

**Yukon Legislative Assembly**  
**Whitehorse, Yukon**  
**Wednesday, May 1, 2013 — 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 Sexual Assault Prevention Month**

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** On behalf of the Yukon government and the Independent member, I rise today to pay tribute to Sexual Assault Prevention Month and to pay tribute to all of the many people who work to eradicate sexualized violence and to those who educate the public about violence and sexual assault.

The territories have consistently recorded the highest rates of violence against women in the country. Rates of sexual assault and intimate partner violence against women are many times higher than those of the provinces. Population in the territories is significantly younger on average and is a consistent risk factor for victimization.

According to Statistics Canada, one woman in three suffers a sexual assault in her life. Compared to the provinces, rates of sexual offences are two to three times higher in Yukon. Females continue to be the most likely victims in police-reported spousal violence, accounting for 83 percent of victims, compared to 17 percent males. Statistics further demonstrate that 80 percent of victims of sexual assaults knew their aggressor and that less than 10 percent of sexual assaults are reported to the police.

Statistics like these can help us understand the severity and the prevalence of sexual assault, but statistics can't tell us how it feels to experience violence, nor can they tell us what it feels like to be blamed for being a victim of violence.

As governments, organizations, communities and individuals, we all share in the responsibility to work together to address sexualized violence and to support those who have experienced it. The government is acknowledging Sexual Assault Prevention Month, both through assistance to women's organizations to deliver programming and through our own anti-violence social marketing campaign called "Am I the Solution?" The social marketing campaign was launched a year and a half ago with display ads and posters and a Facebook page. Last year, radio advertisements were heard on Yukon radio stations.

The "Am I the Solution?" social marketing campaign begins its second phase this Friday, with the launch of a unique and creative book featuring anti-violence messaging for pre-school children. *Only You or You* is intended to help parents and caregivers discuss feelings and pro-social behaviour with

their children in their relationships with others. The book will be distributed throughout Yukon to parents and caregivers through existing programs and services. The Women's Directorate is also releasing a series of posters as part of the youth component under the "Am I the Solution?" campaign. The series of posters depict statistics on violence against women and girls and invite boys and girls to change their attitudes and their behaviours. Posters are specifically designed to reach young individuals, 13 to 17 years of age, and will be distributed to youth at youth-friendly spaces throughout the territory.

"Shifting the social response" is the theme of this year's campaign being organized by women's organizations and other partners throughout the territory. The Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Les EssentiElles and many community partners designed this year's campaign to promote people to reflect on their response to sexualized assault and how we can work to not only better support victims, but how we all play a part to bringing an end to sexualized assault.

Two series of posters will be distributed throughout the territory, one that targets potential offenders and the second that aims to change individual social responses toward victims of sexualized violence. A variety of public events will also be offered to encourage discussion, education and action on sexualized assault and the social response throughout the month of May, including a public forum on the issue of social media and sexualized assault.

Display booths can also be found at a number of public places, including the Fireweed Market, Canada Games Centre and others. I encourage all Yukoners to drop by these and other booths and to take a pledge on paper and join the voices of men and women who speak out against sexualized violence in our community.

On behalf of the Yukon government, I would like to thank all the individuals, the organizations and the many front-line agencies involved in these and ongoing efforts throughout the year.

**Mr. Silver:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Liberal caucus and the Official Opposition to recognize Sexual Assault Prevention Month.

Sexual assault is far more common than most would suspect. Sexual assault or rape can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status or race. Every day across the country, men, women and children suffer the pain and trauma of sexual assault. Fifty-one percent of Canadian women report having experienced one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16.

Of every 100 incidents of sexual assault, only six are reported to the police. Of sexual assault survivors who do not report to the police, 44 percent state that it was because of their concerns about the system.

Many victims and survivors suffer in silence, fearing retribution, humiliation or lack of support. Victims of sexual assault are some of the most vulnerable and silent people in society. The trauma of sexual assault can leave scars that never fully

heal and many survivors experience depression, fear and suicidal feelings.

Sexual assault not only harms the victims, but it also damages families, communities and our way of life. Seeking counselling support in a safe place can help families and victims understand and validate how the assault or abuse has impacted their lives. Through counselling they can let go of the guilt, anger and shame felt by so many victims and begin to feel empowered, stronger and hopeful of their future.

Though we have come very far in our fight to reduce sexual violence, the prevalence of sexual assault remains an affront to our national conscience that we cannot ignore. It violates the fundamental rights and safety of the person along with their physical and psychological integrity. We must do more to raise awareness of the realities of sexual assault and to educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence. We must reaffirm our commitment to continually improve our prevention programs, build public awareness and improve our effectiveness in addressing the needs of survivors of sexual assault. We must focus on preventing violence by changing attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate it. By joining together we can pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about sexual violence at any time, and hope to put an end to this devastating crime.

Today we pay tribute to those victims who through their strength and courage have survived and are there for support for other victims. We thank the many NGOs and agencies throughout the Yukon who are at the forefront for their support and for their counselling. We'd like to thank the front-line workers and the counsellors for their hard work, their dedication and for their ongoing efforts in raising awareness for sexual assault prevention and for being there, helping the families, and in turn, healing lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### In recognition of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I rise in the House today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing May as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month. At 12:30 today, the Premier and I had the opportunity to raise the flag in commemoration of this awareness month, and we were joined at that time by some people sitting in the gallery today — Joanne Josie, Priscilla Quinn, Judy Peach and Alan Macklon. Florence Roberts has gone to another of her volunteer organizations so, unfortunately, she wasn't able to join us today. We had the pleasure of raising a flag in commemoration of awareness of this disease.

Multiple sclerosis is a complex, chronic and often debilitating disease of the brain and spinal cord. While it most often affects young adults between the ages of 15 and 40 years, children as young as three have been diagnosed with MS. With an estimated 55,000 to 75,000 Canadians living with MS, it is the most common neurological disease affecting young adults in Canada. The unpredictable effects of MS last a lifetime, and while the majority of people living with the disease are diagnosed with relapse-remitting MS, more than half will develop secondary progressive MS within 10 years of their diagnosis, and 90 percent will develop secondary progressive MS within 25 years of their diagnosis.

Fortunately, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada has been a leader in offering services that enable people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life and deal with the issues related to the disease. These services include accurate information about MS, support and consultation, self-help groups, educational workshops, individual advocacy, equipment provision, and social and recreational activities. Local communities require these resources as well, since Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world. In Yukon, we estimate about 150 individuals are living with MS.

The thing with MS is that it affects each person differently and changes from day to day. A person can feel great one day and then extremely fatigued or experience double vision the next. For people living with progressive MS, their symptoms may worsen from day to day. This is part of the reason we contributed to the Saskatchewan clinical trials on the MS liberation procedure.

I would now also like to point out that on June 9 the local MS Society will host the annual Scotiabank MS Walk. This walk will raise funds and awareness to help support Yukoners who have been affected by MS, while at the same time funding groundbreaking research into the cause and cure of this disease.

Multiple sclerosis is challenging and life-changing and we all have a role to play in providing support and seeking answers. I would hope that all members would now join me in welcoming the members of the MS Society who are living with the disease.

*Applause*

### In recognition of Asian Heritage Month

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I rise today on behalf of the government and on behalf of the Independent member to pay tribute to Asian Heritage Month and the contribution of Asian Canadians to Yukon. The Government of Canada signed an official declaration in May 2002 declaring May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada. This is an opportunity for us to recognize the important contributions people of Asian descent have made in all aspects of Canadian life, from sports to art to business.

This is true here in Yukon where history reveals that many Asians settled in the territory and made significant impact in their communities. In 2007 in honour of Asian Heritage Month, Yukon Archives partnered with the Yukon Human Rights Commission to recognize the lives of Asian Canadians in Yukon. With additional support from the National Association of Japanese Canadians, they created an exhibition highlighting many exceptional individuals who are part of our vibrant and fascinating history. I would like to highlight two of these individuals.

Masayuki Sakata was born in Japan in approximately 1889 and arrived in Dawson City with his parents in 1907. Mr. Sakata became a well-known entrepreneur with restaurants in Dawson, Mayo and Keno. He set up a lunch program for schoolchildren in Dawson City and worked for the Treadwell Yukon Company. Mr. Sakata was a respected member of the community who became a member of the Yukon Order of Pioneers in 1969.

Another exceptional Asian Canadian was engineer Jim Quong, who left an unforgettable mark on the territory's early

road infrastructure. Originally from Vancouver, Mr. Quong arrived in Yukon to build bridges for the U.S. Army during the construction of the Alaska Highway during the Second World War. In addition to the 134 bridges he helped build, Mr. Quong took thousands of photos, not only of bridges but also of people, events and communities.

Mr. Quong and Mr. Sakata are two of the many Asian Canadians who chose Yukon as their home and in doing so left lasting legacies we remember to this day.

As Yukon continues to develop, prosper and grow, we continue to welcome people from Asia and other parts of the world. In the process, Yukon is changing for the better as our culture grows more diverse.

I would like to thank the Japanese Canadian Association of Yukon, the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon, the Canadian Filipino Association of the Yukon, and the Hidden History group of Yukon — just to name a few — for providing many opportunities for Yukoners to celebrate Asian Canadians this May. I encourage everyone to take part in the events and exhibitions taking place to commemorate Asian Heritage Month in Yukon.

At this time I would also like to recognize and have the members of this Assembly join me in welcoming a few members to our gallery: Chaofeng Zhang is here representing the Chinese community with Charmaine Cheung, and with us representing the Canadian Filipino Association of Yukon is the president, Yvonne Clarke, and with her is Mike Bueusuceso from the new Flight Pass travel agency here in Whitehorse. Welcome.

*Applause*

**Ms. Stick:** I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to Asian Heritage Month, which is observed in Canada throughout the month of May. In December 2001, after almost 100 years of significant contribution to the growth of Canada's social, economic and political vigour, the Senate of Canada passed a motion officially designating May as Asian Heritage Month. Asian Heritage Month promotes Canada's diversity. It offers all Canadians an opportunity to learn more about the history of Asian Canadians and to acknowledge and celebrate their contributions to growth and economic prosperity.

Canada's history of contact with Asians from China, Japan and south Asia has not always been a positive one. We must remember the head tax imposed on Chinese workers in the last century and the forceable removal of the Japanese families from the west coast during the Second World War. The *Komagata Maru*, a ship with hundreds of south Asian immigrants was turned away from Vancouver Harbour in 1914. All of these actions, however, have resulted in formal apologies from the Government of Canada.

The Yukon also has a long history with this community. At the beginning of the gold rush, there is a recording by the Northwest Mounted Police of a Japanese individual crossing the Chilkoot. By 1901, over 80 Japanese individuals were living in the Yukon. Since then, Yukon has continued to see a growing population of individuals and families of Asian de-

scend and ancestry. Like many of us, they have come here from other places, including China, Japan, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Cambodia — this is but a partial list. They have come here to raise families, establish businesses, volunteer and grow our communities. They are our physicians, our tai chi instructors, our friends, our neighbours, our children's music teacher and their soccer coaches.

**Mr. Silver:** I rise today on behalf of the Liberal caucus to pay tribute to Asian Heritage Month. In 2002, the Government of Canada signed an official declaration to designate May as Asian Heritage Month, and over the years it has become a national festival. The history of Asian immigration to Canada can be traced back to more than 150 years ago, when Chinese workers arrived on the west coast and joined workers to build the Pacific Railway in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Asian Canadians not only physically helped to build Canada, but also culturally enriched its diversity, which has become an important characteristic of this country and of our mosaic. Asian Heritage Month offers the opportunity for Canadians to enhance their understanding and appreciation, and celebrate the beauty and wisdom of the rich culture, heritage and traditions of the Asian communities. Canada's cultural diversity strengthens the country's social, political, and economy in innumerable ways. Asian Canadians bring to our society many languages, new ethnicities and religious traditions.

Men and women from these countries have contributed to every aspect of Canadian life, from arts to science to sports, business and government. Asian Heritage Month is a bridge to connect different societies in community building and to understand and to learn from one another. It is a worthy acknowledgement of the long and rich history of Asian Canadians and is a cause to celebrate the continuing growth and prosperity of our nation.

#### **In recognition of International Workers' Day**

**Ms. Hanson:** I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay proud tribute to all workers in recognition of May Day, International Workers' Day. It is important for us, as North Americans, to remember the origins of the work benefits we all expect today. In 1886, during an era of rapid industrialization, Chicago became the centre of a national movement for an eight-hour work day. A series of mass strikes took place in Chicago in May, followed by a peaceful meeting on May 4 by labour activists calling for reforms. The meeting ended when a bomb was thrown. Three workers who weren't even at the meeting were hanged. This travesty was used to attack the labour movement, and May Day was eventually replaced in Canada and the United States with our September holiday of Labour Day, hiding the real facts of the May Day.

The labour movement more than a century ago gave us the right to an eight-hour working day, minimum wage laws and safer workplaces. Social policies such as old-age pensions, veterans' benefits, unemployment insurance and medicare grew from this movement and have benefited everyone, not just unionized workers.

Workers today face serious issues. Pensions and other benefits are being set aside in the interest of keeping companies

in profit. Layoffs, contracting out and privatization threaten to erode what were once secure working arrangements. Organizing unions to protect workers' rights in big businesses like Wal-Mart is a battle that has yet to be won. Part-time work without benefits is becoming the norm. It is shocking to realize that keeping the hard-fought rights won by a past generation is as much a problem today as obtaining them was in the first place.

Today, our financial systems do not protect the average worker. The global financial collapse several years ago has given rise to the current austerity movement, which places the burden on the average worker for our struggling economies while rewarding those at the top. The top Canadian CEO makes the average worker's salary in three hours of the first working day of each year. Even if they drive their company toward bankruptcy, fail their shareholders and leave workers unemployed, CEOs often walk away with packages worth millions of dollars. As a former CEO of DuPont once said, no one else gets paid excessively when they fail; they get fired.

We must also be vigilant of workers' safety in the workplace. In mid-April an explosion at a fertilizer plant in Texas killed 17 people and destroyed dozens of surrounding homes. Despite storing highly explosive substances, the plant had not been inspected for almost 30 years. Last week around 500 workers died in Bangladesh when a garment factory block collapsed. Deep cracks in the walls had prompted police to order an evacuation of the factory the day before, but the factory owners ignored this and kept their 2,000 employees working.

Last week the MLA for Takhini-Kopper King remembered Yukoners who had lost their lives at work in the Day of Mourning tribute. She called for continued commitment to protect people from further harm. As she said, "I don't want us to be living under a cloud of "what ifs" with fear of leaving the house." "No one should live with that threat of loss looming over their heads, but despite all advancements to make workplaces safer, this is still a sad reality."

Today on May Day we stand in solidarity with the men and women, youth and seniors, organized and non-organized workers who continue to struggle for the good of us all.

### In recognition of National Youth Week

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I rise today on behalf of the government and the Independent member to pay tribute to National Youth Week, which takes place May 1 to 7. National Youth Week is an annual celebration across this country of youth and their active participation in the community. In Yukon we have an exceptional group of youth involved in sport, dramatic and performing arts, civic engagement, volunteerism and leadership; we have three cross-country skiers on Canada's national team; we have youth across the territory who lead their peers in recreation activities; we have students who are advocates for human rights and are engaged in the democratic process.

Yukon youth have visited the Legislature, either by way of their school class or to represent organizations or activities that they take part in or to express their views about issues. This government is proud to support our youth and the non-governmental organizations working with them through the youth investment fund and the youth leadership and activities

program fund. These programs support projects ranging from recreational activities, to after-school programs, to First Nation cultural programs. This government also provides operational funding to Bringing Youth Towards Equality or BYTE, the Boys and Girls Club of Whitehorse and the Youth of Today Society.

We recognize youth through outstanding youth achievement awards, which will be reintroduced this year. They will be presented this summer to youth who are involved in their communities in constructive and positive ways. Recipients will receive \$250 and a poster will be created with their photo and their achievements to be distributed within their community. To celebrate National Youth Week, the Yukon government's Youth Directorate, in partnership with BYTE, will host lunch-time barbecues at secondary schools in Whitehorse.

Our youth are our future and I ask that all members of this House join me in recognizing youth, young Yukoners and the National Youth Week.

**Ms. White:** I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition and the Third Party to celebrate National Youth Week.

In Canada the term "youth" encompasses everyone from the ages of 13 straight through to 24. If we pause for a second to think about it, we all know incredible youth around us. Youth Week is a chance for us as community leaders to celebrate these incredible individuals, their successes and their dedication to our communities. It allows us to recognize and thank them for their active participation in making our communities more welcoming, more inclusive and more vibrant places to live.

