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HANSARD

Tuesday, March 12, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Spring Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
 DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
 DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

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Hon. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Deputy Premier Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Economic Development; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Justice
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Pauline Frost	Vuntut Gwitchin	Minister of Health and Social Services; Environment; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Highways and Public Works; the Public Service Commission
Hon. Jeanie Dendys	Mountainview	Minister of Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Women's Directorate

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Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
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Stacey Hassard	Leader of the Official Opposition Pelly-Nisutlin	Scott Kent	Official Opposition House Leader Copperbelt South
Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Liz Hanson	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
Kate White	Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King

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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, March 12, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: I have the pleasure of introducing Rudy Couture, who many of you will know was the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms appointed on October 24, 2001. He then became the Yukon Legislative Assembly's Sergeant-at-Arms in 2003 and he retired in 2016. Welcome to the Assembly.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would also like to welcome some other guests. We have with us today for the tribute to Faro's 50th anniversary Mayor Len Faber. We have along with him Mr. Keith Seaboyer who is a councillor for the South Klondike Local Advisory Council.

We also have the acting director of Community Affairs, Sam Crosby, and we have with her Andrea Wilson who is one of our community advisors — if you can welcome them please.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I would like to ask members to join me in welcoming to the gallery the chair of the Hidden Valley Elementary School Council, Ms. Lindsay Heynen.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would ask my colleagues to help me welcome Patricia Bacon, executive director of Blood Ties, Brontë Renwick-Shields, case manager for health and housing, Robin Walker and Chris Harrold.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would like to recognize my friend May Blysak as she joins us in the House this afternoon. Please welcome her.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I know you've already introduced Rudy, but I think it's important to recognize that he was also a long-time Faroite and CAO of Faro at one point. Thanks, Rudy, for being here.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: Seeing as how we're doing duplicates, I want to also wish May Blysak a happy 80th birthday.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I'm told that I do this at my peril, but I would like members of the House to join me in welcoming back to the House Bonnie Dalziel.

Applause

Mr. Gallina: I would like members to join me in welcoming Gerard Tremblay. Gerard, it's nice to see you. Gerard is a constituent of Porter Creek Centre.

Applause

Mr. Kent: I would like to recognize a constituent of mine, Kim Beacon, who is joining May Blysak here today with us as well.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of 50th anniversary of Town of Faro

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Today I wore my Yukon tartan tie. I wore it in honour of the Town of Faro in celebration of its 50th anniversary. On behalf of the Yukon government, I would like to congratulate Faro on 50 years as an incorporated community. We wish them all the best for another 50 and more.

Faro is known for its resilience and strong community spirit. When the Town of Faro was born, it looked very different to what it does today. Faro was incorporated as a community in 1969, a year when the Faro mine opened and the Cyprus Anvil Mining Corporation became the largest private sector employer in the territory. When the town was built, the infrastructure could accommodate up to 3,000 people. Fifty years later, Faro is a beautiful home to approximately 400 or so folks — all good folks.

From the bustling boom town to the resilient community it is today, the Town of Faro has shaped the history of the territory. In 1974, for example, Rennie Mitchell of the Town of Faro helped found the Association of Yukon Communities along with the mayors of Dawson City and Whitehorse. I guess that makes the association 45 years old this year, Mr. Speaker, and I will tell them congrats as well.

Since then, many leaders in the community have worked hard to build Faro into a wonderful place to work and live — people like Rudy Couture, who is with us here today. I know you just let us know that Rudy served for 13 years as Sergeant-at-Arms here in our Legislative Assembly, and the Leader of the Official Opposition recognized Rudy for his long-time work as town manager. It turns out that it was also for 13 years, which is an incredible accomplishment, from 1972 to 1985.

Faro residents have not only built their own vibrant community, they have helped build the Yukon into a better and more beautiful territory. I would like to thank our colleagues in Faro — Mayor Leonard Faber, council members and Chief Administrative Officer Ian Dunlop — for their ongoing work with our government. We are committed to working closely with all communities, and we are looking forward to building our relationship with Faro for another 50 years and more.

I have been speaking with Faro Councillor Lisa Snyder — who is a heck of a dancer, by the way — and is one of the crew planning the 50th anniversary celebrations. Lisa has let us know that the town will host celebrations for its 50th anniversary between June 28 and July 7. Music, drum dancing, Canada Day carnival, poker rally, turkey shoot, a visit from the Premier — and those last two are not related — they have a lot going on, and they are welcoming all Yukoners for fun and festivities.

On behalf of all Yukoners, I would like to congratulate the Town of Faro on their 50th anniversary. See you in Faro this summer, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Third Party to recognize the 50th anniversary of Faro. Born in 1969 — which just so happens to be the same year I was born — we have the Yukon's best kept secret. I mean Faro, not me.

Faro was founded to house the workers of the largest open-pit lead-zinc mine in the world, but no one in their wildest dreams anticipated what was to come. First, Mother Nature tried to put a stop to the town, as two forest fires swept through the area in June of that year. The first took out as much as 500 feet of new power line, and the second destroyed some 50 residences, all in various stages of construction, but the community survived and thrived.

As the buildings were being rebuilt, the community continued to change as families began to move in. It didn't take long before it was realized that things like a school and a post office would be required.

The Town of Faro sprung from the embers and has gone through cycles of change throughout its life. Unfortunately, those cycles included the mine closing and reopening a few times, causing turbulence over the years in the community. The final closure came in June 1998, and the mine closure did not stop the community, which continued, in Faro fashion, to survive and thrive.

The Faro mine, as the minister mentioned, was the largest private sector employer in the Yukon, and it gave start to many of the businesses here in the Yukon that continue to operate today. The mine remediation cleanup continues to be a key contributor to employment, but the landscape continues to change. Almost all of the once-abandoned housing units have now been purchased with plans to renovate them into rental units or become home for newcomers or housing for future mines, such as the BMC Minerals just down the road.

As the minister also mentioned, Faro has roughly 400 residents today, and I must say that these 400 are the best group of volunteers on the planet. If you don't believe me, Mr. Speaker, just make plans to join me and all of Faro on the 50th anniversary celebration in Faro, which, as the minister again said, takes place between June 28 and July 7. I know that the 50th anniversary event calendar is starting to fill up, and I can guarantee that it's going to be fun for all.

I could go on for hours about Faro, Mr. Speaker, but I know you have me on a tight timeline, so I will just say congratulations to Faro on your 50th and I hope to see you all there that week of June 28 to July 7.

Applause

In recognition of Blood Ties Four Directions Centre Society's Steve Cardiff Tiny House Community project

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today to give tribute to Blood Ties Four Directions Centre Society's Steve Cardiff Tiny House Community.

On January 18, 2019, a diverse crowd of Yukoners gathered at the corner of 6th Avenue and Jarvis Street for the official opening of the Steve Cardiff Tiny House Community project. The group ranged in age and background, but they all shared a common sense of support and hope with the opening of this new housing project. It is often said that it takes a community to raise a child. It also takes a community of open-minded, supportive individuals to help raise and support the more vulnerable members of our community and our society. Patricia Bacon, the executive director of Blood Ties Four Directions, knows this better than most.

The fact that there were so many Yukoners present to support the official opening is a testament of her tireless dedication to the Steve Cardiff Tiny House Community project. It is inspiring to see a community organization come up with an innovative solution that addresses the needs of their clients.

My colleague Minister Streicker was on hand that day to deliver our support for the hard work and vision of Blood Ties Four Directions. We are pleased to be a partner and provide support to this project. These five homes will be supportive, transitional residences for Blood Ties clients. Each home is large enough for a single person to live independently, and the size helps to limit heating and maintenance costs. The tiny home community is an example of how the size, shape and character of a home can be used to create a beautiful and functional space that serves a local need.

This project has been many years in the making. As Patricia stated in her opening remarks at the event — and I quote: "It took a lot of cups of coffee with a lot of individuals to get this project completed." Blood Ties first started this project in 2012 with one tiny home project. It was evident that this model worked for their clients, and one tiny home developed into a concept of the successful tiny home community. Patricia and her staff have done a monumental amount of work to realize this vision.

That's not all that this organization does for Yukoners. Day to day, Blood Ties provides a wealth of support to the community. On top of a variety of resources, information and workshops, they offer needle exchange and fentanyl testing daily at their offices. I recently received my naloxone training at Blood Ties with their harm reduction and wellness counsellor. Jesse provided clear and succinct instructions, which only took 10 minutes. I encourage all Yukoners to visit Blood Ties Four Directions and participate in that program.

Blood Ties also operates the outreach van, an important service for marginalized and street-involved adults and youth. In 2018, the outreach van provided services over 7,000 times to approximately 1,400 unique individuals. They distribute survival gear, harm reduction equipment and overdose education materials. These, among others, are important harm reduction initiatives that Blood Ties spearheads for our community.

The Steve Cardiff tiny house project was another achievement of this hard-working organization, which understands the importance of working together and supporting one another. We are working in partnership in often difficult times, but we have laid the groundwork well in Yukon.

We have plans that are being implemented, such as the Safe at Home plan to end and prevent homelessness and the housing action plan for Yukoners. These plans enable us to work together to meet our shared goals and priorities. They allow for coordinated effort and work and will continue to achieve an active partnership in providing all Yukoners safe and healthy homes to live in.

Today we acknowledge the leadership of the Blood Ties Four Directions Centre Society. They have clearly demonstrated how we can be stronger working together. I'm optimistic that together we can solve housing issues, create innovative solutions that work for us in the north and provide housing options for Yukoners at all stages of their lives.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party and the Official Opposition, I'm proud to stand here today in this Assembly — in fact, to stand at the same spot where my friend and colleague Steve Cardiff stood for many years to speak from his heart on so many issues affecting Yukon and her citizens. Today, I'm especially happy to join in paying tribute to the Blood Ties Four Directions tiny houses project.

Blood Ties is a community-based NGO that has a strong track record working with and for the people in our society who, for many reasons, are not reached by mainstream government programs and services.

As a member of this Legislative Assembly, Steve Cardiff was a relentless advocate for those in our community whose voices were not heard, who were marginalized by race, by their poverty, by their involvement with the criminal justice system, by their youth or by their involvement with drugs. He saw the person first — their humanity — and he responded

first to those dimensions, and then he worked to figure out how to help and try to make change.

Some in this House will recall the spring of 2011. The Yukon government was immersed in a dispute with a local trucking firm about work at Whistle Bend. The firm parked its huge trucks and earth-moving equipment outside this building for days. One day, as we were leaving the building after the Sitting, Steve and I saw a person setting up a tent. She told us that she was homeless and she felt that, with those big trucks out front, she would be safe camped on the Legislative Assembly lawns. We both recognized the truth in what she was saying. We were in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. There were no options for marginalized poor people, especially women. We wished her well. Later that evening, Steve called to ask if I had any camping gear — a cooler, a foam mattress, et cetera. He could not bear to see this person left stranded without some bare necessities.

Over the course of that spring and into July, the tent city grew and grew. The discomfort of the governing party was palpable. It was uncomfortable for politicians and senior public servants to have to pass this daily reminder that not all Yukoners have safe, secure housing.

In early July, Steve was killed in a car crash coming back to the Legislature after a meeting. The day before his funeral, the government posted notices evicting all the occupants of the tent city and passed legislation making future gatherings on that site illegal.

It didn't change the reality of those evicted. They rejoined the invisible poor — the unhoused. A year later, it was so fitting to see the first Blood Ties Four Directions tiny house erected in Steve Cardiff's name on Hawkins Street. It was as if the spirit of Steve had risen, phoenix-like, just blocks away, and it was proof that where government could not, would not — and in this case, just would not — act, citizens from labour to business to ordinary individuals could and would.

This year, Blood Ties, through an amazing cooperative effort with many community partners, including governments and individuals, realized the next phase in the dream of the five-home tiny house community on 6th and Jarvis. We salute the dedicated board and staff of Blood Ties, especially Patricia Bacon. Her ability to pull in dedicated volunteers who in turn help to do the fundraising so necessary to an endeavour like this is amazing.

Mr. Speaker, when I look now at the Steve Cardiff Tiny House Community, I am reminded of words that Steve often quoted, and they are Woodsworth Grace — and I quote: "What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all. To this end, may we take our share in this world's work and this world's struggles."

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Ms. McLeod: I have for tabling a letter from an ADM in Health and Social Services to an NGO regarding their funding freeze.

Ms. White: I have for tabling a letter from the Health and Social Services ADM of Corporate Services to the president of the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society, dated May 7, 2018.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 31: *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that Bill No. 31, entitled *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 31, entitled *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 31 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills for introduction?
Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with First Nation partners and community stakeholders to determine whether there is interest or capacity in other organizations to take on delivery of some or all of the programs and services currently being delivered in the Whitehorse emergency shelter.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that youth who previously attended the Integrated Supports for Yukon Youth program can access their personal files and share them with workers at the new youth program at the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Land development

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise today to update this House and the territory on the ways that our government is working

on addressing the need for land development in the Yukon. Our growing economy has increased demand for residential lots and housing, and we are working hard to meet those needs. We also know that lot scarcity can drive housing prices up. This makes land development an important part of the housing spectrum, directly related to affordable housing and our economic future.

In each of the five years, our plan is to invest over \$19 million per year to develop lots in both Whitehorse and rural communities across the Yukon. In the coming year alone, we will release 240 lots in phases 3 and 4 of the Whistle Bend subdivision, including 19 multi-family lots. It is important to note that these are multi-family lots, Mr. Speaker. These lots are designed to create density and affordability. Prioritizing smaller units and multi-family lots provides for more reasonably priced homes and entry into the housing market. Beyond phases 3 and 4, construction of phase 5 is well underway and will lead to the release of another 166 lots in 2020. Phase 6 preparation and clearing is now also underway. Salvaged fuel wood will once again be made available to the public. In 2021, we plan to release another 158 lots, including single-family, townhouse and also multi-family lots.

While the Yukon government works to ensure that there remains a steady supply of lots, in addition, we are interested in looking at models to increase private sector development opportunities. This spring, to help us gain a better understanding of the interest and capacity of private sector land developers, we have worked with the City of Whitehorse to identify seven rural and urban infill parcels for private development. These lot parcels have the potential for up to 15 new lots, depending on the developer's approach and zoning requirements. We look forward to evaluating this and other models to drive more affordable development into the future.

