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HANSARD

Monday, June 5, 2017 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2017 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. 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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New Democratic Party

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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, June 5, 2017 — 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.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Aboriginal History Month

Hon. Ms. Dendys: It is an honour to rise today on behalf of our Liberal government to pay tribute to National Aboriginal History Month. In 2009, June was declared “National Aboriginal History Month” following the passing of a unanimous motion in the federal House of Commons.

National Aboriginal History Month provides an opportunity to recognize not only the historic contributions of indigenous people to the development of Canada, but also the strength of present-day indigenous communities. Celebrating National Aboriginal History Month in June is an important tribute to the culture, contributions and diversity of First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities across Canada.

This June 21, Yukon will celebrate National Aboriginal Day as a statutory holiday for the very first time. Establishing National Aboriginal Day as a statutory holiday in Yukon was a key commitment of this government, and we are pleased that we have made it a reality. By creating a statutory holiday on June 21, we are giving Yukoners an opportunity to spend the day celebrating the vast and diverse history, culture, traditions, and continuing contributions of indigenous people across Canada and here at home.

First Nation people have lived in Yukon for thousands of years and are huge contributors to Yukon governance, well-being, culture and economy.

I would like to pay tribute to the admirable First Nation leaders who have changed Yukon for the better. Yukon First Nations are leaders in Canada in terms of self-government. For over 100 years, Yukon First Nations advocated for recognition of their rights.

In the early 1900s, Chief Jim Boss recognized the effect that newly arrived settlers had on Yukon First Nations. He wrote two letters to the Government of Canada seeking recognition and protection for his people and their lands. His efforts marked the first formal steps on the journey to settle land claims.

In 1973, Elijah Smith led a delegation of Yukon First Nation leaders to present *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* to the Prime Minister of Canada. This document petitioned the Government of Canada to negotiate land claims with Yukon First Nations.

After two decades of negotiations, the *Umbrella Final Agreement* was signed in 1993. This year, we will be celebrating 24 years since the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the first four final and self-government agreements. This coming February, Yukon will celebrate 45 years since the presentation of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*.

This year we are celebrating Canada’s 150th year. It is impossible to recognize the significance of this milestone without recognizing the foundational role that indigenous people have in the history and the future of Canada.

Indigenous people in Canada have faced many hardships, and we have many reports that encapsulated the history. We have the royal commission, we have the truth and reconciliation report, and we are in the process of the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. Yukoners came together just this past week to help write this important chapter in Canada’s history. I’m incredibly proud of Yukon for the leadership that they have shown in hosting the very first hearings in Canada.

It is inspiring to see the resilience and strength of indigenous peoples in our territory and across Canada. In Yukon, we are committed to working actively and continuously to advance reconciliation and to build strong relationships with First Nation governments based on cooperation, partnership and respect.

We all share the responsibility to contribute to reconciliation and to build our understanding and celebrate the diversity in our territory and country.

Mr. Speaker, just this past weekend, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations hosted their Da Kų Nān Ts’éthhét. What this translates to is, “Our house is waking up the land”. This was a cultural celebration that was amazing, and I’m really happy to have spent that time with the MLA for Kluane during the weekend. It was really a celebration of culture — just the richness of our territory. It brought together many dance groups, and many workshops were shared. It was really about cultural revitalization.

After the week of hosting the very first hearings into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, having that opportunity to celebrate culture in such an amazing way and to refill ourselves after the really incredible and difficult week that we had was creating a balance. It was an opportunity for reconciliation to occur.

I would also just like to highlight that, on Friday, we also had the First Nation high school graduation and their cultural ceremony. We had 109 Yukon First Nation graduates. This was an amazing celebration and a showing of the resiliency of indigenous people in the territory.

On the horizon, we have the Adäka Cultural Festival that will happen in early July. We also have the opening of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation learning centre from June 19 to 21. This is an opportunity for people to come out and celebrate indigenous culture. We will have Ha Kus Teyea Celebration at the end of July, which is the Teslin Tlingit celebration — all of the Tlingit Nation and a celebration of

their culture, so another opportunity for people to come together.

So there are many opportunities and I invite all Yukoners to take some time during June, July, August — throughout the year. This is the month to celebrate National Aboriginal History Month to learn more about the history and the accomplishments of indigenous people in Yukon and Canada, but there are opportunities every single day. There are lots of festivals and opportunities to celebrate together.

I would like to acknowledge some Yukon First Nation people who have come together today. Suzan Davy is a member of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation; Ms. Marrison from the Teslin Tlingit Council; Kelli Taylor; and Kelly Panchyshyn. We also have Brian MacDonald.

I know they're not in the gallery right now, but some of our Yukon First Nation Cabinet staff — Jessie Stephen from the White River First Nation; Nona Whitehouse from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in; and Sabrina Fred from the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. Welcome. I'm happy that you're here today.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: It is my pleasure to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition in celebration of National Aboriginal History Month. Unanimously proclaimed in Canada's House of Commons in 2009, June is the month that Aboriginal History Month is celebrated. This month is time to honour and reflect upon the history, sacrifices, traditions, culture and contribution of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. June is a significant month for our people. In 1996, Governor General Roméo LeBlanc designated June 21 as National Aboriginal Day to celebrate the first people. He stated — and I quote: “On June 21, this year and every year, Canada will honour the Native peoples who first brought humanity to this great land, and may the First Peoples of our past always be full and proud partners in our future”.

As well, June 11, 2008 was when Prime Minister Stephen Harper made the apology to all indigenous peoples of Canada for the system put in place by government called “Indian residential schools”. It was meant to take the Indian out of a child. It was a momentous occasion, as it recognized the hurt and the trauma to so many and its residual effects still felt by many today.

We live in a multicultural Canada and Yukon is no different. It is home to 14 First Nations that have resided here for thousands of years and they have a wealth of history to honour. It is throughout these years that their stories and customs were born. This month, we celebrate those lifestyles and traditions. We celebrate the culture, language, history and heritage that together make our First Nations the strong and resilient groups they are today. We are starting to take solid steps toward real reconciliation across the country.

Bringing aboriginal history into the classroom is positive and we know that education can cut through barriers. Being able to provide focus on aboriginal history for one full, dedicated month every year allows information to flow and connections to be made. A focus on aboriginal history of

Canada allows our aboriginal youth to embrace their ancestors' past as well as learn our modern history. It is important and an opportunity for non-aboriginal youth to better understand and appreciate the history of their country and its people.

Each province and territory has a history that is deeply entrenched with aboriginal culture and stories. By understanding and educating ourselves and others, we are closer to a common national goal to end racial discrimination. We will continue the effort to instill sensitivity and acceptance in future generations. Aboriginal history has played a critical and very important role before and after European contact. Historical contributions are celebrated within an ever-changing environment. The strength and self-awareness today and the continued movement forward are what we celebrate. The promise of strong aboriginal communities, resilient cultures, revived languages and traditions are what we strive for.

I encourage all Yukoners to take some time this month to learn about the tremendous contributions of Yukon aboriginals to the territory. Enjoy those celebrations on National Aboriginal Day as events take place across the territory. Become involved, and acknowledge the strength and richness of our aboriginal culture and people in Yukon.

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus, I am also pleased to pay tribute today to National Aboriginal History Month — a month that as National Chief Perry Bellegarde has said gives Canadians an opportunity to learn to about their indigenous neighbours and to build a new relationship that is based on understanding and a mutual desire for a better future.

The notion of establishing a National Aboriginal History Month actually originated with the Regina Aboriginal Professionals Association. Through their advocacy efforts, both Saskatchewan and Alberta recognized June as Aboriginal History Month. Building on that effort, Jean Crowder, a New Democrat MP from Vancouver Island, introduced a motion and lobbied her colleagues. Eventually, as we heard this afternoon, that motion garnered unanimous support in 2009.

Chief Ian Campbell, speaking at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Traditional Knowledge Keepers Forum said: “Our history is your history... until Canada accepts that... this society will never flourish to its full potential.”

I often refer to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report because there are a number of themes that are incredibly important for us all. One of those is that of us all being able and willing to step back and to be open to relearning our history or what we thought was our history.

The events of last week in Whitehorse — whether it was the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls hearings or the Re-Visioning Justice in the Yukon conference — provided ample evidence to the fact that the lived experience of indigenous Canadians in Yukon and across Canada is not what has been reflected in our history texts or in our media.

One of the passages from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report that draws me back time and again has to do with history and youth. The commissioner said: "... we believe that reconciliation is about respect. That includes both self-respect for Aboriginal people and mutual respect among all Canadians. All young people need to know who they are and from where they come. Aboriginal children and youth, searching for their own identities and places of belonging, need to know and take pride in their Indigenous roots. They need to know the answers to some very basic questions. Who are my people? What is our history? How are we unique? Where do I belong? Where is my homeland? What is my language and how does it connect me to my nation's spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, and ways of being in the world? They also need to know why things are the way they are today. That requires an understanding of the history of colonization, including the residential school system and how it has affected their families, communities, their people, and themselves."

The TRC went on to say: "Of equal importance, non-Aboriginal children and youth need to comprehend how their own identities and family histories have been shaped by a version of Canadian history that has marginalized Aboriginal peoples' history and experience. They need to know how notions of European superiority and Aboriginal inferiority have tainted mainstream society's ideas about, and attitudes towards, Aboriginal peoples in ways that have been profoundly disrespectful and damaging. They too need to understand Canada's history as a settler society and how assimilation policies have affected Aboriginal peoples. This knowledge and understanding..." they said, "...will lay the groundwork for establishing mutually respectful relationships."

Mr. Speaker, in Yukon, the groundwork for reconciliation has been laid. National Aboriginal History Month provides us yet another opportunity to explore indigenous history through that lens.

In recognition of World Environment Day

Hon. Ms. Frost: It my pleasure to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to an important annual event — World Environment Day on June 5. June 5 is celebrated across the globe. The international theme of this year's World Environment Day is "Reconnecting to Nature."

Being on the land is integral to First Nation culture and is a way of life for many Yukoners. Yukoners spend a lot of time in the beautiful and unique landscape we call home, but sometimes we may take for granted how easy it is for us to connect with and enjoy nature in the outdoors. We are so fortunate to live in such close proximity to a wealth of outdoor recreational spaces and the vast wilderness beyond. Easy access to the outdoors contributes to the health and well-being of Yukon residents and visitors alike. Connecting to nature is something Yukoners understand and practise in many different ways. Access to trails, rivers and lakes for hiking, biking, fishing and a variety of other recreational activities

enables Yukoners and visitors to take advantage of our vast landscape and the unique way of life.

Yukon wilderness and nature-based tourism and initiatives provide business opportunities that support a diverse, growing economy in an environmentally responsible way. The Government of Yukon supports many initiatives for residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors and be in nature. Our extensive system of recreation sites, territorial parks and 42 campgrounds, with over 1,000 campsites, is one of the many ways Yukon government provides facilities, services and events that enable residents and visitors to spend time in the outdoors. One-third of Yukoners camp in Yukon's campgrounds annually and more than 16,000 people visit the Tombstone Park Interpretive Centre each year and take part in the nature programs offered in that park.

We have also been very involved in developing Canada's new *The Nature Playbook* — a 45-page colour guide to connect a new generation of Canadians with nature. The playbook profiles fun activities — big and small — that we can all do. Nature is good to us and research provides physical, emotional, mental and spiritual benefits again and again. Time spent in nature helps to reduce stress, lower blood pressure and improve our immune system, our ability to concentrate and our overall physical and emotional well-being.

I am pleased to recognize the Yukon Conservation Action Team, or CAT for short, and the Yukon Youth Conservation Corps, commonly known as Y2C2. These government youth programs connect young people to nature through summer employment. Both programs have been running for over 25 years and boast a long list of Yukon youth graduates who have gone on to diverse and meaningful careers and have taken a healthy respect for nature with them. Y2C2 gained national recognition in *The Nature Playbook* in developing and empowering a new generation of leaders.

To give a small sample of the wide range of work that Y2C2 has undertaken — Y2C2 workers have assisted with children's camps, trail-building and maintenance, tree-planting, firesmaring and cleaning up garbage in many different places across the Yukon. Programs such as the Department of Environment's wildlife viewing events, family fishing days, and hunting education and ethics workshops help people in Yukon interact with nature in a responsible, respectful and safe manner.

Yukon also has an informal Nature Network of people who come together two or three times per year to share events, opportunities and best practices for helping people connect with nature. Network members come from all walks of life, including government departments, NGOs, community associations, the business sector, schools and more. Everyone is welcome to join. All of these programs and activities demonstrate the strong ethic and concern for nature.

By promoting connecting to nature, World Environment Day helps draw attention to our relationship with the environment and how important nature is, not only to wildlife, but also for human health and well-being. World Environment

Day is a chance to reconnect with nature and celebrate the outdoor spaces and places that matter most to us.

Our natural environment deserves our care and appreciation for everything it provides. Today, I encourage everyone to be thankful for the gifts of the land and all that it gives to us, and to celebrate World Environment Day with the love all Yukoners have for our beautiful home.

In the words of the organizers of World Environment Day: Go outside and show the world that you're with nature. Breathe in the fresh air, and remember that by keeping our environment healthy, we keep ourselves healthy too. I encourage members of this Legislature and citizens of Yukon to check out *The Nature Playbook* and many programs offered by the Department of Environment. Most importantly, I encourage all of us in the House to get outside and enjoy the many beautiful things that nature has to offer us — especially all that there is to offer in the Yukon. The accessibility is amazing.

I would like to take this moment to recognize some guests who are here — Dan Paleczny, Yukon Parks; Carrie McClelland, wildlife viewing; Julia Duchesne from Yukon Conservation Society; Chris Rider from CPAWS; and Jobina Tamminga, who is also from CPAWS. I would like to welcome my good friend and paddling partner, Jake Paleczny, also from the Yukon Wildlife Preserve. Welcome and thank you for being here.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to World Environment Day. This year's theme, as the minister stated earlier, is "Connecting people to nature", which highlights the benefits of our natural system and clean environment. Yukoners are encouraged to get outdoors and take part in activities where they can experience those benefits first-hand.

We live in an incredible place. I can attest to that. I've been here for 50 years. Not only are we surrounded by majestic mountains and breath-taking scenery, our air quality is rated the highest in the world. Clean air, clean water and a beautiful natural environment make it pretty hard to resist getting out to enjoy our summer season.

Canadians face a number of challenges to their health. It is reported that likely two-thirds of Canadians are vitamin-D-deficient. In the north, that number can increase due to the lack of sunlight in the winter. Five to 10 percent of school-aged children face attention deficit hyperactivity disorder — resulting in poor school performance — conduct disorders and relationships with social difficulties. Stresses are on the rise across the country and physical activity is low. It is reported, Mr. Speaker, that 82 percent of Canadian teenagers are simply not active enough, and only seven percent meet Canadian physical activity guidelines.

Taking all of these adverse health conditions into account, Canadians need to work harder to address our well-being. The good thing is that all of these conditions have a common relief factor or cure. Studies show that spending time outdoors counters each of these problems. Simply spending more time

in nature has been proven to increase energy, increase fitness and weight loss, increase vitamin-D production, and reduce risk of diabetes, heart attacks and cancer. Mental wellness and concentration are improved, moods are lifted, and anxiety is lowered. The benefits of nature are limitless.