Youth — those vibrant young souls who are sometimes colourful, sometimes fashion-forward, sometimes hilarious and, to those of us who have forgotten what it's like to be a teenager, occasionally baffling. These young people are a crucial asset to the fabric of Canadian communities. Young people often learn the valuable skills of growing up through the activities in which they are actively involved in their time away from school or work. We've all had the good fortune of seeing young people come into their own on an ice rink, a soccer pitch, a ski hill, a dance studio, a skate park, a swimming pool or a bicycle. We have seen them grow wings of independence through art, drama and music. We have seen them develop compassion through volunteerism and helping others. Youth volunteer in our communities as coaches for younger children. They volunteer with the elderly, with Special Olympics, with dance studios, with martial arts studios, after-school programs, drama programs and all manner of things in-between.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Yukon are not only graced with incredible youth, we are also graced with great youth organizations that focus on the health, happiness and well-being of our next generation. So I would like to thank and acknowledge them all for the hard work they do: The Boys and Girls Club, Bringing Youth Towards Equality, the Youth of Today Society, the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, the Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, the Literacy Coalition, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon, Sport Yukon, the City of Whitehorse recrea-

tion department, and recreation directors in all communities all over the territory.

A big thank you to all members of our community who, through their time and energy, encourage, elevate and value the youth in our communities. To all youth, we salute you for being awesome. Thank you.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Introduction of visitors.  
Are there any returns or documents for tabling?  
Are there any reports of committees?  
Petitions.

## PETITIONS

### Petition No. 12 — received

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker and honourable members of the Assembly, I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 12 of the First Session of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Member for Watson Lake on April 30, 2013. The petition meets the requirements as to form of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

**Speaker:** Accordingly, I declare Petition No. 12 read and received. Pursuant to Standing Order 67, the Executive Council shall provide a response to a petition, which has been read and received, within eight sitting days of its presentation. Therefore, the Executive Council's response to Petition No. 12 shall be provided on or before Tuesday, May 14, 2013.

Are there any other petitions to be presented?  
Are there any bills to be introduced?  
Are there any notices of motion?

## NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to:

- (1) continue to work in cooperation with the Salvation Army to provide transitional housing for those individuals labelled as "hard to house";
- (2) continue to work with the Salvation Army in locating a new site for their homeless shelter;
- (3) recognize the Salvation Army as a local non-governmental organization;
- (4) recognize the long history and good work that the Salvation Army has done; and
- (5) recognize that the Salvation Army operates Whitehorse's only homeless shelter and its only halfway house.

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

THAT the Yukon Legislative Assembly expresses:

- (1) sympathy and support for the workers killed, injured or affected by garment building collapse in Bangladesh and their families;
- (2) solidarity with the efforts of Bangladeshi workers, union activists and progressive legislators trying to improve working conditions in the garment sector; and

(3) commitment to ensuring purchasing policies of the Yukon government and our personal consumer choices are ethical and have not been produced in exploitative conditions.

**Mr. Silver:** I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to develop an action plan to address the fallout from Holland America's decision to cut tours to the Kluane region.

**Mr. Elias:** I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to seek unanimous approval in writing by the parties to conduct a comprehensive review and negotiate subsequent amendments to the 1985 *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*.

**Speaker:** Is there a statement by a minister?  
This brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Young worker safety

**Ms. Hanson:** In October 2008, four and a half years ago, Steve Cardiff introduced the *Young Worker Protection Act* in order to increase safety for Yukon's young workers by, among other things, prohibiting young workers from employment in certain industries. Years ago, this government committed to establishing minimum ages to protect young workers. They set a deadline of January 1, 2011, which passed without any action. At this time last year, we heard that the Yukon Party government was reviewing things and, "When our review of recommendations is completed, we will bring forward appropriate regulations at that time."

Will the government release the results of the review announced one year ago and give some indication of when regulations will be brought forward to protect young workers?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** At the present time we are still completing our consultation work. We expect that in the very near future it will be finished, and once that is done we will bring forward regulation changes. At this point we are not ready to bring them forward.

**Ms. Hanson:** I remind the minister that there was consultation. There were some contentious issues, but there are many areas of complete agreement: "A large majority of both employers and parents feel that there should be minimum working ages for certain occupations and workplaces — especially those that are perceived as having more risks and dangers."

This is not the NDP's analysis. It is written in the introduction of the consultation report. The Yukon Party has broken their promise. There has been no review, no regulations are forthcoming, and they have broken their promise to protect young workers. The Yukon will continue to be in non-compliance with Article 7.1 of the International Labour Organization Convention 138.

They don't seem to care and are putting our children at risk. How can this government claim to care about youth and young worker safety when its lack of action and broken promises on minimum wages —

**Speaker:** Order. The member's time has elapsed.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I would answer the preamble; however, that would take me much more time than I'm allotted here today.

We do take the issue of young worker safety very seriously. A code of practice for orientation, training and supervision of young workers came into effect in 2010. It is being successfully implemented. Proposed draft regulations, as I said before, are being considered by the government. We're consulting with a number of industries. There are a number of very tough questions that have to be answered. We want to make sure that, before we bring this legislation forward, it's the right legislation for the Yukon.

**Ms. Hanson:** Let's just review what the real situation is. In the Yukon, children aged 17 to as young as 11 — because really there is no minimum age — are permitted to work in construction, drilling for the oil and gas industry, working in an enclosed or confined space, manufacturing, working on scaffolding and swing stages, mining exploration, spraying pesticides and removing asbestos.

There has been some progress because the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board seems to get the issue, but this government just doesn't seem to care about youth workers' safety. Young workers are at the most high risk when it comes to injury on the job and the Yukon government is willfully permitting young workers to work in some of the most high-risk industries.

Yukoners want an explanation. Why does this government refuse to take action to protect young workers?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Once again, the number of incorrect allegations made during the preamble would take me a month to address. However, I must once again indicate to the member opposite that the code of conduct for orientation, supervision and training of young workers has been successfully implemented and is in operation in the territory. There are minimum ages, contrary to what the member opposite said, for some industries in the territory at the present time under the OH&S regulations, and we will continue to carefully consult with all of the necessary businesses and organizations in the territory. We also have to make sure that everyone understands that parents have a certain obligation in this whole process as well. I know of a number of instances in small businesses where parents have allowed their children to work and it has not only been successful, but it has been very advantageous for both the children and the people who own the business.

The member opposite would have you believe that all young worker occupations in the territory are dangerous and of no use whatsoever to the individual and that's simply not the case, Mr. Speaker. Had she done the kind of consultation that we have done, she would find out that it's not completely a black-and-white situation.

**Speaker:** The member's time has elapsed.

**Question re: Arrest processing unit**

**Ms. Moorcroft:** When I last raised the construction of the arrest processing unit, the Minister of Highways and Public Works proudly boasted that this government had modified the

design to reduce costs and that this was an example of improving project management.

This week, the Minister of Justice told this House that the arrest processing unit will only be 25 metres square. Mr. Speaker, it would appear that the concrete pad for the arrest processing unit was already built and that this concrete pad had in-floor heating throughout. Can the Minister of Highways and Public Works tell this House if the heated concrete slab for the arrest processing unit is the same size as the redesigned arrest processing unit building?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, over the last year, the Department of Justice, working with the Department of Highways and Public Works, conducted a review of the scope and design parameters of the arrest processing unit. This review was conducted to determine whether a modified design could be developed, which reduces cost yet still meets the needs of the arrest processing unit and program standards.

That review has led to a modification in design for the arrest processing unit, which will continue to meet the high standards for safe and secure custody at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

We expect to be able to go to a tender in the very near future, working with the Department of Highways and Public Works, as well as Justice. We're working together to ensure that we are ready for the next building season.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** According to sources, the new 25-metre-square size of the arrest processing unit is a result of the government's latest redesign, and this redesign happened after the heated concrete slab was poured. It has also come to our attention that the new building design is only half the size of the heated concrete slab. Since this concrete slab is heated and the new building size will not cover the current slab, the government will now have to re-do the entire heating system as you cannot heat the slab outside of the building envelope.

Almost \$1.3 million has been spent on design, redesign, a concrete slab and an in-floor heating system that will no longer work. Will the minister tell this House the real costs of fixing this new problem with the redesigned arrest processing unit?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** As I mentioned in my first response, over the last year working with the Department of Highways and Public Works, and Justice, we have conducted a review of the scope and the design of the arrest processing unit that is to be attached to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. I believe that that is a very responsible approach from this government, as we didn't want that construction getting out of hand and we want to move ahead in a fiscally responsible manner. That review was conducted to determine indeed whether modified design could be developed, which reduces costs, as I have mentioned, yet still meets the high program standards of the arrest processing unit at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. We are moving forward with the project and we're expected to go to a tender in the very near future.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** I would thank the minister for his response, but it certainly wasn't an answer to my question. Here again we have an example of how this Yukon Party government mismanages Yukon taxpayers' dollars.

In the spring of 2012, the government said in this House that the arrest processing unit would hopefully be ready and open by fall of 2012. That date has come and passed; \$1.3 million has been spent. The government is now suggesting that tenders might be going out later this spring. Now the Yukon Party government, we find out, has built a heated, concrete-slab foundation for the arrest processing unit that will not work.

Does the Minister of Highways and Public Works really believe that these costly mistakes and delays in building the arrest processing unit at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre is an example of improving project management, as he said in this House earlier this sitting?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** I do not have any hand signals for you, like the member opposite.

This is quite disappointing to hear this from the members opposite. During the budget debate on Justice, the Minister of Justice spoke to the time frame. We are going to tender as soon as we can here on this this spring and we are going to work on it. The good work that has been done by the government employees — we hear from Yukoners all the time about being fiscally responsible, not going overbudget.

In December 2011, the Member for Copperbelt South criticized this government for being overbudget on a project and the project that she was criticizing was exactly what we are talking about. Earlier this year she criticized us for being overbudget.

What does the member opposite want us to do? Does she want us to go overbudget? Does she want to be fiscally responsible?

Mr. Speaker, Yukoners want us to be fiscally responsible. We're going to build this and it will hopefully be finished this fall, and we look forward to it. We want to be fiscally responsible and that's why we're working diligently with procurement and doing what is best for Yukoners.

#### **Question re: Tombstone Territorial Park management**

**Mr. Silver:** Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I attended a public meeting about the *Tombstone Territorial Park Management Plan*. It requires a review three years after the plan's approval and that is what is happening this spring.

One of the issues that was raised at the meeting was search and rescue in the park. The park management committee drafted its recommendations that Yukon develop regulations necessary to fully implement the park's management plan. This will help manage the park and ensure public safety.

The current policy of the government is "hiker beware." The Department of Environment's website warns visitors, and I quote: "Yukon Parks staff do not have the capacity or responsibility for initiating search and rescue."

Inevitably, the Klondike Search and Rescue Association and the RCMP are involved in any rescue. As the numbers of visitors continue to increase, so will the number of people who will encounter problems. How does the government plan to address this concern?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Mr. Speaker, the Tombstone Park is a great example of collaboration between the government and First Nations with regard to a park in the territory.

Of course, this year, as the member opposite noted, we are conducting a review of that plan in conjunction with our planning partners, the First Nations. A number of issues have come up through that process that suggest we will have to make some changes throughout the coming years, perhaps.

One of the things that we've noted is the fairly dramatic rise in attendance at that park and the visitation at the interpretive centre. So we've seen a fairly strong increase in interest of Yukoners and visitors to the territory in attending that park. We'll have to make decisions about the services that are provided in that park, in conjunction with our First Nation planning partners.

So with regard to the specific issue of search and rescue and hiker safety, those are, of course, in the mix as well, and we'll given them due consideration and thought, but I'm not in a position to commit to a specific program at this time.

**Mr. Silver:** One of the draft recommendations for the new Tombstone Park management plan is that regulations be drafted to ensure public safety. There is no plan in place now to deal with search and rescue situations when they arise — steep embankments, specifically.

The City of Dawson is bringing a resolution to the annual general meeting of Yukon municipalities that is coming up this weekend. It addresses the broader issues of search and rescue capabilities in rural Yukon and raises the issue of funding and community involvement.

KSARA, the Klondike Search and Rescue Association, can be a part of the solution to this problem. It needs help to coordinate search and rescue planning, and its members need access to training. The current approach, which is simply "hiker beware" is a recipe for disaster. We should not wait until a tragedy occurs. What is the government doing to address this gap in search and rescue coverage?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** As I said earlier, we are always working with First Nations, our planning partners, to manage a number of parks throughout the territory, and I point out that the Yukon has the second highest percentage of protected areas in the country. So we have a lot of area to manage, and we do that collaboratively with the respective First Nations in respective areas. So, in this particular case, we are working with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation to manage the Tombstone Territorial Park. We've made significant investments in that park throughout the years, including the building of what I would consider an absolutely phenomenal building in the interpretive centre there, and we are always taking action to ensure that our parks are safe and that Yukoners have the opportunity to enjoy them safely, as do visitors to this territory.

So, again, with regard to the specific management planning of the park, those are actions that we'll do in conjunction with First Nations and we are currently reviewing the plan as a whole in conjunction with that First Nation, so if the issue of search and rescue is something that comes out specifically, as the member opposite has noted, then we will have to deal with that.

That is something we will have to work with our partners in planning to develop how best to respond and what services to provide in that park.

**Mr. Silver:** I appreciate the answer from the minister responsible. I'm sure that Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in will say the exact same thing — that KSARA is definitely part of the solution. I'm flagging this issue for the minister for specific reason. Visitation in that park, as he mentioned, has increased, and in 2012 there were over 12,000 visitors to the park. The park's isolation is what makes it both attractive and dangerous at the same time. When visitors can do their best to prepare and be safe, there still will continue to be accidents, and we need to do our best to be prepared.

At the meeting I attended earlier this year, there was concern about the lack of a plan for search and rescue — and that was at the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Cultural Centre. I'm looking for a commitment from this government that will address the problem. The park's management plan suggests new regulations might be in order for this to happen.

Is this government going to respond positively to the recommendation, and when might we expect an answer about the improved search and rescue capabilities in Tombstone Park?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** What I can commit to is that we will respond positively to all recommendations that we receive. On some of them, of course, we will have to consult our planning partners and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.

So, at this time, I can't commit to a specific regulation, but what I can say is that we take the recommendations that come out of this process very seriously and will give them due consideration and thought as we move forward with the Tombstone Territorial Park management. Of course, like I said and as the member noted, this is a park that has seen a dramatic rise in visitation over the years and is really a gem in the territory when it comes to attracting visitors as well as a huge attractant for Yukoners to get out and enjoy Yukon's exceptional environment and wilderness.

When it comes to ensuring that Yukoners and visitors alike are safe in the territory, of course that is a priority for us, but when it comes to the specific regulations, I can't make a commitment at this time. What I can say is that I'll continue to work with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to ensure that the Tombstone Territorial Park is properly managed.

**Question re: Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement amendments**

**Mr. Elias:** Right from the very first page to the last page of the 1985 Canadian *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*, there are a multitude of outdated and stale clauses that do not reflect today's realities. As managers of the Porcupine caribou herd, we simply cannot be the best that we can be with what amount to old, ineffective and outdated governing documents. We owe it to the herd and to future managers to conduct a formal comprehensive review of the 1985 *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*. We all committed to standing strong for the health of the Porcupine caribou herd, even if it means challenging the times and our partners and taking on some hard work. There is an opportunity here for the minister to take a leadership role and seek unanimous approval in writing by the partners to renegotiate and achieve comprehensive amendments to the agreement. Will the minister do just that?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** The *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* is a federal agreement that was signed in October of 1985. It was signed by the Government of Canada through INAC, which is now ANC, Government of Yukon and the Government of Northwest Territories, as well as the Council for Yukon Indians, which is now the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Inuvialuit Game Council, the Dene Nation and the Métis association of the Northwest Territories.

The member opposite is quite right that there are a number of anachronisms in that agreement, not the least of which is the fact that it doesn't recognize the fact that we have final settled land claims in the territory and that the three northern First Nations in this territory have land claims and are self-governing, and through those land claims agreements, have management responsibilities when it comes to the Porcupine caribou herd.

So I do agree whole-heartedly that amendments to this agreement need to be made to bring it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to recognize the realities that we currently deal with in terms of self-governing First Nations and the important role that they have to play in management of this herd. So yes, I will support and recognize that the agreement is out of date and does not reflect the modern treaties and management responsibilities of First Nation governments in the north, and we will work with the federal government to ensure it's brought up to the standard of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Mr. Elias:** That's an encouraging answer from the minister and I appreciate his recognition of the agreement being outdated. Updating the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* of 1985 to reflect current jurisdictional arrangements of Canada, the two territories and the self-governing First Nations of the Vuntut Gwitchin, Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Inuvialuit will recognize them as partners. Here's what's important: they have the lawmaking authority over their lands and citizens, which is not reflected in the current agreement. That will enable more effective conservation of this international resource in Canada and enable the reinvigoration of our herd management objectives in Alaska, including the ongoing protection of the herd's calving grounds on the North Slope of Alaska.

Will the minister speak with his federal counterpart and seek to begin the process of renegotiating, updating and making current the 1985 Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Through the development of the Porcupine caribou harvest management plan, the eight principals involved in that agreement agreed through a joint resolution in January 2010 that the parties address the intergovernmental processes and protocol to support amendment to that agreement. We are of course committed to that, as the Government of Yukon articulated in 2010 through that resolution. I know the Premier has met with the Chief of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and has had these discussions already.