At the same time, we are continuing to work with First Nation and municipal governments to ensure that land development takes account of their interests and priorities. In communities, efforts have increased with respect to land development. This past year, the responsibility for rural land development was moved to Community Services, and we are focused on making land available based on community priorities, reflecting our commitment to local solutions. This year, 20 new lots are planned for release in various communities across the territory, including in Mayo and Watson Lake, either through the development of small subdivisions or the release of single lots. We are engaging with all municipalities to confirm their priorities and are working toward delivering on existing short-term lot inventory needs. We are advancing the planning, preliminary and detailed design on projects in Carmacks, Watson Lake and others. We are partnering with Dawson City to complete and release service lots in the north end and to start planning an urban residential subdivision in the Slinky mine area on the Dome Road. Work to develop lots will also take place in Carcross, Teslin and Haines Junction, and we are looking to complete road upgrades in Carcross, Haines Junction and other areas.

Finally, we are working to support First Nations in their land development. Whether the land is developed for First Nation citizens or for economic development opportunities, we believe it is another important plank of the territorial housing framework, and we look forward to this development.

Ms. Van Bibber: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond to this ministerial statement.

What I found very interesting was the amount of lots that the minister highlighted will be opening in Whistle Bend over the next three years. He stated there will also be 240 lots opened this year, 166 lots the following year and 158 the year after that. According to the government press release from last year, there were 80 new lots opened up in 2018, not to mention the amount of lots that would have been created in Whistle Bend in 2017. That means there will be at least an additional 644 new housing lots that have opened up in Whistle Bend in between 2016 and the 2021 elections.

This is an enormous amount of growth and an enormous addition of voters in just one area. That's why the Official Opposition is concerned that the Yukon Liberal government used their majority to vote down their own piece of legislation and reject the recommendations of the Electoral District Boundaries Commission. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the independent Electoral District Boundaries Commission undertook work to redraw the boundaries of a number of Yukon electoral districts to ensure that they were appropriately distributed for our population now and into the future. One of their recommendations was to redraw the boundaries for Whistle Bend so that it became its own riding. This recommendation is supported by the minister's own statements in this House today about how much Whistle Bend is going to grow before the election in 2021.

Unfortunately, the Liberals took the unprecedented step to vote down that piece of legislation for partisan reasons to protect their own political prospects. The Premier claimed it was to try to save government money, but then he also had no problem voting to give himself a raise, bringing forward a budget that increases spending in his own political office and hiring hundreds of new FTEs.

I also have some questions about other areas of lot development that the minister references. The minister says that they have identified seven rural and urban infill parcels for private development. I would just quickly mention that last year this House debated a motion about private development, and the Official Opposition asked that the motion say that local developers be given preference. The Liberals, of course, voted against that, leaving us wondering why they did not support local developers and whether they had some Outside companies that they would prefer to give these opportunities to. I am wondering where the locations of the infill parcels are.

The minister also mentions that they are working with First Nations and municipalities to ensure that land development takes account of their interests. He also states that they are supporting First Nations in developing their own land. Has the minister communicated this to the City of

Whitehorse as they review such things as their official community plan?

The minister also referenced that there will be 20 new lots in several Yukon communities, and we need a breakdown of those lots. He also referenced a road upgrade in Carcross and Haines Junction, and I think we would be pleased to have more details about these road upgrades and how much money will be spent.

Regarding the subdivision that the minister mentioned will be developed in the Slinky mine area of Dawson, what action has the minister undertaken to ensure that there is no —

Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. White: In response to the ministerial statement — Mr. Speaker, again, we have been asked to respond to a ministerial statement when most of the information shared today is not new. In fact, in his first line, the minister describes that this is a way to highlight ways his government is working on addressing the need for land development — matters that are regularly discussed during budget debate.

We have previously discussed the 240 lots in Whistle Bend and this information has been public for months. Private individuals and developers have been waiting, and the building season, is fast approaching. I guess the question is: When will they be available?

Mr. Speaker, these lots are all part of the Whistle Bend plan — so again, there is no new information here. One just needs to look at the Whistle Bend plan to know that there will be more lots available in the future as different stages of Whistle Bend continue to roll out because that's what the Whistle Bend plan is all about.

The minister spoke about how these lots, with their design and density, will provide for more reasonably priced homes. I'm not sure what is "reasonably priced" these days, and maybe we need to have the government define that for those looking to enter the housing market when we see the average cost of homes continue to climb. According to the statistics bureau, the average price for a single-family home is now over a half-million dollars. Again, what is "reasonably priced"? A quick look at the real estate section in the newspaper shows that nothing in Whistle Bend is currently selling for under \$400,000. Again, what is "reasonably priced"?

The minister also spoke of working with the City of Whitehorse to identify seven rural and urban infill lots. Again, I would note that the information on these potential lots has been available publicly for months. We have seen the City of Whitehorse bringing these forward. We have also heard from neighbourhoods both in favour and against that development. Mr. Speaker, what is the hold up? What is this government waiting for, and when will those lots be developed?

We have seen private development in the city before. We have seen some very successful developments, and we're open to these ideas to improve and increase the availability of affordable land. But what we don't hear is any analysis of benefits and risks or criteria on how these projects will be

rated as successful. How will this government assess whether this endeavour will provide for more affordable development into the future?

Mr. Speaker, communities have been asking for lot availability for years. We know that the housing crisis continues in many of our communities, making it difficult when it comes to hiring staff as there is nowhere to live. This continues to have impacts on the economic health of the communities, so we look forward to this problem being solved.

We discussed rural lot development in this Chamber last fall, and these efforts will continue to be good news for communities. We support lot development. With the changes to the *Land Titles Act, 2015* last fall, we were encouraged and looking forward to watching as First Nations move forward with developing their settlement lands in Whitehorse and in the communities.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, there wasn't a lot of new information here and still plenty of questions. I look forward to the budget debate in Community Services where we will have the opportunity to ask in-depth questions on issues that have been raised previously and to any new issues as they arise.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thanks to both members opposite for their many questions. I do think that there was new information here. I am happy to stand up and present that information to Yukoners and to the Legislature. Some of it is not new, of course, but it's always a work in progress — it's building.

For example, one of the pieces of new information was that the seven lots that have been out there publicly — we will work with private developers. The Member for Porter Creek North was asking for a map of those lots. I am happy to provide that.

The way that we will judge and evaluate the private sector initiative will be on whether the prices come down. That's our goal — to try to bring the prices down to increase and improve affordability.

One thing I will say, Mr. Speaker, is that when we see a slowdown in lot development across the territory — Whistle Bend or just generally in the Yukon — what happens is that pushes prices up. So it is very important to show that we are working diligently to produce more lots across the board.

I will always work to evaluate the efforts, and I'm happy to answer questions today in budget debate throughout the time. It's a very important issue, and I can hear that from my colleagues — all of us here in the Legislature today.

With respect to the whole notion about a new riding — the electoral boundaries commission — I don't think our concern was with Whistle Bend. I think our concern here on this side of the Legislature, I guess, was that there was a new riding being proposed and that there wasn't an opportunity for Yukoners to engage on that. That landed at the very end of the whole process, and Yukoners didn't have an opportunity to speak. I know that citizens in my own riding did not have that

opportunity. They attended four separate meetings and it wasn't proposed, so I think that was a deep concern.

As I say, I'm very happy to provide any further information — for example, a map of where those infill lots are.

Finally, there was a question about whether I have communicated with the City of Whitehorse, with mayor and council about working with the First Nations here in the City of Whitehorse — absolutely, I have. He is entirely supportive of us working with the First Nations here in the community. I think it's all about keeping an open dialogue across all of us as partners in government.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Government support for non-governmental organizations

Mr. Hassard: Yesterday, we asked the Minister of Health and Social Services about the Liberals' decision to freeze the budgets of many of Yukon's health NGOs at the 2017-18 levels. Her response was that for the majority of them, she was increasing their budget by two percent. So we went to the budget to see if the minister was correct.

So let's take Autism Yukon, for example. Last year, its funding was \$180,000. This year, its funding is \$180,000. Some quick calculations show that is a zero-percent increase, not a two-percent increase like the minister claimed. These numbers, Mr. Speaker, are straight from the budget. So can the minister clarify where we can find the two-percent increase to the funding levels for health NGOs reflected in this budget?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would be happy to respond to the question. Just for clarity, I did note yesterday in my presentation — I said that there were 740 NGO groups. There are, in fact, 862 NGO groups in the Yukon that we fund. So as we're going ahead to look at the comprehensive health review, we're looking at efficiencies of services. We're working with our non-governmental organizations directly linked to Health and Social Services. We are clearly looking at improving client outcomes and making the best use of our financial resources. That means that we need to do a due diligence process. We need to work with the NGO groups. We have significantly addressed the concerns that they brought forward.

There are some NGO groups that we funded long term for three years, with an increase of two percent. I did not say every one of them had received that; I said the majority of them had. We will work with those that are currently requiring a little more assistance, and that's what we have committed to. We'll continue to do that.

They have been given notification and we are working with them on doing just that to ensure that they have the supports and the resources to effectively deliver collaborative, cooperative health care and social supports for Yukoners.

Mr. Hassard: So let's take a look at another one — Yukon Women's Transition Home Society. Last year, their

funding was \$1.5 million and this year's funding is \$1.5 million. Maybe the Minister of Health and Social Services has a different budget that shows different numbers, but the one that the Premier tabled in this House last week seems to show that their funding is frozen.

In fact, let me quote from the executive director of Kaushee's Place who was on CBC Radio at 12:30 this afternoon. She stated that the information the minister was sharing with the House is incorrect. In fact, to quote exactly, she said: "I have no idea why the minister is saying things that aren't true." We're kind of wondering the same thing, actually.

I'm wondering, can the minister show us where the two-percent increase in funding to the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society is reflected in this budget?

Hon. Ms. Frost: For clarification, the department has worked with the Whitehorse women's transition society. In 2017, there was a proposal on the table with the transition society to look at long-term funding. The members opposite would know that there is no way that we can increase a proposal that's put before us to increase the budget by 100 percent — not acceptable. We have to look for efficiencies under the current restraints we're facing, so we are working with the organization to better align the service needs of that organization.

What I'm looking for right now in partnership with all our NGO groups is to look for an understanding of where their cost drivers are and where the service delivery models are. Is it in executive management or is it in program service delivery amendments and options that better align with service needs of the client group? That's what we're working with. We're meeting with the women's transition society tomorrow to look at vital services to Yukoners.

Absolutely — women in Yukon need a safe place to flee violence. That's the objective of having the women's transition society in place. It is an essential service that has remained dedicated to the important work that they're funded for. We will continue to work with them to align the service needs that they put on the table for us to consider.

Mr. Hassard: Regarding the freezing of the health NGO budget at the 2017-18 levels, I would like to just quote from a letter dated May 7, 2018 from an assistant deputy minister of Health to a local health NGO. It says that, in the context of the Liberals health review, which is looking for cuts, that — I quote: "the government has made the decision to maintain funding to NGOs at the 2017/18 levels and to enter into one year agreements."

Of course, in this context, when the letter says "the government", it really means the Liberals. Can the minister confirm whether or not this letter is accurate? Did the Liberals make the decision to freeze funding for NGOs at the 2017-18 levels?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would be happy to speak to the letter. The letter was put out to assist and provide an open dialogue with all of the NGO groups. We realized that we were having some concerns. The intent of the review is to help

guide decision-making and ensure that resources are properly allocated and aligned to meet the program requirements.

We took that open dialogue and discussion, we have worked through that with the NGO groups this year, and as a result, there are many of the NGOs that have received three-year funding with an increase in cost of living. We will work with those that currently require a little more assistance. The letter that was issued last year was an open dialogue and opportunity to work with the groups to better align for long-term funding initiatives and to better align the changing dynamics that we are confronted with in Yukon. As we speak about collaborative care, we talk about healthy, happy Yukoners, but we also talk about the current pressures that we are facing within our society. We will ensure that — as we evolve, as the Women's Transition Home Society evolves, as all of the NGO groups that I am responsible for evolve — there is an accountability measure that has to be taken, and I will ensure that we meet the pressures, but they also have an accountability to deliver services within their scope of funding.

Question re: School capacity

Mr. Cathers: The Minister of Education has had letters on her desk going back to 2017 raising the issue of school overcrowding. Last October, she claimed that she had never had overcrowding issues brought to her attention, but it did not take long for that to be contradicted by a school council. When asked about overcrowding, the minister has said that it is not necessarily a terrible problem to have. We disagree.

Yesterday, we asked the minister about a letter from the Department of Education to Hidden Valley Elementary School Council on March 8, 2019. In response to their concerns of overcrowding and a request for a portable, the department, and now the minister, confirmed that the solution is to adjust attendance areas, which is essentially shuffling kids around town.

Will the minister commit to hold public meetings with all affected school councils before adjusting the attendance areas — yes or no?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate the question. Yes.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate that we actually got a straightforward answer from the minister, which is rare in this House.

Yesterday, we highlighted the fact that the minister has not met with Hidden Valley Elementary School Council for over two years. She responded by saying, "I have recently written to the Hidden Valley School Council, as with all school councils, reaching out to them where there are concerns about enrolment pressures and of course agreeing to meet with them and work together with them going forward."

We were told that on March 8, the minister's executive assistant wrote to Hidden Valley School Council declining a request for the minister to attend their April 3 meeting. The school council even said that they would reschedule and asked for a date that would work for the minister. This is not the first time that the minister's story has conflicted with what a school council tells us.

Will the minister agree to meet with the Hidden Valley School Council on April 3, or will she at least offer a date when she will be willing to meet with them?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate the question. The situation that I described yesterday in response to a very similar question — I know I have been consistent — is that the department's focus on meeting with school communities and having their concerns brought forward and considered with respect to how we will address enrolment growth going forward in the education system here in the City of Whitehorse has been consistent. I have not declined any meeting with Hidden Valley nor with any school council. My schedule simply does not allow me to be available on April 3. I have certainly offered another date. As a matter of fact, I think that what that letter also says is that the deputy minister will be pleased to attend that meeting because I am not available to do so but that we would have another meeting scheduled as soon as our schedules — both the school council's and mine — are available to do so.

I think that the insinuation that I am not interested in meeting with any school council is troublesome, because I have said in this House, over and over and over again, that I would meet with school councils, and I have done so and I will continue to do so because these are important issues to families.

Mr. Cathers: I do have to point out that what we hear from the minister today is very different from what we've heard from the school council about the correspondence between her office and Hidden Valley Elementary School.

Yesterday, we pointed out that the letter that we obtained about school attendance areas also suggests that the minister is planning to adjust the attendance areas for Holy Family Elementary, Jack Hulland Elementary and Takhini Elementary schools in addition to Hidden Valley.