The Yukon environment not only contributes to the body and mind, it benefits us in other ways as well. We derive food from our natural surroundings, materials such as wood, minerals, clean drinking water, fresh air, fuel, and much more. Our natural environment offers recreational, cultural, spiritual and traditional opportunities.

I would encourage all Yukoners to make an effort to get outdoors, like the minister said, and enjoy the sunshine. World Environment Day is a great day to recognize the need to enjoy our Yukon backyard just a little more, and to make the commitment to increase outdoor activity every other day of the year.

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the NDP caucus to celebrate World Environment Day.

It would be easy for me to focus on the terrible environmental calamities that are currently happening on the planet, but today it might surprise you that I am going to choose to focus on the good. I believe that this year's World Environment Day theme is an easy one for Yukoners to honour — being encouraged to come together, reconnect with nature and celebrate the places that matter the most to us. I don't know anyone in the Yukon who lives here for the shopping opportunities and the movie theatres, but I know that many like myself marvel at this place that we get to call home.

I love this time of year. At first, it feels like this light is slowly coming to come back, and then, all of a sudden, it's 11:00 p.m. and you hadn't realized it was so late — a time when the hills are painted in the electric green of new leaves and bird songs fill the air. When you look down, you see the rush of life, from the blooming of the lupines and the lady's slippers to the industriousness of the insect world. Today, Mr. Speaker, we are being encouraged to make time to get outside to our favourite places, take a minute or two to appreciate our surroundings. I hope that everyone makes it outside for a little bit today to take a deep breath and to just be.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. White: I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Tim Cameron. He is a constituent of mine and he will be the driving force of getting the mobile-homeowners' association back up and running. Tim, thank you for being here.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. Frost: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 48(1) of the *Environment Act*, I have for tabling the 2017 state of the environment report.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House supports the Paris climate accord as an effective international agreement to deal with greenhouse gas emissions and climate change mitigation and adaptation; and

THAT this House commends leaders of national, provincial, territorial, state, First Nation and municipal governments who are committed to the accord and working to take the necessary actions to fulfill its terms.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to review the current wait-times for lung cancer patients to access new medications and to work with other jurisdictions to determine a way to shorten these timelines and ensure fast response times with respect to patient care.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to follow through on Motion No. 1142 of the 33rd Legislature, passed by unanimous consent, to ensure that victims of domestic violence can:

- (1) terminate a lease early and without penalty; and
- (2) remove an abuser's name from the lease.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Wi-Fi access at Community hospitals

Ms. McLeod: At the Whitehorse General Hospital, patients and visitors are able to access free Wi-Fi service during their stay. This is a great service available to Yukoners to help them during their stay at the hospital. Unfortunately, the service is not offered in our community hospitals in Watson Lake and Dawson City. This can mean major inconvenience for patients in our communities. A recent example is a patient from Teslin who has difficulty speaking and was transferred from Whitehorse to the Watson Lake hospital. As a result of no Wi-Fi, they are finding it difficult to communicate with family and friends back home in Teslin.

Would the minister consider providing free Wi-Fi to patients and visitors in our two community hospitals?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for the question and have to defer a response. I would seek to acquire more information from the department on what's available in both of those communities and get back to the member opposite with that information as to why the services aren't provided.

Ms. McLeod: I guess it's out there and we know that the free Wi-Fi at the Whitehorse hospital is made possible thanks to the generosity of the Yukon Hospital Foundation and Northwestel. However, the government's community development fund has provided some assistance to make this happen.

Providing Wi-Fi to patients and visitors at the hospitals would be beneficial to our communities and merits consideration by this government.

Can the government commit to reaching out to the private sector to see if there are opportunities for partnership on this initiative and will they commit to providing government support through the community development fund or another appropriate mechanism to support the establishment of Wi-Fi at the community hospitals?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that's a great idea — a couple of different entities that were defined there. One is looking at the community development fund. Of course, you need someone to drive that application. Maybe there is an opportunity for the Yukon Hospital Foundation to broaden their scope of support. I will have visits this summer again in Watson Lake. That is maybe something that the Member for Watson Lake and I can take a look at. Conversations with the private sector, I think, are a good idea. I will look into that model that exists right now with Northwestel and then see maybe how the foundation can work.

Good ideas — just giving us a moment to look into this situation and see if there is an opportunity to either model it the same way that is done here, or do something a little more creative so that the people who are staying in those hospitals have access to equal service as in Whitehorse.

Ms. McLeod: I thank the minister for that response.

Of course, providing Wi-Fi to patients and visitors will improve the overall experience for those who are required to spend time in our hospitals. We know that, in the case of both hospitals, Wi-Fi already exists at the hospitals; however, patients are simply not allowed to access it, possibly through a policy.

Is it possible that a simple policy change today could fix this situation very quickly? Will the minister commit to looking into this today and come up with a solution to ensure patients and visitors are provided Wi-Fi access while at the Dawson City and Watson Lake hospitals?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thanks for the question.

I won't commit to it today, but I will commit to get back to the member opposite with a response in a timely fashion. Clearly we need to do some internal briefings and collaboration and seek to find some potential answers, look

for some solutions and, if possible, I most definitely agree that access to means with which to communicate — I think we talked earlier about the importance of telehealth and the opportunities to connect beyond the central, urban setting to that of the rural hospitals and perhaps the health centres. We are looking at all avenues to keep as effective as we can with lines of communication — Wi-Fi being an essential piece of how we conduct our business in the future. Most definitely we will look at that.

Thanks for the question.

Question re: Highway safety

Mr. Cathers: I have some questions for the Minister of Highways and Public Works regarding highway safety. There have been a number of requests from my constituents and constituents in Porter Creek North for a turning lane on the Alaska Highway in front of Porter Creek Super A to improve safety at that intersection. It is something I have heard from people both individually and at public meetings.

The minister has previously indicated that highway safety is a priority for him. Will the minister agree to listen to the concerns of the public and commit to installing a turning lane on the Alaska Highway in front of Porter Creek Super A?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for the question.

He is correct. This government does take safety seriously, and we are working to improve safety along the Alaska Highway from the Carcross Cut-off through to the north highway at the Mayo Road.

We have identified a number of intersections in that stretch of highway that require attention. Some, of course, are more critical than others. We have a list of the priority areas along that corridor, and we are actually working methodically and based on the best evidence we can muster to make decisions and actually prioritize the jobs.

I thank the member opposite for the constituency work that he is doing. He has brought an issue to my attention. I will take that under advisement and will look at the report in a holistic manner, actually do the work and take a methodical approach.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the minister's response, but I would urge him not to be too methodical. These are concerns that people are hearing and they do want government to respond to them in a timely manner. Two other areas that I've heard concerns from constituents about are the intersections of Boreal Road and the road into the new Grizzly Valley subdivision on the Mayo Road. Several of my constituents in the area have indicated their concern with safety at these intersections and have asked to see turning lanes and slip lanes added at these two intersections as a way to improve driver safety. A few of them have had a few close calls at those intersections.

The minister has indicated to the House that safety is a priority for him, so will the minister take these concerns into consideration and commit to developing turning lanes and slip lanes at these two intersections?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for this representation on behalf of his constituents. I will take the matter up with department and, as it is a matter of concern for the constituents of Laberge, we will put them into the queue of priorities as we determine them. As I'm sure the member opposite can understand, there are constituents across this great territory who have similar concerns, some of which are more pressing than others, and we will do the assessments based on the traffic information that we can gather, and make informed decisions.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answer from the minister. I would just ask him respectfully to please give an indication of when he will be able to get back to me and to my constituents regarding this matter. A few people at those intersections have had close calls and, in one case, an accident earlier this year at the Boreal Road intersection. I would again ask the minister, with all three of those intersections, if he could commit to a timeline for getting back to me about when government will be able to slot the improvements of those intersections into their financial plans.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can certainly commit to the member opposite — maybe not giving him a firm answer as to when we will do the work, of course — or not. I don't believe these intersections are in this year's budget, but I can certainly ask the department for more information about the information they have gathered on these intersections. I'm sure the capable civil service has some information on this stretch of road and I will get back to the member opposite with an answer.

Question re: Abandoned gas-well cleanup

Ms. Hanson: EFLO, the Texas-based company that tried to resume production of the four gas wells in the Kotaneelee region, went under in 2015. While three of the wells were turned over to another company that has assumed responsibility for cleanup, the fourth one is now the Yukon government's responsibility. It is what is called in the industry an "orphaned well".

The well is scheduled to be abandoned. The project is in front of YESAB at the moment. We know that the government has access to the \$625,000 that was EFLO's security deposit.

Abandoning a gas well can be expensive. Can the minister tell this House what the total cost for abandoning the Kotaneelee gas well is and how much of it the public will be on the hook for?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Yes, the work that we're looking to get underway this summer — and we're going through the regulatory process. We spoke a bit in the Assembly here about some of the costs associated with it.

As stated, we are responsible for this particular well. Well L-38 is the well that we're speaking about. EFLO, after they became insolvent — I think it was the shareholder Apache that was in a position to take on that liability. The current estimate for the well abandonment is approximately \$2.4 million. The estimated cost to the Yukon government for

this work is about \$1.8 million, as the Yukon government is in possession of security in the amount of \$625,000 for this well.

We're going through the permitting process but, as the member opposite stated — significant cost to taxpayer and significant cost to the government, so we will have to make up that other bit.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for his answer. Abandoning this gas well is certainly necessary, but I'm sure the minister would agree that it shouldn't have to be paid for by the public.

Yukon's history is full of examples of public dollars being spent to clean up after an industrial user has gone bankrupt or walked away. We need to learn from the past and make sure that private or corporate cleanup costs are factored in up front and not left to be paid by the public down the road.

The Eagle Plains area is both an historic and current drilling site for oil and gas. Northern Cross (Yukon) has been conducting test drilling for a number of years.

Can the minister tell this House the amount of financial security Northern Cross has provided to the government and can he confirm that it will be enough to cover future abandonment costs should they become necessary?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: We have sort of two areas that have been with significant activity. We touched upon the fact that on the Kotaneelee — certainly just to clarify, there's the one well, L-38, that we have an obligation to work on and clean up. The other wells that are on-site — Apache energy is going to be doing work on those. That's almost a total of \$10 million.

The Northern Cross (Yukon) activity in north Yukon — the government holds a security in, I guess, the original holding company — Chance oil and gas, formerly Northern Cross (Yukon) — in the amount of \$1.1 million. Security amounts were last reviewed in 2014 and determined to be adequate at that time in accordance with the Yukon *Oil and Gas Act*. Security for the Chance oil and gas wells is currently under review.

After the review is complete, if necessary, I may require the company to file for additional security because we're in the middle of a sort of legal conversation there on ongoing matters. I'll leave it at that. The following factors are considered when we look at this. It really comes up to well location, well depth and well status. That's how we define how we look at security. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Hanson: We certainly understand that the wells in Eagle Plains are different from the ones in the Kotaneelee. But considering that abandoning a single well in the Kotaneelee region will cost over \$2 million, this amount that the minister has just cited seems extremely low. The remediation or abandonment costs for Eagle Plains also have to factor in the remote location and the presence of permafrost. As a cautionary tale, one simply needs to look at our neighbours in Alberta with nearly 1,500 orphaned wells, which have no owners, meaning responsibility for cleanup falls on the public. Alberta is stuck with liabilities worth over \$30 billion.

Thankfully, Yukon hasn't yet seen any drilling activity at that scale, but even a much smaller liability could have an impact on Yukon's much smaller budget.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the minister is saying that they're doing a review. What measures is this government taking to make sure any amount required for cleanup or abandonment of gas wells — whether they are testing wells or production wells — is not paid by the public?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First of all, I think with the cleanup job in southeast Yukon, part of the challenge is that north Yukon is rural. Certainly the work that has to be done in southeast Yukon, taking into consideration a really remote area — barges — there is a ton of work that has to go into just moving machinery into that area to get the work done.

With that in mind, I think the Leader of the Third Party raises a great point. We have to ensure within our oil and gas industry that we have the proper security in place. I think that going through the process in the Kotaneelee is going to give us a really a good run-through of the process — making sure, seeing what costing looks like and then taking a look at what's happening in north Yukon.

Really, it's a fine edge for me to walk, due to some of the things that are happening outside of the Legislative Assembly. Certainly, speaking with Yukoners and affected First Nations over the summer on some of the pieces that are happening in north Yukon, in revisiting this, I think that the Yukon Government has done a good job when it comes to post-devolution security, whether looking at some of the reclamation that is happening in the mineral sector — I think we have done a good job on it. Of course, we look back to some of those really nasty stories in history that we have here as well.

Question re: Mobile-homeowners

Ms. White: It took years for the previous government to understand — and then agree — that mobile-homeowners are different from other tenants in that they own their home and rent the land it sits on. Faced with a rent increase or an eviction, other renters have the ability to pack up their belongings and move. Most mobile-homeowners don't have this option. When the Casa Loma park shut down, it took more than a year of effort between the City of Whitehorse and a trailer-park owner to build the infill pads to accommodate some of the units.

Some of the mobile-homeowners had to walk away from their homes because they couldn't afford the cost of moving and then renovating their home. Mr. Speaker, does this government agree that mobile-homeowners face different challenges from those of regular tenants?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for her question and for her work on this topic — including the Member for Porter Creek North and the Member for Copperbelt North, all who have trailer parks in their ridings and who have been working on addressing this. Yes, as the Minister of Community Services and as a government, we recognize that mobile-homeowners have a different relationship. They are both renters and owners, they are on the

continuum of home ownership — at the early end of it — and are an important piece of that continuum of home ownership within the territory. We recognize that there are very different ranges of situations around their tenure. The challenge, as the member opposite has noted, is in how to ensure that the needs of the mobile park owners and the mobile home pad renters are balanced.

Ms. White: Unfortunately, only two out of three of us agree on the way forward. The *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* that came into effect last year does not address the unique needs of mobile-homeowners. The government just released the results of the survey report from August 2016 — 10 months ago, Mr. Speaker. The results are clear: eviction without cause and uncapped rent increases put mobile-homeowners in a vulnerable position. These are not new issues and we are glad the issues we have raised in the past were confirmed in the survey.

Mr. Speaker, will this government agree to change the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* to cap pad rental increases to inflation and stop eviction without cause from mobile-homeowners?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There are a couple of questions in there and I will try to address them both. I appreciate that the survey was conducted last year and it was conducted specifically because of the new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. There was an acknowledgement that, under the new act, there are some differences for mobile homes. When the survey results were presented to me, I very quickly asked that they be made public. We are working to try to keep this information out there broadly for everyone to be able to see. The whole point of that, as I understand it, is to take that information and consider whether there should be some changes to the act. That is the purpose here — to share that information so that we can have that dialogue and consider what changes should be made.

I appreciate that the members opposite — the Member for Takhini-Kopper King and the Member for Porter Creek North — wrote a letter to me last week proposing some suggestions around amendments and I look forward to having a conversation with them on those topics.

Ms. White: I believe that the 400 signatures on the petition actually forced the survey. For over five years, we raised questions about these issues. The *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* was passed in 2012 and some of the regulations didn't come into effect until earlier this year. Unfortunately, the act does not recognize the unique situation that mobile-homeowners find themselves in.