So, of course, we do recognize that we have a role to play here, but I would note that the federal government is the lead in this review and amendment process. While they have identified their commitment to undertake such a review, progress has been a little bit slower than we would like. What I can commit



to on the floor of this Legislature is to continue to work with the federal government to recognize the importance of this and, for lack of a better term, push things along to ensure that we bring this agreement into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Mr. Elias:** I'll provide some examples for the House with regard to the current agreement. In the current agreement, many of the signatories are no longer in existence. In section L of the agreement that deals with commercial harvest, subsection 2(b) basically allows for the sale of the Porcupine caribou herd and, in my opinion, has been abused over the years and has no place in a current, up-to-date agreement. We can also insert the precautionary principle into the new agreement because we've just gotten through a decade of some very uncertain times and it took a lot of hard work to get to the agreements that the minister just went over — the harvest management plan, et cetera, et cetera — because in the future, should conservation concerns arise for the herd again, the signatories will be in a much better position to control what they can control. That is people.

Will the minister help to achieve a new Canadian *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*? Can he explain to the House how and when?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I have to admit that on some of the details that the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin explained, I don't have the breadth of understanding and awareness of the agreement that he does because he has been dealing with it for so long. What I can say is that there are a number of things in the agreement that are somewhat problematic for us today. One of them is of course the implication of the Council of Yukon First Nations as being involved in that when, in the modern context of settled land claims, the individual First Nations themselves should be identified — the Na Cho Nyäk Dun, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in being the three in the north that have a role to play. Those First Nations have modern settled land claims and have management responsibilities themselves and deserve to be identified in the agreement, rather than under the umbrella of the CYFN. So of course we have an interest in that.

There are a number of other specifics that I don't have the time to get into, but the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin did mention some of them. As I said earlier, what I can commit to is to continue to work with the federal government — the federal government being the lead — to encourage them to take action and to ensure that we move this process along in an expeditious manner.

**Question re: *Foreign Workers' Guide to Employment in Yukon***

**Ms. Stick:** Foreign workers play an important part in our economy. It is imperative that foreign workers know their rights, know their responsibilities and know about workplace safety. It's common sense that such information needs to be accessible to a wide range of individuals who work in the Yukon. The government has published the *Foreign Workers' Guide to Employment in Yukon: Rights and Responsibilities*. We asked an "English as a learned language" educator to review this document. While well-intentioned, this document is not accessible to workers whose first language is not English.

Will the minister ensure that this document is reissued in plain language for foreign workers whose first language may not be English?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** The guide referenced by the member opposite is of course the *Foreign Workers' Guide to Employment in Yukon: Rights and Responsibilities*. It is a booklet that is made available to foreign workers entering the Yukon workforce through the Yukon nominee program. In order to participate in the Yukon nominee program, Citizenship and Immigration Canada requires nominees to demonstrate proficiency in English or French. The guide is available on our website in both of these languages and the English guide was recently updated with a revised section that explains minimum wage; there are also changes to the French guide that are in progress. So we are making progress in updating them and bringing them into that plain language aspect that the member opposite is asking for.

**Ms. Stick:** I believe the whole document needs to be reviewed in terms of plain language. I thank the minister for indicating that will happen. As well-intentioned as the information guide might be, if foreign workers can't understand the legal content, then it's not helpful.

This document is meant to inform and educate workers about rights and responsibilities but is only available in French and English. Foreign workers would include, I am assuming, more than just workers from English- and French-speaking countries. In the Yukon, foreign workers speak Tagalog, Mandarin, Thai, Hungarian and Spanish, to name the most common.

This is, after all, about the rights and workplace safety of foreign workers. So will the minister ensure that this document, rewritten in plain language, is translated into languages other than French and English?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** As I indicated in my first response, this guide is available to those individuals who are admitted to the Yukon through the Yukon nominee program. In order to participate in that nominee program, nominees are required to demonstrate proficiency in English or French. Those are Canada's two official languages, and we have provided those guides in both languages. We'll be working with our partners to make the guide more accessible by simplifying the language and the presentation, and I can also mention to members of the House that when the Yukon implements the temporary foreign worker annex, or our own program after review, we'll examine any translation needs not already being met by the Government of Canada at that time.

**Question re: *Foreign worker program***

**Ms. Moorcroft:** The use of temporary foreign workers in Canada has come under fire for lowering wages and for creating an exploitable, lower wage tier of labour without rights. Even as the federal government attacks working people's pensions and access to employment insurance, it has been forced to admit it has a problem with the system and it is bringing in changes, eliminating the 15-percent wage cut incentive to employers who bring in temporary foreign workers. We know that over 1,370 temporary foreign workers have come to the Yukon. The minister has asserted that these workers are not

under his jurisdiction, and he has limited information about how the program was administered.

Is the minister aware and can he share any new information about temporary foreign worker treatment and use in the Yukon that was uncovered by the federal review?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** The member opposite is quite right — changes to the temporary foreign worker program were recently announced by the Government of Canada. There are discussions at the officials level that will be taking place, I believe, as early as next week, after which we will tailor the Yukon temporary foreign worker program to meet those changes that have been implemented at the federal level.

One of the aspects that is important here in the territory with our program is the partnership with the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, which helps ensure that temporary foreign workers work in a fair and safe environment. We're looking at targeting the two main industries — the tourism and hospitality sectors — with our program, as well as oil and gas, mineral exploration and mining. Those are the two industries that were identified by industry and immigration stakeholders that would see the most benefit from a temporary foreign worker program here in the territory.

With respect to the federal temporary foreign worker program, as mentioned, that's not my responsibility as Education minister or minister responsible for immigration. I just want to make sure that the Yukon's program is progressive and robust and meets what the federal changes are anticipated to be.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** The Yukon is awaiting the sign-off from the federal minister on the annex that will give Yukon jurisdiction over a made-in-Yukon temporary foreign worker program, and I am very pleased with the partnership between the Department of Education and the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. I know the minister was interested in rushing this for the mining exploration and tourism hospitality industries and that he had planned to cap the number of temporary foreign workers at 50 per employer. There are few private sector workplaces that employ 50 workers in the Yukon, and one would imagine most exploration camps and tourism and hospitality operators employ fewer than 50 workers. Has the minister made a final decision, or will he entertain the idea that the number of temporary foreign workers should be based on a percentage of the workforce?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** No final decisions have been made with respect to the Yukon annex or the Yukon temporary foreign worker program. As I mentioned in my previous response, there were some changes announced this week by the federal government where the officials are meeting and will make determinations on how those changes can be implemented into our programs so that we can have as seamless a program as possible. The Yukon temporary foreign worker program has not been finalized; it has not gone through all the processes that it needs to go through, including Yukon Cabinet approval.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Federal mismanagement of the temporary foreign worker program revealed it stopped well beyond filling short-term labour market gaps, which was the official mandate of the program, to the point of depressing Canadian

wages and replacing good paying jobs with lower wage equivalents.

The Canadian Filipino Association of the Yukon has recently spoken in favour of the Yukon nominee program because it is specifically designed to encourage qualified foreign nationals to come to the Yukon and make it their home. The Official Opposition agrees. We would add that unemployment in the Yukon is high among youth, aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and other equity-seeking groups. We want to see local people trained to fill labour market gaps and when we look beyond our borders we want people to come to the Yukon not just to work, but to make it a home and be part of life.

We're looking for a commitment from the minister to train local people and that the nominee program comes first before temporary measures. Will he make that commitment?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** It was appropriate that the member opposite did mention the nominee program because it was my intent to stand up and actually acknowledge the great work that has been done with the nominee program to date. It certainly fills an identified need that exists within this community, both from an employment perspective and with a cultural diversity and richness that people who come from other parts of the world in fact bring to this great Yukon culture that exists today, only making it richer and broader. For that, I think we are all very grateful.

In fact, I think I mentioned not long ago the documentary called *Cold Paradise*. It was describing the life of some of the Filipino community, moving here and the hardships that they had in bringing their families here. I think a lot of great richness has resulted from that program. But certainly training is a priority and has been well articulated by the minister responsible for Education regarding all the work that has been done.

We mentioned the mining — we're looking at a program right now for a Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, which will not only provide training through centralized Yukon College, but with the purchase of mobile units that can go to the communities and provide training in each community to ensure that we are providing the training opportunities for Yukoners for Yukon jobs.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has elapsed. We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

#### MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

##### Motion No. 430

**Clerk:** Motion No. 430, standing in the name of Mr. Hassard.

**Speaker:** It is moved by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to work collaboratively with the Government of Canada for funding to improve our highways, construct new schools, expand the current hospital and to enable investment in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure.

**Mr. Hassard:** It's a pleasure to rise today to present Motion No. 430 to the House. I'm very proud of the many important infrastructure improvements the Yukon Party government has made across the territory, that they have enhanced the lives of Yukoners in so many ways.

Since 2005 numerous infrastructure projects have been funded through partnerships with the Yukon government, the federal government, First Nations and municipalities that have accessed a variety of infrastructure programs, including the Building Canada fund, the gas tax fund, the Canada strategic infrastructure fund and the municipal rural infrastructure fund.

I'd like to take a few moments to talk about some of these projects, because I know they are very important to our government, First Nation governments, municipal governments, our local business community and all other Yukoners.

In Beaver Creek we invested just over \$1 million in road upgrades and to support the White River First Nation to complete its integrated community sustainability plan so that it can now access gas tax funding. Burwash Landing — wellhead protection and upgrades to the Grave and Sedata roads are underway, for a total of \$3.6 million.

The municipality of Carmacks has seen numerous projects, such as sewer line replacement, monitoring wells at the solid-waste facility, building improvements — this is all from the gas tax fund. Other projects under the Building Canada fund include sewage treatment and collection. We've seen total investments in Carmacks of approximately \$11 million.

In Dawson — \$46 million: that's just for infrastructure projects in the community alone. This does, of course, include the sewage treatment facility, as well as the sustainable district heating.

This government has spent almost \$10 million on various energy efficiency improvements and the water treatment facility in Haines Junction; \$12 million in Mayo in recreation centre upgrades, community well and sewer upgrades.

We could go on at great length, but I'm not big on speaking, so we'll just keep it short — \$4.3 million in Pelly Crossing; almost \$2 million in Tagish; \$9.4 million in Watson Lake, including the new well, which will help address the water quality problems in that community; the City of Whitehorse, which is the largest community in the Yukon — we've seen almost \$110 million.

The current Building Canada fund ends in 2014, and this government is working very diligently to ensure that this critical federal funding continues. In fact, the Minister of Community Services met with the federal Minister of Infrastructure, Minister Lebel, just recently, and I believe she will be speaking with him again tomorrow to make sure that he remains fully aware of the Yukon's interest in continued funding for infrastructure needs.

I am very pleased that the Government of Canada has, in its recent budget, announced a successor program to the Building Canada fund.

Together with our provincial and territorial counterparts, we will continue to work closely with the federal government

to determine the final details of just how this new program will roll out.

Municipal governments in the Yukon and across Canada have seen the benefits of both Building Canada and gas tax funds. This includes projects to address safe drinking water, sewage treatment and solid-waste management. In July, ministers of local government will be meeting here in Whitehorse and Yukon will be hosting this event. They will be discussing how the new Building Canada and gas tax funds will be implemented over the next year. We look forward to these discussions as we continue to address Yukon's infrastructure needs.

Since 2008, some of the projects in my hometown of Teslin include sewage lagoon fencing, lagoon hydrological assessment and water closet replacements in the rec centre.

Approximately \$75,000 has been spent on the following: the transfer station and recycling/composting program; arena improvements; recreation complex water supply; recreation complex roof repairs; a new garbage truck with a compactor on it; tangible capital asset reporting; roof repairs on the Teslin recreational complex; renovations to include heat recovery system; over \$3 million in arsenic treatment, waste water system, road upgrades, smart-fill sewer line replacements — some of these are under gas tax, Building Canada fund and MRIF. Teslin Tlingit Council has received money through these funds as well — monitoring residential fuel spills. The Teslin Tlingit Council purchased a passenger bus to transport students and elders from the community into Whitehorse; sewer development; road upgrades.

Ross River has seen approximately \$11 million in funding since 2009. Some of those items include an addition on the capital works building for the sewer truck, subdivision environmental assessment, renovations to the laundromat, community infrastructure plan. Ross River received money for arsenic treatment, approximately \$3 million in road upgrades, and they have a new public works building that will be opening very soon for approximately \$5.5 million.

The community of Faro has received approximately \$7.5 million since 2009 for construction of a third lagoon, sewer line replacement, a new boiler in the recreation centre, removal of some asbestos in the recreation centre, well house upgrades, tangible capital assets, furnace replacement in several buildings, sewer line by Van Gorder Creek, water and sewer pipe replacements, and approximately \$3.5 million for their pump-house.

Some of the projects currently under the watchful eye of Highways and Public Works include Betty's Haven, the F.H. Collins Secondary School, the EMS ambulance station — which is a new four-bay ambulance station and emergency response facility located on Two Mile Hill near the Canada Games Centre — and, of course, \$7 million for the Ross River community arena, which was a design/build contract. A contract was signed with Ketz Pacific Construction in November. They have proceeded with that work and the project will hopefully be completed in time for skating season this year.

I'm very happy to see this long list of projects, many of which I have just mentioned here. These projects are either recently completed or are in the process. This Yukon Party

government understands the importance of a good economy, and it's important that we work closely with our counterparts in the Government of Canada to secure funding for projects such as these I've just mentioned.

I look forward to hearing from others here in the Assembly today and listening to their ideas in regard to Motion No. 430.

**Ms. Hanson:** I rise to speak to the motion set forward today urging that the Government of Yukon continue to work collaboratively with the Government of Canada for funding to improve our highways, construct new schools and enable investment in energy, transportation and communications infrastructure.

The notion that the Yukon government should work collaboratively with the Government of Canada with respect to any transfer of federal funding to Yukon is pretty much a given. The reference in this motion is really to federal transfers for expenditures that by their nature will be significant. The Yukon government has benefited significantly from federal transfers: some have been time-limited, such as the stimulus funding; others are targeted funding for special purposes, such as social housing. I don't need to remind the House that the current year's capital estimate in the budget for 2013-14 is a significant \$252 million — almost \$253 million.

So today's debate is really about how we work to increase our share of federal transfers for new and expanded capital expenditures.

When we talk about spending a new or expanded source of taxpayer money, we must never forget it is all taxpayer money, whether it's raised in whole or in part from Yukon citizens or is part of a federal transfer far exceeding what Yukon taxpayers could on our own entrust to this Assembly.

As elected representatives of the people, we are accountable for the decisions made by this Legislature with respect to what money is spent on, why and what the expenditure achieves against what it was voted for. It is through capital spending that we build the major projects we need so our society can function, transport our goods, extend the reach of our communications and knowledge networks, and adapt to changing environmental circumstances, deal with emergencies, et cetera.

Capital spending builds the infrastructure that powers our economy and this in turn affects our work, our communications, as well as our recreation. So whether it is for energy, schools, health care, highways, telecommunications or community infrastructure like new subdivisions or rec centres, as I've said in previous discussions related to the issue of capital projects, the Yukon Official Opposition does believe that major capital projects should reflect public needs and wishes.

They should be based on evidence of appropriate and effective ways to meet Yukoners' needs. They need to be properly built with sound planning principles that identify and manage risks. We must make sure that any major capital projects include fair rules for contractors, with a focus on utilizing local labour and expertise to maximize economic benefits. This is an important aspect because as we look to increase federal transfers, there will be increasing pressures on us to not maximize

the local benefits, and we will need to be diligent as legislators to ensure that local benefits are indeed maximized. We need to ensure that as we think about expanding access to increased federal dollars for capital projects that those that we do plan adhere to clear timelines and budgets, and our job as legislators is to ensure that we include regular reporting to all Yukoners about what's going on and what we're spending their money on, so that we avoid inefficient outcomes and the worst case scenario — negative surprises. So, as we discuss the importance of ongoing federal support for any and all initiatives in this territory, we need to be mindful of the increased scrutiny and — I think it's fair to say — “scepticism” that exists across this land with respect to how tax dollars are perceived to be used by government — big “G” government, Mr. Speaker.

Governance is more than how much we spend, and it is measured by what we spend our taxpayers' money on, as well as how efficiently and effectively we spend it. We know what the public does not want to see — they do not want to see major capital projects seemingly decided for short-term political gain. The public also does not want to see questionable decisions on how these contracts are awarded.

In short, we do know that the public does not want to see boondoggles, and they don't want to see overbudget projects, delays, confusion. We have heard loud and clear from citizens and from the Auditor General that we must raise our game — that there can be no more wasted money with little to show for it, or worse, growing public debt due to poorly planned or executed projects.

Mr. Speaker, as both a strong federalist and a fervent Yukoner, I believe there is a powerful and compelling rationale for the federal government to not only continue, but in certain strategic areas, significantly increase investment in the north and in Yukon, in particular.