We asked the minister to confirm whether or not she met with any of the school councils to discuss this before she made the decision. She dodged the question. We also asked the minister to confirm whether or not she will be adjusting the catchment areas of other schools such as Golden Horn Elementary. Again, we didn't receive an answer, so we're hoping she can answer today.

Has the Minister of Education met with the school council of Holy Family, Jack Hulland and Takhini to discuss adjusting attendance areas, and will she be adjusting the attendance area for Golden Horn as well?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am happy to answer this again. It was the question that was asked yesterday, at which time I did respond that, in fact, the planning and construction for a new Whistle Bend elementary school — which is part of the overall planning for elementary schools here in the City of Whitehorse — will help to address the overall projected enrolment issues that we have seen over the last number of years here in the territory, particularly in the City of Whitehorse. That planning will help to address those issues in the longer term.

Part of that planning — and I said this yesterday — for a new school will include a review of the attendance areas,

which has not been done for a number of years in the north end of the City of Whitehorse. We will work with the Hidden Valley school council and school community, with Takhini, with Jack Hulland and with the Holy Family school communities to do this work.

If the question is whether that has been done yet — no, it hasn't been. Clearly, the letter indicates that. My answers here in the House have indicated that clearly. All of our conversations with school councils on this issue of growth and enrolment growth, have been that we will be and are connected with them in dealing with how this problem will be resolved going forward and how the planning that has never been done will be done.

Question re: Employee assistance program

Ms. Hanson: Last year, this government contracted with a Vancouver-based firm to provide the employee family assistance program to Yukon government employees. This \$533,000 contract was then subcontracted to Many Rivers.

Many Rivers was to operate as the point of intake for eligible employees and their families. People would then be referred to Yukon counsellors contracted through Many Rivers.

Employees seeking assistance took some comfort in the fact that the person on the end of the phone and the counsellor they met were here in Yukon.

Over the past number of months, we have all watched as Many Rivers was found to be not in compliance with the *Societies Act*. We watched as employees were forced on strike for 11 weeks. When the strike ended and the staff returned to work, they were given layoff notices, and the doors of Many Rivers closed.

Can the minister tell this House how the employee assistance program contract is being managed by this government and how the subcontract with Many Rivers is being monitored and by whom?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am very happy to address this issue on the floor of the House today. Our employee and family assistance program service provider, FSEAP, works with a network of regional service providers including but not limited to Many Rivers to offer counselling and critical incident stress management services.

At this time and since the outset of the labour disruption, FSEAP is not using Many Rivers for EFAP counselling or intake services. We are confident that the service provider is able to deliver the employee and family assistance program despite any labour disruptions by their local affiliates. FSEAP is reviewing the Many Rivers situation in relation to access to in-person services outside of Whitehorse and is considering options for meeting the needs of employees in Yukon communities.

I will add that there are about 20 counsellors within the City of Whitehorse whom the service provider is pulling on to deliver services to Yukoners in need.

Ms. Hanson: That is very interesting. We do know that the contact person for EFAP at Many Rivers was laid off along with the counsellors. We know that the phone number

goes to Vancouver. We do know, as we have said before, that Many Rivers has closed its doors. Employees seeking support through the EFAP previously raised legitimate concerns about the effectiveness and quality of over-the-phone and online counselling services from somewhere else.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of talk on the street about where these services are now being provided, and by whom. We have heard that the former executive director of Many Rivers is now managing that subcontract — the employee assistance program — out of offices rented and set up through Many Rivers. There are too many questions in the community about what is being provided to employees, by whom, and no clear answers.

Can the minister inform this House as to exactly what is happening with the employee assistance program, and how and where it is being provided? I'll come back to this in a moment when he doesn't answer.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am enjoying the discussion that I am having with the Leader of the Third Party this afternoon on this very important issue. I'm happy to address some of the questions that are being raised by the member this afternoon.

The service provider, FSEAP — a nationally recognized organization — has had some very trying times of late, as has the community of Whitehorse. We have seen a prolonged strike that has disrupted the services provided by Many Rivers. That said, FSEAP has found other avenues to provide the services that are needed by Yukoners. Generally, we were pleased with the support that FSEAP provided during the recent strike by the Many Rivers staff. We are aware that call response times were impacted early in the strike by increased call volumes and issues with the implementation of a new phone system. Those problems were addressed very quickly by the service provider, and since then, they have refined their service, and we are pleased with the service they are providing.

Right now, FSEAP has contracted a local counsellor. They are working on 4th Avenue in Whitehorse; they have their own office. I will address more questions as they come.

Ms. Hanson: This government has long extolled the virtues of evidence-based decision-making and the benefits it can bring. We agree that evidence-based decision-making offers the best insight into assessing current programs and future planning. But when we look at the government's own statistics when it comes to the employee assistance program, there's a gaping hole. There are no numbers for EAP files or hours of service provided in 2018. There's a forecast for this year, but no numbers — zero, zero, zero.

Mr. Speaker, given the turmoil at Many Rivers and the hands-off attitude by the two other government ministers involved, can the Minister of the Public Service Commission tell this House what is going on with the employee family assistance program? What is the minister doing to monitor and ensure that employees seeking support are given the best service and that there is value for the \$500,000 spent and no evidence of service being provided?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Again, I thank the member opposite for discussing this very important issue on the floor of the Legislative Assembly this afternoon.

FSEAP provided assurance to the Public Service Commission that there was no disruption to the employee and family assistance program or critical incident stress management services throughout the strike. We have verified that through the number of calls we received. There was no untoward call volume that would indicate there was a great problem.

As there were no active YG employee counselling cases assigned to Many Rivers' counsellors at the outset of the labour disruption, employees experienced no interruption in their counselling services. There are three non-union counsellors at Many Rivers and 19 FSEAP-affiliate counsellors in Yukon who do not work for Many Rivers whose services are available through FSEAP. These resources were available to meet demand.

Question re: Tourism development strategy

Ms. Van Bibber: On October 22, the Minister of Tourism told this House — and I quote: "Tourism has plateaued a little bit in terms of increase of GDP..."

Last week, the Premier told this House — and I quote: "Yukon's tourism industry also continues to perform well. 2017 was a record year for the industry, and it is expected that 2018 will also prove to be another record year..."

These two statements seem to contradict each other. Can the minister please explain why she told this House that tourism plateaued in terms of increase of GDP?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank you very much for the question today. I love to talk about tourism. Tourism is performing very well. I have said that all along.

When I made the comment, I meant that tourism had been sort of floating along for a number of years and it would increase a little bit. Now today, we have experienced in the last two years record tourism in Yukon. I am so proud today that the Government of Yukon recognizes the value of tourism and is committed to supporting the sustainable growth of this industry.

We were happy to announce this week that we have endorsed the new Yukon tourism development strategy — the first new plan in 18 years in Yukon.

I spoke about that yesterday in my Budget Address to Yukoners and to this Legislative Assembly — that we're investing \$875,000 into the first year of implementation of the strategy this year, and I'm really looking forward to increasing and taking tourism to the next level through the next decade of tourism in Yukon.

Ms. Van Bibber: It's still not clear why the Minister of Tourism would make the statement on October 22 when she told the House: "Tourism has plateaued a little bit in terms of increase of GDP..."

Government documents released in November say — and I quote: "From 2008 to 2016, Yukon business revenue attributable to tourism increased 51.5% or an average of approximately 5.3% per year." This again seems to contradict

the minister's statement in the House. Yukoners deserve accurate information from all of our elected officials. MLAs are our communities' voices in this Legislative Assembly, and when they use their name in the House to spread incorrect information or their time instead of advocating for their constituency, it's very disappointing.

Will the minister explain and apologize?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I think that I've been very, very clear in terms of how tourism has been performing over the past several years. I do not believe that I have anything to apologize for here. I've worked incredibly hard with all of our stakeholders over the last couple of years to develop a new plan and to take tourism to the next level — to plan while tourism and our economy is performing so very well in our territory. I do not believe that in any way, shape or form this government has anything to apologize for. We have worked very hard with our partners. We will continue to do that, and we will absolutely take tourism to the next level in this territory.

I look forward to further supplementary questions, and hopefully they're not in the same tone.

Question re: Daylight saving time

Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, as you know, at the 2017 annual general meeting of the Association of Yukon Communities, they passed a resolution asking the government to investigate whether there is a case for eliminating daylight saving time. This House passed a motion in 2018 asking for the government to do the same. Several states along the west coast are looking at the possibility, and British Columbia is looking to be part of that discussion.

Will the government agree to begin consultations right away with Yukoners on the possibility of removing daylight saving time? Will the government eliminate daylight saving time?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The Yukon government does recognize that the issue of daylight saving time is an important one to many Yukoners. Following the motion from March 2018, officials were tasked to investigate the possibility of daylight saving time and maybe the elimination therein and to consider how such a change would be made in Yukon. The analysis showed that now is not the time to eliminate daylight saving in the Yukon, as no other jurisdiction is prepared to stop daylight saving.

The Yukon is committed to remaining consistent with our neighbours and other jurisdictions. If that changes, we will definitely look at this again, but we are not going to go it alone. There are conversations right now, as we know and as the member opposite brought to light, in the Legislative Assembly from British Columbia. As we look at the western states — they are considering this as well. We will be monitoring that situation, but Yukon is not going it alone on this file. We did our due diligence. We looked at this. We looked at the evidence and made that determination based upon that evidence.

Question re: Land development

Ms. McLeod: Earlier today, the Minister of Community Services stated that there will be 20 new housing lots planned for release in various communities across the territory. Can he please provide us with a breakdown by community of where those lots are?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would be happy to provide the information for the member opposite. I don't have the list right in front of me about the exact communities where it's taking place. I can say that we have been in conversation with all municipalities. I can say that we are working to look at this from a territory-wide perspective, driven by the communities' desires and interests. For example, even in my ministerial statement today, I spoke about Watson Lake a couple of times.

I know that the Land Development branch has been working with the community of Watson Lake, and at my last meeting down there — I believe with the Minister of Tourism and Culture and the Women's Directorate — we had that very conversation about an interest in seeing development of land. I would be happy to get that information back. I also welcome the opposition to pose the question during debate on the main estimates, and we will happily get that information when officials are here in the Legislature.

Ms. McLeod: The budget documents state that of the \$19 million that is earmarked for residential lot development this year, only \$4 million is set aside for the communities. Can the minister tell us why the Liberals decided that they would spend so much less in the communities, especially considering that they are in urgent need of housing as well?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will try to get a little bit more of an analysis for the member opposite, but my quick read on it is that roughly 25 percent of the budget is going to the communities. That is roughly proportional to the population across the territory. I appreciate that the member opposite would always like to see more. What I would like to say is that we are working hard to develop lots across the territory including in all communities, as I stated during the ministerial statement today.

Ms. McLeod: Last year's budget included \$17.7 million for land development. Can the minister tell us if all of that money was fully spent? How many lots did that expenditure create and where they were?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The thing about when you invest in lot development is it's not like, "I paid a dollar and here is that lot today." It takes many years to develop those lots, and when we slow down there is a problem. That is one of the reasons why we see higher housing prices. I am looking backwards in time right now. Last year, we spent nearly \$17 million. This year, we are on track to spending nearly \$26 million.

That's why we went to a special warrant. That was because we want to develop more lots. When I look back over the previous years, it looks to me like we spent more in the last two years than were spent in the previous four. I'm happy to get the information for the member opposite. Land development is very important in the territory.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members' business

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. It is Motion No. 272, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

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, March 13, 2019. It is Motion No. 413, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 208: *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second Reading, Bill No. 208, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to begin debate on the *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*. At the outset of our mandate, our government made commitments to full-year budgeting and more robust forecasting. In our view, the true purpose of the supplementary estimate is to reflect the funding extenuating circumstances that require immediate action. This is exactly how we continue to budget.

As a government, our vision was set through the main estimates. It has remained clear and focused throughout the fiscal year. Last fall, I was pleased to table a supplementary estimates bill that was a less than one-percent increase over the main estimates. This spring, the story is much the same.

I want to commend all of the departments for their hard work in improving their budgeting forecasting and thank them for their cooperation as we continue to budget for the whole year rather than just to the next budgetary period.

In total, the second supplementary estimates include a net increase of \$1.3 million in spending from the first supplementary estimates. This is made up of a \$1.2-million increase in net operation and maintenance expenditures and an increase of \$99,000 in net capital expenditures. Overall, seven departments will see an increase in either their O&M or capital budgets. There is a notable increase in revenues of \$10.3 million in these supplementary estimates.

There are two key components to this increase. The first is a \$6.9-million increase to corporate income taxes. As well,

revised population figures have resulted in a \$3.3-million increase in the Canada health transfer.

The second supplementary estimates show a deficit of \$7.1 million, a small increase from the \$4.8 million projected last fall. Net debt is forecast to be \$11.2 million at the end of the year, down from a net debt of \$28.4 million in the first supplementary estimates.

With that overview, Mr. Speaker, I want to briefly highlight the main changes in the supplementary budget. The Department of Community Services is seeking a \$20-million increase in its capital budgeting — \$5 million of this is a recoverable investment in land development. Yukoners know that lot availability remains tight in the territory. As I indicated in my budget speech last week, our government is accelerating efforts to make residential lots available. The additional funding for lot development for the current year is being directed toward land development phases 3 through 6 in the Whistle Bend subdivision, which are proceeding very quickly. We are also continuing to make great investments over the coming years to put more lots on the market. This is part of our commitment to ensuring available housing and affordable housing.

There is \$15 million also included in the supplementary estimates for infrastructure development. This reflects the progress made on municipal and First Nation infrastructure projects this year. The significant preparatory work in the last two years has culminated in a higher-than-average number of projects in construction in 2018-19.

I said in the fall that this government would make use of federal funding where available to make sure that Yukon's infrastructure is maintained. This is a prudent approach to fiscal management. We will ensure that Yukon remains vibrant and sustainable into the future. Today Yukoners are benefitting from improved infrastructure such as clean water and waste-water projects in Dawson, Faro and Mayo as well as community development projects in the Carmacks arena and the bridge in Ross River.

The supplementary estimates include a capital reduction of \$11.8 million in the Department of Economic Development related to the diverse fibre project. I want to commend the department for its hard work in securing this project. It is essential infrastructure that will increase Yukon's participation in the digital economy. Now that we are in the construction phase, this project has been transferred to Highways and Public Works. This makes sense. Highways and Public Works has extensive experience in overseeing multi-million dollar construction projects. We are confident that this transfer will prove beneficial for the project. The project has resulted in \$700,000 in spending this year. Given that this project crosses borders and involves significant regulatory considerations and numerous stakeholders, we are taking the time necessary to ensure that we get it right.