Now that we have the survey results and report that was completed 10 months ago and not released until last week, the results show that over 80 percent felt that eviction without cause should not be allowed and 73 percent said they would not be able to move their mobile home if they needed to. Mobile homes are the most affordable way for Yukoners to buy into the housing market, Mr. Speaker.

How much longer will mobile-homeowners need to wait until this government amends the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* to recognize their unique situation?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, I think that the member opposite echoed some of the same comments that I raised in my first response. We do recognize that there is a difference. We do recognize the importance on the continuum of home ownership that mobile homes represent.

I just received the letter from the members opposite last week on the specific requests that are here. I just received the survey results last month and just got them up on the website and asked that a press release be put out so that everyone sees those same results. I appreciate that there are some specific statistics within there that the member opposite is raising and I think it's good for us as Yukoners to look at that and to make sure that we are seeking to help everyone to have a home here in the Yukon.

Question re: Tourism initiatives

Ms. Van Bibber: Mr. Speaker, this year, Yukoners will be commemorating Canada's 150th birthday, as well as the 75th anniversary of the Alaska Highway. However, we have seen very little promotion in Yukon for either of these major and historic events. There are no signs and no banners.

For Canada 150 in particular, we are only 25 days away and tourism operators who we have heard from are still in the dark about what materials they are being provided with by the government. Unfortunately, this could have a negative impact on tourism and attendance to important, commemorative and celebratory events this summer.

Will the minister explain why we have not yet seen promotion for Yukon events related to Canada's 150th birthday? More specifically, at what point should Yukoners be expecting to see banners and other promotional materials in their communities?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank the member opposite for the question.

Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation provides such an important opportunity to deepen our sense of what it means to be Canadian and reinforces our pride in being Yukoners. I spoke today a little bit about that in a tribute.

What the Yukon government is doing is — we are in the process of debating that budget in the House, but we've allocated \$200,000 of funding that is made available to communities through the Culture Quest program for activities and commemorations of both the 150th anniversary of Confederation and the 75th anniversary of the completion of the Alaska Highway.

Yukon government is participating and partnering with the City of Whitehorse for the Canada Day celebrations that are happening in a few weeks.

We have also partnered with Canada on two signature projects, one of them being the Music Yukon — we've partnered \$50,000, and that's happening right now at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre —

Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Van Bibber: We see the government's budget allocation of \$200,000 for Canada 150 community events and \$100,000 for signature events. However, as far as we are aware, there has been no communication on what this money

will actually support. Which communities will see events, other than Whitehorse, as a result of this funding? How will the minister ensure that communities get access to this funding prior to the 150th birthday? Will each community be given the same amount?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the follow-up question. I will just finish off on those two signature events that Yukon is partnering with Canada on. The Music Yukon project is a signature event that will take place in major cities across Canada, and then we also have the Canada Scene, which is happening in different locations within Canada.

Particularly with this question — the supplementary question — on how communities will gain access, it is through the Culture Quest program. We have done direct reach-out to the communities around access to that fund. Again, when I came into the position — I'll just say that I was a bit surprised that decisions hadn't been made around the Canada 150, which I thought would have been made many months before we came into government. That's an area where we were playing a bit of catch-up on that, but we really are committed to partnerships with other governments, with our communities and providing as much opportunity as we can for celebration.

Ms. Van Bibber: Yukoners are also looking for ways to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Alaska Highway. There has been little or no communication with Yukoners on what events might be coming up, no highway signage or public information. This could lead to many tourists this summer having no idea what is happening with the celebration. Can the minister tell us what the government has planned for this commemoration? Also, are there any banners for that?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the follow-up question. The Department of Tourism and Culture and Government of Yukon are partnering with Parks Canada on an event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Alaska Highway. We are making some funding available to communities along the Alaska Highway to have their own events. This event is happening on Soldier's Summit on June 29. I absolutely invite everyone — all members from this Legislative Assembly — to participate in that event. It will be after the House Sitting.

In terms of how we're getting the information out to communities, I actually had some conversations with tourists in Haines Junction over the weekend, and they said they have gone to many of the visitor centres. They haven't been to all of them yet, but they felt very informed about what was happening within Yukon and for Canada's 150th. They are aware of all of these projects. I was really happy, as minister, to hear the feedback about the information being provided by our visitor centres.

Sorry that I didn't get to the banners — we have commissioned banners that will be going up very shortly —

Speaker: Order. Thank you.

The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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.

Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Hutton): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*.

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.

Bill No. 201: *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*.

Department of Community Services

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to welcome here today in the Legislature two of our colleagues from the Department of Community Services: Deputy Minister Paul Moore, and our head of finance, Sarah Lewis.

Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the members of this Legislature for the opportunity to provide the Department of Community Services budget for 2017-18. This budget details how the department, in partnership with municipality governments and First Nation governments, is working to build thriving communities. The budget reflects the thoughtful and careful decisions made by this government to deliver the programs and services that contribute to certainty for community funding, addressing the infrastructure deficit, the development of sustainable communities, protection of people and property, and the advancement of community well-being.

The department's main estimates include more than \$70.2 million in capital expenditures and more than \$89.4 million in operation and maintenance expenditures. These investments prioritize the programs, services and activities that help Yukoners lead healthy, productive, happy lives.

This budget contributes \$20 million more over last year into growing the economy by creating jobs and building critical infrastructure for municipalities and First Nations across all of our communities. Let me outline how the 2017-18 budget works for Yukoners across the vast array of programs and services provided by Community Services.

First, Protective Services division — I'll begin with Protective Services, the branch that strengthens the territory's ability to respond to emergencies and to coordinate prevention to emergencies. Protective Services houses: emergency management coordination, first response and public safety agencies; building safety and standards, which ensures the structures in which we live and work are safely constructed; the Fire Marshal's Office, which protects those structures and the people in them; Wildland Fire Management, which works to keep wildfire away from our communities; Emergency Measures Organization, which prepares governments for emergencies; and Yukon Emergency Medical Services, which provides pre-hospital medical care to patients.

Investments in personnel, equipment, training and infrastructure improve Yukon's ability to prevent and prepare for emergencies, to respond when they occur and to reduce the loss of life and property. Accordingly, more than \$31.9 million of the department's operation and maintenance budget and \$4 million of the capital budget is allocated to Protective Services. These investments provide honoraria for our dedicated volunteers, training and personal protective equipment to keep them safe, and the equipment and infrastructure they need to respond.

We have budgeted \$2.3 million for fleet vehicle replacements for volunteer fire departments for search and rescue vehicles and for four new ambulances for the Yukon Emergency Medical Services.

\$621,000 is allocated for turnout gear and firefighting extrication and communication equipment for the fire service, operational equipment, medical supplies and continued communications upgrades for Yukon Emergency Medical Services.

Investments of \$8.6 million in Wildland Fire Management operations keep air support and suppression crews ready for the fire seasons. As we all know, we have already called upon our team of dedicated staff and volunteers.

Contracting with First Nation economic development corporations for fire crews contributes to our diverse economy and strengthens intergovernmental relations. This summer, an additional \$149,000 is being invested in contract crews as Kluane First Nation joins 11 other First Nations in providing fire crews for Wildland Fire Management.

Significant capital investment — \$856,000 — is allocated to Wildland Fire Management to improve initial attack base facilities, lookout towers, weather stations, aviation fuel systems and fuel storage. This investment will improve safety and efficiency and meet environmental regulations.

Building maintenance for wildland fire tanker bases and fire halls across the territory is provided through an allocation of \$170,000. Agreements between Canada and emergency

measures organizations provide \$1.4 million to fund the development of new tools for disaster mitigation and emergency communications and to develop emergency management services capacity in non-settled First Nations. I noted that the deputy minister and I had meetings with Minister Goodale to discuss this very topic.

Hazard, risk and vulnerability assessment is being developed to assess flood risk and vulnerability for all Yukon communities and critical infrastructure. The tool will examine and quantify flood hazards and the risk a flood poses to a community. This allows a community or property owner to anticipate problems and solutions to help save lives and property, reduce damage and speed a community's recovery.

Reliable, deployable communications systems are needed in disaster response situations where conventional communication infrastructure is damaged or non-existent. In partnership with Simon Fraser University, Emergency Management British Columbia and E-Comm 9-1-1, the Emergency Measures Organization will conduct field tests on emergency communications networks to determine what emergency responders need, where they need it and when they need it.

A seven-year, \$1.6-million agreement between Canada and Emergency Measures Organization formalizes how emergency management services are delivered to White River First Nation, the Ross River Dena Council and the Liard First Nation under the *Indian Act*. By using Emergency Measures Organization to coordinate preparedness for response to and recovery from major emergencies and disasters, these First Nations will receive consistent support while building community capacity. This is an example of strengthened relationships with First Nations that contribute to sustainable communities.

Through a \$280,000-allocation, Corporate Services division will support Protective Services by developing IT systems for electronic reporting of patient care, an emergency mass notification system and a tracking system for fire resources. With these budget allocations for Protective Services, this government is investing in the protection of people and property and the advancement of community well-being.

Secondly, the Community Development division — community well-being and the development of sustainable communities are at the core of Community Development. This division supports local governments and collaborative relationships with communities. Community development's branches provide access to safe drinking water in unincorporated communities, maintain waste-water and solid-waste facilities, and manage the construction of community-based infrastructure projects. It supports sport, recreation and active-living initiatives, and oversees 15 community libraries. Community Development has received \$43.9 million of the department's operation and maintenance budget, and \$63.5 million of the capital budget, which is the bulk of the budget.

Community Affairs supports local governments, helping to build their capacity and effective operation. It fosters

effective working relationships between communities and the Yukon government to develop local solutions to local challenges. Part of this working relationship is improving compatibility between Yukon government's capacity to deliver support and the expectations of municipal governments and local advisory councils. Recognizing local needs, local interests and local solutions builds thriving Yukon communities and — if I may say so, Mr. Chair — solutions that last longer.

This budget supplies municipalities with more than \$18.2 million in direct transfers, as well as \$7.3 million in grants in lieu of taxes for Yukon government properties within municipal boundaries.

Yukon communities also receive \$72,000 for administration of local advisory councils, which provide voices for their communities and act in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Community Services. Local advisory councillors are one of the ways that Yukoners are engaged in shaping the territory's future path.

The Association of Yukon Communities receives \$100,000 for daily operational costs to assist municipal and local advisory council members to collaborate with Yukon government and First Nations on areas of mutual interest. This funding also supports training for municipal elected officials and administration on issues of local governance to improve their capacity. The Government of Yukon recognizes asset management as a critical part of capital planning. We will continue to support Yukon First Nations and municipal governments as they develop a culture of asset management within their organizations. This support includes \$360,000 through the northern strategy trust to support communities with asset-management-related projects.

An important goal for Community Services is to work with unincorporated Yukon communities to develop objectives for municipal-type services such as drinking-water, waste-water and solid-waste management. Service objectives ensure services are delivered in a financially sustainable, environmentally responsible manner.

Community operations branch — through the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan*, the community operations branch is improving solid waste and recycling programs in the territory. More than \$1.8 million is allocated to ongoing expenditures for the solid-waste action plan. We are listening to our municipal partners, the Association of Yukon Communities and stakeholders. They describe the need for more sustainable programs that encourage higher levels of waste diversion without placing undue burden on local businesses.

We are developing options and recommendations for service models, end levels, policy, operational practices, revenue offsets, and roles and responsibilities for governments and partners. The goal is a financially sustainable and environmentally sound approach to waste management. This budget allocates \$2.2 million for improvements to the solid-waste facilities and construction of recycling depots. This will reduce illegal dumping, promote higher levels of waste diversion, and extend recycling programs to our rural communities.

We also want to ensure solid-waste facilities do not harm water. We monitor groundwater at all of our sites, including those that are closed. A three-year initiative to build municipal capacity for groundwater monitoring is concluding with an investment of \$111,000.

Through gas tax funds, the Government of Yukon will support the construction of new recycling facilities for Ross River and Burwash Landing and the expansion of the existing program in Dawson City.

New phases of the upgraded beverage container regulation and designated material regulations will be introduced. The implementation budget for 2017-18 is \$250,000 for this topic. The Government of Yukon allocated \$650,000 to support recycling processors to get recyclable materials to market while we develop a long-term sustainable recycling plan for the territory.

Sustainable drinking water and waste-water infrastructure is also integral to Yukon communities. This is the final year of funding for the three-year Yukon water strategy, with \$50,000 allocated. Initiatives under the strategy are: study the level of services and cost of providing drinking water in the Yukon, investigate challenges recruiting and retaining certified water operators and study Yukon-wide source-water protection.

The Community Operations branch has \$858,000 to operate the Dawson waste-water treatment plant on behalf of the Town of Dawson City in this year's budget. This investment, which includes employment for two full-time equivalents, is a reduction of \$1.6 million in costs from the previous year.

Hand in hand with modernizing operations is ensuring modern, reliable facilities. The Infrastructure Development branch is responsible for community infrastructure. Infrastructure investments must be responsive to community needs and be fiscally responsible. They address ongoing needs, create jobs and improve well-being for Yukoners.

Funding priorities are guided by the new Yukon infrastructure plan, which identifies projects within target areas for major federal infrastructure funds. The small communities fund and the clean water and waste-water fund provide more than \$33 million in 2017-18. Yukon government collaborates with First Nations and municipal governments and unincorporated communities throughout the territory to ensure the fund supports local solutions.

The small communities fund will provide approximately \$342 million to support Yukon infrastructure over the next eight years in a 75-percent Canada and 25-percent Yukon split. This year, it will be used to support culturally important core infrastructure priorities, such as the Carcross/Tagish First Nation learning centre and continued repair of the Ross River footbridge.

The fund supports more than 30 projects, including infrastructure, reconstruction, groundwater protection in Whitehorse, upgrades to the Mayo reservoir and the Old Crow lagoon, roads in Teslin, and solid-waste projects like Haines Junction and Watson Lake. As the name declares, the clean-water and waste-water fund supports Yukon's drinking water and waste-water infrastructure priorities. Community Services

collaborates with local governments to guide these investments. More than \$19.7 million in capital funding will be invested in communities throughout the territory for upgrades that will move, store and treat waste water. This includes underground infrastructure, lagoons and treatment plants.

Another priority area is mitigating the damaging effects of water. Flood and erosion can threaten community infrastructure and property. More than \$850,000 will be invested in flood mitigation in Mayo, Faro and Old Crow.

In Whitehorse, Yukon government works closely with the city to make land available to homeowners and contractors. This includes bringing new residential, commercial, industrial and institutional lots to the Whitehorse market, keeping costs as low as possible.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll cut it short whenever I have to, Mr. Chair. We'll get back to the end of it at some other point.

The Land Development branch receives more than \$24.5 million for land assessment, planning and administration to deliver more Whistle Bend subdivision lots to the market. An adequate supply and range of land options is an important factor in overcoming challenges related to affordable housing in Whitehorse. That's why we are increasing our efforts to deliver more lots to the market to meet short-term demand and anticipate land development needs for years ahead. We're committed to working closely with the City of Whitehorse and other Yukon departments and stakeholders to ensure we are responding to the demands and market.