I believe that as we as Yukoners can demonstrate the pivotal role we now play and will play in the future of the northern 40 percent of this great country, we need to show that federal investments in Yukon are about more than just good politics. We need to demonstrate that federal monies we spend are good for Yukon and good for Canada.

There are challenges, of course. We have to do more than simply convince federal politicians and senior officials that funding to improve our infrastructure or to construct new schools or rec centres or any other great idea that may appear on the horizon is a good idea.

As Yukon legislators, at the same time we must make sure that citizens we represent are part of the process — that they not only understand, but they also support the initiatives that we seek the federal government to support by increasing federal transfers to the Yukon government.

As most jurisdictions, over the years we have had a number of examples that demonstrate that elected officials need to do a better job of managing expenditures of large amounts of taxpayer money, including that for capital projects. We saw that with the decision recently of the do-over of the F.H. Collins Secondary School replacement after lots of money was spent, announcements were made and work ceased.

Those kinds of decisions, or lack of decisions or lack of planning, lead not only to the dismay of families and students, but they increase the scepticism that we need to overcome as we plan and work with the federal government to see additional funds coming into this territory. We saw it again in this year's Auditor General's report on major health projects, which looked at the decisions made by the Department of Health and Social Services and the Hospital Corporation board with respect to building expensive hospitals to deliver short-term care without a proper needs assessment or rigorous planning. What we as elected representatives want to be able to demonstrate to the electorate, and quite likely to the Auditor General at some time, is that Yukon has learned from the experiences where this government has been roundly criticized for the way this process was managed and that we can demonstrate that the Yukon government knows that any expenditure must be able to demonstrate value for money.

As we discuss the idea of grabbing the federal government's imagination and helping them to understand that the federal national imperatives around Arctic sovereignty, national security, responsible and sustainable resource extractions and a diversified national economy really do rely upon recognition of the north, of Yukon, as more than simply some vague sense of somewhere up there on the left-hand side of the map, in an era of ever-increasing scrutiny and worldwide economic uncertainty, we as Yukon legislators can no longer assume that just because the federal government has always been there when we needed or just wanted a little, or perhaps a lot more, money that they can or will respond or that there will not be strings attached.

These are matters that we need to be prepared to discuss as legislators with each other and with our constituents. Now more than ever, we need to be able to demonstrate the essential tenets of good government: that the public is getting value for money; that government is accountable for spending; and that capital projects reflect public priorities.

I previously talked about the importance of oversight of capital projects. When we talk about creating opportunities for additional money that is set out in this motion from the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, when we are seeking to have the federal government invest more money — which I have already demonstrated that I believe fervently needs to be and should be made available to the Yukon Territory — it requires us to demonstrate that when we make decisions about capital expenditures that we do so based on evidence, that we have listened to and sought expert advice in some areas, and that we can demonstrate that any capital projects will serve demonstrated needs in the more appropriate and cost-effective manner.

This is more than simply a public buy-in. Financial resources are finite. This requires government and members of this Legislative Assembly to engage in a process of consultation and prioritization of the needs of the public. Despite the wish lists that we can all dream of — woulda, shoulda, coulda — for spending money, sometimes we may need to say no, that the solution to an identified need or problem is not a shiny new building, but in a new way of working and here, for example, you can think of the notion of building shiny new hospitals

providing short-term care, possibly at the expense of community-based collaborative care.

So, as we seek to gain increased federal funding, let's be mindful of the words of the Auditor General, who said — and this is speaking with respect to the Yukon Hospital Corporation, but you could paraphrase it in terms of any government expenditures: "Before beginning future capital projects, the Corporation should carry out a needs assessment, a risk assessment, and an options analysis (including how the projects will be funded)."

This government does have a public credibility gap when it comes to the way it has managed and planned capital projects. I suggest we need to work together to overcome that if we are to successfully engage the federal government in transferring new, significantly larger sums of money, because we know Yukoners care about this. As elected officials, we need to learn from our experiences of how projects have been managed because we have finite resources and when we waste taxpayers' money, we are robbing from other important projects or services.

We need to make sure that when we make statements like the following, and I quote: "Like all projects now, we want to ensure that the diligence is done. We make sure that when we make an investment, when we are using taxpayers' dollars, we ensure that this is done wisely and that our diligence is done to ensure the investments meet scrutiny and we meet expectations of taxpayers and that we're spending their money wisely."

We need to make sure that when we make statements like that, we mean it and we deliver. By the way, those were the Premier's words about F.H. Collins.

Actions must follow the words we use. We must, as elected representatives, demonstrate that we act with due diligence. Unilateral actions are no longer acceptable to the public, and they don't buy claims to being fiscally responsible if the evidence is to the contrary.

As we debate this motion to work with the Government of Canada to increase our share of available funding, this is really a chance for legislators to demonstrate the importance we all place on avoiding getting caught in the traps of crisis management to suit short-term political objectives — that we understand the need for sound project management, and that we are committed to delivering the vital infrastructure that Yukoners want, that meets their needs and, as a result, can and will leverage millions of capital dollars for maximum effects for our economy — for the local economy.

So, as we look forward to increased federal investment in Yukon, we need to look at the implications for the local economy of major projects: How many Yukoners will be employed? How do we ensure that those Yukoners who expect to be employed on major projects in the Yukon have those skilled trades necessary and will be hired, so they're not left looking for work elsewhere because we're not able to or are unwilling to enforce provisions that ensure that skilled Yukoners go to the front of the line, not the back?

The Auditor General is a constant observer — he or she and currently a "he" — of our operations because he is our auditor. He does that oversight, in terms of ensuring that we,

the Legislative Assembly, vote funds to be expended by government, that that's done in compliance with what the vote said.

In addition to the health area, it's interesting to reflect on other areas where the Auditor General has made comments.

We want to avoid having future requirements for the Auditor General to say, as he did in 2009 when he was commenting on the Department of Education, that the department has no long-term master plan to ensure that it is managing school facilities effectively and preparing for significant challenges, such as the number of schools that are aging and in need of repair. At the same time, we've got vacancy rates that are high in Whitehorse schools alone. Student enrolment at that time was 3,879, with many vacant seats. He said that without a facilities management plan that considers the condition and capacity of each school, it is difficult for the department to plan for maintenance, repairs and improvements where they are most needed. The Auditor General went on to say that the lack of such a long-term plan with specific, measurable goals makes it difficult for the department to track whether it's making optimal use of its resources and progressing toward its objective, nor does it have a risk management plan to formally identify each risk.

Let's make sure, as we go forward seeking new monies for schools, we can demonstrate the lessons learned. Our success in accessing federal resources will require us to do so. Simply saying that we need money for new schools will not be adequate.

We need, and we can, because we know that we have the skilled human resources — we have the professionals throughout this public service who can, if directed by government, provide the necessary compelling story to ensure that we have access to these federal resources.

Again, as we look to improving our major infrastructure, such as highways, let's not put Yukon in the same position it was in, in 2008, when the Auditor General said, and I quote: "Many of the transportation infrastructure and building projects we looked at, such as bridge rehabilitation, highway reconstruction, airport runway resurfacing, construction of airport terminal buildings and community centres and school replacement expansion, went over their original targets for total spending. Most of the projects were not completed on schedule. The department did not adequately manage the risk of such occurrences, nor did it conduct the required review of completed projects to evaluate whether it had followed appropriate procedures, observed economy and efficiency and met the objectives for the project."

It is imperative when we look to the objectives of this motion that, if we are seeking to expand our access to enable investment in transportation in particular and communications infrastructure — any form of major capital expenditures for infrastructure — we need to demonstrate that, over the last number of years, we have lifted our game and improved our ability and capacity to deliver, because it is ultimately all taxpayers' dollars, whether it's coming from the federal source or directly from your pocket or mine. We can and we must do better.

Finally, when you consider seeking additional federal funding to expand the Whitehorse General Hospital, as mentioned in this motion here, let us be reminded again of the Auditor General's recent report in which he said that the corporation did not conduct a full assessment of the communities' health care needs in planning and designing the Dawson and Watson Lake hospitals. It also did not determine the incremental costs for operating those hospitals until construction was well underway. The corporation cannot demonstrate that the hospitals, as designed, are the most cost-effective option for meeting the communities' health care needs.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of health care dollars have already been sunk into major infrastructure — hospital infrastructure — with improper planning. Money has been wasted, residents have been ignored, operating costs will triple, we know, and we still have risks like staffing and housing that remains unsolved.

We have consistently opposed because we believe that the role of the Official Opposition is to be constructive. I don't know how many times I have to say that and try to demonstrate that by putting forward ideas. We know that good money thrown after bad cannot be spun as fiscal prudence.

Hospitals belong to the public. They are not supposed to be anyone's home and, generally, a health care system should aim to keep people out of the emergency ward — out of the hospitals. As legislators, we know that taxpayers shouldn't be saddled with more projects where decisions are made behind closed doors to bypass the established competitive bidding system that often has in this territory resulted in lengthy delays and skyrocketing costs.

Health care, schools, highways, communications infrastructure, waste management — these are not things with which to either be seen to, or actually play political games.

They are vitally, vitally important to Yukoners, all Yukoners we are elected to serve in this Legislature.

In light of the serious rebukes of the Auditor General and the confusion surrounding, for example, F.H. Collins Secondary School, the public has very little confidence in this government's ability to manage large, complex infrastructure projects. The long-term impacts of recent capital projects, such as cost overruns, unnecessary design features and ballooning operating costs, will affect the Yukon government's future budgets, future hiring needs and future generations.

In the Yukon, as I said at the outset, expenditures on government capital projects already constitute a significant share of the territorial economy. It is important that we get them right. The money wasted on fiscal mismanagement is money taken from other important programs and services that can and could meet the needs of Yukon people.

We can do better, and I believe we must do better. Wouldn't it be a welcome relief to all if we did it together? We believe that more oversight by Members of the Legislative Assembly and others, and more participation by the public in the discussion of capital spending and assessment of needs, must come first.

We believe that through more oversight we can make sound choices, because we know the current practice is not working. We are proposing a better way, a more transparent

and accountable way to manage the public purse for the territory and its people. We believe that this motion is a good motion, but we also believe that it can be strengthened.

*Amendment proposed*

**Ms. Hanson:** I propose the following amendment to strengthen Motion No. 430:

THAT Motion No. 430 be amended by adding after the word “infrastructure”:

“while ensuring the fiscally-responsible use of all government funding through:

(1) consulting with municipalities, First Nation governments and development corporations and citizens in the identification and prioritization of infrastructure projects;

(2) using best practices in the designing, planning and implementing of projects based on comprehensive needs assessments; and

(3) increasing legislative oversight of all major capital projects.”

**Speaker:** The amendment is in order.

It is moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition

THAT Motion No. 430 be amended by adding after the word “infrastructure”:

“while ensuring the fiscally responsible use of all government funding through:

(1) consulting with municipalities, First Nation governments and development corporations, and citizens in the identification and prioritization of infrastructure projects;

(2) using best practices in the designing, planning and implementing of projects based on comprehensive needs assessments; and

(3) increasing legislative oversight of all major capital projects.”

**Ms. Hanson:** Speaking to this amendment, I would like to say that I brought forward this amendment to really build on the idea that was in the original motion with respect to working collaboratively with the Government of Canada for funding to improve our highways, talk about building new schools and expand health care and to enable investment in energy, transportation and communications infrastructure.

As I said in my comments, it’s important to have the ability as legislators to say and work with what we have. What we have is an ingrained scepticism across this country about how effectively government is seen to spend its money. We’ve repeatedly had the experience in this territory. I’m not going to recite the examples, but what I did say in my comments was that I do believe that we can, if we work together, if we actually use the words and take that notion of collaboration — and not just with the territorial government and the federal government, but incorporate that in terms of how we work through consultation with municipalities, First Nation governments and development corporations — I’ll come back to that one in a moment — and citizens in general in terms of the identification and prioritization of infrastructure projects.

If we give real meaning to the notion of collaboration — if we stop using words, then we will be part of the process of

allowing citizens to have faith in government, where they don’t question when we use words like “fiscal responsibility” or “collaboration”, but they’ll know that we actually are prepared to work with them, engage with them. That’s of paramount importance, as we’re looking in an era — we’re looking to increase federal transfers to this territory. When we’re looking at the challenges and the opportunities that we face in this territory around the necessary investments that we have to make in this territory to continue to grow our economy in a sustainable and responsible way, we will need partners.

One of the key partners that we have and that we should be working with in true collaboration as we go forward is First Nation governments and their development corporations because it’s no secret — First Nation development corporations hold a significant potential role as being economic drivers in this territory. They have demonstrated that they are poised to do more. We need to find ways to collaborate with them and engage with them, so that it’s not perceived that this is somehow a one-way channel, only between the federal and territorial governments. We are in a new era. So if we’re talking about these transfers and transforming this territory, we need to know how to collaborate. Simply stating that we are going to continue to work collaboratively doesn’t identify the actual behaviours or aspects of collaboration. I believe that collaboration means a two-way flow of information. More than providing opportunities for participation in decision-making, collaboration means actually listening and including that input — meaningful participation and meaningful consultation. Governments go to court to argue it; we are proposing practising it.

The federal government does transfer money right now to different levels of government in the Yukon. It only makes sense that those levels of government — all those levels of government in Yukon — should also collaborate in order that those federal funds are used most effectively.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, how transformative it would be if we actually worked with First Nation governments and the Yukon government in developing those priorities in a real way.

We have to ask ourselves: Do the various levels of government in Yukon always work well together for the benefit of all? It is clear that there is great room for improvement in that area. So we do believe, as the Official Opposition, that it’s critically important to be as inclusive as reasonably practicable — and I’m not saying everybody everywhere has a say in everything. I know it isn’t reasonable. Believe me, I’ve worked in and run hundred-million-dollar organizations. I know you can’t get everybody onside with everything. But Mr. Speaker, there has to be a meaningful opportunity for people to have meaningful input, and ultimately you have to make a decision.

What we do in the Yukon with federal monies should reflect priorities of all our citizens and should, if we have done it right, dovetail well with initiatives of other levels of government like the municipalities, like First Nation governments.

We know that municipalities are facing huge infrastructure challenges. The opportunity to work in collaboration with municipalities and have that message that this government takes to Ottawa with respect to the needs in the territory is only en-

hanced by the deep collaboration with the municipal governments.

NGOs, various agencies and citizens all have valuable insight and experience to offer as well. We have an opportunity to make our federal transfer dollars deliver as much benefit as possible, to expand the benefits. We believe that the fiscally responsible approach would be for all levels of government to actually be seen to — not just be seen to but actually cooperate and collaborate here in Yukon, to exchange information about our priorities, to agree to disagree, and then to identify opportunities for cooperation.

The amendment being proposed recommends the use of best practices in designing, planning and implementing projects based on comprehensive needs assessments. I've said already that we've had too many and too regular reminders by the Auditor General over the years.

It's time that we demonstrated that we have learned, that lessons have been learned, and we have the ability and the capacity and the desire, because that's the key thing here — the desire to do it better. We don't want to see — nor do Yukoners want to see — any more project dollars being spent on projects that don't have proper design and planning. What we're suggesting is that we can do that. As I said in my comments earlier, I believe we can. We just have to suspend our disbelief we could actually work together.

We've had, from Auditor General's internal auditors, recommendations that government base their designs on comprehensive needs analysis. We would save a lot of money not having to redo things, not having to cancel things. It's only by identifying the real needs that we can plan to design to meet those needs. You have to know what your needs are before you start spending money. It sounds straightforward, but somehow it is missed.

I was trying to think of an example and one would be: Is it an automatic given that we should expand the emergency department at the hospital because of a chronic doctor shortage? It may not be the best way to treat Yukoners who need the services of a family doctor. I personally don't like the idea, but that's something that needs to be talked about in terms of the needs assessment — what's driving that.

Lastly, this proposed amendment recommends increased legislative oversight. We cannot always count on ever-increasing federal transfer monies. I have said this before in this Legislative Assembly. In the mid-1990s, the federal government of the day was facing serious financial challenges. I would suggest they were no more serious than what this current government is facing, and the federal government of that day made a singular and arbitrary cut to the territorial funding formula financing arrangements that had a compounding effect going forward. We cannot and should not count on ever-increasing federal transfer monies. We simply need — and it's not simple: simply said, the reality is we need to learn, as legislators, to ensure that when we spend, we spend wisely and that when we spend, we do so with a view to the most effective use of the money that has been entrusted to us as the elected representatives of Yukoners. This House is the appropriate place for oversight.

This proposed amendment only strengthens the government's motion. The Official Opposition is committed to collaboration, to best practice including comprehensive needs analyses and to legislative oversight to evaluate and correct, when necessary, the way we spend the public's funds.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this amendment to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** There are a few areas in the amendment brought forward by the Leader of the NDP that are somewhat redundant, considering what government already does. There are a few other matters in it that are somewhat problematic, which I will refer to.