The capital estimates in the supplementary includes some projects that are deferred to the coming year. Chief among those are the renovations at Copper Ridge, the girls receiving home in Whitehorse and landscaping at Whistle Bend continuing care facility as well as the Yukon asset

construction agreement associated with this project. These projects amount to \$5.2 million.

Looking at the estimates related to operation and maintenance spending, there are some modest increases.

The Executive Council Office is seeking \$1.3 million associated with our government's commitments to reconciliation. Our government believes that, as a territory and as a nation, we must continue to address and take action to heal the harms caused by our history of inequalities and discrimination. We see our path to reconciliation as a journey, and we know that the actions that we are taking now will continue to have benefits for years to come.

The funds requested in the supplementary estimates for the Executive Council Office are in that spirit. They are funding agreements with Yukon First Nations without final and self-governing agreements, with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, which has transboundary interests in Yukon, and with the Kaska Dena Council. These agreements are addressed to consultation, capacity development and research needs aimed at reconciliation.

This includes \$765,000 for new commitments in the coming fiscal year. The balance is for commitments made last year that will conclude in 2019-20.

Also, in the operation and maintenance estimates, there is a \$5.5-million decrease related to Wolverine mine, which includes a corresponding decrease in recoveries. As I mentioned in the fall, the mine is currently in non-compliance with some of the permits issued and with inspections having determined that work needed to be done to ensure that environmental concerns were addressed. Upon further examination, it was determined that the full \$5.5 million is not needed at this time. With some work required, much of this can be deferred to future years.

As I wrap up my remarks here, I again want to state that this government has a commitment to improving our ability to forecast and budget effectively for an entire year. At the end of the day, the advantages obtained as a result of better forecasting benefit everyone. Not only does better forecasting provide more transparency to the public, it also provides better planning opportunities for our partners and allows the private sector to plan for their year.

With these benefits in mind, we will always work to account for any expenses that we know will occur based upon the best possible information at the time. This remains an important step toward long-term fiscal responsibility.

On the whole, I am pleased to say that this government's spending is in line with what we laid out for Yukoners last year.

Mr. Cathers: Beginning my response as Official Opposition Finance critic, I'll note — first of all, I won't go on at great length in debating this here at second reading — that we do, as will come as no surprise to ministers, have some concerns with the content of this spending bill.

We also recognize that it is, in most cases, money that has already been spent, so there is not a lot of point debating whether it should be done, but we do have to point to the

process by which decisions were made and also to the fact that the government's choice to again use a special warrant — despite the Premier's very strong language here in this House and in public and in commitments that he made prior to the 2016 election. The government has completely ignored their commitments upon taking office and in 2017, in fact, broke the record for the use of special warrants with a total of \$456 million in that year.

Again, the \$20 million that was spent earlier this year through the use of a special warrant brings the total of the current Liberal government to \$476 million spent without the prior scrutiny of this Legislative Assembly. I do have to point that out in holding the government accountable to their own commitments. Whether the slogan used by a Liberal government is "real change", "sunny way" or "be heard", the main issue is promising the public that you will do things differently and then failing to live up to that promise.

In 2016, the Premier — then Leader of the Third Party — strongly criticized the use of special warrants, going so far as to say that it disrespects this Legislative Assembly and democracy itself. I will quote from him in April 2016 — in two excerpts from what he said. The first is: "It demonstrates a lack of respect, in my opinion, for this Chamber and for democracy."

The second quote from the Premier: "I'm going to quote again: 'The problem with the use of special warrants is that cabinet avoids the scrutiny of the legislative assembly. I just don't think that's a good way of running governments.'"

As the Premier has said before in the past, apparently the view is different from the other side. It is unfortunate that, despite his strong language and commitments to Yukoners with regard to the use of special warrants, he has not lived up to his commitment to do things differently and is, in fact, just continuing on, when it is convenient to do so, spending money without prior debate in this Assembly.

I actually just want to briefly reference something that the Premier said in March 2016 outside this House in an interview with one of the local papers. The Premier said: "One of those things we glaze over is that every dollar we spend is taxpayers' money, and it needs to go through due process; it needs to be debated in the legislature."

The article then used the Premier's name, which, of course, I cannot in this Assembly without contravening the Standing Orders. It goes on to quote the Premier saying that, "It's an opportunity to bring up issues, for fiscal responsibility. There's a reason for those processes, that's democracy."

Just for the reference of Hansard, the quotes from Hansard where I referenced the Premier were from April 12, 2016, and the quotes that I referred to from the media article were in the *Whitehorse Daily Star*, March 24, 2016.

Again, we see a commitment to do things differently, but upon taking office, the Liberal government chose not to live up to it.

We have also seen with regard to the \$20 million spent through a special warrant, there are questions about why this money could not have been brought forward during the Fall

Sitting for the authorization of this Assembly or wait until the spring. We have heard the assertion made that this is due to projects proceeding faster than planned, but for a government that has talked a very good line of rhetoric about claiming to improve its planning processes, claiming to improve its budgetary projections and so on and so on and so on, these actions are simply not matching the rhetoric. It does beg the question: Why was the government supposedly completely unaware of these capital projects that suddenly became an urgent priority — to authorize \$20 million in increased funding for in January, back when we were in the Fall Sitting? We have yet to hear a real answer from the government to this point.

In the area of these projects, we note that there is \$5 million for land development that was authorized through the special warrant. The question of why government could not anticipate this need earlier in the fall remains a question again, considering their own claims and rhetoric about improving the way they were projecting the needs of government.

In the second area — in the community infrastructure development projects, the \$15 million contained in that area — we understand, based on the information in the budget and what we received from officials, that additional funds were for municipality and First Nation infrastructure projects that fall under federal infrastructure programs. We understand, based on the government's statement, that they said the projects were projecting faster than originally expected, but I do have to ask the question — I would ask them, with regard to all of the projects contained in that area, whether in fact this was due to proceeding faster than expected or whether those projects simply went over their original budget. The Premier should provide that information to this House.

We have also not yet received a list of the breakdown of the projects that were funded with that \$15 million. We understand that it relates to projects approved under the clean water and waste-water fund, but again, not only was the money not debated in this House first, we still don't have a complete list of which projects were funded, how much funding was provided for each project and an explanation and accountability of whether in fact these projects were, as indicated, proceeding faster than expected or whether in fact the true story is that these projects — or some of those projects — went overbudget. That is information that we believe the Premier owes the public.

I would also note again that the Premier and this Liberal government have often talked about the claim of improving the accuracy of their budgets, but there are a number of areas in the supplementary estimates that do not line up with those statements. We see major changes in line items including the increase of \$1.259 million in Executive Council Office and an \$11.8 million lapse in Economic Development, a lapse of over \$5 million in Health and Social Services, \$1.5 million in Highways and Public Works, over \$1 million in Justice and so on. These are just a few examples of where, despite the claims that accuracy had improved, we really don't see the results of the rhetoric translated into results.

I would also just ask, with regard to the funding that is provided under Executive Council Office — in addition to the information I asked for about the Community Services project — we understand that the budget contains an increase of \$1.259 million for the Aboriginal Relations division for First Nation negotiations of reconciliation commitments made in 2017-18 and for new funding for negotiations and reconciliation. Based on the information provided to us, we understand that this applies only to non-settled First Nations, including transboundary First Nations and one entity that has recently been determined by a judge to be a society and not a First Nation in terms of the obligations that government has to it.

I would just ask — and we might want to make it clear that I'm not saying that those amounts were not justified. We're simply asking for accountability and an explanation of how much was given to which of the entities involved. What was the purpose of that? Why does the Premier believe that the outcome of that is justified by the expenditure of money and what those outcomes were?

It is simply information that we believe the government should be willing to provide to the public if it believes that expenditures of that type or indeed of any type are justified. Yukoners do have a right to ask the government, "What did you spend my money for and what did I get in return?" and receive a reasonable answer.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will wrap up my comments. I look forward to hearing more answers either in second reading or in general debate, as well as information about a project I asked about in the Department of Education of a \$433,000-increase for an electrical distribution upgrade project when we didn't receive information explaining exactly what was entailed in that project.

Ms. Hanson: I am happy to rise this afternoon to speak briefly to the supplementary estimates third appropriation bill.

I would like first of all to thank the Department of Finance because I believe it was they who coordinated efforts by all the departments, with the exception of Health and Social Services, to provide at one time the necessary information to understand the supplementaries so that we were able to, in a relatively brief time, go through the overview of the supplementary budget requests — the sort of rationale on an overview basis — and then by those departments where there have been changes since last fall.

I do believe that the efforts of Finance have resulted in — from a very high level, macro level — a better representation at a macro level of the financial status of the government. I will come back to that in a moment, Mr. Speaker, because it very much pertains to what we see and what the Minister of Finance will be hearing from his deputies from our vantage point as elected members of this Legislative Assembly with respect to the absolute dearth of information that is provided to Members of the Legislative Assembly on the very high level numbers. When we get numbers of \$12 million, \$15 million and \$30 million and there is no substantive data as to what comprises that, so why is the number that number?

What is the intention of the department or the entity in terms of delivering on behalf of Yukoners a program or a service that rolls into that?

It is when you are sitting with the officials and you realize — and you know, having been in that role myself, I know the level of detail that those officials have — and you are looking at your budget document that is this thick and they have a briefing binder that is that thick, I say to them: “Why can’t we have a discussion about what you’re reading to me? Why can’t I get a summation of what you’re reading to me?” I can’t take down a quarter of what is being said in a briefing in terms of the amount of information. So we don’t have an informed debate in this Legislative Assembly because we are left to go through the gauze and the maze and try to figure out what is going on. There is no source of information to back this up. You cannot go to the website and see where what has been tabled here corresponds to any performance indicators or any levels of services: this is what we are doing in Community Services; this is how it rolls into this \$12 million. Until and unless we have that, it is always going to be that kind of a strange exercise in this Legislative Assembly.

To a certain extent, with respect to the supplementary estimates — I will come back again and try to find language that the Minister of Finance can accept in terms of providing more accuracy and details to all Members of the Legislative Assembly so that the debate we have here is not based on conjecture or guesses. If it is actually based on data, it would be serving the citizens of this territory a hell of a lot better than what we are doing right now.

I had a couple of comments — I wanted to point out, as a cautionary note, that in fact the Minister of Finance is correct when he points out the increase in terms of corporate income tax in this reporting period. As it was explained to us by the officials, that is a temporary blip. It represents the fact that we had an operating mine at the time of this reporting. We do not have that operating mine, so we will not see this kind going forward.

A more relevant point would be a decrease in personal income tax. I think that one of the things — there is a correlation there, though not necessarily a correlation in terms of that operating mine, but a correlation in terms of our ability to be looking at options to be generating revenue. One of the things about the focus of the government to date is that it has been on spending, with very little on revenue. I will keep coming back to the fact that Yukoners participated in and listened to this government, and then through its Yukon’s Financial Advisory Panel, it talks about both sides of government. It is this revenue and it is the expenditures. We have failed in the first almost three years of this government to have that revenue conversation.

As we look at hopefully the coming online of a couple of operating mines — hopefully — we were told there would be one by the end of this fiscal year. Now is the time to be looking at having that public conversation with Yukoners about ensuring that we retain some of that wealth. I am referring here to the recommendation made by the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel that this government look at a

revenue stream through a measure such as a government payroll tax on non-resident workers — a tax through which the Northwest Territories in 2017 raised an estimated \$40 million.

Instead of breaking the backs of NGOs’ volunteer boards, we could do a heck of a lot with \$40 million in this territory. There are other options out there, but we need that conversation so that people understand what is intended and how it works. It means that those workers who fly into our territory, who are able, by the fact that they are working here, to use some of our services, et cetera, but are not paying their income tax here — their income tax is paid in whatever jurisdiction. In the Northwest Territories, quite a long time ago, they gleaned onto this. I believe at the time of the conversation it was around two percent. At the end of that tax year, those workers who were residents of the Northwest Territories got a nice little sum, and those workers who didn’t have left it in the Northwest Territories for their consolidated revenue fund.

I think that the conversation around the supplementary estimates is always an opportunity to look at those options.

The Member for Lake Laberge pointed out a couple of questions that we had raised with respect to the Executive Council Office supplementary budget item with respect to negotiations. I guess my question for the minister responsible for the Executive Council Office, so the Finance minister and the Premier, is that if it’s the intention of the Government of Yukon — and I clearly understand that we would expect the Aboriginal Relations division to have as a function, but again, because there is no level of detail in any of the budget documents that we get — that we generally get the notion that there is a function to be performed around negotiations and “reconciliation” — however defined — there is no funding included. There was no funding included. So rather than having it subject to coming forward for supplementaries on an as-needed basis, perhaps there should be some line included there along with program and function definitions. What we’ve asked for is clarity as to the terms of reference — basically, that the funding that’s provided pays for whose participation? Who are involved in these discussions and what are the optimal outcomes of the conversations and of the negotiations? You don’t enter into negotiation unless you have an end point. What are you trying to achieve — an agreement on XYZ? We’re looking for that kind of information from the minister responsible for the Executive Council Office.

With respect to the other departments, we appreciate the information that was provided, and we look forward to quickly doing — I hope — a review of each of those areas during the discussion for the next couple of days on the sups.

I would point out that we did ask a question. Of course, the time lapse from when we had these briefings and when we’re debating it doesn’t allow departments or agencies to get back to us right yet, but on the Public Service Commission and the data that was provided to us, I will be asking the minister responsible for the Public Service Commission to tell us where — in the bold letters, the roll-up letters — the \$553,000 fits and whether or not they have any reporting data

to verify or justify the expenditure of that money, given that agency was in no way, shape or form able to deliver on the contracted obligations and that there is no data with respect to services provided for the last two fiscal years under EAP.

We don't have the data. The government doesn't appear to have the data, and it's very hard for us to come to an assessment that the contractual obligations have been fulfilled on behalf of Yukon. That's a concern. That's a half-million dollars right there. Similarly, when we look at the contractual obligations with Health and Social Services, how much of the \$2 million-some flowed to Many Rivers this fiscal year and last fiscal year while it was non-compliant?

These are valid questions that citizens ask and those are the questions that we will need to delve into as we get into both the representation of what was spent last fiscal year and what is forecast for this year, because we notice that Many Rivers is still in there — the \$2 million. That would be hopeful. We haven't seen any action by government that would indicate that is going to happen.