In addition to providing land for homes and the infrastructure operations to service them, the Community Development branch provides softer services that contribute to the well-being of Yukoners. Sport and Recreation branch contributes to better quality of life for Yukoners through its investments in sport, recreation and active living initiatives. Our support for Team Yukon at major games provides substantial value, tremendous benefit and inspiration to the participants and organizations involved in these life-changing opportunities. We have the North American Indigenous Games in Toronto this July, we have Canada Summer Games in Manitoba this July and August and also the 2017 men's world softball championships. We will be going to the Arctic Winter Games in the Northwest Territories in March next year. We just announced that in 2020 they will be here, Mr. Chair.

This year's budget invests \$905,000 to support our athletes in these major events and to lay the groundwork for future games. Active living throughout the territory is supported through investments in maintenance and improvements to community rec centres and pools. Similar investments in public libraries contribute to the community wellness by providing community programming, access to knowledge and entertainment through books and technology.

Thirdly, Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs division — Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs helps ensure our

communities have access to fair processes, our business practices are sound and our rights are clear. This division: enforces employment standards and residential tenancy laws; registers business, non-profit securities and personal property security; provides all Yukon taxing authorities with property assessments; and regulates health professions, real estate and other professionals, insurance and charitable gaming. In 2017-18, more than \$9.2 million of the department's operation and maintenance budget and \$1.8 million of capital budget will support the work of this division.

I'll cut it short there for now and I will provide more details as we go through questions and answers.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister. I would also like to join in welcoming the officials here to the Assembly this afternoon. I would like to begin with a few questions in the area of Protective Services. First of all, I would like an update on the status of the number of EMS volunteers in each of the communities served by rural EMS — the current number in each community. Secondly, if the minister could provide an update on several issues related to rural EMS, including what the current status is of training opportunities for volunteers in the area, including new volunteers, as well as a list of the anticipated training during this fiscal year in each community.

Secondly, could the minister confirm that all of our current EMS volunteers have full uniform kits and aren't waiting for any equipment — or, if there are some, indicate when that equipment is being purchased? Last but not least — just indicate in that area if there have been any problems with the radios that volunteers have, or if what we believed was a solution is indeed working and operating effectively and safely.

Also related to EMS, could I get an update on the computer-assisted dispatch phase 2 that was intended to roll out GPS systems to ambulances? Could I get an update on the status of that?

Jumping to another area within the Protective Services framework — but to the capital side — I believe I heard the minister refer to \$856,000 allocated for capital, including investments in initial attack bases. Could the minister confirm what those investments are? Is the Ross River initial attack base for Wildland Fire Management seeing any upgrades in this fiscal year? Is work beginning on the air-tanker base replacement here in Whitehorse? If not, can the minister tell me when that would occur?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I counted a lot of questions there. My officials are working to help get me up to speed. I think I'm going to do my best to start answering some of these questions. I suspect I'll be getting more as we go along, so I apologize to the member opposite.

Let me start with the air-tanker base. That has been deferred this year, and the rationale is to roll it up into the airport master plan, which is happening right now. I believe the design of that is happening this year. Once we see that master plan, we should have more coming back regarding the air-tanker base.

With respect to the initial attack base in Ross River, I will look up to see what else we have in terms of the capital as you

requested. The Ross River initial attack base is not in this year's budget. It will be in future.

You requested the numbers in our rural communities. We have 154 volunteers across our rural communities. We also have some FTEs in those rural communities. I don't have the breakdown at this moment but, as I understand it, we have 66 FTEs — which I think includes those across the Yukon.

I also heard you ask questions about the computer-assisted dispatch system. I do know that is in the budget, and I will try to provide more details in a moment.

You also asked about training and equipment, specifically including radios. I will seek to get you those answers in a moment.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answers that the minister had. I also apologize to the minister and the officials trying to get that information together. I know that I covered a long list of items within the general Protective Services area, and I will endeavour not to pack too many together quickly but, as the minister knows, we are reaching the tail-end of the Sitting, so I'm also trying to get a number of questions out there even if the minister isn't able to immediately answer them.

Sticking with Protective Services — the latest I heard is that there have been issues with the Mendenhall fire hall and with Beaver Creek being short on volunteers throughout a good part of the last number of months. I believe that currently — although I would be happy to hear that it has changed — Mendenhall doesn't have enough volunteers to actually provide fire service, and the Ibex fire hall was the backup in that case.

Can the minister confirm the status of the volunteer numbers in those communities, as well as indicate whether there are any other fire halls that are short-handed in terms of volunteers?

Secondly, can the minister please indicate what steps — if any — the department is currently taking or is planning to take to increase the recruitment of volunteers in rural Yukon, particularly in those communities that are short-handed?

Last but not least, can the minister indicate if there are any increases in this year's budget to the honoraria provided to rural EMS volunteers and volunteer firefighters? If not, is this an area that he will agree to review in recognition of the fact that in both areas it has been a few years since those honoraria were most recently bumped up? In our view, it is about time to take a look at those numbers.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thanks to the member opposite for that great list of questions. Noting that he is trying to get them on the record is all great, I will endeavour to answer these. These are all questions that I wish to try to answer. It's just a volume question at this time.

I'm not able to give a specific response to the situation on the volunteers within Mendenhall and specific communities. I do have a note here, which I will share with the member opposite. We're committed to ensuring that our communities are protected from hazards of fire and the Yukon Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for public safety and fire education as well as the funding, training and administering of fire departments in Yukon's communities.

Volunteer recruitment in communities requires significant effort because of the time and training commitment that it takes to maintain service. This government is addressing this ongoing challenge by collaborating with communities to support sustainable fire prevention and protective services. Fire prevention, such as building code inspections and enforcement, and lifesaving tools, such as fire alarms and home escape plans, are crucial to the safety of Yukoners. The Fire Marshal's Office assists all communities, particularly those with low volunteer firefighting memberships, with fire prevention and education.

What has been happening over the last several years — I won't say "decade" yet, but probably over the last decade — is that the need to ensure that we have safety for our staff and volunteers has been increasing and the requirements around that safety have been increasing. At the same time, we have been seeking to ensure that the health and wellness of our volunteers is increasing. What we're doing is trying to train our volunteers more. We recognize that this has put a burden on all of our communities and that it is a challenging situation.

I know that the Fire Marshal's Office has gone out to various communities and sat down with them and had conversations because I have attended a couple of those meetings. We're talking with those communities to understand what it is they need for training, what it is they need for equipment, how we can be supportive of them and how we can work to recruit and retain volunteers. To answer one of the other questions of the member opposite, we don't have an increase in this budget around honoraria for our volunteers, but we are seeking to make sure that our volunteers are well-supported. I think I will leave that one alone.

Currently, just getting this in as we go — Mendenhall has five volunteers, all of whom are active at the moment. Both Ibex and Hootalinqua currently have a strong volunteer base and, again, I apologize that I don't have specific numbers to give.

As to an earlier question that came from the member opposite regarding computer-assisted dispatch, we have in the budget \$105,000 this year for a communications system upgrade. This is phase 3. This is the introduction of mobile data computers requiring hardware and software components with mobile docking, mounting hardware — as an industry standard — GPS antennae, et cetera.

That's money which is going in. It's currently in the City of Whitehorse and we're moving it out to our other communities. I will leave it there for now and I will endeavour to answer the other questions as I am able.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answers from the minister. The one that — he may not have had the information — I had asked as well about Beaver Creek and the volunteer levels there — if he is able to provide that answer that would be appreciated.

I would just note in regard to the deferral of the replacement of the air tanker base — and I know that it's too late to be encouraging the minister to try to get it within this year's capital plan — but not knowing the exact timelines around the overall airport master plan, I would just note for

the minister and indeed for all his colleagues the fact that, having taken a look personally at the Whitehorse air tanker base along with the staff — which was a tour to understand the asset — we have a lot of people being cramped into a space that is not well-suited for the facility. There are also times when it is difficult, due to the limited space available, to turn aircraft around.

Also, proximity to equipment, including fuel tanks and the storage for chemicals — it is a pretty tight facility. It obviously has been functioning in its current status, but with the change to the type of aircraft and the more recent fire contracts, I know it's posing an ongoing operational challenge. I think it's fair to say that the concern from staff is that while they have been able to manage it to date, if they were dealing with a high-volume call in an urgent situation, there is the possibility of mistakes and difficulty in tripping over each other within the small space within the building as well.

I would just encourage the minister and his Cabinet colleagues to ensure that if it's going to take a while to do the airport master plan, they consider in fact bumping up the air tanker base replacement and I would encourage them to try to accommodate it within next year's capital budget.

I would just note as well in the improvements being made to initial attack bases under Wildland Fire Management, if that doesn't include the air tanker base in Whitehorse and the initial attack base in Ross River, could the minister indicate where those upgrades are occurring and what the nature of those upgrades are? Before jumping into another area, I will just leave that question there for the moment.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I apologize if I miss the very last question that came out. I thank the member opposite for his concerns and suggestions regarding the air tanker base. I have now asked the Minister of Highways and Public Works to try to look into the timing that we are estimating for the master plan. I think the concern is that if we do the development work and it doesn't work in concert with the broader efforts, there may be some wasted effort.

So I think there is a tension there with what we have with the air tanker base now. I think that if we see that the master plan is starting to take longer, we will be considering whether we change that position.

I also note for the member opposite that Beaver Creek at this point has an active chief but has fluctuating volunteer numbers. So there are some concerns there that we are working on.

Regarding fire staging areas — Wildland Fire Management deploys crews around the territory and imports crews from Outside. The staging areas provide suitable sleeping and eating facilities to house local and imported resources on a temporary basis. The operating costs can be reduced by providing a suitable camp set up to house and feed staff during fire activity and preparedness. In some areas, no suitable restaurants or eating facilities are available. In such cases, having a cook and providing cooked meals is the only healthy alternative.

So we've identified \$70,000 to build fire staging areas in Dawson, Mayo, Carmacks, Haines Junction, Teslin and Watson Lake. The project involves building tent frames, seasonal kitchens, dining areas and outhouses. We have identified \$150,000 to retrofit a new wash trailer in the community of Mayo.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the minister's answers in those areas. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on the floor this afternoon talking about the air tanker base, but, just in recognition of its importance — although I do appreciate his answers and the assistance from his colleague that he provided. In terms of timeline, I just would leave that topic with the notation that — while recognizing the concern that changes to the air tanker base could affect the master plan for the airport — I think the minister would see, and his colleagues would see, if they were to actually take a look at the site, that there aren't really a lot of options for how to make changes at the air tanker base or where — unless a complete relocation were entertained, which was not planned before. I would just leave that topic with the urging that they take a look at trying to make it happen in next year's capital budget. I think that if they were to take a look at the location, they would share my conclusion that the airport master plan will probably have to plan around the needs of Wildland Fire Management for the air tanker base if that air tanker base is to operate effectively.

Just moving on to another area within my riding in this case — also within Protective Services — we expanded the water capacity of the Ibex Valley fire hall with its poor-recovery-rate well, but there have been issues with the fact that the yard can get a bit muddy at times — and the approach to it for fire trucks. Can the minister confirm whether there's funding in this year's budget to pave that approach to the water storage tanks for the tankers? If there isn't, will he agree to look into that and consider doing that at a future date? Secondly — although this is jumping a little bit in terms of the branch, it's related as well to my riding in the Ibex Valley area — there is an interest from the local advisory council on behalf of residents in seeing a new a new community well put in Ibex Valley.

I understand the cost pressures associated with a community well, but I would ask whether the minister would be willing to follow up on the request from the Ibex LAC by doing a survey to attempt to determine how many people in the area would benefit from a community well, what the volume would be, and consider whether it might be possible to request funding either through the new clean water and waste-water fund, or the New Building Canada Fund at a future date.

I think I will leave that there for the moment to not bombard the minister with too many questions in a row.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can let the member opposite know that we don't have money identified within this budget to pay in front of the fire hall, as he noted those concerns.

We had not yet heard from Ibex Valley LAC about their interest to have a well and I look forward to speaking with them. What we have said at the LAC forum — each time we

meet with local advisory councils and communities, we have outlined what is happening with the clean water and waste-water fund, small communities fund, and other infrastructure funds that we see on the horizon.

How we have described it to those communities is that we want to have the conversation with them about what they identify as their priorities, and that we would work with the Infrastructure Development branch to put those priorities into consideration, assess them and see how they would deliver on those needs and which funds they would fall under. The clean water and waste-water fund — that money is virtually allocated and is a very short-term fund. It has been noted here in the Legislature from the members on both sides of this House that it has only a couple of years in which to spend it, so we wouldn't look under that fund. There still is the option to look under the small communities fund. Again, we have initiated the process with all communities — this includes municipal governments, LACs, and First Nation governments — about how the infrastructure dollars are flowing and how we can have a conversation with them about their priorities.

The other thing that I will note is that there is always the rural well program available. There may be the opportunity — it's not necessarily one of the infrastructure funds — but it is a way in which we can assist communities if they wish to seek a well right away.

Mr. Cathers: I'm guessing that this may be just something that was lost in the transition because, in fact, there may not be a recent formal letter from the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council on file, but the interest in seeing a well does go back for a number of years, including, in fact, that the very addition of the water storage tanks on to the Ibex fire hall resulted from a discussion that had initiated with the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council wondering about the possibility of relocating the fire hall or drilling another well — which I believe would have been the third well attempt at that location because the first well similarly had a poor recovery rate and that led to discussions with me at the time as minister of the local advisory council and the Fire Marshal's Office as well as the director of the Infrastructure Development branch.

We determined that the quickest way to provide for the water volume needs of the fire department, which was the most urgent and time sensitive concern, would be to add on to that building and the two storage tanks, which were then added to the Ibex fire hall.

The interest in having potentially a community well does remain an ongoing topic of interest for the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council. If the minister would like a formal letter from them — if he could indicate that — I could certainly arrange for them to pass that on, since they have recently raised that with me as well as with staff of Community Affairs in the minister's department.

Again, I do very much understand the high costs that come with a community well. I think the minister would find that I understand I'm raising issues and catching him on the spot this afternoon, but the rural well program itself wouldn't really be a good fit for a community because the requirements that are associated with a community fillpoint falls under the

regulations associated with either a community fillpoint or with trucked water supply, which are regulated to a higher standard than personal wells. That includes a significant amount of capital costs through things such as the requirement for a certain amount of chlorine contact time. Unless there have been recent adjustments to those regulations that I'm not aware of, that would again dramatically change the scope of what one of these wells would cost. In the case of the well projects at Deep Creek, Carcross, Tagish and Mendenhall — I know the cost of each of those projects would have exceeded the total amount available under the rural well program in any given fiscal year.

Unless the minister has recent information, I will just leave that there, understanding he may need more information before being able to respond in detail. I would just again note that the request for a community well has been something the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council has raised a number of times. They also understand the limitations to government budgets, but they have indicated to me, as well I believe to staff of the minister's department, that they still hear interest from constituents in the Ibex Valley area about the possibility of a community fillpoint. They would appreciate if government would be willing to work with them in gauging the number of people who would actually benefit from that and determining whether it would be possible and feasible to put a new well in place.

A location that has been talked about in the past that I would just pass on to the minister and staff of his department to be aware of in considering this is — from looking at the layout of the community, the Ibex Valley LAC thought that the location near Creek Road and across from the Old Alaska Highway on the northeast side of the highway would potentially serve as a suitable community well location, subject to there actually being suitable water at that location.

I'll just leave that topic there for the moment. I understand that the minister may need time to look into information with others.