Frankly, we considered whether we could propose a subamendment to it and restructure it, but we would be here all afternoon on one motion. The government will not be supporting the amendment proposed by the Leader of the NDP, and I now want to explain why.

There are a few areas that — to begin with, it seems that the NDP — as is often the case, in my opinion — is very process-oriented, rather than outcome-oriented. One thing that should be noted is, in fact, government does and continues on an ongoing basis to hear from Yukoners, including municipalities, and First Nation governments and citizens about what is important to them. There is work that is going on within each and every department to assess the needs of that department and the citizens with whom they connect.

For example, in the case of the Department of Highways and Public Works — I'll give an example of why prioritizing infrastructure projects is not necessarily best done through the type of process the NDP appear to envision. In the case of bridges being prioritized for replacement or work on them, it's really the technical staff of Highways and Public Works who have the best understanding if there are structural issues with a bridge that require investment in it. If there are permafrost issues in a specific section of highway, that would be a bit of a different situation where — chances are — if there were potholes, we would have heard from citizens, potentially from First Nations, municipalities, local advisory councils, et cetera, about those issues. But the technical solution and analyzing the cost compared to other priorities on the books, and which are deemed to be more urgent, are matters that are often best done by officials.

Another point with regard to the prioritization of infrastructure projects is when we, as a government, have specific platform commitments we've made to Yukoners about certain projects that we would do, it is not something that then we're going to engage in the process and decide whether certain other infrastructure projects that may be higher on someone else's priority list would be done instead of the projects we told Yukoners we would invest in if we were elected and that upon that basis, in part, they subsequently voted us into office as a majority government.

Another thing I'd like to point out, in terms of areas where in fact the NDP have missed in their proposed amendment, is their first proposed clause regarding with whom government should consult on all infrastructure projects — completely ig-



nored local advisory councils, non-governmental organizations, stakeholder groups, et cetera, all of whom have a stake in what the Yukon government does and what we invest in.

Government does consult to help develop our spending priorities and our plans. This includes all of the groups identified by the NDP in the proposed amendment, but it also includes more groups and citizens as well. A very important part of the process is MLAs hearing from constituents. MLAs are not mentioned in the proposed amendment.

I will give a few examples. As minister at various times during my time in different portfolios, I have personally responded to what I have heard from MLAs, both on this side of the House and opposite. For example, when the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, during my time as Minister of Health and Social Services, approached me with regard to extending the pilot project for — I forget the proper name, but the youth active living program that Health and Social Services had funded in Old Crow, he spoke to me and explained his rationale. I appreciated his perspective on that and didn't need to go through a formal process to hear from others. I assumed that the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin had heard from his constituents and was reflecting to me those priorities. It seemed a reasonable point and a well-reasoned suggestion. So, in part because of the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin's input as an MLA representing his constituents, I extended that program that had been a pilot project in addressing what I had heard from him.

Here's another example of changes that have been made based on input from people: In my riding at the research forest that's at the corner of the Hot Springs Road and the north Klondike Highway, I heard from a constituent who had formed an association largely based of parents who were wanting to see a playground put somewhere in the area. Rather than requiring a process that consulted with municipalities, First Nation governments, development corporations, et cetera, et cetera, a mother who had formed this group and other parents on the group had identified this as a priority. It seemed a reasonable proposal.

We looked to find a location to establish a playground and determined that we could do so at the research forest right near the entrance, and it would in fact be on that enhancement to that research forest's attempt to become more family and community friendly.

Quite simply, I think that the basic process that has been mapped out by the Leader of the NDP in the proposed amendment is just mistaken in a number of areas. Rather than us spending all afternoon on amending and sub-amending, et cetera, we simply think that the original motion as constructed is the better approach.

That motion, in our view, was focused on the Yukon government working collaboratively with the Government of Canada regarding funding. It was not focused on the completely separate process of how we respond to the needs and the priorities that we hear from Yukon citizens, Yukon communities and other levels of government within the territory, which is an important part and will continue to be an important part of the process for determining where we should make investments under programs such as Building Canada.

The proposal of the NDP to have comprehensive needs assessments of projects is something that is appropriate in some cases, but in the case of using the playground that I referred to as an example, or the youth program in Old Crow — or another example I would give is when, during my time as Minister of Health and Social Services, the Chief of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations came to me regarding a priority that that First Nation was looking at supporting, that being a community greenhouse project. He proposed that they allocate a little over half of the resources necessary to run the program and asked for a contribution from Health and Social Services. Rather than doing a comprehensive needs assessment, as the Leader of the NDP apparently would, it seemed to be a project where, for the dollar amounts involved and for the work that had been done to date, we had enough evidence that would suggest that the request from the then chief and now current chief, Chief Allen, was a good suggestion and so we did provide that support in partnership with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

Legislative oversight of all major capital projects is something that — I know the Leader of the NDP has attempted to paint this image in the past, but I would refer in fact to some of the messages that the former Auditor General, Ms. Sheila Fraser herself, gave in talking about fiscal prudence in saying that the — I'm quoting from memory and I forget her exact phrasing of it, but I do recall her pointing out that the solution is not necessarily more rules or more processes, but having simple, clear rules and following them. Adding a massive Legislative Assembly committee process would not be in the best interests of dealing with project planning. There is the opportunity for oversight both in the Legislative Assembly and through the Public Accounts Committee. I have to remind the NDP that the Public Accounts Committee had been dormant under the NDP's time in government and it was the Yukon Party that reactivated this committee because we recognized its important role in scrutinizing public accounts and reviewing reports of the Auditor General.

Another thing I have to point out is that the Leader of the NDP was painting a vision of and trying to, it appeared to me, portray herself as an expert and champion of how governments really ought to engage with the public and with citizens, pointing to her time as regional director general for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

I would point out to the member, with all due respect, that Yukoners were not happy with how things were done under DIAND's watch when DIAND had control. That is not limited to the member's time as regional director general, but it does include it. I think it's fair to say that Yukoners are happier today with having more control here in the hands of Yukon citizens and their duly elected representatives.

I would remind the members — I know that they are not going to appreciate this reference again — about the report that was done last year that analyzed the happiness of Canadians and other citizens of the world showed Canada as the second happiest country in the world and Yukoners are the happiest in Canada. We think that it is a good sign that Yukoners, generally speaking, are fairly positive about life in the Yukon. While Yukoners recognize and do not minimize concerns that people

have with the Yukon government or municipalities, or the federal government or other levels of government, we believe that, generally speaking, most Yukon citizens think that the Yukon is a beautiful place to live.

There are great opportunities — an excellent health care system; good school system. In comparison to some other parts of the country, the quality of our road system is really very high and the staff of Highways and Public Works in the case of snowfalls, such as right now, amazingly, that we're having outside — the staff of Highways and Public Works, I think, and from what I've heard from constituents, it seems to me, is that most Yukoners agree that staff of Highways and Public Works do a really good job in responding to snowfalls when they occur, getting out there early, clearing off our roads and our streets, and making it safe for travel again.

Again, just to re-emphasize that in determining the prioritization of infrastructure projects, our first consideration, of course, is what we told Yukoners we'd do in our election platform — the commitments we made and where we've made specific commitments to infrastructure projects. We are committed to doing those projects and, in fact, the Premier in the mandate letters that he provided each minister with, as in the case of platform commitments, specifically tasked ministers and their departments with fulfilling our platform commitments in those areas, including around infrastructure projects. Those projects are not going to go to the back of the line, though the Leader of the NDP might wish to put them there.

Another point I'd make — in terms of the NDP's proposal to consult with development corporations, it really seems a bit of an odd inclusion in their motion, especially since they excluded local advisory councils and NGOs in there. We appreciate the role the First Nation development corporations have in advancing the business interests of those First Nations, and where their input is provided through their First Nation or others, they are a factor that is taken into consideration when government is making decisions. To have them in a consultative process, especially put in a consultative process when NGOs and local advisory councils are left out of it, is really quite odd.

Another example I would point to is, in fact, looking at other groups representing Yukoners that the NDP have failed to include in their proposed amendment — Association of Yukon Communities is an important organization whose advice and input is important to help the Yukon government determine the priorities of communities; each municipality and local advisory councils are important; a great many societies and non-governmental organizations also play an important role in representing the needs of their respective groups or stakeholders and associations representing segments of Yukon society, such as associations representing farmers, contractors, carpenters — just to name a very few off the top of my head as illustrative examples.

There is a wide range of groups that represent a wide range of Yukoners from all walks of life, whether they are in the examples I listed or in tourism, arts, culture or the knowledge-based economy, et cetera — all of which have been excluded in the NDP's proposed amendment. We think that all of them play a very important part in helping the government set the priori-

ties, in keeping with the platform commitments we made to Yukon citizens.

The urgency of need assessed by department staff in areas such as health care, highways, et cetera, where there in fact can be certain areas that may not be widely known to be something that does require a significant investment, but in fact the people who know that area best do understand and do know and are in the best position to provide the government the information that certain investments in a specific area in the Department of Health and Social Services may be an appropriate area that requires an investment, whether it be capital or operation and maintenance. That may not be well known by the groups that the Leader of the NDP identified in her proposed amendment.

One area where we do agree with the NDP is that the federal cuts, which were made by the former federal Liberal government — the cut to the territorial funding formula — had a significant negative impact on the Yukon. One thing that we do appreciate with the current federal government is that they have made a commitment to not cut funding to the provinces and territories and to, indeed, maintain the territorial funding formula. That is a very important part of our ability to operate and respond to Yukon citizens. We appreciate very much the fact that the current federal government does understand that cutting equalization or cutting the territorial funding is not the appropriate path to take.

In my remaining time, Mr. Speaker, I will give a few examples of working, as well, with other levels of government.

There are a number of areas just within Energy, Mines and Resources — not to mention all the other areas of government — where we work with First Nation governments and will continue to do so. That includes working with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in on the agricultural development and potential of lands in Sunnysdale. That includes the Faro mine remediation project where, since 2004, over \$7 million has been provided to affected First Nations to support their participation in the Faro mine remediation. Affected Yukon First Nation businesses also received over \$2 million of sub-contracts, 571 person days of direct employment and \$250,000 of training opportunities in 2010 alone — for the training opportunities, that is.

Another example is Yukon government, Canada and Little Salmon-Carmacks have reached an agreement on the remediation of Mount Nansen. Energy, Mines and Resources has provided over \$962,000 to Little Salmon-Carmacks. Kluane First Nation solar net metering project is completed, involving the installation of a 4.7 kilowatt solar photovoltaic array on the roof of the First Nation's fleet vehicle building.

I know I'm running out of time, so I can't go through the long list of other examples I had. We don't believe that the proposal made by the NDP would be an enhancement to the motion, but we will continue to do some of the things that are outlined within it.

**Ms. Stick:** I support this amendment to Motion No. 430, and thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing the motion forward. It certainly recognizes that we are dependent on federal funding and he speaks in the motion to major capital projects. The member talks about playgrounds and consultation

and that type of thing, but this isn't what this was intended for. We understand that if a community association comes forward and says they've met and would like to have a playground, then that's a fairly simple consultation that has taken place and can occur. It's not what was addressed in this motion and certainly not what is addressed in the amendment that the Member for Whitehorse Centre has proposed.

I believe that in fact we've not removed anything from the first motion, but we've added to it and by adding to it I think we've strengthened it. We left off LACs and we left off AYC, and we left off NGOs and a long list of who should have been included. I don't think this was meant to cover every single organization in the Yukon and if we had tried to do that we would have been accused of putting too much in and it being too long a list.

When we talk about municipalities, we are encompassing LACs; we're talking about hamlets; we're talking about cities. I would include in that the Association of Yukon Communities when we talk about NGOs, or when the member mentioned that. When we talk about citizens, it's not just individuals, but it's those citizen groups that are so impacted that we would consider consulting also. Along with consultation — and I thought the Member for Whitehorse Centre also spoke to collaboration and working together — it is not just consultation, but a way to work together to make sure that needs are being met; that projects going forward are the ones that we want and that the communities want, especially the major capital projects that were outlined in the main motion.

Best practices, designing, planning and implementing of projects based on comprehensive needs assessments. To me this is critical.

We do need to know exactly what communities are asking for, what is important to them, and what is included in their plan. Best practices — in this day and age, with the technology and research available — there is so much out there that we don't need to reinvent.

I believe we can look to other territories, other provinces and the federal government and see what the best practices are, aim for those, and incorporate them when we are doing the planning and implementing of projects. Increasing legislative oversight I really believe is something we all need to do. It is part of our job, whether we are in government or in opposition. This is part of it.

I just want to go back to one example, though, that I think illustrates where this didn't happen — or, part of it happened and then we did a 180-degree turn — and I refer to F.H. Collins Secondary School in my riding. There was a consultation process with teachers, council, First Nations, the school community, students and members of Riverdale about what was wanted and what was needed. There was consultation with user groups. A lot of time and effort, on the part of many, many people, was put forward to come up with a school design and plan that met most people's needs. Not everyone got everything they wanted. There was cooperation, collaboration and, in the end, an agreement with what was happening.

I know because I go to the meetings at the school. There is a resignation that "We did this work. We've done it all, and

now they're asking again for us to tell them what we want" — and to be very clear about what you really need and what would be nice to have and in a short time frame. I just have to say that I've had teachers talk to me; I've had parents talk to me, and some are of the opinion right now, "Just build something — anything. Just get on with it," and others are just feeling, "Why are we being asked again? We've told them. We've done the work." There's a sense of resignation about the whole project. I think some of those things might have been avoided if there was a plan — there was a plan. It could have been implemented, but even that plan was not brought back — "Can we change this up? Can we remove something? Can we add something?"

It has been difficult for that population and for that school community and I hear it. People talk to me about best practices for designing, planning, and implementing projects. There might have been a way this could have been moved forward and that money that was overbudget removed from that project, and I've heard from lots of people about that.

I do support this amendment though. I believe that it strengthens the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin's motion. I don't have a problem with that motion; it's about capital projects. It's about working collaboratively. We've talked about that, and we must. The majority of our funding does come from the Government of Canada, but it's not the Government of Canada's money. It's our money. It's all our money. We all pay taxes and that's where it goes.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I'll be reasonably brief on the amendment. The amendment appears to me to completely change the motion as brought forward by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin in that it goes on to a completely different area than the original motion, which was to consult with the Government of Canada. For that reason alone I have some difficulty, but I think that I'd like to address one particular issue here and that's consulting with municipalities. I spent a little bit of time as a member of a municipal council and an even shorter time as the head of the Association of Yukon Communities. I found that during my time, especially with the City of Whitehorse council, that consulting was something that was done extremely well between the department and the City of Whitehorse. In fact, with the city we were able to manage to negotiate an agreement that turned over all planning for municipal lands within the city to city administration. So contrary to what was heard some time ago in the Legislature where one member opposite was criticizing the government for the mess that the Government of Yukon had made planning the Whistle Bend subdivision — that was completely wrong.

The responsibility for that had been turned over to the City of Whitehorse. The City of Whitehorse consulted with hundreds of people in the city. We did charettes; we did an extensive consultative process. In fact, it was termed as one of the most complete consultative and collaborative processes ever held in the City of Whitehorse and probably in the Yukon. Consequently, it was decided to go ahead with Whistle Bend, with the cooperation of YTG. YTG was simply working as the

contractor because YTG had the deep pockets that the City of Whitehorse simply didn't have.

I think that there is a lot of misunderstanding about what actually goes on between municipalities and the Government of Yukon. I know that on this side of the House, we believe that municipal government is probably the closest government to the people and that they should be making as many decisions that affect the people in those municipalities as they possibly can. I know that the member beside me is going to Watson Lake this weekend to participate in the Association of Yukon Communities AGM.

She is much appreciated within the community for her collaborative, consultative attitude. So the idea that municipalities aren't being consulted on an almost daily basis on many of the things that occur in the territory is an incorrect assumption. I'll go into that a little bit longer maybe when we get back to general debate.

I was happy with the consultation that occurred while I was president of AYC for about 3.5 or four years and during my 10, 11 or 12 years as a councillor for the City of Whitehorse.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I'm just going to speak briefly to the amendment as it pertains to some of the comments that I heard from the Member for Riverdale South with respect to the F.H. Collins school replacement. Certainly, that is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, construction project that is on the books for this government. One of the most important things that we're committed to is the principle of fiscal responsibility.

That's why we decided not to proceed with the tender design concept. We remain committed to replacing the aging school, and we're moving forward with a new core building design concept for the replacement of the school. It's a concept based on something that has been constructed successfully and economically in other jurisdictions, and we're going to work on this project. We want to ensure it proceeds in a timely manner that allows students to continue their studies in the current facility with as minimal amount of interruption as possible while the construction of the new building begins.