Mr. Speaker, we will look forward to moving forward on both this bill and those to come.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard on second reading of Bill No. 208?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to my colleagues across the way for their comments here in second reading of the second supplementary budget.

A lot of questions are specific to some of the particular departments, so we will definitely get into that and allow what the Leader of the Third Party is looking for — more clarity, more conversations and more detail with more officials in the room to go over those numbers line by line to help her with having that conversation.

I will say as well that we have had conversations before about Public Accounts and the Public Accounts Committee and their role therein. I don't think the member opposite and I are going to agree on the breadth to which that committee should be working to. I have heard overtures from the Leader of the Third Party in the past of a model very similar to what the federal government does. I don't think we necessarily have the resources for that. However, with that being said, I am willing to sit down and have that conversation with the two other leaders anytime as far as that scrutiny goes from Public Accounts to Public Accounts — from oranges-to-oranges comparators, forecasts — those types of things as well.

When it comes to the issues that the Leader of the Third Party mentioned on payroll tax specifically — or let's just bring it into a broader conversation about some of the next steps and recommendations that have been outlined by the Financial Advisory Panel. Again, we are more than willing to sit down with the two opposition leaders and the two parties and have a conversation on that and where we should go from here. As all Members of the Legislative Assembly know, payroll tax is a tricky one in that this money comes off of

everybody's cheques right away. Then money goes back to Yukoners.

If we were going to model the approach from the Northwest Territories, we are more than willing to have a conversation about where we go moving forward with some of the recommendations from the Financial Advisory Panel that we haven't already been implementing and working on to date. Again, I appreciate the thoughtful presentation from the Leader of the Third Party.

I will now pivot to the Official Opposition and their concerns over special warrants. I will continue to say that I don't like using special warrants. I don't. I absolutely don't. I think special warrants do have a scrutiny piece, and they will be — all those projects that came from Community Services — we will have an opportunity here to hear the specific concerns that the members opposite have on those projects. We will find out which projects they believe we shouldn't have moved forward on. We will talk to them about the money that was allocated — absolutely.

It's not my favourite way of doing the accounting process because I do agree with members opposite — I agree with my statements in opposition — that scrutiny piece should be up front. It really should. However, in this case, I would say the previous government relied on warrants on an annual basis. They did treat the Legislature as an afterthought, as warrants were — the scope in which they used warrants definitely was a lot bigger. We have not done that.

The special warrant here is providing that additional budgetary authorization for up to \$20 million to maximize benefits to Yukon communities. With \$15 million for infrastructure development and \$5 million for land development, the additional funds are absolutely needed for municipal and First Nation projects that fall under federal infrastructure funding programs and are processing faster than anyone expected. I do have to give a shoutout to the Department of Community Services.

We haven't, as a government — whoever is in charge of this government — we've never been in this situation before where the Department of Community Services, with a whole-of-government approach, working with Highways and Public Works, working with Finance, working with the federal government, getting flexibility where they need it for these infrastructure dollars — for the first time got to a place where, as of January, that money was spent and we had two pathways forward. We could have stopped every one of those projects in its tracks and waited for the scrutiny that the members opposite are looking for or we could have done the special warrant.

The Department of Finance will tell you how much I don't like them, but I agree with the Department of Finance and I agree with my colleagues — we had to do it because we didn't want to see the Carmacks phase 3 waste-water system stop. We didn't want to see the Marsh Lake water treatment plant replacement stop. We didn't want to see the Ross River sewage lagoon rehabilitation stop. We didn't want the Teslin drainage and BST to stop or the Whitehorse Selkirk aquifer underground water protection to stop — Dawson water plant

and water sewer upgrades, Haines Junction sewer lagoons upgrades, Old Crow sewage lagoons upgrades, Faro water systems upgrades, F.H. Collins track, the Watson Lake sewage lagoons upgrades, Mayo reservoir and water sewer upgrades — I have to say, Mr. Speaker, not sexy projects, that's for sure, but extremely important infrastructure to all of these communities — so we had to move forward.

This is about the accounting and to make sure that the cheques can continue and the projects can continue, and that's very, very important to this government. We definitely had to do what we did and again, when you take a look — and I appreciate the comments from the Leader of the Third Party as far as the budgeting process of the territorial government and how we are getting more efficient — but again, the special warrants, we'll use them if absolutely necessary.

This was an extenuating circumstance that had never happened before, and we are proud to be able to say that we got this money out the door. It's an extremely important thing for this Yukon Liberal government to make sure that we did that.

This comes down to the high level of advanced scoping and feasibility work completed during the previous two fiscal years as well, resulting in one of the strongest years on record — one of the strongest years on record for spending on infrastructure projects in the Yukon. That's a testament to the Department of Community Services. It's a testament to their ability and the minister's ability to work with First Nation governments and municipal governments as well to get lot development and community infrastructure development that are priorities of Yukoners out the door.

We're working extremely hard to meet the growing housing demands, to replace outdated and failing infrastructure and to help communities meet the needs of their residents, and we'll continue to do that.

I will, once again, agree that I am not a big fan of special warrants. In this case, after long consideration, we made the decision that we would have to move forward in that vein. We are happy to discuss in Committee of the Whole, when we get past the general debate and into specifically Community Services, any questions necessary on any of those projects that I listed from the members opposite because, right now, we are just hearing some generalities as far as that goes. There was one specific question that they wanted to know about cost overruns — happy to have that conversation, but again, this is important work. I know for a fact, with due respect to the member opposite, that he would not want to see any of these projects slow down because he understands how important this infrastructure is to the communities.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for your indulgence so that I could answer some of the questions from the members opposite. With that, I will sit and we can move on to Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?
Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are nine yea, seven nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 208 agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Recess

Bill No. 208: *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Is there any general debate?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would like to welcome the officials from the department here today: Chris Mahar and Katherine White. I will embarrass Katherine later.

I will just start with small opening remarks here. As I made clear in my second reading remarks, I am very pleased with the progress made to date on the budget for the current

fiscal year. Developing our capacity to forecast effectively is a hallmark of good fiscal management, and the estimates that we are debating this afternoon are modest. They reflect our view that supplementary spending should reflect unanticipated changes rather than embark on a new course of action.

Our government set its vision in the main estimates last spring. It has remained clear and focused over the year. I want to thank all departments again for their hard work and cooperation in following through on the vision set by our government and also for their diligence in delivering programs and services that Yukoners have come to know and deserve.

I outlined the highlights of the second supplementary estimates earlier this afternoon. Rather than taking time in the House to repeat those, I will yield the floor to members opposite and look forward to those questions.

Mr. Cathers: In rising to speak again to the supplementary budget as the Official Opposition Finance critic, I want to thank the officials from Finance who are here today not only for their attendance here, but also for their help at the briefings that we have had in walking through the budget. I also want to emphasize to them and to officials of all departments who were involved in putting together the budget that, while we will criticize the decisions that we see as being made by the Premier — where we think those decisions warrant criticism — we appreciate the work that is done by officials in Finance and across the whole of government in putting together the budget and carrying out the instructions and direction they are provided with.

I am not going to spend too much more time in speaking to the supplementary budget here this afternoon since I already addressed it at second reading. Again, the Official Opposition has concerns with this supplementary estimate, primarily due to the Premier and his Cabinet's choice of spending \$20 million through a special warrant in mid-winter rather than having that amount dealt with either during the fall budget or during the spring. The excuses provided today, and prior to today, by the Premier about why that was necessary — quite simply, we have not seen the evidence of that presented, and we do have to remind the public that the Premier used as strong language as anyone has — it is probably fair to say — in this territory, criticizing special warrants prior to taking office. He went so far as to refer to them as demonstrating a lack of respect for this Chamber and for democracy itself and talked a very good line about not using them before taking office.

Unfortunately, we have seen the Liberal government not live up to that commitment.

Again, we are seeing frustration from Yukoners about the fact that the Liberal government, whether it's at the national level or territorially, whether the slogan is "real change," "sunny way" or "be heard", the main issue is promising to do things differently prior to being elected and then failing to live up to your words and your promises upon taking office.

With that, I will wrap up my remarks here in general debate so we can get into the individual departments. I would again note the list of items that I asked for at second reading on this for breakdowns on the expenditures. We would still

like to receive that information, including clarity on the projects funded by Community Services.

The Premier, in responding to me at second reading, expressed the view that he was sure I wouldn't oppose any of those projects, but in fact I have to remind the Premier that we still don't know what all of those projects were that were funded in that area. We have yet to receive that information and that complete breakdown as well as the explanation of the list of projects. We did receive a partial list, but we still do not have the individual dollar amounts for those items.

It makes it very hard to determine the validity of a request on a project when we still don't know whether it's a project overrun or a project proceeding quicker than expected. We have only the Premier's assurances on the topic. We don't actually see the detail that we have a right to expect — that the public has a right to expect to be provided to them — about how their money is being spent.

With that, I will wrap up my remarks.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to my colleague across the way for Lake Laberge.

Again, we have given the list. I have run off this list a couple of times now, and it is the comprehensive list. That's the total list. For a breakdown of those dollar values, I am happy to continue that conversation in Committee of the Whole with Community Services and to talk about the dollar values therein.

Again, I will continue to say that the special warrant — if that wasn't passed, Community Services would have issued stop work orders to contractors, postponing projects and creating new and unnecessary costs related to restarting that construction. Again, Community Services, through their due diligence and work with the communities, did something that was never accomplished before. It's quite that simple. As we now know that it is the new normal that Community Services now has that capacity — you can't really predict the future, so we will see — I really hope that we now have that as corporate knowledge inside of our department.

I will talk a little bit more about that approach as well because I think Community Services really deserves the distinction. They really deserve Yukoners knowing the real story here on why the special warrant was created and how it's different from the previous government using it really as a tool almost every single session. An envelope attached to both land development and for municipal and First Nation infrastructure projects was used for budgetary purposes in 2018-19 — a budget of \$15 million allocated to land. The department was directed to continue as quickly as possible with projects approved within the envelope and then return if that envelope was exceeded. As of early January 2019, Community Services fully spent the capital voted to date. Again, it didn't happen before.

Additional spending authority was needed at that time. It was absolutely necessary at that time to continue progress on those projects. Because the Legislature didn't sit until March 7, a special warrant was the only option available for that accounting treatment. For Supplementary No. 1, an additional \$4 million was approved for land development. We went

through that process here in the Legislative Assembly. Supplementary No. 2 includes that \$20 million for that special warrant. I'm happy to discuss that \$20 million for the special warrant here in the Legislative Assembly, giving the transparency that Yukoners are asking for as far as those dollar values.

The department could not wait until the supplementary budget passed in the Legislature, with an estimated time frame for spending authority being March 21 at the earliest, based upon debate in the Legislative Assembly.

Since 2014, Mr. Chair, the department had spent between \$14 million and \$27 million on infrastructure. Within the 2018-19 year, they exceeded \$27 million. Again, credit needs to be given to the department and also to the Land Development branch as the primary land developer in the Yukon for these projects.

The projects listed are for everywhere from Old Crow to Watson Lake and everywhere in between, so lots of really important projects. Again, we had to make a decision. We did. I feel comfortable with the decision and those projects are on the way as we speak. They would have had to stop; we wouldn't have been able to give them the authority to continue until at least the third week of March. That is just not good enough. The costs would have been excessive to do that project. Yukoners need this infrastructure. The economy is booming, and we need infrastructure that matches the level of the economy, and that's what we're going to continue to do.

Thank you to the member opposite for his concern, and I hope that answered his question.

Mr. Cathers: It unfortunately did not answer my question. Again, I'm not going to spend too much time in debate here this afternoon because we do want to get into other items, but I do have to point out that we still have a situation where we know that the item spent by special warrant is \$15 million. We still don't know how much of the project was spent.

We've heard the assurance and the talking points saying that it's all just projects proceeding faster than expected, but we still don't have the detail on what that is actually.

Again, the same applies with land development projects, but in both cases — especially in the area of the clean water and waste-water projects — we're just asking for a detailed breakdown and more of an explanation about what the rationale was, what the expected schedule was and whether this was indeed ahead of schedule or whether it's just overbudget. That is not an unreasonable level of information to ask to be provided to members and to the Yukon public. Again, the request stands.

I also do have to challenge the point that the Premier just made of suggesting that the fastest possible approval that could have occurred in this Sitting for additional resources would have taken it to the third week of March; in fact, if there were an item of some urgency, it could have been dealt with in an interim supply bill. If we were provided a reasonable explanation by the government of the urgency of passing interim supply and believed that it was a reasonable expenditure — a reasonable, justified request — in fact we

would have been willing to give favourable consideration to expediting debate on an interim supply bill this very week, not waiting until the end of March, as the Premier is indicating.

I get the sense we're not going to get a lot more than the talking points from the Premier here this afternoon. I would note the information that we've requested that we still haven't received about the individual projects — what the original timelines were and whether indeed these are, as the Premier has told us, projects proceeding faster than planned or whether in fact they're simply over the original estimated budget.

I would note for staff of Community Services listening that indeed if they were proceeding faster than scheduled, and in keeping with the instructions that they had received from the political leadership, were asked to do things as quickly as possible and were completing things ahead of schedule, then certainly I would be the first to congratulate them for a job well done in that area. Even if they are proceeding faster than expected, that does not absolve the Premier and his colleagues of the responsibility to explain the expenditure of public dollars to the public, provide a reasonable level of information about those spending decisions and ultimately be accountable not just to this Legislative Assembly but to all Yukoners, for their money.

With that, unless the Premier says something that sparks an additional question or requires me to rebut it, I will likely cede the floor to the Third Party for their questions at this stage.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I'm not disputing that we should go over the items line by line. We did give a complete list to the member opposite and we've read it into Hansard — so that's the list. During Community Services debate, we will be able to expand on those dollar values for each one of those.

I did hear the member opposite ask if we could have done it through an interim supply bill. It would have been the same situation where we would have to wait for the Legislative Assembly for an interim supply bill or for a supplementary. I think what he said was there are other options like interim supply. I'm happy to discuss why that was not an option. He can take me at my word or not. It's irrelevant to me. I'm just happy that those projects were able to continue.

I'm happy the Department of Community Services, for the first time, was able to get more out the door because the economy is booming, and we need to make sure that those infrastructure dollars are being spent so that we can advance the economy and advance the infrastructure in those communities.