Over \$2 million was identified in federal funding for the rehabilitation of the Ross River sewage lagoon. I believe that was under the Government of Canada's clean water and waste-water fund. Can the minister confirm what the status is of work on the Ross River sewage lagoon and outline what the plans are for remediation of the old septic pit?

Last but not least, the minister mentioned funding being spent under the small communities fund and the clean water and waste-water fund. If I heard him correctly, I believe he indicated that there were a total of 30 projects, although I might have missed writing something down as he talks quicker than I write. Could we please get a list of what the projects are under the small communities fund and clean water and waste-water fund for this fiscal year?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I apologize for the rate of my speaking. I don't mean to speak fast. I am trying hard to just communicate.

I would like to also say that I'm very happy that there was a question raised in the Legislature about the clean water and waste-water fund. I'm totally happy to table a list under the

small communities fund as well to show where projects are at. I will note for all the members of the Legislature here that Canada has asked us to supply a final list by March of next year.

I'll ask a favour as well. If the member opposite could ask the questions first and then talk about the stuff afterwards, then these guys can help me get answers as well. I'm sure we'll work it out as we go.

With respect to the Ibex Valley LAC, I have just received a note from department officials who said that they had spoken with the LAC and it was not supported to do a well, so something is breaking down in communication somewhere.

But to the main point that the member opposite asked: Are we willing to work with them? Absolutely — that's the whole point. Let's do that. I don't want to try to negotiate it here on the floor of the Legislature. If we have a misunderstanding somewhere, let's just sort it out and figure out what that is. We do want to get that local input on projects and to then see whether they fit under certain funds or not and prioritize that way. Definitely, we want to work with the folks in Ibex Valley.

With respect to the Ross River sewage lagoon, yes we have just over \$3 million allocated in this budget to go forward. It will be in front of Management Board shortly, so I think that the design work is done and it is coming. Just as I noted for members of this Legislature previously, as soon as we get information, I'm happy to try to share it. Our anticipation is that it should go to tender this summer. That is what we're seeking to do.

I can try to give you a list right now if you wish, but I'm also happy to try to table a return at a later date. Let me just touch on it for the member opposite.

Under the New Building Canada fund — or what I have sometimes in this Legislature referred to as the small communities fund — there is \$200,000 for Haines Junction regarding solid waste, \$320,000 for the Town of Watson Lake for solid waste, \$2.8 million for the Carcross/Tagish First Nation learning centre, \$2.1 million for the Ross River suspension bridge, \$2.9 million for the Mayo reservoir upgrades, \$440,000 for the Teslin drainage and BST upgrades, \$100,000 for the Teslin connector road construction, \$1.3 million for the Whitehorse downtown infrastructure reconstruction, and \$400,000 for the Whitehorse groundwater protection.

Those numbers that I gave are for this year's budget. Some of those projects have a couple of years to them and there are other aspects in future years, but those are the dollars that are roughly allocated toward those projects.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answers from the minister. I think with regard to the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council and the discussion of a well, I understand that the minister is getting information as well from officials who are getting information from others who are trying to provide answers quickly — in some cases based on memory.

Just to clarify the history of it for the minister, I think where officials who are providing the information may be getting off track on that and mistakenly thinking that the Ibex

Valley Local Advisory Council didn't want to see a well project was the fact that there were several options that were discussed when we added the water tanks on to the fire hall to increase water capacity. The Ibex Valley LAC did support the quicker option, which was to simply add those tanks at a much cheaper cost than doing a new well. In fact, from the point we discussed that with them, it was done within a calendar year — the project was complete versus planning a community well project. One of the factors is that the lead time on that kind of project is longer than it would have taken to get the tanks in place.

It is still an active project of interest to the Ibex LAC. If the minister would like that in a letter from the LAC, I can certainly have them provide that to him. I think I most recently discussed it with the Ibex LAC in about April — it might have been May — but I know that interest has not gone away.

I will just move on to other matters. I hope that has clarified it for the minister and officials.

The minister mentioned that it is in the final year of the water strategy. Can the minister indicate if that funding is not being continued — what had begun admittedly as a three-year program — whether they are looking at extending that and continuing that work in future years.

Moving to two other areas related to municipal fire protection — the comprehensive municipal grant included, during the last time it was revised, a \$50,000-supplement to assist municipalities with the costs of structural fire protection. Would the minister be willing to look at increasing that amount in the next comprehensive municipal grant in recognition of the increased costs associated with fire protection and that while the rate of inflation may be lower, the rate of increases in the cost of fire equipment are one of the areas that definitely go up regularly?

As the minister has probably heard from staff, one of the challenges that they deal with is that any time something is certified for fire usage because of the associated cost and the associated liability — any equipment that is officially sold for fire purposes — is often more expensive than the same piece of equipment would be if it were bought for non-fire purposes. The specific question was: Will the minister be willing to look at increasing the comprehensive municipal grant funding for municipalities that is allocated to fire from the \$50,000 it is currently at, as well as ensuring that there is a requirement to spend that funding on fire-related matters, instead of allocating it to general revenue.

Secondly, the Municipality of Carmacks has raised the issue of their fire hall — not only the age of the facility, but the difficulty if they upgrade to a new truck, which they are going to need to do soon, if they're not already doing it this fiscal year — that a new truck would probably be too long for the existing facility. The municipality of Carmacks I know had raised this with others and with me last year when we were there for community tours.

Have they raised it with the Minister of Community Services and, if they have, is work underway to look at assisting them with a new fire hall for Carmacks? If they

haven't raised that issue, would the minister be willing to talk to the Village of Carmacks and see whether government can partner with them or assist them in replacing the fire hall for that area?

I will wrap up there to give the minister time to collect the information.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, again, thanks for the information regarding the Ibex Valley. We do totally remain open to those conversations. As the member opposite noted, a lot of the immediate need — the priority when it first was raised was about the availability for firefighters, which was done with the tankers. Yes, let's close the loop and let's see where things are at with the LAC and the members of the community. I mean, when I suggested earlier about the rural well program, I wasn't suggesting that it should be the LAC; I meant that maybe if there are some residents who feel a strong need, we could help them through the rural well program and then maybe the demand that the LAC is feeling then drops. That's all.

To me, a formal letter is fine, but I think, given that this conversation has been raised here, we just will direct our Community Affairs staff to go out and talk with the community again. I am totally happy as well as the minister to go and have a conversation with the LACs.

The comprehensive municipal grant, as the member opposite notes, is sort of a cornerstone for financial support for our communities. I didn't hear him note it, but just in case he didn't, I will say that the comprehensive municipal grant does have an inflationary rider in it, but not the supplement that has been put in for structural fire. At the Association of Yukon Communities AGM this year, there was a very articulate question — and maybe some of the members here heard it — which came from the city manager for Faro, who raised this question about inflationary pressures on fire equipment. As the member opposite notes, it is expensive equipment. That was part of what I was describing earlier about this notion of the pressures on firefighting. We want to make sure our firefighters — whether they are staff or whether they're volunteers — that they are safe as they can be. Part of that, as we both noted, is to make sure that the equipment is up to grade and in good working order.

In this year's budget, we have not increased those numbers, but we had a conversation with the Association of Yukon Communities right away, even before the budget was finalized and went forward, because we noted that the comprehensive municipal grant is nearing the end of its five-year cycle. As such, this is a year in which we are going to be there discussing it. When I met with the board and when I met specifically with the executive, we developed a timeline to carry out that negotiation. Just this weekend, when I was attending the Federation of Canadian Municipalities alongside several municipalities and a really strong contingency from the Association of Yukon Communities, I took the time to sit down with our acting assistant deputy minister on community development along with the president and executive director of the Association of Yukon Communities. We discussed that timeline and they re-noted their interest in discussing how to

ensure that firefighting equipment will be considered with the notion that costs increase over time.

With respect to the community of Carmacks, I have met three times with city officials and have taken two tours of the fire hall, so I am aware of it. I thank the member opposite for raising it as a concern. We've had some constructive conversations about the concerns that are there. I think that at all times in the conversations with the municipality I have emphasized with them that I wish it to be their priority, but I also suggested to them that we look for alternative solutions, because that might free up more space for other priorities that they might have. So maybe it is the right solution to build a new fire hall, or maybe it's the right solution to extend the front of the fire hall forward to accommodate that new truck.

Now, that's a conversation which is ongoing. So again, I appreciate that the member opposite has raised it as a concern. I'm happy to report that the municipality has been talking to me directly about it.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answers from the minister. I appreciate his update on those areas. Another area again within Protective Services on the Wildland Fire Management side — there were issues at their site in Carmacks. Can the minister please provide an update on whether any work is being done on that project?

As well — just trying to find my place, since I asked my questions out of order — I would ask if the minister could provide a more detailed update on the funding that's being spent on flood mitigation and flood hazard mitigation. What work is being done now in that area?

Secondly — in the area he referenced as far as doing a flood hazard assessment — how are they proceeding with that? I know in the past, there have been a number of discussions about things like drone mapping or other measures. Can the minister just provide information on what sort of approach is being used to assess flood risk in communities?

Also, jumping back to the Fire Marshal's Office area within Protective Services, I would just note that — as the minister may have heard — and, if not, so that he is aware of it — there have been some concerns and challenges with fire halls as a result of the fire fitness standards. That is posing, I believe, a challenge with some of the volunteer areas. That was in association with other presumptive legislation that was put in. An unintended consequence was increased challenges on the fire fitness standard to ensure that government wasn't unnecessarily becoming liable in those situations. So I would just make that notation, as well, as government considers presumptive legislation in another area that I believe WCB has just announced they're consulting on.

I believe it looks like Camp Ember is continuing to go ahead this year. I'm pleased to see that. That has been successful in helping more women get into the volunteer fire service. I know that, within my riding alone, the Hootalinqua fire department saw several new volunteers as a result of that program. I would just encourage the minister and his colleagues to continue that and to look at whether there are ways to expand it further without undermining the program.

The other thing I would just note — I'm pleased to see the continued funding for capital in terms of new ambulances and new fire trucks in this fiscal year as well stable O&M funding in the areas of EMS and the Fire Marshal's Office.

I would just note for the benefit of not only the minister but as well his Cabinet colleagues that they are looking at fiscal pressures for future years. These are areas that I'm quite familiar with — the O&M numbers in those units. I know that those are areas where there isn't really a lot of room for sharpening the pencil or tightening the belt. In fact, it's an area that I would encourage the minister to pay close attention to during this fiscal year as they consider whether there is a need for a supplementary budget to the cost pressures in those areas, and secondly, be working closely with the officials in preparation for the next year's budget cycle to assess the pressures in those areas, because they do an excellent job. I believe the current numbers do adequately fund those areas. As I noted, I don't believe there is room really for tightening the belt in those areas. I just provide that friendly advice to the minister as well as his colleagues.

With that, I will look forward to any information that the minister can provide me on the questions I most recently asked.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'll start where the member opposite finished, which sounded like some great compliments. I agree that the staff here are excellent, and I appreciate that they do a lot of work to keep a lean budget. I thank you for thanking them. I feel lucky to be working with them on this.

With respect to the hazard mapping, this is a bilateral funding agreement with Public Safety Canada to develop a Yukon-specific hazard risk and vulnerability assessment tool to be used to assess flood risk and vulnerability for all Yukon communities and critical infrastructure. I think we're working with colleagues who I used to work with at Yukon College, with the Northern Research Institute, to carry out research and development. I believe it's using LiDAR. It's a tool that allows us to get elevations over a broad swath very quickly. It's a great tool.

I missed one of the member's next questions, and I apologize for that. There was a discussion regarding Camp Ember. I agree — I'm glad that we get to plug those women who are training to be firefighters. I think it is great and we look to continue to support that. I noted it when the First Nation development corporations held their spring training program. They had attracted several women to be part of that program as well. I think it's nothing but good news that we continue to encourage gender diversity in our firefighting workforce. I think it will just strengthen us overall. Whatever I am able to do to help encourage this to become a diverse workplace — I look forward to it. Whether that is culturally or gender-based, it's all good in my mind.

With respect to training for our volunteers and staff, we recognize that it is essential, just in the same way that I noted — I hear the member opposite echoing these comments — that in order to ensure that our volunteers and staff remain safe and be able to carry out challenging work, they need to

keep their training up. We agree that this is essential. The best thing that we can do is to support training, which is a fundamental piece of our approach to retention of our volunteers.

If I missed a specific question, I apologize. I will try to get at it in the next round.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for the answers. I believe he did miss responding to one, but I may have missed something in his response, so I will just take a look at the Blues afterwards and I encourage him to do the same.

Another area that I would like to ask the minister about is the civic addressing and the status of expanding civic addressing — as well as if he could confirm which areas have completed civic addressing. The Ibex Valley, I believe, was the most recent one, although I think work was underway within the minister's riding also.

I would just note as a follow-up concern that, while the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council and Community Affairs staff did work closely together and did do a great job on the civic address initiative in Ibex Valley, there are a few areas where — just because of the way it was approached — there are a handful of people who didn't have driveway signs assigned to them. I would encourage the minister to ask staff to work with the local advisory council and residents in the area — and if there are any other small gaps in the initiative within any other local advisory council areas — to make sure that we haven't had a handful of driveways slipping through the cracks, which could, of course, be a problem in an emergency situation.

Secondly, as I previously noted to the minister, the area that I currently represent has the largest population of Yukoners within an unincorporated area, and not represented by a local advisory council.

In the Hot Springs Road area and the Mayo Road area, in total — according to the Elections Yukon list, there are over 900 adults in that area. I would, just again, ask the minister — and if he's not able to provide an answer, encourage him to have department staff engage with the Hootalinqua Fire Protection Society in the same basic role that local advisory councils have performed in the previous areas to help identify the areas and do the rollout of civic addressing within the Hot Springs Road and Mayo Road areas, since both of those areas are covered by the Hootalinqua fire department.

I'll tack one more question under there. There has been population growth in the Fox Lake and south Fox Lake area, some moderate population growth at Deep Creek and an increase in population in the old Grizzly Valley area due to subdivision, as well as increase in new Grizzly Valley lots being sold — which I think, as I last heard, was maybe approaching a little over half being sold of phase 1. There has been a population increase in that area. Would the minister be willing to commit to looking into options for expanding and improving fire coverage in those areas, including whether there is the opportunity for expanding a satellite fire hall within the next few years? I recognize, as I note that request, that in the past when governments looked into it, there weren't enough people interested in being volunteers to make that a

really feasible option, but since that population has grown significantly within the last few years, I'm asking if the minister could revisit that and assess both the need and the available volunteer base, as well as potential locations.

Within the range of options that I've asked the minister to consider would be looking at — in locations such as the new Grizzly Valley subdivision, whether putting in place tanks — probably buried below ground. Other options might be fire suppression options to allow tankers to reload and have access to water supply. I'm referring to either wet tanks or dry tanks being potentially put in place.

I know those are a lot of options that I threw out for the minister, but I would ask if he would be willing to look into it and, if unable to provide answers today, to get back to me at a later date.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First, with respect to civic addressing — civic addressing is community infrastructure and services that help Yukoners lead — let me get past some of that.

So what it does is to ensure rural homes can be found by emergency response services. It's an important piece of keeping us all safe.

What it does is it ensures that rural homes can be found by emergency response services. It is an important piece of keeping us all safe. You would be surprised how complicated it gets in the sense that when Yukoners have developed in these smaller and less-planned communities, you end up with challenges. For example, within my own community of Marsh Lake, addresses in New Constabulary are not on the main road, but everyone accesses off the main road, so when we try to give civic addresses, it gets challenging.