All of the bids received during that tender process for the construction of F.H. Collins Secondary School were rejected as the lowest bid came in at 21 percent above the pre-tender estimate. Two pre-tender estimates were received from independent sources at \$38.6 million with the lowest bid coming in at \$47.78 million. That's almost \$10 million before the first construction worker arrives on the site. Certainly, most Yukoners I have spoken with and many Yukoners my colleagues have spoken with recognize that that was not the fiscally responsible way to proceed with that school. When I hear the member opposite saying that the school community says, "Just build it. Just build anything," that's certainly not what I'm hearing. They want to make sure that we build a school that meets their programming requirements, but build it in a fiscally responsible way.

My colleagues and I have spoken to many Yukoners who consider this to be the right decision. They perhaps didn't think that we had the courage to proceed in this manner, but we did.

We have to be "fiscally responsible" with the projects that we do. I'm not sure what definition the Member for Riverdale South has for fiscal responsibility, but it certainly isn't the one that I have when it comes to starting a school that is \$10 million overbudget before the first tradesperson arrives on the site.

Mr. Speaker, we are very committed to that project. I've been engaged with the school council on a number of occasions. I have been back and forth with them. I know they're seeking options for the programming that is going to occur within the new school. One of the opportunities that has arisen and has been announced lately is the opportunity perhaps to include a French first language school. I attended a meeting at l'École Émilie Tremblay with the CSFY and heard from the community. They've decided to take the next step and explore that option further. It's an option that we'll leave open to them; we're not putting a timeline or a time frame around that with respect to coming up with a decision. We'll just choose a flexible design that will allow us to perhaps add French first language learning components to the F.H. Collins Secondary School if that community so desires.

Mr. Speaker, I do take issue with the Member for Riverdale South and her comments on the F.H. Collins school replacement. We are moving ahead with it; we're committed to it, but we want to ensure that it's done in a fiscally responsible manner. That's what our promise was to Yukoners and that's what we intend to delivering on.

Again, the programming will be very important. It's a school that's going to outlast us all — in this Legislature perhaps, but perhaps not some of the students who are going there right now. We want to make sure that we build that for the long term and that the space is adaptable to an evolving education system and evolving learning facilities and that type of thing as we move forward. I'm disappointed, I guess, with the Member for Riverdale South and her comments on "just build it".

With that, I won't be supporting this amendment proposed by the MLA for Whitehorse Centre.

**Mr. Silver:** On the amendment, after reading the first two items here, I was happy to see it, but it's unfortunate that the NDP included item number (3) in this amendment. It's my opinion that this would be an absolute logistical nightmare. Also, as I recall, the NDP spent a lot of time during private members' day discussing this concept, and it wasn't getting a lot of traction outside of the party at that time.

It was Motion No. 368. I believe it was amended by the Yukon Party at that time, but it was never voted on. That was standing in the name of — I don't have that information here — the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

In terms of this amendment, item (1), "consulting with municipalities, First Nation governments and development corporations, and citizens in the identification and prioritization of infrastructure projects" — absolutely. It's the opinion of the Liberal Party that this is fundamental in creating a sustainable Yukon. It would hopefully take a lot of the partisan politics out of the rationale for major builds.

Item (2), "using best practices in the designing, planning and implementing of projects based on comprehensive needs

assessments” — once again, absolutely. It’s actually a sad testament that this would even have to be mentioned.

Item (3), the increased legislative oversight is not something that I can support. Let the communities be heard and the process be respected and allow the government of the day to move forward and to show leadership and to make a plan. Then when the ribbons get cut and the budgets get scrutinized, let the voting public of the Yukon provide the oversight needed with their votes.

With that being said, I can’t support this amendment. I do appreciate the scope in which it was brought forward, but I wish it was just numbers (1) and (2). At this point, I won’t be supporting the amendment.

**Mr. Tredger:** On the amendment — I’d like to thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing forth the original motion. I think it speaks well and it’s something that will be important going forward for the Yukon. I’d also like to thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for the amendment.

I think the amendment greatly improves the motion. It would accept the government’s position over the necessity of getting federal funds for highways, energy, hospitals and other infrastructure, but would bring issues of consultation, fiscal responsibility, legislative oversight, planning and community wants and needs into major infrastructure decisions.

We’ve become used to spending a lot of money. It’s becoming increasingly evident that the money we’ve been spending is not going to be ours to spend forever.

We need to become fiscally responsible, good managers of the taxpayers’ money, whether it comes from Ottawa or whether it comes from the Yukon. The Auditor General has pointed out a number of ways that we can increase our fiscal responsibility and where we can ensure that our infrastructures are more effective. We can look to ensure that our infrastructure projects are respectful of all people and they consider the needs and wants of each community and citizen.

The original motion speaks to consulting with the federal government. The amendment speaks also to consultation with local citizens, with municipalities and with First Nation governments. We on this side believe they go hand in hand.

While you might say it’s a given, if it is necessary to spell out the need to consult with the federal government, we believe it is also necessary and equally important to consult and trust the citizens of the Yukon.

The member opposite from Lake Laberge talked about prioritizing. I believe he’s selling the Yukon people short. He talked about bridge building as being too technical for Yukon people to talk about or to be consulted on. He talked about structures as being too complex to consult Yukon people about. I think Yukon people — the Yukon people in my riding — have a lot of common sense. They know the value of a dollar. They want their dollars spent well.

I believe that when they’re consulted and when they’re involved in the decision-making process, they are able to make sound, rational, commonsense decisions that are fiscally responsible, that are beneficial to their communities and to the Yukon and will improve our standard of living.

I remember a time when many communities wanted a new school in their community because they were aging. They were consulted and involved and the needs of each community were laid out. The school councils of the day and their representatives sat down and established a priority list. They trusted the system because it was open, clear and transparent. For the next number of years, schools were built in an orderly fashion after what had been a lot of concern about who got the next school and a lot of division. Consultation moved past that.

What if we did the same for recreational facilities in rural Yukon? What if we took the time to get all the municipalities and their representatives together and said, “Here are the needs; let’s take this out of the political process, let’s make the process open and transparent, and let’s make some decisions. I believe in Yukon people. I believe in their common sense, and I believe they would say, “Yes, this community needs one first. We’ll go number three on the list, or number four on the list.” I believe, when it comes to building it, that they will be fiscally responsible because Yukon people know the value of a hard-earned dollar. If they are involved in the decision-making process, they take ownership and they take responsibility. If they are not involved, if Cabinet makes the decision and bestows it upon their community, they have been left out.

They’ve been left out of that process. They’ve been left out of the ownership. I believe in the people of Haines Junction, Dawson City, Mayo, Teslin and Watson Lake. I believe when we’re designing and building projects, the closer we can get to the people who are actually going to use it, the more fiscally responsible, the better used and the better developed project it is.

I need look no further than some of the facilities that were built in Mayo, where the Village of Mayo worked hand-in-hand with the Government of Yukon, the Government of Canada and other funders. They were consulted. They were involved. They took ownership and they created wonderful facilities that are widely used. They became their buildings.

As the Member for Riverdale South said, we’re not talking about small playgrounds, although those too should have needs assessments done. We should determine through consultation what we’re building, why we’re building it, how we’re going to build it and what needs it will serve. Yes we do have consultation and hats off to the Department of Community Services for the work they are doing in the communities and the consultation they are doing. I would hope we’re consulting with the federal government as a matter of course.

What this motion is intended to do — I assume it was the intent of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin — is to ensure that that consultation takes place. The member was concerned that maybe we haven’t been consulting with the federal government to our fullest extent, so he felt the need to make this motion. We’re saying yes, makes sense, and we would also like to include consultation with Yukon citizens because we believe consultation with them is best for everyone.

Then the structures they are involved in can save us money; it’s fiscally responsible. They take part in the ownership and the care, and the local people are also very connected to the ongoing costs and the operation and maintenance of fa-

cilities. I've heard time and time again: we would like to be involved in the planning so we're not left with a large, annual bill to pay yearly; so that we can be involved in making sure that the buildings, the infrastructure, meet our needs, fulfills our desires and lasts so our children and our children's children can benefit.

In closing, I support this amendment. I think it makes a good motion stronger. I support the people of the Yukon and I support their need to be involved in the decision making process.

**Speaker:** Does any other member wish to be heard on the amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

### Division

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

### Bells

**Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Disagree.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Disagree.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Disagree.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Disagree.

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Disagree.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Disagree.

**Ms. McLeod:** Disagree.

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** Disagree.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Disagree.

**Mr. Hassard:** Disagree.

**Ms. Hanson:** Agree.

**Ms. Stick:** Agree.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Agree.

**Ms. White:** Agree.

**Mr. Tredger:** Agree.

**Mr. Silver:** Disagree.

**Mr. Elias:** Disagree.

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker, the results are five yea, 12 nay.

**Speaker:** The nays have it. I declare the amendment negated.

*Amendment to Motion No. 430 negated*

**Speaker:** Does any other member wish to be heard on the main motion?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Motion No. 430. I believe it's very important for Yukoners to discuss a few of the many projects on which Highways and Public Works has successfully collaborated with the Government of Canada for funding to improve quality of life for all Yukoners.

By focusing our efforts on building sound and durable infrastructure to support our growing communities and our growing economy, we are constructing the necessary foundations for a sustainable and prosperous future. Critical infrastructure, such as roads, highways and bridges, contributes to healthy and

sustainable communities and are essential to the economic and social development in the north.

The Government of Yukon is facing some recent funding pressures, namely that the Building Canada plan expires in 2016. We look forward to working with Canada should a replacement program be implemented.

The territorial health system sustainability initiative expires in 2014 and, to date, there is no federal commitment to extend the initiative beyond that date. Funding by the Government of United States for the Shakwak agreement to update and maintain the south Alaska Highway and Haines Road was removed from the U.S. government's 2012 transportation bill, which means that the \$280 million to \$340 million estimated to complete the work is no longer in place. Yukon's growing population will require the construction of more schools, as well as the expansion of Whitehorse General Hospital. Yukon's expanding economy will require more Yukon government investment in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure.

While Yukon's economic outlook is extremely positive, we must be cognizant that the percentage increase in our territorial formula financing agreement for subsequent years will be significantly lower than in recent years. Some of the funding pressures can be accommodated by increased revenues from the private sector due to Yukon's strong economy. However, we must continue to live within our means in meeting our platform commitments.

As the Minister of Highways and Public Works, I'm also cognizant of the fact that both mining and tourism are largely dependent upon Yukon's transportation infrastructure — our primary roads, secondary roads, rural roads, resource roads, bridges and airports. Work continues this year on sections of the Alaska Highway, as part of the Shakwak project — good fiscal management from this government. We have funds in reserve for this. This important project continues with funding from the Government of the United States, in partnership with the Government of Canada. Its purpose is to ensure a safe and modern highway corridor leading to Alaska. The Government of Yukon, in concert with the Government of Canada, will continue to make representations to U.S. legislators to restore funding for the Shakwak project and any new build. We're always working on this.

My department is continuing to work closely with the U.S. federal highway administration to determine how to best spend the remaining funds and the time frame over which such spending should occur. We will also be spending \$4 million this year on permafrost remediation to stabilize the north Alaska Highway and improve the drainage capacity and replacement of deteriorating BST surface with hot mixed asphalt on the Haines Road. A further \$13.5 million will be spent on pavement overlay for the Haines Road. Our government is allocating \$4.35 million for rehabilitation of existing pavement on sections of the Alaska Highway, totalling over 10 kilometres, with either full pavement overlay or recycling pavement into base course and resurfacing with BST.

Reconstruction of the Campbell Highway is an important initiative of this government. This year, we will continue to

reconstruct the remaining improvement sections from kilometre 95 to 107. This multi-year project has been significantly accelerated due in large part to the support from the Building Canada fund. Reconstruction will improve safety on the roads for all the users and provide a more stable, reliable and secure transportation corridor.

The Atlin Road is an important tourist route and the only land access to the community of Atlin, British Columbia. Funding from Canada has allowed for the significant reconstruction of this support roadway in the southwest Yukon. It has been able to be upgraded from gravel to hard surface, which is great. This roadway is often affected by adverse weather conditions and the planned improvements will increase overall operating safety and reduce the maintenance costs and vehicle wear and tear. The result is a safer highway for the travelling public and lower maintenance costs.

Other highway improvements include \$2 million for the second year of a two-year project to reconstruct the surface of the Takhini Hot Springs Road. Initial public consultation will be undertaken to ensure that residents are completely informed of the 2013 construction plans and determine the preferred option related to the proposed sport trails adjacent to the highway.

Mr. Speaker, I think a lot of it you'll see long before the amendment. I speak to stuff that we're already doing within the proposed amendment to our motion. Members opposite can review *Hansard* and see exactly where I'm at, if they're not getting it.

There is \$500,000 to complete safety improvements, such as guardrail replacement or repair, rock fall protection and sub-grade improvements on primary highways; another \$500,000 for the Alaska Highway Whitehorse corridor planning — that was spoken of in the House; \$500,000 for aggregate reproduction and surface of the Silver Trail; \$1.25 million for surfacing, spot repairs and erosion control on the Dempster Highway; \$1.35 million for improvements to the North Canol Road; and \$870,000 for surfacing and safety improvements for various secondary roads.

Our transportation division maintains a total of 4,890 kilometres of road, including eight kilometres of bridge/ferry crossings, 128 bridges, four airports and 25 aerodromes. We operate two full-time weigh scales and have two additional weigh scales that can be activated as required.

In 2010, the Pelly River bridge superstructure was repainted with support from federal funds. This important work provided more than just a cosmetic upgrade. It will also prevent corrosion of the steel structure and lengthen the bridge's life-span.

Other bridge work includes \$1.88 million for rehabilitation of the Stewart River bridge, and the Yukon River, Haldane and the Wagon Creek. A further \$500,000 has been allocated for rehabilitation design of the Nisutlin Bay bridge. In 2010, we also received federal funding to build additional staff housing for Canada Border Services. We project managed this and they were very happy — the delivery of the two projects, which included the construction of two staff residences in Little Gold and eight staff residences in Pleasant Camp.

This government is committed to providing high quality, energy-efficient and cost-effective housing for our seniors. In 2011, this government partnered with Yukon Housing Corporation and Canada to see through to the completion of reconstruction of a new seniors housing complex in Whitehorse called Waterfront Place. This unique complex now provides 30 private residences, office space for health care providers, and roof-top garden and common areas for the enjoyment of its residents. It's worth a look.

This government also partnered with the Yukon Housing Corporation and Canada to deliver a new housing complex in Dawson City. We also work closely with the City of Dawson to ensure that that building has a historic appearance. Completed in early 2011, this project contains 19 apartments and was built to Yukon Housing Corporation's SuperGreen energy efficient standards. In 2011 Canada contributed funding toward the air terminal building expansion project at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. This important expansion work included the addition of a new baggage carousel, arrival area and a secure passenger waiting area. With almost 300,000 flight passengers using the airport in 2012, we have seen an increase of 94 percent over the past 10 years. This important improvement enables us to better serve both Yukoners and travellers. The airport is now able to accommodate Yukon's growing population and growing tourism sector. In 2012, approximately 294,000 passengers used the Whitehorse airport while an estimated 80,000 visited the airport, either meeting passengers or utilizing airport services. Whitehorse has seen a 94-percent increase of passengers arriving and departing the airport over the last 10 years.

Highways and Public Works is currently managing a few capital projects, which include Betty's Haven. This is a new second-stage housing facility for women and children escaping family violence. Highways and Public Works is managing this project for the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society. The project is on schedule and within budget. Completion is expected in August 2013.

The EMS ambulance station — this is a new four-bay ambulance station and emergency response facility located near the Canada Games Centre. The foundation work started in the fall of 2011 with building construction getting underway in the spring of 2012 and completion is expected this fall.

The Ross River arena — a design/build contract for the new arena was signed with Ketz Pacific in November 2012. Work on-site is scheduled to commence soon. The project is expected to be completed by this fall.

We spoke about the APU, the arrest processing unit. This is an intake and holding facility to be built as an addition to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The design is underway and expected to be ready in May. Public tenders will be out. The construction is expected to begin this summer.

The new passenger boarding bridge — construction of a new passenger bridge has been completed. However, some minor installations need to be completed before the bridge is made available for use this spring. The bridge supply and installation contract was done through a Yukon asset construction

agreement between the Yukon government and Kwanlin Dun First Nation working together.

The Dawson waste-water treatment plant is essential to the healthy and sustainable future of the community of Dawson. The Building Canada fund provided two-thirds of the financial resources required to see this project through its sustainable completion. The sewage plant is more than a robust, compact and environmentally appropriate system; it is using innovative technology — which I'll speak to in a little bit — to better meet crucial infrastructure requirement needs of today and tomorrow.

I would also like to mention the collaboration of this government with Parks Canada in providing year-round access to Kathleen Lake and Kluane National Park and Reserve and the Chilkoot Trail National Historic Site — two popular recreation destinations for Yukoners. This coordinated effort has encouraged winter recreation, supported winter tourism and enhances the safety of these popular multi-use recreational areas.