Mr. Cathers: I'm going to be very brief. I just want to make a point that I should also have outlined as one of the available options to the government, which is not just an interim supply bill, but in fact, since we're still in the 2018-19 fiscal year with this very budget bill, if the government had not proceeded with the special warrant, as soon as this supplementary appropriation is approved, government would have had the spending authority to proceed with those \$20 million in projects that instead it proceeded with mid-winter.

Again, there were a number of options available other than a special warrant. It could have been addressed in the fall. It could have been addressed in the supplementary bill without spending it beforehand in a special warrant. It could have been in an interim supply bill. In the case of both being contained in this budget bill, if it had not already been spent through special warrant or interim supply, we would have given favourable consideration to any time-sensitive projects that had a valid explanation for them.

I don't think we are going to get much further with the Premier here this afternoon on this topic, but I do feel compelled to point out, on behalf of the Official Opposition and on behalf of Yukoners who have raised these concerns, that the government did have options, but it chose to spend \$20 million through a special warrant instead. Again, this brings the grand total spent by the Liberals through special warrants to \$476 million. In all of those cases, there were options that could have avoided them having to do any of it in the first place.

With that, Mr. Chair, as I said before when I sat down, unless something requires further comment, I will likely pass it on for furthering interest of debate.

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite is correct in that there are supplementary budgets and there special warrants. There are interim supply bills. What I will disagree with is — I do appreciate that the member opposite is saying that he would give special consideration as the Legislative Assembly started expediting the process, whether it was through a supplementary budget or an interim supply. However, that would still leave us with months where these projects would have laid dormant and would not be expanding. Again, it was January when we had to make this decision.

He mentioned that we could have even dealt with this in the fall. Absolutely correct — if we had the information that we had in January in the fall. We are going to have to agree to disagree. At the same time, we are accounting for the money that is spent, and we are doing that as efficiently as possible in making sure that we have the debate in the Legislative Assembly and when we get to Committee of the Whole on those specific projects. Again, the member opposite is not correct in that it would have been an okay solution to wait until March 7 when we knew as of January that these projects would halt if we did not have that spending authority. We couldn't have done it in the fall and did not think that we should wait on these projects till the Spring Sitting, so the special warrant was necessary in that case.

Ms. White: I am going to take the opportunity right now because we are in a general debate on Finance of this appropriation to just thank the Deputy Minister of Finance because I did not get the chance. She just rolls her eyes because you have to describe what happens in Hansard. We were introduced to the Deputy Minister of Finance with the previous government, and when she came in, big changes happened — really big changes — including the fact that the way I was taught to read a budget in 2011 drastically changed

and I needed to learn how to do it again. What happened was that we were able to compare budgets as years went forward.

I have had the good fortune of being in other briefings and getting to meet other people from the Department of Finance. Then I got to learn that we have a rock star in Finance right now as our deputy minister. She is held in really high regard by her colleagues, so this is the opportunity for me to say thank you — although I was the original, I like to say. She definitely brought a lot. It has been fantastic to have you, and I am a little bit sad because the work that was happening under your leadership — I have high hopes that it will continue and so does the Department of Finance. Whatever jurisdiction gets you and wherever you end up, they will be really lucky. Thank you for the work that you have done. Thank you for the leadership that you have shown. Thanks for explaining things that are hard to understand for those of us who do not have the financial brains. It has been a pleasure, and I won't get the chance to say this later on, so thank you so much for being here and good luck in the future.

That is all, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Of course, I am not just going to let this go. First of all, I am going to do this. I am going to say, “Kate White, Kate White, Kate White” because I am not allowed to say that in the Legislative Assembly, but I am talking about my deputy minister, not a member. It is nice to be able to say “Kate White” in the Legislative Assembly. I am not allowed to say that normally.

I also do want to thank my colleague. Imagine coming into this job as the Minister of Finance. You feed from a fire hose in the first year, and to have somebody like Kate, who can take things and put them into terms and who can know where you are and know where you have to be — a degree in mathematics is one thing, but finances for a \$1.5-billion budget is a whole other thing. To be able to know where I was, as far as my understanding of mathematics — but to be able to translate that into what I need to know for this job was all on the shoulders of Ms. White. I don't know if it was because she is a Cape Bretoner, but she said it to me in a language that I could understand from the beginning.

Again, I really want to thank her for all of her dedication. I have to say this as well: the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel would not have happened, really, without the guidance of Kate and her team at Finance.

You are absolutely correct. She walks on water up there, for good reason. There is a lot of respect from the department for Kate because of her care for the team. She would take a bullet for anybody up there, and so I just want to say thank you.

If anybody wants to say thank you to Kate White, say it in whiskey sours.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on the bill? Seeing none, we will now proceed to clause 1.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

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 Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Is there any general debate?

Department of Justice

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would like to welcome to this Chamber, for the first time, our Deputy Minister of Justice, John Phelps. Returning to help us again this afternoon is Luda Ayzenberg, who is the director of Finance for the Department of Justice. Welcome to both of them.

I rise today to speak to the Department of Justice 2018-19 *Supplementary Estimates No. 2*, and it is my intention this afternoon to take a few moments to outline what is in that supplementary budget and then entertain questions after that if there remain any.

This supplementary budget further adjusts last year's main budget, funding vital projects to improve our justice system and the services that it provides. The land titles modernization project, which continues to move toward full implementation, will improve the service quality provided so that it meets the national standards while maintaining the Land Titles Office current, very high level of accuracy and certainty in title here in the territory.

Currently, folks are implementing phase 1 of the supporting Yukon electronic title information computer system, also known as YETI for short. This modernization will speed up title registration and enable Yukon government and public users to search the Yukon registry data online — certainly progress. While \$720,000 is being deferred to the 2019-20 budget for the land titles modernization system, I am excited to announce that we expect to go live with the YETI computer system this year.

In addition, Mr. Chair, our government is still working on the corrections case and facility management system that will support better data collection and analytical measures, creating better program planning and evaluation, which in turn leads to better evidence-based policy and decision-making in the Corrections area of the Department of Justice. We are still working to finalize the specifications for this project, and as a result, the department will reduce last year's budget by \$650,000 for the Corrections case and facility management system. We will be working with our partners to develop and implement the system in the coming years. There is an opportunity here to evaluate what is the best possible solution for that project.

The department is budgeting an increase of \$375,000 for the provost renovations. As members will recall, we are now going to be managing the provost duties within the Government of Yukon after the RCMP stepped away from

this service, expressing concern about the older court facility and newer standard for lockups that the RCMP work under — national standards set by the RCMP. But when reviewing the risk associated with this facility, our government worked to determine the improvements needed in the court building, taking into account the purpose of that area — primarily holding inmates during daylight hours when they are required to attend court.

As members will also recall, the Whitehorse provost services include activities that maintain security for custodial purposes, including inmate transport, guarding and inspection of detention facilities. Those are all now delivered by the Department of Justice.

Our goal is to create service efficiencies and to allow the Yukon RCMP to focus on other policing priorities. Certainly, that was a productive conversation that we had with them, and those adjustments are being made and are being completed this year.

The last item falling under the capital budget is \$500,000 for the morgue and coroner office planning that has been deferred from this year. We are working within the department and with the coroner's office. That work is still ongoing, but we have not yet reached the point where these funds need to be expended.

Mr. Chair, shifting to the operation and maintenance budget, the department has requested an ongoing increase of \$310,000 for the Judicial Compensation Commission pay increases. This particular Judicial Compensation Commission was late in reporting as the first named commissioner had to step away for personal reasons. But with a new commissioner, the process proceeded, and our government has accepted the recommendations of the 2016 Judicial Compensation Commission and will pay salaries to judges and Justices of the Peace that are in line with other western and northern Canadian jurisdictions and within the scope of the *Territorial Court Act*.

Further, within Court Services, the department will see an increase of \$19,000 in time-limited funding from Canada for the French language training for the judiciary. This money is 100-percent recoverable from Canada. Equal access to justice is important to all our citizens, and having judges who can work in both official languages helps us to do that well.

Moving along to community justice and public safety, the department has allocated an increase of \$154,000 in time-limited funding from Canada for the gang and gun violence action fund. This is also 100-percent recoverable from Canada. For a total of over \$2.2 million over the next five years, this funding is aimed at increasing prevention, disruption, awareness and understanding of gun and gang violence here in the territory. This funding will be used to support several activities, such as adding investigative capacity to Yukon's safer communities and neighbourhoods unit and creating new capacity within the Department of Justice. That work is ongoing.

Mr. Chair, an increase of \$30,000 in time-limited funding from Canada has been allocated for the independent legal advice pilot project, which provides independent legal advice

for victims of intimate partner violence and sexualized violence. Again, this money is 100-percent recoverable from Canada. This project allows victims to discuss their case at any point in the process with specially trained lawyers and will support training for service providers while assisting justice professionals in understanding the complex legal framework surrounding sexual assault.

Finally, Mr. Chair, a tradition of good neighbours to our friends in the north of British Columbia — we asked for a \$9,000 increase to cover the cost of victim services provided in the communities of Good Hope Lake, Lower Post and Atlin, British Columbia. This cost is 100-percent recoverable from the government of British Columbia. So we provide those services to them and they pay the Government of Yukon for that service.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to provide remarks on the supplementary budget for the Department of Justice. I look forward to any questions that there may be as a result of the Supplementary No. 2 that's presented for Justice.

Ms. White: From reading the notes that my colleague got from the briefing, I just have a question about the morgue and the coroner's office. It just says that the money allocated last year has been carried through because a location had been found — so if the minister could just update us as to how the search continues.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate the question for this item because it is certainly something that we spoke about last year and put in the budget to address the issues for the coroner's office. It is a situation where the work is ongoing internally, and I'm happy to describe what some of that work is.

There is, at this point, a separate coroner's office from the location of the morgue. All activities requiring the morgue are carried out there. Sometimes families must go there and visit. We've done some renovations, as you may recall, in 2017 to make that experience as good as it can be in the surroundings.

The idea of looking at an appropriate and new location both for the morgue and for the coroner's office is something that has arrived over the last number of years.

Currently, the chief coroner shares an office with the worker's advocate, and there is some interest in separating those two places of business. The contemplation is that possibly the coroner's office would be located nearer to the morgue.

The concept of the morgue requires some very specialized equipment. It requires a loading-bay vehicle garage that can be closed and into which very large vehicles — often ambulances and other vehicles — can enter. There is a location required next to that for preparation and work by the coroner, other medical professionals if need be and sometimes police and then a separate place as well for families to be comfortable if they need to attend that location.

It's a pretty specialized unit. Right now, it has evolved over time into something that is useful but probably not ideal. We're trying to consider all of the details of the coroner's office location in one puzzle, and there are a lot of pieces of that puzzle.

We are continuing that internal work, and the department is also looking at the allocation of space for several offices. When you move one piece, maybe there is another piece that can move as well, or you can move one in order to get space for another one. It's a pretty complicated puzzle, and we are not at the point where money can be spent for the purposes of planning that and/or designing or building.

We've deferred that money to future budgets — not necessarily 2019-20 — so that we can make a full assessment of what that work will require and have, in all frankness, a better idea of what that project might cost. All of that work is happening internal to the Department of Justice. It's also happening in concert with the Highways and Public Works Property Management division.

It's complicated. I hope I didn't complicate things more, but those are the kinds of factors that are going into making those decisions in consultation with the chief coroner and the work that the department is doing with her and making sure that when a move is made, it's the right move, it's fiscally responsible and it gets us to the service delivery model that we want for Yukoners. That work is ongoing, but it won't be spending that money this year.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that answer.

Just while I have the opportunity — because it doesn't often happen that I get to talk about Justice — I, along with many others happily attended the announcement by the Kwanlin Dün First Nation about the ability for settlement land to be included in land titles. It has been a long time coming and it was complicated to get there and it was really exciting. I am just taking this opportunity to congratulate those at the Land Titles Office for the monumental amount of work that they have done recently in working toward modernizing that office.

I know that when I've had the opportunity in prior years to talk about the condominium act as it was proposed, the one thing that I was told by surveyors as well as realtors is that the thing that they saw as being one of the main drawbacks we had was that, until we modernized the Land Titles Office and the work that they were able to do, it would always hold us back.

I want to congratulate everyone for the work that went into the ability of Kwanlin Dün to be able to make that announcement because it was really exciting. I also want to acknowledge the amount of work done by the good folks at the Land Titles Office so far and their efforts to modernize. So it's not really a question; it's more of a statement, and maybe the minister can let us know what next steps are required because there is the deferred \$720,000.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for those comments. I echo those comments. The staff and the administration of the Department of Justice that have managed this process over the last number of years — the planning that went into that and the realization of all of those milestones, including the ones we are about to make, are extraordinary and certainly are to be well recognized. The Land Titles Office probably quietly — it's something that Yukoners do not pay a lot of attention to until there is a need for them to transfer property or buy their

first home or have interaction with it. It becomes a far more complicated process maybe than people understand, but also the modernization project will address many of the confusing or complicated parts of that from the past. It certainly brings the Yukon into modern day. We have had great progress there. I too appreciate all of that and thank the staff and administration for all of their hard work.

The land titles modernization system is now referred to as YETI, as I mentioned before. This is the electronic land titles registry system that will be going live hopefully relatively very soon in this fiscal year. It is also required to register documents for land titles used in offices. The original project's capital budget in 2018-19 was \$1.835 million, and \$720,000 of that amount was deferred to the 2019-20 budget due to additional work that needs to be completed and a change of the project implementation date. As with many large complicated projects, the estimate of time needed to be adjusted, and as a result, not all of the funds were spent at that particular time. As a result of the additional work, the original implementation date of phase 1 of the Yukon Electronic Title Information project was March 2019. It is now June 2019, so that is the effect of the budgetary change. The additional work to be completed on the electronic registry system will enable the Land Titles Office with the ability to register and create titles for settlement A and B lands for the Yukon First Nations, as my colleague mentioned. It will ensure that the condominium register will align with Yukon legislation, which is a project that is ongoing.

Ms. White: I sometimes drop these lines in conversation just because it is surprising for people. When I say, "When I was in jail," and then I let it sit there for a bit because sometimes you just like to make people wonder. I worked for two years in Corrections as a life skills coach, and I learned a lot of things when I worked in Corrections. This is an opportunity as well to have a conversation with this Minister of Justice about that before I clear everything and we move on. I worked with women within the correctional facility, and I was lucky because it was a pilot program. It was run for two years, and when the new facility opened it shut down.