Overall, though, the project is a great project. I thank the past government for initiating it. It's the right thing to do. I think the pilot overall has been successful. We have assigned civic addresses in the local advisory areas of Mount Lorne, Ibex Valley, Tagish, south Klondike — which is Carcross, predominantly — and Marsh Lake and we plan to broaden that. I think over the next year we will be working on developing a plan to see it go out to the territory. It is our hope that over the next two to three years, we will complete civic addressing to the territory. The department is working on it as we speak. That is the intention. We're very supportive that this will make us safer, especially with the territory-wide 911 coming into play and being able to ensure that our emergency volunteers — firefighters, ambulance and police — are able to locate people in their homes as quickly as possible.

There was a question by the member opposite about whether we would sort of use — I think I heard — the Hootalinqua Fire Association as sort of an interim or substitute local advisory council. What I would like to say is that the local advisory council is a construct of the *Municipal Act*, so I don't think we would get into a formalized process.

On the other hand, if there is sort of an informal organization of residents, I would be happy to be in touch with them. I just want to make sure that we're not overstepping the rules. I would be very happy to work with them if they wish to form an LAC. I think I had a conversation with one of our

community advisors a month or so ago about that possibility, so I know that those conversations exist. Our job should be to meet with residents and inform them of the possibilities and what the pros and the cons are and to assist them if they choose to form an LAC, but there is a process whereby it would require a vote of a community, if my recollection is correct. I'm stretching my mind back a bit to when LACs were formed in my own riding. You can't sort of do it on an informal basis. We need to take that formal step.

Just continuing to follow up, I do appreciate that there has been growth in Grizzly Valley, Deep Creek, and Fox Lake, so I think that it is important that we continue to monitor how demographics change in the territory, so that we can ensure that if we're going to develop fire services, we do so in a way that is going to be thoughtful to where the population base is and where the resources are and are not.

My understanding is that this is work that is ongoing at all times with the Fire Marshal's Office, including how they would tackle suppression options, including ones that were suggested by the member opposite. Whether or not there is an LAC, I think that we can always be working with the Fire Marshal's Office to detect or to decide whether there is room for developing a new fire hall.

I think one of the challenging limitations, as the member opposite has noted, is regarding our volunteers. We need a volunteer base in order to have functioning fire halls. I just received a note a moment ago that even though we have increasing fire fitness standards, to date, all of our volunteers have been meeting those fire fitness standards. We haven't had anyone who has been deterred by those — who we have as current volunteers. It's really important that we support our local volunteer fire chiefs because they're a big component of ensuring we get that retention.

Mr. Chair, I would also like to note that when I met with the communities a couple of answers ago — the member opposite asked about the firefighting trailer in downtown Carmacks and I did talk with the municipality about that. We discussed the whole downtown area because land is at a premium for them as well. That land is valuable to them. They want to see it used well. I think the trailer was sitting on a Department of Environment site or next to maybe the CO office — I'm not quite sure. I have just received a note that the trailer has now been moved to the initial-attack base, so away from the downtown area, which I believe is what the Village of Carmacks was asking for.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the minister's clarification about local advisory councils. I was also aware that the structure for it, I believe, requires at least a petition, although the minister referenced a vote. I would just note for the record that, personally, I think that ensuring there's a vote within an area or an opportunity for it is the most democratic way. In the past, local advisory councils have been formed on the basis of a petition received from — 30 percent of the people in the area, I believe, is the requirement in the *Municipal Act*, but that does leave open the potential for people who have a neighbour who is fairly passionate about something to feel a little pressed on that subject. So, the idea of doing a vote in

that situation I know is one that we did in one area. I would note to the minister that I personally support that model of allowing people the opportunity personally and privately, either at a ballot box or secret ballot or in their own home, to decide if they support an LAC or not. I would encourage government, any time a majority of people in an area are in favour, to accept and support that proceeding.

I would just note that, in the case of the Mayo Road and Hot Springs Road areas within the Hootalinqua fire hall's mandated area — that while, if necessary, people could, I'm sure, go through the process of requesting an LAC or forming a separate society — I know it's a little bit of a shift from the model of working with the local advisory councils — I would just encourage the minister and staff to look at doing it because, while I can't speak to how it has happened in other local advisory council areas, I know that, from having attended a lot of Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council meetings where Community Services staff were working with the LAC, much of the work involved identifying what streets existed within the area, where houses accessed them directly or had various roads, as the minister referred to in his riding. In some cases, there could be one or more feeder roads that come off and complicate it further.

By mapping that area, they identified what roads were named. If the roads weren't named, then, in keeping with government policies, there was an attempt to determine what name people on that road would support, and then ultimately assign them a civic address on that basis. The fire protection society doesn't have a *Municipal Act* mandate because of the unique mix — I think it's fair to say that about half of the people are volunteers and are active firefighters, and about half are community supporters who work with them and do things like managing the fire hall and so forth. I know from past discussions with them that they are very interested in doing that if Community Services would be willing to do it. I believe that they would be very well suited to help Community Services staff do that mapping work to determine what's named and what's not named, and assign addresses on that basis.

I will leave that there. I'm not going to put the minister on the spot too much this afternoon. He may wish to discuss it with the staff who are not here.

I would just note again that I know the society is willing, and personally I think they have the right expertise to fill the role that LACs have had in the past in that area. The simplest way is not to get into forming new entities, but to use one that is well placed and with members who are fairly familiar with the area.

Mr. Chair I would also note, in leaving off — talking about my riding specifically in terms of fire needs — that as well as what was previously raised in discussion on our motion supporting the expansion of cell service territory wide — within the old Grizzly Valley, new Grizzly Valley, Deep Creek, Fox Lake, and south Fox Lake, with the significant population increase in that area, there are a number of people who are not currently within cell service. Again, that is one of

the areas we have noted as a priority for seeing cell service expansion.

I would hope the minister, along with his colleagues, would consider that as they are looking at the opportunities and the needs across the territory, and as well, within my colleagues' ridings — within the Mendenhall areas as well as part of Ibex Valley not being well-served by cell service just because of gaps in coverage — and also within the Member for Watson Lake's riding in the Junction 37 area — those would be areas that we believe would benefit — highway safety and people safety — if cell service were expanded in those areas.

Mr. Chair, I would note as well in the area training for EMS, including rural EMS — can the minister provide an update on what's being done with regard to helicopter training as well as the policy for rural EMS responding via helicopter? There were some issues in the past that we had to work on sorting out, but I think there may be some more work needed in that area and specifically work that relates to the ability for volunteers to deploy via helicopter in what, for lack of a better term — this isn't the right term for it, but in run-of-the-mill situations that are functionally no different from someone as a passenger in a helicopter being in it in flat terrain, flat landing, safe conditions versus the other end of helicopter deployment, which probably requires more specialized training — being mountain deployment, toeing into mountainsides and so on. If the minister doesn't have that information, I would just appreciate it if he could get back to me at a later date with the status of what's being provided in terms of training and what the current policy is as it relates to rural EMS deployment.

I'm going to jump to a completely different area of the department just because I don't want to lose that note that I wrote down as my slow-writing hand was trying to keep up with the minister talking. I know the minister apologized for it. It's not all his fault. My handwriting, as some of the officials with him are well aware, is not good, and if I go too quickly, even I can't read it.

The minister mentioned investments in waste and transfers to municipalities. I believe he said — but I may have misheard him — \$2.2 million from solid waste going into recycling facilities. Could the minister indicate what portion of that is for solid-waste facilities, what portion is for recycling, and what portion of that is for Yukon government sites versus transfers to municipalities to assist them with their sites?

I had asked during the briefing by officials — and they didn't have the information at that time — for a breakdown on the investments in solid waste. If I understood correctly, I believe there was \$50,000 in minor repairs, \$270,000 in the capacity for hazardous and electronic waste handling, and \$25,000 for wind and other electric fencing, as well as an additional amount that I didn't catch for investments and upgrades at a number of the Community Services-operated solid-waste facilities.

Would the minister be able to provide a breakdown of that work being done at solid-waste facilities as well as what

monies are being transferred to municipalities for either solid waste or for recycling?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, with respect to civic addressing and working with communities, absolutely — we want to work with the Hootalinqua fire association. When civic addressing moves out — and our intention is to go territory-wide and I said that this is the intention over the next two to three years. We're working on the strategy now to expand it starting next year.

We will absolutely work with the local fire department. It is the right place to work. We don't need an LAC to do that, and we want that local knowledge. In fact, I think they are the best places to work. It's not actually an LAC. If there were an LAC there, we would turn to them as well — especially for road names and things like that because that may take sort of a formal approach.

My understanding of it as I was doing volunteer work in my own riding was that this is exactly how we did do it. We went to the local fire hall to talk to them about how they access various properties, et cetera. Part of it as well is — because even though you have that civic address, you also need to understand: Can the trucks get in? Can they not? Where are resources to help support? That is all local knowledge. It's imperative, in fact, and so I thank the member for his suggestions.

Cell service territory-wide — I will defer that and work with my colleagues, the Minister of Highways and Public Works and/or the Minister of Economic Development. I think they have the lead on this, but I do note that we're looking to try to support our citizens, but I don't believe it means yet that everywhere on every road will there be cell coverage.

Part of that is to understand where those demographics are changing, and even to understand how the technology is changing, because, as we have moved ahead in some technologies, the coverage hasn't remained the same. In some of our rural communities, there have been some challenges. I am working in my own communities in my own riding to try to track down where those challenges lie and to work with the service provider to ensure that service is as good as it can be.

I appreciate the question. Our department won't be taking the lead, but we are happy to try to work with the other departments.

With respect to the deployment of firefighters and EMS, especially using helicopters, there are challenges and you do have to train up about it. I don't have the answers at my fingertips for the member opposite, but I will endeavour to try to get some description of what levels of training we provide.

Terrain is one of those challenges, but so are conditions like smoke. Even on a flat terrain, if you're deploying from a helicopter and there are hazards from fire or smoke, you need to be careful. Also, there is the fact that our firefighters have a lot of equipment, and equipment around helicopters as you are embarking or disembarking — that is something that you need to be thinking about. You want to make sure that everything is safe. So, like all of these things, I think safety is key. That is where we work from. As I have stated here today and as the member opposite has also affirmed, it's important that our

staff and volunteers are trained so that they are able to operate in a safe and efficient manner.

Now, department officials just also passed me the group — the special operations medical extrication team. That's a group that has been trained up. I can just maybe find a little bit here. There's an odd in-between time when someone is not necessarily missing when the RCMP would bring into play Yukon Search and Rescue. Our medical officials go where things are accessible by road or by air, but there are times when we have people who are off-grid, if you like, and they are injured and we know of them and we need specialized medical extrication teams. There's an example of where we have some very specific training, which has ensured that we can assist. That doesn't have to do with fire crews, but it is an example of where we do training.

I apologize. I seem to have lost track of the very last question. I stopped writing because officials had already passed me information. Let me try to give a breakdown on the solid-waste improvements.

Some of that money, as the member opposite noted, is flowing through our operation budget and some of it is flowing through the gas tax fund. I'll start with the gas tax fund. There is investment in solid-waste cells in Beaver Creek and Tagish. There is the building of recycling depots in Burwash, Ross River, and Dawson. Again, as I noted previously, this is the first year of multi-year elements on some of those. As well, there are drilling of wells for environmental monitoring in Braeburn, Canyon Creek, Keno and Upper Liard. We're also investigating some work around Pelly Crossing and Carmacks. The total for that amount is \$1.67 million.

There are additional amounts to bring it up to the \$2 million-plus: \$560,000 which includes some minor capital repairs at all of the 16 solid-waste facilities — as you can imagine, there is always ongoing capital — and an increased capacity for the collection of household hazardous waste and especially electronic waste. As we anticipate the designated material regulations coming into force — I believe it is in February — around electronic waste, we anticipate that there will be a large bulge of electronics that we need to deal with at first, so we have identified significant funding toward that. Also there are: capital improvements and earth work at Deep Creek, Destruction Bay, Ross River and Tagish; electric fencing at various sites and also wind fencing to prevent plastic bags and other blow-able materials from moving out past the facility; several storage shelters; and several catwalks for cardboard and recycling bins and facilities in Champagne, Carcross, Deep Creek and Destruction Bay. I believe that's it for solid waste, Mr. Chair.

Chair: Thank you, Mr. Streicker. Would members like to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Chair: Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*.

Mr. Cathers: In resuming debate and discussion with the minister this afternoon, I would like to thank him for the information he has provided in answer to my questions.

One area where I think he misheard what I was saying was the question I was asking about deployment of volunteers by helicopter. It was primarily related to rural EMS, although as he noted correctly, the deployment of people by helicopter also affects Wildland Fire Management sometimes and of course Yukon Search and Rescue.

In that specific situation, as one of the officials with the minister will probably recall, there had been an issue a few years back related to the Dawson City area. At that time, there had been a directive put in place that was then changed — and changed for a good reason — but at the time, there had been an indication that because of concern about helicopter safety, the volunteers of the Dawson EMS area as well as the permanent staff who have PCP certification, wouldn't be able to deploy via helicopter to West Dawson during the period when they were waiting for the ice to go out. That was changed to allow them to do that. I would just ask for confirmation if that is still the case that the policy does allow rural volunteers, if necessary, to deploy via helicopter.

If it isn't the case and a change has been made since that time, I would encourage the minister to actually revisit that with some degree of urgency because at the time that specific case had prompted the concern that if someone in West Dawson had a heart attack or a stroke and volunteers were able to fly via helicopter, leaving at the helicopter company's normal base of operation and landing in a safe area, they were not fundamentally taking on more risk than anyone who rides on a helicopter, including when children are given rides at Sourdough Rendezvous, for example. While understanding that the directive that was rescinded was prompted out of an abundance of concern for safety, in that situation, a requirement to have staff deploying out of Whitehorse operations, flying up to Dawson and then flying over to respond to a heart attack or a stroke would almost certainly be leaving the patient in that situation very likely not surviving when volunteers were in a position to respond — hopefully in time.

First of all, I would just ask for confirmation that the policy still does allow for rural EMS to dispatch via helicopter and I would also just encourage the minister and his staff in that area, both with volunteers and with staff, to take a look at the policies for deployment and take an approach which largely focuses on giving either the staff or the volunteers access to training, but ultimately allowing them to make a judgement call in a situation where as long as they feel safe responding and were willing to do so, they would be given the allowance by department supervisors to respond and would be fully supported in having made that judgment call. Again, I'm noting in that area that I think there is room for further

improvement in that regard and would just make that request of the minister when he is answering the question that I led with.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, thanks to the member opposite for the question. I'm not sure — it's always tricky. There are a lot of questions and we're trying to do our best.

Specifically for West Dawson, as the member requested, currently EMS responders from Dawson are able to respond by helicopter to West Dawson, so that issue is not there.

There are always situations as we get into rougher terrain and things like that. That is where the SOMET team — I'm trying to get the acronym again — I don't like acronyms and probably the member knows it, but we'll get it in a moment. They have the special operations medical extrication team. They have that higher level of training if we're getting into more challenging situations.