Some large capital projects in this budget include such things as the Yukon College mobile trades unit, the Watson Lake conservation office, the Atlin campground, McDonald Lodge replacement, Sarah Steele replacement, Whitehorse seniors housing project, Mayo seniors housing project and the Swift River living complex. In my riding, Beaver Creek is getting a major \$3.66-million facelift with the construction of the new Beaver Creek fire hall, EMS and search and rescue facility. The new facility will enable training, skills development and team building among emergency responders so that they are better able to help visitors, neighbours and families in the communities along the Alaska Highway.

The Ross River public works building will be officially opened upon completion later this spring. It will house the community's fire truck, the other public works vehicles and a new water treatment plant. The two projects combined represent a \$7-million investment under the Building Canada plan.

I just want to speak a little bit about the territory of Nunavut — this is how important it is that we collaborate and we work with the Government of Canada. In Nunavut — in the last budget, we saw \$100 million going into housing. In the Northwest Territories, we've seen \$300 million for the road from Inuvik to Tuk. We have infrastructure here also that we need to keep working with Ottawa on to build and upgrade our infrastructure.

Improving project management and contracting and procurement — I want to speak a little bit about that, because that does fall under the Department of Highways and Public Works. My colleagues and I appreciate the good work that the government employees have done in this area. We've heard lots from the members opposite about the audit in 2008. Like the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin said yesterday, I was also taught that if I don't have anything good to say, then to not say it. So I'm not going to, just because I'm not very impressed with the decorum in this House. I'd really like to just get across my point so Yukoners can hear it.

The Government of Yukon has been modernizing services to make contract regulations, policies and procedures fair and consistent and accessible for business. The department has

been responsive to input we heard from contractors and suppliers, and we are simplifying the procurement processes. We're working with the departments so the processes are the same.

What suppliers told us is that they wanted better information and an increase of information and access to government business and opportunities.

We provide more training to government employees to increase their expertise. That's something we've done. We've had many people go through a lot of different courses. The increased centralized support for procurement is being done through our procurement office; introduction of more electronic tools without negatively affecting smaller business; recognize the contributions of local business to Yukon's economy — the revised threshold — we've created a new supplier directory. Some increased consistency and fairness and transparency to reduce supplier time and cost to provide bids; measure and track suppliers' performance and use in bid evaluations — this is something we started with the Yukon Contractors Association.

This government and my department are building on the foundations of strong government procurement and focusing our efforts on improving internal processes, especially those that have created challenges for our suppliers. The Minister of Education just spoke to it with respect to F.H. Collins Secondary School.

With the amendment to the motion, item number (2) said: "using best practices in the designing, planning and implementing projects based on comprehensive needs assessments".

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

#### Point of order

**Speaker:** Member for Riverdale South, on a point of order.

**Ms. Stick:** We're not speaking to the amendment to the motion now. We're back to the main body of the motion. The amendment was defeated, if the member across remembers.

#### Speaker's ruling

**Speaker:** I will remind the minister that he is speaking to the main motion as originally presented.

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** I'm just tying thing together, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

On the motion, we have a risk assessment that we've started doing since the Auditor General's report on our infrastructure, so when it's time to go to Ottawa and we're working with and collaborating with the Government of Canada on monies that would come to us, we can improve our infrastructure. We have a list of infrastructure that needs replacement, roads that need upgrades, bridges that need fixing — we do that already. We've been doing that for awhile.

A good example — just look to the City of Dawson or the municipality of Dawson: the infrastructure that has gone in there, prioritized for the people of Dawson. We have within Highways and Public Works a tradition of being innovative and trying out new ideas and techniques to improve our performance and service delivery. We have a portion or a thing called



Connections. It's an initiative within Highways and Public Works. We have management and regular employees who are all part of this Connections team. It's a willingness to rethink how we do things; it's essential when budgets are tight, but even more, it's expected of us to do the best we can for the taxpayers' dollars.

For this reason, this is where the department had come up with Connections, which I support. Some of the recent examples I'll just bring up — the installation of Dawson's first vertical shaft, waste-water treatment facility in Canada. This is the first in Canada. Also, playing into it to cut the cost down for the residents of Dawson City, an installation of a state-of-the-art district heating system that relies on a local and renewable energy source — I could go on about cutting-edge, internationally recognized research on the number of highway construction and resurfacing techniques when we hear about it all the time — reducing the degradation of underlying permafrost.

Like most Yukoners, we try to live within our means and be fiscally responsible. Things didn't look good in 2008 in the rest of the world. Canada came out strong. The Government of Canada came out strong because it is fiscally responsible. Being fiscally responsible, the Yukon and Alberta governments are the only two not running a deficit in Canada right now — out of all the provinces and territories. As the Highways and Public Works minister, I am committed to being fiscally responsible on our projects. As you have heard me say in this House sometimes, I've been asked many times in this House by members opposite why we are overbudget and then asked why we can't retender or why are we retendering a project 21 percent over?

Working with our partners within the Government of Canada is integral to the growth of Yukon infrastructure, and proper management will make our dollars go further for all Yukoners. I commend this motion the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin put forward. I believe a good working relationship with our federal counterparts goes a long, long way for the residents of the Yukon and for infrastructure in the Yukon.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** I rise to speak to Motion No. 430, which urges the Government of Yukon to continue to work collaboratively with the Government of Canada for funding to improve our highways, construct new schools, expand the current hospital and enable investment in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon government receives millions of dollars every year from the Government of Canada. Of course, we in this House are very well aware as we scrutinize the Yukon government budgets and our Public Accounts records that the Government of Canada contributes 80 percent of Yukon government annual revenues.

Indeed, for the 2013-14 budget, the Government of Canada revenues are \$978,986,000. That is almost the full amount of the expenditures of the Yukon government, which come in at \$1,121,321. So we are certainly very well aware that we rely quite heavily on the Canadian government and the taxpayers of the entire country of Canada when it comes to the expenditures that we have here in the Yukon.

I would like to touch on several of the areas contained in the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin's motion, with the aim of determining what lessons can be learned toward improving our collaboration. I will begin with Highways and Public Works. The Highways and Public Works budget is heavily subsidized by the Government of Canada. In fact, over the past 11 years, the Yukon government has received several million dollars for transportation infrastructure from the Government of Canada, yet I've been unable to get a satisfactory answer from the Minister of Highways and Public Works about his planning for improving the Alaska Highway from the cut-off at the intersection to the south Klondike Highway to the cut-off at the intersection of the north Klondike Highway.

There is a real need to improve highway safety and the access to residential subdivisions, to industrial subdivisions, the two main access routes downtown into the City of Whitehorse — the Robert Service Way and the Two Mile Hill.

We've heard reports from people from Marsh Lake and Mount Lorne complaining that the work on the roads they drive seem to have been a reduced standard of crush because they're seeing a lot of problems with the road, and they're also pointing out that they contribute to the bulk of the traffic that does, in fact, commute to Whitehorse on a daily basis.

The Alaska Highway has quite an amazing history. It started out with its construction by regiments of the United States Army, which included two black regiments. For many of our First Nation people, their encounter with the Army Corps of Engineers was their first contact with someone who was not aboriginal.

Over the years, we've also seen the Alaska Highway improved. In fact, it has been tremendously improved. It has been shortened a great deal. With engineering, you can accomplish a lot. There have been entire long stretches of the highway taken out — cutting out a mountain pass and moving to another one. So I know that although it is costly, a lot of improvements can be made.

I am disappointed in the Yukon Party government in that it doesn't have a vision and long-term planning for improving the Alaska Highway corridor between the two cut-offs — that 33-kilometre stretch in the Whitehorse area. We know that Highways and Public Works can increase lines of sight; they can cut down hills. We know that that work would be expensive. Bearing in mind that three-quarters of the population lives in the Whitehorse area, that our international airport is along that stretch of the highway and that it's where the capital city of Whitehorse and the bulk of industrial and commercial activities are located, it would seem to me that the government should have completed its functional planning for that section of the Alaska Highway corridor.

I would turn now then to the Auditor General's report when the Office of the Auditor General of Canada audited Highways and Public Works in 2007.

"The Government of Yukon's Department of Highways and Public Works is responsible for ensuring that transportation infrastructure in the territory is safe and efficient. Highways and bridges are especially important in the sparsely populated Yukon, where communities are separated by long distances."

So what the audit found was that the department did not have a rigorous approach to long-term planning and funding for maintenance and rehabilitation of the highway assets, including bridges. There is a need to bring the condition up to standard.

In addition the Auditor General found that “Many of the transportation infrastructure and building projects...went over their original targets for total spending,” and that “...the Department did not adequately manage the risk of such occurrences.”

I’ll come back to speaking about risk and addressing the comments the Minister of Highways just made in a few moments here.

I want to speak briefly about an issue I have raised in this House before. It is completely unacceptable and, quite frankly, puzzling why this government refuses to address the needs of the community of Ross River for a safe road. There are many dollars in the budget for a road to a potential new mine, which goes right past Ross River, but the government won’t commit to upgrading for the safety of the residents of Ross River and those who visit them, those who go there to work, government officials who go there to provide services to members of the community.

In contrast, we see that there is a \$31-million investment in the Campbell Highway and a lot of that is used almost exclusively for mine traffic. We know that those expenditures may be needed, but I am pointing out to the minister that there is a long-standing need for infrastructure development and they are certainly not collaborating with the residents of the community of Ross River or with the First Nation. That’s one of the reasons why my colleague had brought forward an amendment about the need for also consulting with municipalities, First Nation governments, development corporations and citizens in the identification and prioritization of infrastructure projects — but that has been defeated.

Now, the Auditor General has also spoken about the need to improve project management. I’ve raised a number of concerns about project management. Some recent examples of tremendous overexpenditures are the Whitehorse Correctional Centre facility, which is now at \$70 million and counting. There was a lot of money spent on redesign, there were a number of change orders, and we don’t know the full costs. We don’t know, for example, the full cost of heating a building that was shrouded in plastic over the winter months because the schedule wasn’t properly rolled out. If the design work is done early enough and the tender work is out early enough, then construction can begin so that there can be a roof before the cold weather comes and you’re not spending huge amounts of money to heat an incomplete facility.

I’ve also been asking about the arrest processing unit and not been getting very clear answers on that project.

It started out with expenditures originally in the 2010-11 budget, and then there were plans to have it built in 2012. Now we’re hearing that it’s going to be completed in 2013 and that the redesign is to save funds. Well, we’ve heard that there’s a concrete pad that doesn’t match the footprint of the building, and that the heating system may not be able to be used because it was installed and there will now have to be a new system

because the work that has been done to date doesn’t fit in with the redesign. So they may have to remove the old system.

I’d like the minister to be accountable here for those expenditures. It’s bad planning to redesign after you’ve spent over \$1 million. The proper approach to planning is to design before you build and not have what the Minister of Highways and Public Works referred to as a design/build project where you simply just keep changing as you go along. It’s bad planning to say, “Oh well, we’ll get started, but we want to save some money so we’re going to change the design.”

Now, in speaking about planning, the Minister of Health and Social Services spoke about the fact that the Minister of Community Services would be attending the Association of Yukon Communities AGM in Watson Lake this weekend and that she was noted for her collaborative and consultative manner.

So I want to speak for a moment about the needs in the community of Carcross in —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

#### Point of order

**Speaker:** Government House Leader, on a point of order.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** It would appear to me that pursuant to Standing Order 19(b), the Member for Copperbelt South has been going on for quite some time about matters that are not related to the motion. I’m not sure she’s aware what motion we’re discussing, but it appears to me that she has strayed some.

#### Speaker’s ruling

**Speaker:** I’m sure the member will tie it together for us in a few moments here.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Thank you for your ruling. I have been speaking about improving our highways and about infrastructure improvements, which is the substance of this motion.

In fact, the Minister of Community Services has put out a challenge to Carcross for the community to come together on a consensus of what were the most important needs identified by the community and to work with governments to move those initiatives forward. My colleague, the MLA for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, within a couple of weeks had organized and held a public meeting and invited the minister to attend, although I understand she was not able to attend the meeting, and achieved the result that the community came together with two immediate priorities that they requested the Yukon government deal with and those were for a new multipurpose community centre and for a seniors/elders centre and housing complex.

We heard the Minister of Highways and Public Works just speaking about \$6 million for a Beaver Creek fire hall and about \$7 million in expenditures for improvements in Ross River and this government, as I said at the outset, does have millions of dollars and a majority of those dollars from the Government of Canada for funding for a number of Infrastructure projects.

I want to point out that the current community centre in Carcross is very old and that we’re looking for clear timelines

from the Yukon government as to when and how the two priorities they have identified for a multi-purpose community centre and a seniors/elders centre and housing complex will be met during the next few years of the Yukon Party mandate. Since the government has spoken in support of this motion, I trust that that minister will support the collaborative/consultative approach in the community of Carcross and will respond to how they might meet those needs of the community.

I would also like to speak about what we can learn from the government's approach to F.H. Collins Secondary School. I don't know what to call it. It's more than a redesign — it's a do-over; it's a stop-start, stop-start. In fact, when I was out knocking on doors in Copperbelt South during the election period, I spoke with many parents and with young, first-time voters, who were very clear that it was time to get on with completing the construction of F.H. Collins. There has been delay after delay and mistake after mistake. The Premier has stated that they're committed to F.H. Collins, but they want to ensure the diligence is done.

Well, I guess, in their view, diligence is spending money on building advisory committees, on bringing parties together to come up with recommendations for what they would like to see in the design of a new school — and then dismissing that. The government's management of the F.H. Collins replacement doesn't look or sound like fiscal responsibility, and it does not look like due diligence has been followed.

Also during the election period in 2011 — on the eve of that election, the Premier posted photos with shovels in hand and announced that the project of the F.H. Collins school would soon be open for business. Parents are tired of hearing that it's coming soon. There were plans for geothermal to be included as the heating source for this school, and those were off, and then we think they are back on. I'm not really sure about that. But this motion speaks to the importance of investment in energy infrastructure. Geothermal has been considered as a green heating and energy source. Although it has a high capital investment cost initially, geothermal power is cost-effective, reliable, sustainable and environmentally friendly.

So the use of geothermal heating and energy generation has been proposed to this government for many different projects, but I don't believe it has ever been accepted. I think geothermal use at F.H. Collins would be an ideal candidate for a green power fund if the Yukon government and the Government of Canada could collaborate on that.

So we are speaking in support of the motion, but we are also really urging this government to consider how it might improve its performance in planning and delivering on highways, schools, hospital and health care projects as well as investments in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure.

Other members have brought forward to the attention of the government the findings of the Auditor General who has examined the Hospital Corporation and health care expenditures. The Auditor General characterized the current government's decision-making with respect to health care facilities as political. He did not characterize it as collaborative, he did not characterize it as evidence-based, and so I would urge the gov-

ernment to not only support this motion, but to actually do what this motion urges it to do.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I've sat here and listened for some time and I have to tell you that I would like to start maybe at the beginning of where some of these funds came from, because I'm absolutely astounded that the members opposite have so little understanding of some of the history and how this system works at the present time. Statements have been made by members opposite that show a complete and utter misunderstanding of the allocation of capital works in communities around this territory.

Just as a little background information, in 2002 the Yukon government of the past few years had received, during any capital allocation from Ottawa, 0.01 percent of the total budget of any capital allocation, and that was because all of the funding was done on a population per capita basis.

In 2002-03, I participated as a member of the Association of Yukon Communities at federal meetings with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. We lobbied long and hard for over a year to have the allocation of funding changed for any future capital allocations funding from Ottawa. We lobbied for an allocation that would give each jurisdiction in the country — 13 jurisdictions — each one percent of the total budget and then anything after that would be allocated on a per capita basis. We were successful in having that resolution approved at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Later, to the benefit of the then Minister of Finance, Paul Martin, the federal government agreed with that allocation.

So the first allocation of the gas tax funding that came from Ottawa was based on the new formula — one percent per jurisdiction and per capita after that. What that meant is that, in the Yukon, we then received a \$30-million allocation per year from the \$3 billion gas tax fund, rather than the normal \$330,000. So it made a heck of a difference to the territory.

As part of the gas tax fund allocation — I was president of the Association of Yukon Communities at the time, and we entered negotiations with the then Yukon Party government with respect to how that funding would be allocated within the territory. The City of Whitehorse — even though they have somewhere between 75 and 80 percent of the population — the Whitehorse City Council, to their credit, stated, "We don't see ourselves getting 75 to 80 percent of any annual allocation in funding." The reasons for this were numerous. First of all, there were First Nations to consider, and they had to be brought into the funding formula. There were various communities that were not incorporated — non-incorporated communities in the territory — and then there were other areas that simply weren't part of any community at all, all of which had to be looked after by the territorial government.

At that time, we agreed to a split, and what we also agreed to was a committee that would oversee future allocations of capital funding from that gas tax. The committee is made up of two members of Association of Yukon Communities, two members from the Council of Yukon First Nations, and two members from the territorial government — Community Services department.