The one thing I can say, based on my experience, is that as release dates got closer and closer, people got more and more nervous. You could see everything change. You can tell when someone is nervous. You can tell by behaviour. You can tell by all sorts of things, including them saying that they were really worried about what was going to happen. The example that I use is that you could have someone who may have had an alcohol or drug dependency. While you have the ability to be in a sober facility, that is really fantastic and it gives you that head start before your release date.

The concerns that I have always had about women leaving Corrections is that men have the opportunity to go to something called the ARC or the Adult Resource Centre. Men leaving Corrections have the ability to go into that program. Women leaving Corrections — there is not a place for them to go. Just to be clear, a woman leaving Corrections cannot access Kaushee's Place because she is not fleeing violence. A

woman leaving Corrections is vulnerable. I am going to say that again: She is very vulnerable because she is going back to the situation that she left. You could see what would happen, where people would start to make phone calls, so they were either calling family or they were calling friends or they were rekindling relationships that they had left behind because release date meant that you had nowhere to go unless you had it organized.

My pitch with the prior government was always: When are we going to make sure that we take care of women when they leave Corrections? It is more a comment, but the question could be: Has this minister, and of course her new deputy minister, looked at what happens to women when they leave Corrections as to whether or not we have exit interviews about where people are going and as to whether or not we have check-ins? The other thing I learned unfortunately in Corrections is that if I met someone once, the distinct possibility was that I was going to meet them again. You never really said anything that left any kind of closing, you just said: "I'll see you when I see you." In some cases, I saw people multiple times in two years and in some cases, I see them now and it's good.

My question is: Has this government looked at what happens to women when they are released from Corrections?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I thank the member opposite for the question. I too have some experiences — not the same as my colleague across the way — but certainly with inmates in correctional services. I will say today that I am happy to continue this conversation with her.

I was pleased — in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre review that was done last year — in the report from Mr. Loukidelis that transitional services were identified because it is something that our government has identified for all inmates and the need to improve them, along with the need for a more holistic approach to the services that are provided to inmates who are suffering from mental health issues.

There are a wide variety of those, so everything from anxiety to much more serious — not that anxiety is not serious, but more serious issues. I think that the work we have begun to do will bring us to a contemplation of transitional services and how we can better do that. It will also involve case managers and the services that they can provide to individuals who are transitioning out of custody — in particular, a one-government approach with respect to wraparound services.

While I can't say that huge progress has been made to date, it is something that is on the radar. I think it is an important issue. It is certainly an important issue for Corrections, recognizing that the services of Corrections are broader than when the door slams on the way in or when the door opens and someone is released from custody.

We have a deputy minister now with extraordinary experience in the correctional and criminal justice area, and our opportunity to have those discussions going forward is very important and also an opportunity that we will try to seize.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that comment. Again, I highlighted it in the previous iteration of the Yukon government with the concern of folks being released from the Whitehorse Correctional Centre who lived in communities. At the time, Greyhound could take you to Watson Lake, so you could get a ticket for Watson Lake. The minister can confirm if people are able to take the Husky Bus on its route toward Dawson City. A previous minister, at one point in time — and that person is not in this room, so it's okay — had told me that the expectation was that you would call a family member and they would pick you up. The reality is that's often just not possible.

One of the questions I have always wondered about and thought about since my time in Corrections was if a person is apprehended in a community and they're brought to Whitehorse, is there the ability to get them back to the community they came from, or are we just leaving people in Whitehorse to figure out their own way home?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I don't have the specific details about Husky Bus or any version of that, but I don't take it that's what the member opposite is asking about. I take it that what we really need to be talking about here is case managers and a focus on Corrections that's not about phoning a family member to get out but, in fact, an assessment of exactly what that person's vulnerabilities are and how they can be addressed by Corrections before the door is opened, if I can say it that way.

It's our position that this responsibility of the case manager to determine a safe environment is, in my view — and I'll draw this comparison — not unlike the social workers who work at the hospital where there's an exit strategy for someone who's going home. Will they have the proper care? Will they be able to have some assistance, if necessary?

Maybe it's not to the same extent — and it's not a direct parallel — but it is a responsibility, in my view. When we are looking at the mental health and mental wellness of inmates and a safe, secure place for them to go — for those who do want that assistance — that assessment is a responsibility that we have on the way out the door, and transitional services is a better and perhaps all-encompassing title for that but something we need to improve.

Ms. White: I appreciate that answer. One of the reasons why I highlight it is if you had someone who is brought in from a community being released into Whitehorse on, like, a Thursday or Friday night, it was absolutely terrifying. I worked with women who asked to be released on Monday because they had a better chance of trying to get home if they were released on a Monday than if they were released on a Thursday or Friday night.

It's really important to look at that, especially when we're talking about people — the farther away they are, the harder it's going to be to get home. Often, like I said, you've had that ability to access counselling services, you've been going to AA — if you're lucky — you've maybe been going to NA and you've started that work, and often people want to continue that work and often in their home communities. I'll leave it at that.

When I worked in Corrections — so I went through the correctional officer training — I did — and I never wanted to be a peace officer, so I never did that part of it because that responsibility, for me, would change the dynamic that I had with inmates. There were other people who worked in the facility at the same time I did who also didn't wear uniforms. Case managers did not wear uniforms when I worked there; neither did the support staff. The reason why I highlight this is because when the discussion came with me as to whether or not I would be viewed as a peace officer — so a correctional officer — and then whether or not I would wear a uniform, I said that if I had to wear a uniform, then I was not interested in the position because it would change the dynamic of me going from a support person and a person who was there to help to one who was viewed the same as an officer who had a punitive role — that was not my role.

I know that when the new facility opened there were some changes, including the fact that case managers went from being in the clothing that they chose to wearing uniforms. The question I have now is: Has the minister or the department had the opportunity to look at the effectiveness of that? Has it changed the dynamic between case managers and inmates for the good or for the worse?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate that we're straying a bit from the supplementary budget, but I don't mind answering the questions if I can — all good ideas. As we say, there are great ideas coming from every corner of the Yukon.

There is much research with respect to the dynamics in correctional facilities and the details of how people respond to uniforms, not uniforms, certain surroundings, rooms, paint, activities — those kinds of things, and they're all being reviewed and taken into account.

I will point us back to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre review and recommendations made by Mr. Loukidelis because I think there is scope there for a lot of those things to be considered, to be frank.

I can also indicate that I fairly recently had the opportunity to be in Nova Scotia where I met with a correctional facility there as well as with the forensic health unit that involves the mental wellness and mental treatment of inmates with mental health issues. The question of uniforms does come up in that context, although the inmates aren't in different clothing, but the people who provide service — the social workers, the correctional officers — are.

Absolutely — it's an evolving world. It's a situation in which we need to make sure we look at all aspects of how someone is affected when we're dealing with their mental health. What we know from statistics and what we know from the Whitehorse Correctional Centre review is that the mental health of inmates is a major issue to be dealt with, and we need to do that better, in a better way. All of that is to be looked at as we go through that process.

Mr. Cathers: In rising this afternoon to speak to the supplementary budget, I want to first welcome the officials, and in the case of Deputy Minister John Phelps, I believe this is your first appearance here in the Assembly. My congratulations again on your appointment and best wishes. I

know that your family is no stranger to these Chambers here, and I think you're probably sitting one chair over from where your dad sat during his time as Government Leader.

Just a few specific questions that I would like to ask about the budget here. We see some changes in the supplemental to the federal funding agreements. In the case of one funding agreement, we see the increase in the guns and gangs violence action fund of money from Canada. I understand that this is time-limited funding from the Government of Canada. Could the minister please provide some information on the details of this funding? I know what was in the press release, but it wasn't 100-percent clear from that press release whether the overall amount of money that was announced through this fund is money that is coming through equal annual contributions to the territorial government or whether there is some variance on that — whether some of it is either front-end loaded or back-end loaded or changing throughout the years.

The second part of that I would ask is: What is this money supposed to be for? Specifically with that, I want to just get some clarification from the minister on two things. One is if there are restrictions or criteria on the use of this money, and if so, if she could describe generally what they are. Secondly in that area, I understood from the press release and the minister's comments around the time of the press release — there were interviews that were done at that point — that some of the money was going toward the RCMP, and some would be going to government for use by SCAN and perhaps elsewhere.

At this point, I have not seen the detail yet and would appreciate if the minister could clarify: Of the amount that is coming through this fund, how much is coming per year? How is that being split between the Department of Justice and the RCMP? Are there any specific details related to the intent of this fund? I know the title is itself an indication of the basic intent, but I would appreciate if there are any specific criteria or requirements of what government needs to do under this fund to complete any specified activities pursuant to this agreement.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will see if I can tackle all of those questions. I think we'll first go to the amounts. The funding is going to flow from the federal government over the next five years in varying amounts. I think it increases over a number of the years. I have in my head \$154,000 for 2018-19, increased by the new funding: \$2.2 million over five years. I think the first year, which is 2019-20, is \$194,000 — so a small increase — but I am happy to provide that list. I do not have it here; I saw it when we were preparing for the announcement. I can certainly provide that list to the member opposite that shows the amount of funds to be flowed for each of the next five years. I am happy to commit to doing that.

There is no direct funding through this program to the RCMP. One of the requirements of the federal program was that it not be used in other federal programs. Of course, the policing here in the territory for us is a partnership between the federal government, the RCMP and the Yukon territorial government. I will hesitate with respect to that to quickly say

that this funding being used in different areas with respect to the work and the focus on gun and gang violence here in the territory will allow the RCMP to focus their attention perhaps in other areas. So they are at the table in determining how we can best use this money here in the territory to address those concerns.

There are some restrictions with respect to its use, which I have mentioned. I am also aware that when the program was first announced, the officials at the Department of Justice here contacted Canada to explain the unique circumstances, as we sometimes have to do here in the territory and across the north, with respect to the restrictions that were designed in the program and how they would affect us here in the north. Certainly, conversations took place around that topic, and ultimately, the response came that some recognition of the uniqueness of the territory and the fact that sometimes these programs are written with perhaps larger cities or larger issues in mind and they don't always play out well here. We have noted that they have been receptive to those adjustments for the territory.

An increase in this supplementary budget of \$154,000 has been noted as 100-percent recoverable from Canada, and the federal funding has been announced for over the next five years. It is to go toward enhancing efforts in the territory that are aimed at prevention, research, training and capacity building of territorial law enforcement, and in particular, territorial programs to address serious and organized crime throughout the territory. It should not surprise anyone that the seriousness of gun and gang violence has been noted here in the territory. We are all aware of that. We are also aware that the territory affords itself an opportunity for gangs and gang-related activity to ramp up from time to time here and then for those gangs to quickly disappear.

As I said recently at the questioning by the media about this particular thing, it is a very complicated thing here in the territory. We have a small population. Newcomers and outsiders are noticed easily, but by the same token, they have an opportunity to be affiliated with gangs that are in the Lower Mainland and in other places here in Canada and operate in a way that doesn't necessarily require them to have a home base here in the territory.

To go on and try to answer some of the other questions posed by my colleague from the opposition about how it could be used, we have, in all honesty, been somewhat circumspect. We don't necessarily want to break down — and I don't have the answer today anyway — dollar for dollar what is going where so that these people who are in organized crime and have unscrupulous behaviours will know what is being ramped up, but I certainly appreciate the question on behalf of Yukoners. In a broad way, I am happy to report that the safer communities and neighbourhoods unit will play an important role. It does play an important role in building safer communities throughout the territory by responding to concerns of Yukoners, often about illegal activities that involve gang activity — about drug trafficking and the drug trade, in particular. Yukoners can seek relief in that

complaint-driven process. That unit will be a part of the recipient of the capacity-building forum from this funding.

We have also indicated that some funding — and it has frankly not all yet been determined. As I said, the funding will ramp up over the next few years, and we need to determine via working group and committee, working through the Department of Justice, and as I said, with RCMP assistance, where to best place these funds or build capacity to address the issues that this funding is aimed at.

The Government of Yukon and the RCMP are working collaboratively to address the organized activity and organized criminal activity here in the territory. The RCMP, the federal prosecution services and the territorial justice partners will continue to respond to these activities related to organized crime and have the funds to do so over the next five years.

As I have mentioned, the SCAN unit — or the safer communities and neighbourhoods unit — has uncovered and taken action to deal with a number of properties in the last year where there have been recognized clear connections to organized crime and where the drug trade has been taking place.

Yukon is actively working with Canada to combat criminal activity resulting from organized crime groups and taking advantage of the new federal funding under this initiative to enhance the capacity and training of individuals, of people who work in that law enforcement area and to do research and make efforts to help prevent gang involvement.

I can also indicate that we will be working closely with our partners in British Columbia and in other cities in Canada — in Vancouver and others — to make sure that any of the capacity we build here is in partnership with and connected to how they're doing that as well.

Thank you to my colleagues. I do have some numbers: 2019-20, approximately \$198,000; 2020-21, \$508,760; 2021-22, it goes to \$622,500 — I'm rounding the numbers, but approximately — and 2022-23, \$722,650. I hope that answers my colleague's questions.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answers from the minister and thank Justice officials for their quick work in getting those numbers that the minister just shared. I do appreciate that information.

I look forward to hearing more details about how government is planning to use the money, recognizing that, especially for the first two years of funding, the amount contained within that is more modest than later on down the road. I recognize that those dollar amounts, while significant, only go so far.

I look forward to hearing more from the minister about this area. Since the title of the funding agreement relates to guns and gangs — and I'm sure that neither the minister nor officials had any control over what the federal government chose to name the fund.

It is an area where, as much as the current federal government seems to be focusing on guns and talking about new gun control measures and gang activity, what is often missed in that point is the connection that very frequently exists between gang violence — including gun violence and

homicides — and the illegal drug trade or other illegal activities such as prostitution or black market trade that goes on across the country in varying levels in various jurisdictions. As the minister knows, the illegal opioid trade, including the fentanyl epidemic, has touched the lives of a number of people across the country, including here in the Yukon. We have seen deaths associated with that and suspected fatalities associated with that. It is a very serious problem. I hope that the government has the flexibility in this funding and will use it toward dealing with the illegal drug trade, focusing on trying to stomp out the problem that exists — and is not just a violence problem but in fact has cost the lives of Yukoners who have consumed drugs that have turned out to be fatal to them. It is a very sad situation and one that I hope these resources are used toward addressing to the greatest extent possible.

I would like to move on to another area of the supplementary budget where we have seen a \$75,000 reduction in funding from the federal government due to time-limited funding in Canada for the implementation of Bill C-46. Can the minister provide an explanation of what that was for and whether it is being replaced in any way or whether that funding from the federal government is simply ending?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am happy to do so.