I appreciate the point that if someone says that they recognize the risks and want to go ahead, it's just that you can never remove the responsibility of us, as government, to ensure that when a decision was taken to authorize someone to do something, it was done in a way in which we had ensured care and safety. I do appreciate that volunteers and staff sometimes are willing to declare that they believe themselves to be safe enough and, while that is appreciated, I think that when I talk with the department, the notion of safety is also our responsibility. It is a dialogue, and in this case I think we can say that the members of West Dawson are able to be served and I don't anticipate any concerns at this point. If any are raised, I will do my best to inform the members opposite.

Mr. Cathers: I won't spend too much more time on this topic, just in the interest of managing a large number of questions we do have to ask. Because of its importance, I recognize the point the minister made about the safety of staff and volunteers. I would encourage the minister to actively work on this area with staff, as well as reaching out to rural volunteers and Yukon Search and Rescue as well.

I know there have been frustrations in the past within Dawson specifically, but also other communities, about volunteers feeling that they might not have a certificate, but were very capable themselves in other areas, such as in the case of one who, when wearing a Rangers hat, would have been able to do certain things, but when wearing a search-and-rescue hat, the government would not allow the on-the-scene judgment. I am just encouraging the minister and staff to do further review in this area and to move toward a policy for volunteers of EMS and Yukon Search and Rescue, as well as for staff, of moving more toward, for lack of a better characterization, an incident commander model. This would allow whoever the staff or volunteers on the scene are to have more discretion in making decisions and is aimed at taking an approach that provides them comprehensive training and tries to ensure that they're aware of the risks of various situations. It ultimately recognizes that, within the volunteer community especially — although to some extent as well within the employees of the department — that there are a lot of people who have a lot of good experience with bush skills and other situations, and probably often have more experience than their

supervisors in understanding a situation. We can move toward empowering those people, giving them the ability to make a judgment call on the scene, but also asking them to always ensure that you're never entering into a situation that puts their own lives at risk.

But generally speaking, if you approach it from a staff and volunteer empowerment perspective of giving them more on-the-scene discretion to make a call and then be fully supported in making that decision by government and by the system — and, of course, if a problem emerges, then working together as a team to figure out how to avoid problems in the future — I'll leave that point there, but I would just again strongly encourage the minister and staff to look at how they can further empower our volunteers and staff within EMS and Search and Rescue to have more ability for the person on the scene to make a judgment call based on their own skillset and their assessment of the situation.

Moving on to one other area within Protective Services that I just want to touch on that actually affects a number of departments but, as I raised in the House on May 10 — and the minister, I believe, also spoke to the motion. I just want to again urge the minister, along with his colleagues, to look beyond post-traumatic stress disorder when they're looking at the support that is provided to staff and the volunteers and to reach out to all front-line responders and health professionals who deal with people in times of crisis to see what can be done to improve the critical incident stress management that's currently in place. That includes everything from mental health counselling to peer support.

As I noted on that day, I believe that the system has come a long way, but further improvements can be made through ensuring the network of peer support and counselling is there. There's a long list of service personnel who may need this type of support and counselling. That includes everyone from the RCMP, to EMS, to volunteer firefighters, and to highways' crews. It can include staff at the coroner's office and community coroners. It can include Victim Services' workers and victim assistance volunteers. Actually, I previously missed mentioning that it can include staff such as Search and Rescue as well. I'm probably putting the minister on the spot to ask him to make a commitment to do more in that area, but if he is able to make that commitment, it would be appreciated. If he's not in a position to make it without talking to Cabinet colleagues, I would encourage him to take a look at reaching out to all of the staff and volunteers in those areas I mentioned and any I may have missed and to look at how to make the current approach stronger and identify any gaps in terms of peer support, mental health counselling, and so on and so forth.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First off, I would like to thank the member opposite for encouraging us to further review the policies around — his word is “empowerment”. I think of it as how to make sure that our staff and volunteers are working to their fullest capacity and that we ensure they are trained. We share here, on both sides of the Legislature, a wish to try to get the most that we can, or allow our staff and volunteers to

do their best. I'm behind it all the way, and I thank him for his suggestions.

With respect to the question about whether I could commit, as a minister, to trying to do more around prevention with respect to PTSD and critical incident stress management for all responders, then yes — I happily make that commitment. When I spoke on the motion that was before us, I tried to make that the emphasis of my comments here in the Legislature. It's my belief that we want to do our best. The purpose of presumptive legislation is to ensure that, when someone is suffering from PTSD, we have a way to try to address it soon rather than late.

The best place to try to address it is through prevention, and the further we can move up that path, the better we are. That would mean training to try to ensure that there is a mental wellness and peer support group as much as possible, but also that when you start to see signs of it — like through critical incident stress management for all responders — we find a way. I have had conversations with colleagues here — the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission and the minister responsible for workers' compensation health and safety. I think we are agreed on this point. I am happy to hear the member opposite emphasize his point as well.

I'll just read out here — we're committed to supporting the public service to enable them to improve the quality of life for Yukoners through their daily work. Community Services focuses on prevention and early critical incident stress management for all responders to proactively and in a timely fashion mitigate post-traumatic stress by addressing its early signs and symptoms in the workplace. Again, this is so that our staff are as well as they can be.

We're committed to investing in the mental health of Yukoners within our public service and throughout our territory. This department offers a multi-phase program to support all emergency staff and volunteer responders who are exposed to critical incidents and post-traumatic stress. This support includes facilitating debriefings, individual counselling services, and workplace accommodation when required.

I would just say that the member opposite is asking me to commit — and I do commit to trying to improve that as much as I can. It is a smart investment in people here in the territory so that they are able to work in a healthy and safe way.

Mr. Kent: As members know, we have split the critic roles in Community Services and a couple of other departments, so I am also one of the critics for Community Services. I would also like to welcome the officials here to the Chamber today, and also thank the other officials who participated in the opposition briefing. It was very helpful and we'll touch on some of the things we learned there, but also touch on some of the other aspects that the minister is responsible for.

One of them that I wanted to start with is sport and recreation. Going through the minister's mandate letter that was sent to him by the Premier on January 6 of this year, one of the things that is absent from the mandate letter is any reference to sport. I know it's something that has been brought

up to me personally by some of the sport-governing bodies. They were concerned about it. I'm just curious, given that there is no mention of sport in the Yukon in the mandate letter, what direction or priorities has the minister communicated to his department with respect to sport and rec opportunities?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thanks to the member opposite for his questions.

I too have sat down with several of the sport-governing bodies, and I hope that we can relay a shared message that I am very committed — we as a government are very committed — to sport and rec. There is more money in this year's budget than last — I know that — and I just have officials working to try to get me a little bit — comparatively. What I see here is that we're going to have \$841,000 in an increase over last year in sport and rec.

There are some differences always and, as games come and go, there are always some changes. I think the place where I seek it in my mandate letters is in this notion of having active, healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities. While we don't have a specific bullet under the mandate letters, there is general language under the mandate letters that gives me a lot of encouragement that our investment in sport will be strong.

In terms of sporting events, this year, we are investing in the North American Indigenous Games, we're investing in the Canada Summer Games, we have the world softball championship happening here this summer, and one of the common themes that we've had in our discussions with the sport-governing bodies is how to try to make these things more sustainable over time rather than at big games and then not so much — how to sort of keep it for the longer term.

Then, as it turns out, we had the same conversation with the City of Whitehorse when we discussed a memorandum of understanding around our intention to jointly host the Arctic Winter Games in 2020 on the 50th anniversary. Department officials and I had very specific conversations about working to ensure that we would find ways to make the games more sustainable, whether that is the ability to get them distributed to smaller communities or whether that is working with the Minister of Economic Development to ensure that we have consistent protocols around sponsorship, or whether there are ways in which we as a department work to ensure that the little lead time and follow-up before and after games is supported with capacity from the department.

In general, I am happy to say that I believe we are investing strongly in sport — we believe in it. In conversations that I've had with the Minister of Health and Social Services, we talk about wellness, and we recognize that when we invest in sport, we invest in the long-term wellness of our communities.

Mr. Kent: I know that Community Services, through a number of their branches, have partnerships with other departments within government. I wanted to touch on a few of those here in the next series of questions. The first one is partnering with the Department of Education on some programs, as well as after-school programming — so the first

question for the minister is: Is there a plan in place to continue to provide funding for after-school programs to help students to take part in healthy activities on a daily basis? Of course, this helps to keep them busy during the high-risk period after school and it helps parents by promoting fitness and providing their children with supervision and after-school care during work hours. One of those programs is operated by the Boys and Girls Club of Yukon. I want to ensure their Weekday Warriors after-school program does not face the risk of running out of adequate funding and having to cease operations.

Those are a couple of questions for the minister and then we'll get back to the more specific one on a program that's active right now in Yukon schools.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I want to make a small note: I stated that, overall, the O&M budget is going up. I will note for the member opposite that the capital budget is going down. This is specifically because in last year's budget, there was money allocated — it was possibly for the Yukon sports complex. I have sat down and talked with that group and what I have let them know is that coming up through the 2017-18 federal budget, there is money that has been allocated to sport and recreational funding. We are waiting to get word, as I've stated in this house, on some specific details for the Yukon. I have stated that I will share those with this Legislature once I get them.

What I have said to those sports groups is: Let's get working to see what the needs are for sport investment or facility investment across the territory. As that money comes in and we work through this, in partnership with First Nation and municipal governments, we will understand how that money will get distributed and then we will seek to set priorities based on the needs on the whole of Yukon for sports.

The Yukon Recreation Advisory Council is a group of citizens who are involved in sport and recreation from across the territory. They meet a couple of times a year, and they just met two weeks ago — or a week and a half ago — and they invited me to come in and meet with them and have a conversation with them.

It is through that, that they will make recommendations to us around the community recreation — it's CRAG.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Yes, community recreation assistance grant — I thank the member opposite for that assistance on the word "assistance". The community recreation assistance grant is the place where often money goes to local rec centres, and those rec centres choose whether or not they believe in applying for the after-school program. That's not the only place those groups get funding to do that. For example, there is an Executive Council Office youth branch, although I believe YRAC, the Yukon Recreation Advisory Council, also takes a look at those funds and also funds from Lotteries Yukon. I can't tell you specifically whether money is going more or less to the community recreation assistance grant as of yet, but I do note that we don't anticipate it going down. We anticipate it going up. The

reason we anticipate that is because several of the broader anchor pieces underneath the YRAC allocations have been pulled out and are now being funded separately, so there's more room under that allocation.

My anticipation is that CRAG will at least maintain, if not grow. Whether or not that money is being used, we leave it on a community-by-community basis to make the decision about where to put that money. Of course we always require that they show us where the money is being spent and how they have chosen to allocate it, but as far as I understand, we don't get right down in to that level to decide.

Because YRAC met recently, I anticipate we could get some information shortly about those allocations and we can share them with the Legislature once we get them.

Mr. Kent: Just a quick question of clarification from the minister. If the Boys and Girls Club is looking to apply for funding for their Weekday Warriors after-school program, is the minister suggesting that they go to YRAC as part of the CRAG allowance? Just some clarification from the minister in case we hear from the Boys and Girls Club or other associations that are looking to provide after-school programming in Whitehorse or other communities throughout the territory?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm being asked a really specific question and I want to be careful — I will check with the department to try to understand specifically. I don't know; I don't have a list in front of me of all the groups that receive under that money, but I will seek to answer that specific question.

What I understood from the budget — although we would have to check with the Premier, as the Minister of Executive Council Office — but my understanding is — and I'm looking to my colleague, the Minister of Education — that we upped the dollars that went to each of the youth groups this year. I'm sort of getting a nod. I will just confirm at some point for the member opposite and try to see what monies are going that way.

Overall, my understanding is that we will have the ability to increase the funding that is going to CRAG — but I want to be careful — that is an advisory group that makes recommendations to us, who are specialists within the field and who look at — they are people from across the territory who have experience in sport and recreation and they — as a group — make a recommendation. I haven't seen those recommendations yet about how they recommend that the dollars be allocated, but I do believe that information will be coming shortly.

Mr. Kent: I would just appreciate at some time clarification from the minister. It wasn't a trick question or anything like that. We're just trying to get a sense on where some of these groups could go to apply, or if it's core funding just coming from Community Services or Education or a combination of the two.

In 2013-14, the first-ever Yukon sports school and physical literacy project was begun through a partnership — Community Services was involved in the partnership I believe with the Department of Education, F.H. Collins Secondary

School and Sport Yukon. The program has continued to flourish over the past few years, so we're looking for an indication of whether or not the government will continue to support this important program. If this is a question that is better put to the Minister of Education, I can do so. I just know there was some involvement with Community Services in this program. I have heard from some of the parents of kids who have been, or are in the program, and they are very supportive of what it provides and how it is going forward.

Again, if the minister has some information for the House with respect to the Yukon Sports School that would be great. Otherwise I can take it up with the Minister of Education at a later time.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: For the member opposite, as far as I understand it, that program has been transferred out of the Department of Community Services and I believe it has been moved over the Department of Education. Either the member opposite or I can follow up with the minister to check on that program.

I do know, from my time before I was in the Legislature here — I was a community recreation director and we did have a lot of emphasis on physical literacy. It has been a strong component of our recreation associations across the territory and it is a great investment in our young children, so that they have lifelong physical activity. It is a strong investment and I appreciate the member opposite's question.

Mr. Kent: In an earlier response, the minister referenced the Yukon Outdoor Sports Complex Association, or the acronym is YOSCA for that. The previous government started working with this group in 2014. Of course members know, whether they were here in the House at the time or I'm sure even if they weren't members at the time, that the Whistle Bend location and the required zoning amendments to build the facility there were not approved by the City of Whitehorse and I think that happened on a couple of different occasions.

What I'm interested in finding out from the minister is: Are there plans by the new government to look at other options for this facility? This is a facility that we've heard an awful lot about from the sport governing bodies that would be interested in seeing it developed. It would not only provide opportunities for enhanced training and development for Yukon athletes, but would offer a new space for the territory's recreation community to host events during the summer months, provide sport development, social development and of course economic benefits for the community as a whole. We're interested to know if the new government is looking at other options for this facility or have they chosen to go in a different direction?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I will say, and as I stated a moment ago, we did sit down and meet with the Yukon Outdoor Sports Complex Association folks. We had a great conversation with them. They spoke to me about the project. I did have some experience with the project, because I happened to be on city council when they first brought that proposal forward. I had some knowledge of the proposal ahead of our meeting.

I think there are a couple of issues that we wanted to try to work through. One of them is infrastructure funding. As I noted with them and as I've said here in the Legislature, through the Government of Canada they have identified a community cultural and recreation fund, which we will get information or details on shortly. The anticipation is that this money will start to flow not this fiscal year, but next.

In speaking with all sports groups and communities where they have identified sports infrastructure as being a critical priority for them, we are working to collect that list of needs and desires and to prepare it to be ready to go once funding starts to flow around sport and recreation.

Now, if the federal government had not identified funds, then we would have considered whether we would turn to some of the other infrastructure funds. However, since the federal government has been quite articulate around these funds, our recommendation to the sports groups is that we use the funds that are specifically being designated for sport and recreation infrastructure.

