helps to address the housing pressures that are felt right across the continuum that we have spoken about a lot this afternoon in general debate. That's why we have developed the seniors supportive housing program to provide seniors with housing supports and options. Part of that approach is securing 10 affordable housing units at Normandy — Normandy Living. This is a private, 84-unit seniors residence to provide Yukon Housing Corporation seniors supports for daily living and who do not require full service or long-term care.

So, it's an exciting partnership and project — and, of course, with multiple departments, including Health and Social Services, involved here as well. There is eligibility for seniors currently housed in or on waiting lists, and the Yukon Housing Corporation units will be addressed based upon a clinical frailty scale and the rent-geared-to-income and services-geared-to-income rates.

So, these are all important considerations as we take a look at capacity and ability to work within the private sector. These are all leased right now, which is great to see. Existing housing policies are extremely important as we take a look at how we partner with these folks, such as the application of an asset cap, which will also be applied for — part of that eligibility. We will ensure that affordable units at the Normandy Living are distributed in an equitable way to make sure that we can meet those folks in the most need.

Those 10 leases that we are talking about, just for some background, are leased, not owned. They are 20-year leases. I know that the minister responsible has had conversations about where we go from here. I'm not going to speculate on that. I am just going to basically praise the minister for the work that he has done. He deserves the accolades for getting this partnership moving forward.

It's also great to see the private sector working on that 84-unit seniors residence.

Ms. Clarke: Normandy will be a mixed-use building. What does this mean for the building? Are there any policies in place for the units designated as Yukon Housing Corporation units? Will this be reserved for seniors?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe that I answered most of that question. We have 10 of the units. There are definitely services being provided in our units.

We talked a lot about how, in addition to currently focusing on folks who are 65 years of age and over — you know, the Yukon Housing Corporation offering units to seniors who would enjoy the diversity of mixed-income and mixed-use buildings through the community housing. I think I did speak to that when it comes to Normandy, but when it comes to the fastest growing segment of the Yukon population, which is our seniors, it is extremely important that we have different options for seniors — safety and security are extremely important to contemplate, as well, as we look at options, working with the private sector, but also working with Health and Social Services' commitments as well.

We know that, in our strategy, we think about things like nighttime security services in our Whitehorse multi-unit buildings, one-on-one engagement through phone calls and visits from senior engagement specialists, 24-hour security cameras, monitoring in all Whitehorse multi-unit buildings with common areas, and a quarterly seniors newsletter to increase senior tenant sense of community. This is extremely important, based upon our action plan, and, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services, the corporation's new seniors supportive housing program will support eligible seniors who require some daily assistance, as well, to maintain independence.

Again, outlining the plan and how that program coincides with the opening of Normandy Living, which is, again, a private 84-unit housing development with supports for seniors, which provides Yukon Housing Corporation the use of those 10 affordable housing units for low-income seniors — it is extremely important for context to talk about the overall plan, not just necessarily those 10 units.

Madam Chair, seeing the time, I would move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Klondike that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Ms. Blake: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 206, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2022-23*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

The following documents were filed November 8, 2022:

35-1-109

Bill No. 20, *Animal Protection and Control Act*, letter re (dated November 7, 2022) from Rosie Sandulak, Vice President, Yukon Outfitters Association to Hon. Nils Clarke, Minister of Environment (Dixon)

35-1-110

Bill No. 20, *Animal Protection and Control Act*, letter re (dated October 24, 2022) from Jim Fink, President, Yukon Outfitters Association to Hon. Nils Clarke, Minister of Environment, and Hon. John Streicker, Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Dixon)