For the record, Bill C-46 implementation, also known as drug-impaired driving, is an important topic for all Yukoners. This is in the supplementary budget — a decrease of \$75,000 in time-limited funding from Canada for the implementation of Bill C-46 — again, 100-percent recoverable from Canada. This funding was established in order to support training of approximately 15 RCMP members per year in a standardized field sobriety test and the drugs that impair course, with an aim of having 33 percent of the Yukon RCMP receiving updated training by year 3. The funding also provides for one RCMP member to receive the drug recognition expert training each year. The funding also supports the staffing of an analyst of drug-impaired driving to evaluate the implementation of new criminal sanctions related to drug-impaired driving — building the expertise that we have and need here in the territory of RCMP members. That funding was directly related to the training of those individuals as a result of the implementation of Bill C-46.

Mr. Cathers: That sparks a follow-up question of whether that money that has been lapsed — whether that agreement with the federal government is going to see that money rolling forward or being revoted into a future year or whether that \$75,000 is lost. If the minister could just outline, as I think she spoke to it — if she could provide information here just to refresh our memories about the time period that is covered within the C-46 implementation funding agreement, what the annual amounts are and when it will be wrapped up.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The original budget item in 2018-19 for this implementation that the member opposite might recall was about \$525,000, and that was based on estimates when the program was being developed for how much they anticipated it might cost here in the territory. That's being adjusted here in this supplemental budget of \$450,000, which

I'm told is closer to the actual costs of that training for the RCMP here in 2018-19. We have funding to continue this training and the implementation related in particular to the implementation of C-46 and continue to grow our expertise — the expertise of the RCMP members here in the territory over the next three years.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answer from the minister.

In the area of Court Services, there is a line item — and I think I can guess at the reasoning for it, but if the minister can explain — there is an increase, according to the handout given to us by officials, of \$310,000 for the judicial compensation commission pay increases. It notes that it's ongoing. Can the minister just explain the context of where this originated and the reason that there's this increase in the amount that is being paid for judges?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The one-time budget increase in the amount of \$310,000 was approved to cover retroactive salary increases from 2016-17 through 2018-19 and was approved by the judicial compensation commission report and recommendations. As I noted in my opening remarks, the report to come from what is known as the JCC took some time as a result of the original person chosen to do the work needing to resign for personal reasons, and then a new commissioner needed to be appointed, so by the time the process was ultimately followed and the report and negotiations and recommendations were completed, there were retroactive funds required.

The deputy judges' and the judges' salaries were increased by two percent in 2016-17 and 2.5 percent in each of 2017-18 and 2018-19. In addition, the formula for calculating the daily sitting fee for deputy judges will now be calculated by dividing the salary of a judge by 235 days. It used to be 250 days, which also effects an increase. A \$10 hourly rate increase was also authorized in this process for part-time justices of the peace at each level.

Mr. Cathers: With that, I will conclude my questions on the supplemental estimates. I thank the minister for the answer and the officials from Justice for their work in preparing the budget and also assisting with the answers provided this afternoon.

Chair: Is there any further general debate? Seeing none, we will proceed to line-by-line debate.

Ms. White: Mr. Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote No. 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$447,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,455,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,008,000 agreed to

Department of Justice agreed to

Chair: The next order of business before Committee of the Whole will be Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

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.

The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Is there any general debate?

Department of Community Services

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the members of this Legislature for the opportunity to provide information on the Department of Community Services in *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* for 2018-19.

The supplementary estimates before us consist of a \$20-million increase in capital — \$15 million for community infrastructure and \$5 million for the land development envelope. The content of the supplementary budget was contained in the special warrant that this government issued on February 13. We certainly looked at trying to wait until we could get to an interim supply act but we couldn't, short of shutting down some projects, which we did not want to do.

We know that lot development and community infrastructure development are significant priorities for Yukoners, and we have been planning and responding to this need accordingly.

I recall that when I first got into this Legislature, one of the concerns I heard from the members opposite was that we weren't moving fast enough on infrastructure and lot development. Community Services has been working hard this year to meet current and future housing demands, replacing outdated and crumbling infrastructure and helping communities meet the needs of their residents. This has resulted in what I believe is a record-breaking year for infrastructure projects in the Yukon.

There are currently dozens of infrastructure projects underway in communities across the Yukon. From scoping and design to near or newly completed, these projects are addressing fundamental services needed for Yukon

communities to thrive. Some of this year's projects include: the final completion of the Ross River suspension bridge, Teslin drainage work, completion of the Ross River lagoon, Dawson Front and Turner streets water and sewer upgrades, Faro water pump house rehabilitation and reservoir upgrades, continuing work on the F.H. Collins track and field, and Mayo water and sewer upgrades.

The Premier listed off a list of the projects that we have identified as ongoing right now and part of what the special warrant was needed for, and I'm anticipating that we will answer some specific questions on those very projects.

I think it's also worth mentioning that we anticipate continuing with strong infrastructure development and land development in the future. Over the next 10 years, more than \$600 million will be available to fund infrastructure projects around the territory, and most of these will be cost shared between Canada and the Yukon, and other recipients will be on a 75/25-percent basis.

Last spring, we met with all municipalities and First Nations to discuss how to allocate these infrastructure funds to address their local infrastructure priorities in their communities. Through these meetings, we collaborated to develop multi-year plans for infrastructure projects across the territory to be funded through the various Canada infrastructure funds.

Over the past two years, we built momentum on the infrastructure and land development. This supplementary funding is helping us to maintain that momentum and to continue on schedule. The availability of contractors and other resources have also put constraints on how quickly we can get all of these projects completed. We chose to use more flexible multi-year contracts and an envelope approach.

Let me just cut off the speaking notes and get to the point that I heard in the questions from across the way earlier. First of all, none of the projects that we listed — the Premier listed about 10 or 12 projects, which total about \$35 million overall — are overbudget — none.

That is not to say that none will ever be overbudget in the future, but as of today in talking with the department and discussing those infrastructure projects, none of them are overbudget. I don't know of any overbudgets on land development either, but it is fair to say that costs have gone up in recent years. That is fair to say. What we did is we presented all of the clean water and waste-water fund projects here in this Legislature for all MLAs to see. We presented the full list of small community fund projects for all to see. We got approval in principal from Canada, and then we opened up an envelope approach, which allowed us to be more flexible with the private sector.

We entered into multi-year agreements with the private sector on those projects. Those multi-year agreements allowed them to front-load or back-load their workload as they deemed fit. Thus we took away our own ability to be very strict about when those projects would hit completion, and we think it did two things: number one, allowed them to expand their scope of how much they could complete, and number two, allowed us to get — we hope — better rates on those contracts. Given

that prices have been going up, it was a way to try to keep our costs down.

Overall, what happened was that we were tracking all of those projects, looking at them coming forward. It is very difficult to know ahead of time how progress will proceed on all those projects. As it turns out, overall, it was more successful than we had originally anticipated. We identified that situation in early January; we approached the Premier and the Finance folks to explain that we felt that the projects were moving ahead faster than we had anticipated when it was time for the first supplementary budget. As such, we could see that we had to choose either to stop those projects or to go for a special warrant. The good news overall is that we are seeing more investment in infrastructure, we are seeing more Yukon communities receive that investment and we are seeing more lot development than we had originally anticipated.

I am happy to answer very specific questions, Mr. Chair. I will sit down now and look forward to having the discussion back and forth with members opposite.

Ms. Van Bibber: Welcome to the department officials and the brand new minted deputy minister — good to see you. You gave a very good and succinct outline of what the appropriation was for. The projects that have been listed and the bulk money — is it possible that we can get an allocation of each — the dollar amounts that went to each of those — to ensure that they are complete and not overbudget?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I stood and then sat back down. I was just looking at the numbers — very happy to provide. The only time I get nervous about it is when they are being tendered and out for bid, and I don't want to say it is this exact number. We are happy to pull from the registry what those projects are and what their dollar amounts are.

I could run through the list, but it was the list that the Premier gave when he was speaking in Committee of the Whole. I'm happy to give that list. I just did a quick addition of all of those projects, and my total came to \$35 million and change. There are significant projects from across the territory and I'm happy to get those numbers across to the member opposite.

Ms. Van Bibber: The land development change was \$5 million, and it was to support ongoing land development projects, specifically in Whistle Bend. Also mentioned were the seven Whitehorse infill parcels that will be released for private sector land development. How will those developers be chosen, and once they're chosen, is there a time limit for improvements to be made on those lots?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The seven lots that we're talking about, Mr. Chair, are lots within the city. They are lots that the city had already approved and identified for development. We sat down and worked with them to say, hey, we'd like to work with the private sector, and in that dialogue, they suggested these infill-type lots. It will be an open and competitive process for private developers. We'll put it out to RFP. There is a little bit of groundwork that still needs to be done — I believe — to get prepared, but I would anticipate that in the next month or so, they will be put out. Part of that bid process will be around the timeline about completion. I can't give you

a specific answer, and it might be different for different parcels. Some of them are larger, some are smaller — it depends. All of them will have to comply with existing official community plans, existing zoning, et cetera. If there is any desire to change that, they would have to go through a zoning process.

In general, we look for the municipality — in this case, the City of Whitehorse — to do the planning side, to decide how they want the community to develop over time, and they then — if, for example, we're talking about Whistle Bend, we do the development side. It will be no different if it is a private sector development — they do the development, but under the direction and the guidance of the city through its zoning and official community plan.

Ms. Van Bibber: I think this morning in your ministerial statement, you said these lot parcels have the potential for up to 15 new lots, depending on a developer's approach, and again, the city's zoning requirements. If we have 15 new lots, does that mean there could be more than one house on each of those lots? I know we had infill houses beside our place in Porter Creek, and they filled in very tightly, so I'm just wondering about how this requirement is going to be.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The most straightforward answer, Mr. Chair, is that it depends on the zoning where those lots are. I committed earlier to sharing a map of those lots and I can maybe even, in a moment, get — oh no, I can't. I will try to get that information across to the member opposite fairly quickly. It really depends on where they are located and what that zoning says. You could just use examples right now — for example, many of us as MLAs will have a home here in town and you will know that there are rules around whether you can add on additional suites and things like that. That zoning is what will apply, and it will also depend on things like, if it is country residential, then there are certain size limit — again, developed through the planning processes. Those will be abiding by the rules that are set out by the city through zoning and the official community plan. Sorry, we will be setting the RFP up to abide by the rules and then the developer will work inside those rules, so we can't say it will be exactly this many. It will be part of the system through the RFP itself.

My officials have just let me know that of the seven that we are doing, five will be by an RFP process and two will be by a lottery process.

Ms. Van Bibber: This summer of 2019, 240 Whistle Bend lots will be sold through multiple releases.

Twenty or more lots are to be released in various communities as well. Could you expand on the term "multiple releases"? Are any of these lots required to be entry-level and affordable housing?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thanks again to the member opposite for the question. I feel like I missed a small thing at the end of it, so if I don't answer it completely, if she is able, please just repeat the last part.

There are multiple releases because often they work with the phase — sorry. When we're talking about Whistle Bend, we'll be talking about the phases that they're in. For example,

there's phase 3, phase 4, phase 5 — so each of them, as they get developed, come out at slightly different times. That's why they will come out at different times. As they are available and ready, that's when they go through, I think, Energy, Mines and Resources, which does the work of putting the lots up for sale.

I remember the other question, thank you — I just got it.

With respect to the infill lots, those will depend on how the RFP process goes. Finally, with respect to the lots across all the communities, I gave the number 20; the department will tell me it's between 20 and 30. It's not a fixed number.

It is dependent on the conversation that we have with each community. Some of them are further ahead and some of them need a little more work. It is in various stages with each one. We are not treating it as "one size fits all". The Land Development branch — I think they are meeting today in Dawson. There is a conversation going on. It is all about working to identify the local priorities as set by the municipality or the community and then taking advantage of whatever stages they are at or wherever they believe they need that lot development. We get them out to market as soon as we can.

The last question was around affordable housing. I am not going to be able to give a very precise answer. The way that I understand it was that, for example, in the City of Whitehorse, as they went through the planning phase and the charrette for Whistle Bend, the notion was to have a dense neighbourhood — a neighbourhood that would have its own little shopping district, almost like a little downtown, and that it would be a self-contained neighbourhood that would have bus service to the rest of the city. How were they working at getting more affordable housing? It was through these multi-family lots. I think the phrase that they used was "density with dignity". It is through the planning phases that they designed these lots so that they will get more units per lot.

That is how it has been designed all along. It's all built from our side — me, along with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation. It's about trying to address the spectrum of housing needs across the Yukon. There is a diverse set of needs.

In the home ownership portion of that sector, we are looking for opportunities where we can provide homes that will not be as much as the average house price, which has been going up so dramatically. It's trying to provide that for the citizens of Whitehorse and the Yukon. It's not a case of "here is a number". It is, through the planning process, trying to get denser lots, which provides smaller homes, which we think will have a lower entry in the marketplace.

Ms. Van Bibber: I thank the Minister for that answer.

The 20 or more lots that are being released in various communities — can you provide which communities will be selected? Will some of these lots go out to private developers as well?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We have had these conversations in all municipalities and many communities. I'll give you a small example: Keno asked us about lot development. We said

sure; let's send our Land Development branch up to talk with you. Mr. Chair, I think you were even there at that meeting, so you will know about that.

I'm trying to say that all communities have these conversations progressing. I want to say that where we're the furthest ahead in those conversations — or the closest to getting to the development — are Dawson, Mayo, Carmacks and Watson Lake. Those are the ones where we're furthest ahead, but in all of them those conversations are happening.

To date, we haven't yet opened up for private sector opportunities in our rural communities, but we intend to. We're looking to see how this first exercise goes here in Whitehorse. We're going to evaluate it; we're going to judge how that goes. This is part of the whole move where the rural land development branch moved back inside of Community Services. We have now integrated it well. We have tried to take advantage of bringing the two groups together, and they're working well together. I'm happy with the work they're doing.

We have had conversation in the communities about private lot development, so there is a discussion that is ongoing, but we're not yet at the stage where we're planning to release those lots through an RFP or lottery system in the rural communities, but please stay tuned. I promised when we started this that I would try to make sure this was exciting, so it is coming.

Ms. Van Bibber: That concludes my questions.

Ms. White: I hope I get to come back to this. I'm going to put this out there, but Mr. Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. White that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee 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

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*, 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. Ms. McPhee: 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.