The other thing that I will say about this one is that, because there were concerns that had been raised at the municipality level around zoning, I think there is some work to do. In talking with the City of Whitehorse — or if I'm talking with other municipalities about their zoning issues — we always want to have an open and informed discussion, so I have let them know that I have met with the Yukon Outdoor Sports Complex Association folks and have let them know about the timelines around the infrastructure funds. We anticipate some conversations going forward. Both sides of that conversation — the municipal government and the proponents — have expressed an interest in working through all the concerns ahead of time to try to make sure there is a strongly facilitated process, if and when a new proposal comes back.

I don't want to give the impression to the member opposite that we're trying to move it or re-do it; we're trying to build it into the process that we see forming over the next year or two.

The last thing I will note on this one is that there are, I believe, monies allocated in the budget — I'm looking at the Minister of Education — around a track around F.H. Collins, and that has been identified.

We had a conversation — because the folks from the Outdoor Sports Complex Association had put some work into understanding what would make a good track or not, I asked them if they could work with the department to share their knowledge so that, when we do invest in a track, it would be — not in the sense that it would be competitive with some other facilities, but just to try to make sure that, when we invest dollars in sport and recreation, it is done in a way that is going to serve the broader community as much as possible. It's with that notion of building a facility that will serve as many Yukoners as possible.

Mr. Kent: I'm glad the member opposite brought up the F.H. Collins field and the \$2 million that's in the Education budget this year. He mentioned a bit of the conversations he has had with the Minister of Education

respecting the upgrades to the F.H. Collins field. I'm curious — whether the minister can answer this, or perhaps one of his colleagues could get back to me — if there's enough room at that F.H. Collins site to develop a facility that would allow for the Yukon and Whitehorse to host summer competitive games, such as the Western Canada Summer Games. I know that's something the sport community was looking forward to doing with respect to the potential development of the YOSCA project but, again, we do see a \$2-million expenditure in this budget.

Apologies to the minister — I know it's not in his budget that we're debating today, but I'm just curious as to whether or not he or his department provided input to Education to potentially develop a facility there that would allow us to host games and events during the summer months.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm not sure I'm going to be able to give a complete answer to the question as the member has posed it. I will do my best.

We will work to maximize the space that we have within the geography, or room, available on the F.H. Collins site. I know there is work to try to get as much usage from it. Part of it is the type of track that is being contemplated, so that it's not something that is sort of a band-aid but is a real investment. The other part of it is this challenge of the space constraints. I don't want to give the impression that the track and the facilities that we anticipate there would be the same as those that have been contemplated for the Yukon outdoor sports complex. There is a not a space to make that happen.

I don't know the answer to the specific question about the Western Canada Games and what would make that viable or not. That would be something we would have to get back about. It's a very technical question, and I would want to rely on our experts within the departments to be able to answer those questions.

The best way to frame it, I believe, is to say that it's to invest in quality facilities to maximize the space constraints that are in that location.

Mr. Kent: I don't believe I've seen it tendered yet on the tender management system — the field and track at F.H. Collins — but hopefully there's an opportunity for Sport Yukon to provide some input into what that tender is going to look like, as well as some of the minister's sport officials so that they can get a sense for what would work there and that it doesn't become that band-aid solution that the minister spoke of. We certainly want to have a facility there that, if possible, could host games or other recreation events during the summer months but, at the very least, could provide a training facility that puts our athletes — particularly our track athletes — on the same grounds competition-wise as the athletes they are competing against outside of the Yukon. Of course, that would more than likely involve some sort of a rubberized track.

Again, I recognize and I know that there are some space limitations on that site. When I was MLA at the time — I did it as the MLA for Riverdale North — we conducted some site work on that entire education site that has Selkirk school on the south, right to where the current skateboard park is on the

north end of the property, and everything in between. That, of course, has led to the decision, I believe, to put the francophone high school there as well.

I thank the minister for those answers and just encourage him to hopefully get Sport Yukon involved in building that tender document for what is going to go to that lower field at F.H. Collins.

I wanted to change gears here now to one of our primarily winter sport facilities — of course, they operate year-round. That is Mount Sima. Has the minister begun work with Mount Sima to develop a long-term plan for financial stability? Are there also funding options being considered for the ski hills in Dawson City and Watson Lake?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: To just reference back to the earlier comments by the member opposite — would we be open to input regarding the facilities at F.H. Collins from Sport Yukon? Absolutely; this is the whole point. We want the user groups to be heavily involved in designing the system, and we believe they have the expertise that we need — Athletics Yukon, et cetera. There will be several groups that I know we will walk with, including the Yukon Outdoor Sports Complex Association, which I already noted. I'm happy to get that input and, for the record, I just state clearly that we are seeking it.

With respect to Mount Sima, I will defer some of this to my colleague, the Minister of Economic Development, because some of this goes through that. For example, we have seen, in the past, applications through the community development fund. I don't know specifically if the other ski hills in Dawson and/or Watson Lake have an intention to apply or what development work is needed.

I do intend to be down in Watson Lake in a week and a half. That's my first opportunity to have some broader conversation within the community.

With respect to Mount Sima, I was invited and did spend an afternoon sitting down with them talking about the changes that they've had in recent years and their move toward sustainability. We have been investing in the hill, not so much through this department but rather through the Department of Economic Development. They've had some very successful wins through the fact that we have an early and late ski season, which makes it rather ideal for training. They have been recruiting early training opportunities from the Province of Quebec and the Province British Columbia, so the Yukon is gaining a reputation as a location.

A couple things have made this happen. It was investment in snow-making equipment and also in doing earthworks, which means that you don't need as much snow. When they shape the terrain in such a way that they don't — like for the big jumps — have to build a mountain of snow — rather, they build some earth underneath it and then they just have to put down enough of a layer of snow. In a very smart fashion, they have been expanding their ability to hit financial sustainability.

I think of us as partners working with them, but I don't have specific things that I can talk to the member opposite about.

By the way, I have just been informed that the Watson Lake ski club has just been funded \$14,244 through CDF for purchasing and installing two new tiller bars, which is great.

There is some investment. One of the things I noted with Mount Sima when I sat down and spoke with them about their financial horizons and how they were working toward sustainability and what way we could work to assist them — I also asked them to do a couple of other things. One was to try to reach out to the other communities to find a way to support our youth, especially in other communities that don't have a ski hill, to provide a service that they don't have access to. They talked to me about what they are doing around that and I thought it was good news.

The other one was to see if they could work with other sport bodies. Really interestingly, they had loaned their snow-making equipment and their snow-making staff to Mount McIntyre and the cross-country hill. It was because of that, that Mount McIntyre decided it was a really smart investment for them. I think again it was the Department of Economic Development that helped Mount McIntyre to invest in some snow-making equipment.

It is fundamentally the same equipment, but used in a very different way because, on a downhill ski hill, you're sort of doing a wide swath, whereas on a cross-country trail, you're using a narrow, very-focused path. That will also allow sports like cross-country to extend their season, when we bring the Haywoods here, for example, so I think there is a real opportunity.

I think there are some great synergies out there that, in general, we are working with, although it won't be led directly through this department.

Mr. Kent: The minister referenced the early season training opportunities that have been taking place the past couple of years at Mount Sima. Of course, not only does this draw national attention to our national ski and snowboard facilities, but Mount Sima is able to open earlier to the public, as he mentioned. They are generating more revenue for the hill and creating jobs earlier in the season. There is also significant economic benefit to the community as a whole from this early training. I think the minister referenced teams from Quebec. I know there are other teams that also come up and rent hotel rooms and all of the other spinoff-type activities in a bit of a shoulder season for the local accommodation sector.

Can the minister tell us how much money, if it is in his department, is in this year's budget to support the early training program, and is the government committed to continuing that support in future years?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is not within the Department of Community Services. It is in the Department of Economic Development. Actually that was a really productive meeting. We had lots of discussion about the support that has been coming from Economic Development and Sima's projection about how it will move to self-sustainability around that.

I will broaden the discussion a little bit to say that it is through meetings like that, and also meetings with the City of Whitehorse, that have led us, as a department, to reach out to

the Minister of Tourism and Culture and the Minister of Economic Development to again seek a way to develop a sport tourism policy. We think there is a great amount of opportunity in the Yukon — both in the winter and shoulder seasons — in which to expand. We think that all of us, as departments, should be working together to seek a Yukon-wide approach around that.

I don't have the exact numbers, of course — hopefully we will get those from the other department — but I do know that the uptick to hotels is right on the shoulder season. It is an excellent time for us. This program has been a real win across the territory, as the member opposite notes.

Mr. Chair, if I might just make a clarification: I was mistaken earlier when I said that the Wildland Fire trailer in Carmacks has already moved. I have been informed that the decision to move it has happened, and the move is imminent — it hasn't yet happened. My apologies, as that is your riding, Mr. Chair — but it is about to happen.

Mr. Kent: I would like to thank the minister for the clarification on an earlier remark. Just in closing — on Mount Sima — I would like to offer my congratulations to Scott Casselman and all of the volunteers and individuals who have worked to make that hill a big success. I know Scott is a tireless volunteer in a number of organizations and does a great job.

I'm sure he has a great team of volunteers behind him, as does Mount Maichen in Watson Lake with Jenny Skelton and her team, and I'm sure there's a great team of volunteers in Dawson City as well — a big thank you to them and to the other volunteers who support various organizations throughout the territory.

I wanted to move now and talk a little bit about the community infrastructure. I wanted to get a sense from the minister — I know when I was Highways and Public Works minister, about 15 months ago or so, we had a transportation ministers meeting with Minister Garneau, and Minister Sohi came and provided an update to transportation ministers on the infrastructure spending of the new Liberal government at the time in Ottawa.

I'm hoping to get a sense from the minister. We had the Building Canada fund and then the New Building Canada fund under the Conservative government, and then we segued into what I'm hoping he will confirm are the three different tiers for the Liberal government in Ottawa's federal infrastructure spending. I believe one was on green initiatives; the other one was on municipality transit initiatives; then there was a sort of catch-all one on social-type initiatives — if the minister can just confirm for me that those are the three new streams coming in for infrastructure spending, or if those are still the streams coming in for spending in Canada under the new federal government.

Are we finished with the funds for the New Building Canada fund? Are there any projects that are currently underway? Are they all off the books now and we are now moved into the Liberal government's infrastructure commitments and the funds they created?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can confirm that it's not three streams. I can confirm that it's more streams. I will apologize straightaway, because the names of these funds seem to be so fluid at all times. The New Building Canada fund here in the Yukon is generally referred to as the small communities fund for us. The gas tax fund remains and was virtually doubled a couple of years ago. The clean water and waste-water fund is a short-lived fund that will be done in the next year or two. There was a one-year extension on it in order to ensure we could get our build out.

The next big suite of funds is called the long-term infrastructure plan. Just this weekend at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, some folks from Infrastructure Development were indicating there might be yet a new name for it, and I will apologize now if the name changes. I just can't help it; it seems to be that everyone wants to brand these things all sorts of ways. Underneath that, I will confirm for the member opposite that three of the funds that he was asking about are part of that long-term infrastructure plan. Firstly, the green fund; secondly, public transit infrastructure fund, sometimes referred to as PTIF; and thirdly, communities cultural and recreation fund.

Fourthly — the one that he didn't mention but I will note — is the rural and northern fund, which will also come under that broader umbrella, but doesn't go everywhere in Canada. It goes to rural and northern communities under the acknowledgement that the north has some specific challenges due to both distance and northerliness that put more pressures on our infrastructure broadly.

There are many other funds as well. For example, the minister responsible for — and I'm going to get it wrong — social inclusion and housing spoke this weekend and described some funds around housing. So there are several other funds, including through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. Even though I named the big ones that are coming under the long-term infrastructure plan, there still are lots. I will do my best to help us navigate those. I want us all to be informed about what those funds are looking like. I want Yukoners to be informed about what those funds look like so that, as we go forward, we can have a fair conversation about it.

Mr. Kent: I think the minister, earlier in this Sitting, provided a detailed list on some of those — I think it was the clean water and waste-water fund projects that were announced last year and some of the tendering dates. We have noticed that some of these projects have made their way to the tender management system. I think a couple in Faro have made it there, as well as some of the Mayo projects and perhaps one of the Watson Lake ones that were committed to, to be on there for late May. Again, I thank the minister for getting those projects to the TMS. Perhaps, if there are any updates on some of the other ones that he provided earlier information on, that would be useful for constituents on both sides of the aisle as far as trying to get a sense on when their infrastructure will be in place, but to get some information out to the contracting community as well as on when they can expect some of these jobs to be tendered. Obviously, they are

important jobs for some of our small and medium sized contractors or general contractors, or even some of the bigger ones as well. Again, any information that the minister can provide to the House is certainly welcome when it comes to those infrastructure projects.

I know that the time is growing short in the day, so I'm just going to pivot quickly to a couple of questions I had with respect to lot development within the City of Whitehorse and some additional lot development in my riding of Copperbelt South. This may be a question for the Minister of Community Services or perhaps the Minister of EMR — I can ask him about it a little bit later. The City of Whitehorse right now is looking at developing some infill lots.

When I looked at the map — obviously there are some in my riding of Copperbelt South — there are also some in other areas of the city. Some of it looked familiar, as far as potentially being undeveloped Commissioner's land or land that the Yukon government has in its possession.

Can the minister, I guess, first of all, confirm for me and the House whether Community Services is responsible for that? I believe they are, as the department that works within the City of Whitehorse boundaries, and EMR works outside of the City of Whitehorse. If not, I will take this up with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources during the time.

Again, are those YG lots that they have supplied to the city? Have they given them to the city to seek rezoning and to consult with the public or were they sold to the city?

Again, there are some individuals out in my riding who are particularly concerned about some of the lots that are being developed out there. Does the Yukon government have any say in this, or should I specifically direct their concerns to the City of Whitehorse with respect to these new lots that are being proposed in Copperbelt South, but also other ridings in the City of Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is not the Department of Community Services and the Land Development branch that are dealing with the infill lots. We do have a direct role with Whistle Bend phase 4, and that is what we've budgeted. If the member opposite wants some details, I can provide them.

I'm just going to read out a note here that I believe is coming to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources: The infill project does not include transfer of land between the city and the territorial government. We agreed with the City of Whitehorse that this was a step that would add unnecessary time and process if the desired shared outcome is to put these lots on to the market for future development.

I can let the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources provide even more details when that department comes up here in debate. We are working in partnership with the city to try to ensure that we assist them to deliver, and it's under their recommendation.

Pardon me — member opposite — I thank you for the thanks. I'm just going to deflect it right away to the department for their work on getting the infrastructure projects out to tender. I don't think it's really me; I think it's just good work that the department is doing.

Mr. Kent: As I mentioned, I think it was during a motion debate earlier on this Sitting, I certainly hear good things from mayors and municipal officials throughout the territory on the work of the departmental staff in Community Services. I would, again echo the minister's support and congratulations to the officials in Community Services for all of their work — no matter what branch they work in.

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kent 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. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Chair of —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: I was under the understanding that, when the House was in, members had to be in their own seats to be recognized.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Yes, the Member for Lake Laberge is correct. I would note, just for the record, that the officials who were sitting beside Mr. Streicker were getting organized and were leaving.

I understand why Mr. Hutton sat in another chair, but for future reference, it is true that when the Speaker is in the Chair that the members should be sitting in their appointed seats. I thank the Member for Lake Laberge for the clarification.

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 5:28 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled June 5, 2017:

34-2-19

Yukon State of the Environment: Reporting on environmental indicators — 2017 Highlights (Frost)