When communities come up with a capital project that they wish to use the gas tax funding for — I understand the gas tax funding is one-third community, one-third territorial and one-third federal. So when any community comes up with a project that they wish to utilize that money for, the project becomes their priority. In other words, Yukon government doesn't determine what a priority in Mayo is as the member opposite seems to think — they have to collaborate. The municipal council in Mayo determines what their priorities are, what they wish to use their gas tax funding for and that proposal then goes to the allocation committee, which determines whether or not that meets the criteria under the gas tax agreement and the funding is allocated. So any idea that the territorial government is going to tell the City of Dawson that they can't use their gas tax money to build a new recreation facility, if that's what they so wish, is totally erroneous, Mr. Speaker. That's not the way the system works. That's the first thing. I think it is incumbent upon all members that if we're going to get up here and speak about how the territorial government should do things, they first of all understand what the process is.

I would also like to reflect on a couple of comments, but before I do that, the Member for Copperbelt South made so many comments about how the two- or three-year time frame for planning and going back and replanning projects was such a terrible thing and how obviously we were incompetent because we were unable to do this in a reasonable timeline. So I thought I'd bring up two or three things that have occurred in the past — two or three projects. I'm not even going to bring up the Watson Lake sawmill fiasco, because that would be too easy a target. I thought I would instead bring up one that began in late 1985, early 1986. It was a community project undertaken in the City of Whitehorse and I have an auditor's report on that project right here.

The first comment they said is "we have not seen any analysis of the community needs for this project. The corporation in control over the planning design of the project has no experience of any kind. Logically, the government should have taken more control of the project and undertaken it on their own."

In November 1986, the proposal came forward costing \$9.5 million to be funded by Government of Yukon, Government of Canada, City of Whitehorse and an independent organization. That was in November of 1986. In December of 1988, the architect submitted the cost of the proposal and it came in at \$14.5 million — a mere \$5 million over the anticipated cost of the project.

The government decided at that time to pare the project down, so it was scaled down from 5,500 square metres to 3,450, losing some pieces of the project that all of the community groups felt were very important, but their opinions were disregarded in the scaling-down process. Previously one part that had been considered essential to the community by several groups — including the City of Whitehorse — was turned down.

In March of 1989, three years after the initial proposal, Canada and Whitehorse withdrew funding from the project

because of the fact they weren't being consulted appropriately. It was put out to tender in August of 1989. A consultant estimated the cost at \$6.5 million. The lowest bid received was for \$6.9 million. The project was scaled back again for an estimated cost-savings of \$250,000 and retendered in April 1990.

So now we've moved four years-plus down the time continuum and we still don't have a contract. The Contractors Association expressed surprise that the first tender was not accepted and complained about the costs of retendering. It's déjà vu all over again, Mr. Speaker. The lowest bid on the retender was \$7.9 million, so a higher tender on a scaled-back building once again. This precipitated further cuts causing even further delays.

The project was eventually completed in May 1992, more than six years after planning was begun. It was completed at a cost of \$9.28 million, so the \$6.5 million consultant's estimate, by the time construction was actually done, was \$9.28 million. The net cost to the government, because of the fact that other partners had withdrawn, was substantially higher than anticipated.

But I'm sure that none of the participants in this whole process felt that they were doing anything wrong. They were attempting to work in a fiscally responsible way. They were attempting to bring in a project that met the needs of the people and still met the budgetary constraints under which they operated.

The fact that this actually occurred — and it was a six-year project, not a three-year project as the Member for Copperbelt South has castigated us over — severely chastised us, shall we say — this is just an indication.

I went back through a number of other auditor's reports and found some other ones during that time frame too that I could bring up, but I guess I'm just doing it to show that these things do happen. It's unfortunate and it's something that we're all trying to avoid. We're attempting to do our needs assessments. We're attempting to ensure that our projects are completely thought-out, but these things do happen.

I was also struck by the member opposite's comments about wants versus needs. She said this is what the people want and this is what they need. In my 12 years or slightly less as a councillor in the City of Whitehorse, I discovered over and over again that wants are not always the same as needs. So we as political leaders and decision-makers must sometimes decide what do people really want and what do they really need.

That's one of the things that my colleague, the Minister of Education, is making an attempt — a real honest-to-goodness attempt — to find out. During the construction of the new F.H. Collins building, what is the actual need of the constituents who will utilize that building? Not what they want — because everybody wants something much better than what they currently have, even if what they currently have meets their needs. I support the Minister of Education in the changes that he is intending to make to the F.H. Collins project, and I commend him for trying to work within a budget, while still making sure that the students and the staff and the people of the Riverdale community get what they actually need.

I've already talked about how the Government of Yukon works with municipalities and how the system works as far as capital funding goes with municipalities, so perhaps I won't dwell on that one very much longer. But I should maybe bring up — just because it has been talked about here — what we're trying to do within the department when it comes to needs assessments.

We're doing needs assessments and — again, it's difficult maybe to convince members opposite, but we're not only doing needs assessments for our current needs or our needs for the next two years, but we're trying to project 10, 15, 20, even 25 years down the road. So when we go and speak with the Government of Canada about our capital needs, what we're trying to convince them of is — yes, our capital requirements are this much, this time, but this project will be good for us 20 or 25 years down the road and therefore we attempt, by doing this, to further our conversations with the Government of Canada.

I know with the Sarah Steele rebuild that we're doing, we have not only projected what we need 10 or 15 years down the road, we've consulted municipal community groups; we've consulted the municipality; we've consulted our staff and a number of other organizations in the city to try and get what we really need at the Sarah Steele Building. We're not going to build something that is going to win us any architectural awards; we're not going to build something that is going to be an everlasting tribute to this government. What we're going to build is a building that meets the needs of the people who work there and meets the needs of the people who will be using that building.

So, I guess I think the motion is fine. It's an attempt by the Government of Yukon to further our funding, both for municipalities and for infrastructure in the territory. I think it's an excellent motion and I'll be supporting it fully. Thank you. With that, I'll sit down.

**Mr. Silver:** I would like to thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing forth this motion, although I'm a little perplexed. This is an interesting motion from the Yukon Party government — a government that promotes itself as a protector of the private sector — yet the crux of this motion is Ottawa needs to send us more money. I understand that this pertains to major capital endeavours, but the point needs to be made that this government is using the private members' day not to discuss how we can bolster the private sector, but rather on how we need to continue to spend federal money and increase this model. The Yukon Party government will likely point out — and correctly — that spending federal dollars will absolutely support the private sector with spinoff industry and local economy based on these major infrastructure dollars. The problem is, and we see it time and time again, that after 10 years in power, this government has doubled its dependency on federal money and our private sector is currently shrinking.

When this government came to power, approximately 80 percent of expenses were paid for by federal transfers. Now, almost 87 percent of our expenses are paid for with federal money. As the federal transfers increase, the spending increases. Needs assessments in place or not, we spend and spend

and our reliance on federal dollars is doing the exact opposite of what economists would have predicted — the exact opposite of that spending was done correctly and efficiently.

On behalf of Yukoners, I am calling on this government to plan to achieve a more dependable and less dependent sort of revenue. While the government likes to boast about good fiscal management, the fact remains that Yukon gets more of its budget as a percentage from Ottawa than we did 10 years ago. We are as dependent as ever on federal transfers.

The motion before us is an admission of that, and it urges for more of the same. The government's plan to fund infrastructure is ask Ottawa. Is the irony lost on our listeners today or the readers of *Hansard* that a conservative government is asking for more money from government to develop and define our infrastructure and therefore our economy?

We in the Liberal Party recognize the Yukon is years away from being able to pay its own way. We don't pretend that the Government of Yukon, by working hard and promoting the private sector, can change that dependency in five or 10 years. It will take many years and that's just being realistic. The settlement of land claims and the devolution of authority over land were important milestones toward this endeavour. They have made big differences in Yukoners becoming more self-reliant and we'll continue to do so in years to come.

However, in August of 2012, Yukon had 12,900 workers in the private sector and now that number has dropped to 11,000. The private sector is shrinking. The number of private sector employees has dropped dramatically in the last eight months under this government's watch.

The motion mentions expanding the current hospital. I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services to explain the plan in this House in Question Period for funding the expansion of the Whitehorse General Hospital. We didn't get an answer. The cost estimates say that it could be as much as \$287 million spread over a number of years. Based on this motion today, is the plan to try to cost-share this expense with the Government of Canada? Well, this is a far better plan than the one that was used for the Dawson and Watson Lake hospitals, which involved borrowing millions of dollars with no real plan to pay it back. The plan resulted in a \$27-million bailout of the Yukon Hospital Corporation being the centrepiece of this year's budget.

Before the Yukon Party gets up and goes on about how dark and dreary it was 10 years ago and 15 years ago, I can't do anything about the timelines of devolution, nor was I involved in the design of the federal algorithm that shows a budget in the Yukon Party's purse made largely from federal transfers.

Why are we always bringing up financial comparisons pre- and post- this large federal dollar stimulus? That was over a decade ago anyway, and it's like comparing oranges to apples, or ducks to swans. The reality is that Yukoners will continue to rely on Canada for help with major infrastructure projects. We are too small to pay for them on our own. We are part of Canada and we deserve our share of federal dollars anyway.

I find it odd, though, to see the Yukon Party celebrating this dependency, because most of the time they try to pretend it doesn't exist. Despite the obvious contradictions, I will abso-

lutely be in support of this motion. Working together with Canada, which has deeper pockets than ours, is a very good idea.

**Speaker:** Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, it has been a really intriguing day again here in the Legislative Assembly of the Yukon.

Again, lots to respond to, but I'll try — I always encourage my eight-year-old to speak kindly of others and to treat them with respect and I will certainly do the same, as I have endeavoured to over the years.

The motion that is before us really speaks to a very key and essential item that has really gone toward growing our private sector economy; it has gone toward contributing to the health of our communities and our towns. Looking back over the years — and I appreciate what the MLA for Klondike has to say, but it is important to go back 10 years ago. I'm not going to go back to those long, dark, dreary days because they were dark and dreary and I'll just leave it at that.

But 10 years ago when the Yukon Party did get elected, there was a change-up. There was a significant change in leadership. There was a change in direction for the territory, and the territory has benefited ever since, despite what may have been said here. The facts — really, when you look at the retail statistics; when you look at the GDP; when you look at employment statistics; population growth and the list goes on. Far be it from me to debate statistics, but they are what they are. I can say that when the Yukon Party government was first elected in 2002, there was a strategic decision to invest in strategic investments — investments to do with infrastructure that would be there to grow the economy, and we have seen a tremendous amount of investment in infrastructure. Yes, we will thank the Government of Canada for their confidence in investing in the north — in Canada's north — something that we haven't seen under previous federal governments, to be sure. Certainly, the current federal government does see a lot of opportunity in Canada's north and has gone to work with the respective northern territories to grow those opportunities.

We have been able to utilize those funds by way of infrastructure funding mechanisms, whether it was MRIF or CSIF, Building Canada or the gas tax — as the Minister of Health and Social Services alluded to earlier. We've been able to leverage those dollars and have been able to utilize those dollars in a strategic manner that has grown the territory in many different ways.

The motion before us is really about continuing those strategic investments, working with our partners, and continuing to build on the momentum we've been able to set over the last decade. As Community Services minister, I'm very proud of the work that has been done by our officials over the last number of years, in collaboration with community governments and First Nation governments, and their ongoing work with the private sector and the federal government.

Going to work on investing in that strategic infrastructure makes all our communities very attractive places to live and makes our communities viable and sustainable.

I talk about investments — when we look at improvements in waste management; improvements in drinking water standards; treatment facilities; improvements to how we treat our waste water; improvements in energy; and improvements in our rural roads — all of these pieces of infrastructure are very key to carrying out the good work of our communities and are a very essential element of living in communities.

I can say that as the regulatory regime continues to unfold, evolve and become strengthened, it is a challenge. It's a challenge for us as the Government of Yukon. It's a challenge for First Nation governments. It's a challenge for community governments to be able to sustain those changes. We have, working together. I think it's very important to note, including the community of Carcross — I found it very interesting how the Yukon government hasn't been working with our communities. When one looks at Carcross, in fact, we have been working on water treatment upgrades — a new facility, for an over \$5-million investment.

I think it's important. Members opposite don't, because they repeatedly continue to vote against it.

Now, when it comes to also other elements for added infrastructure investments — tourism and tourism-related infrastructure and substantive investments being made in the Southern Lakes area — I commend that community for working with the Yukon government and, of course, working together with Carcross-Tagish First Nation. We recognize that there are many priorities left to be addressed, that it isn't all going to be solely laid on the shoulders of the Yukon government, but that it is a collaborative effort. We recognize that and we commend every government that we have been working with and that we continue to work with.

I have met with the Chief of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. I have met with members of the LAC — South Klondike LAC — to talk directly about their priorities, just like I have been in every single community since I was elected, on a multitude of occasions, talking about fire halls and the need to invest, talking about health infrastructure and new hospitals, all of which we know, and campgrounds — another investment very much lauded by Yukoners — also cultural infrastructure and infrastructure to help grow our tourism sector.

One only has to take a look at all the Whitehorse waterfront improvements for \$20 million. We're about to wrap up those investments. Thanks to the Government of Canada, working in collaboration with Kwanlin Dun First Nation and the City of Whitehorse, the waterfront has very much been revitalized, and it is in support of growing the private sector.

I certainly commend the City of Whitehorse for their planning on the riverfront and putting into fruition the direction for Yukon government to work with them to be able to deliver that plan and be able to deliver on a new cultural centre — the new Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre that is a huge cultural gathering space for not only the people of Kwanlin Dun, but all the people of the territory. I commend the leadership of that government.

It's just like when we look at the Village of Haines Junction and the significant investments being made on that front to address and enhance water and sewer infrastructure upgrades

just like we are doing in the Town of Watson Lake to the tune of about \$7.5 million — every single community in which we continue to invest.

We often talk about housing and that is a very important element when it comes to growing our economy and meeting the critical housing needs of Yukoners. There is no other government in the Yukon's history that has been able to deliver on housing as this government has, and I'm very proud to acknowledge Canada and all the significant improvements that they have been able to invest in housing in support of First Nation governments, but also in support of affordable housing initiatives across the territory. One only has to take a look at the family-focused housing initiative in the community of Riverdale and how that has made a significant difference in the lives of many single-parent families. That has been long recognized as a need — two- and three-bedroom — a warm, secure, welcoming environment for families to grow in and be able to nurture the family environment. That is something we're very proud of.

We are very proud of the investments being made in Betty's Haven — second-stage housing — and it builds on second-stage housing that we've been able to deliver on in the Town of Watson Lake. We are also working with the community of Dawson and the women's shelter in Dawson as well, thanks to Yukon Housing Corporation and thanks to the community development fund. These are all significant pieces of infrastructure that are in support of providing that safe and secure housing that is so important to families and so important to the security of the territory as we know it today. We have significantly added to the housing stock in the territory. I know it is never enough and we know that there are always going to be needs there, but we're working on it. We're working on a housing action plan in collaboration with all of our partners, working on really minimizing the gap between all of the stakeholders and the agencies working to deliver housing initiatives on behalf of Yukoners. Even just in the past two terms of the Yukon Party government, we were able to increase the housing stock by about 40 percent.

That's pretty significant. When I am able to meet with my provincial and territorial counterparts, I feel very blessed to be able to talk about some of these investments being made and recognize that, yes, there are other very significant needs that have yet to be addressed.

We are continuing to invest in this infrastructure. As I mentioned, whether it's community infrastructure — and I go back to a recent meeting that I had with the president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities recently and how we talked to every single — there's not one community that hasn't been touched by some investment in water upgrades, in how we treat our waste, in how we improve our roads. That's not the case south of 60. That's not the case, indeed. In fact, there are many communities that haven't had the opportunity to have that investment.

But I thank the municipalities for partnering with the Yukon government and the Government of Canada to see these priorities come to fruition. I recognize that there is a significant

amount of work to be done, and there always will be — to be very true.

Other pieces of key infrastructure — we talk about air access, and we talk about how important that is to the territory. When you look at the record levels of individuals in planing and deplaning in the territory, we continue to break records over the past five or six years. That's why we have made significant investments in the expansion of the Whitehorse International Airport, and we have made investments in rural airports as well. Again, this is in support of a growing economy. It's in support of the mining sector; it's in support of enhancing the tourism sector by continuing to access the international markets that we have seen a growth in — continue to grow that infrastructure. There are so many examples of how the government has worked and continues to work to address some of these initiatives, but I guess the point to be made here is that we will continue to work with our community stakeholders. We are very much committed to working with the Government of Canada. They are a significant factor in all of this, to be sure.

What I do find perplexing and I do find odd — I do share the sentiment of the MLA for Klondike — when he finds it odd, I also find it odd that members on the opposite side continue to not support development of the territory. Of course, that is all about growing the private sector as well. They continue to vote against our expenditures in the budgets that we're speaking to this week and, to be sure, over the past couple of months — over the past year and a half. I find it odd that the members do continue to not support the expenditures being made by the Government of Yukon in support of the communities that they represent. We talk about land development — another key initiative, in terms of growing our economy and making land available.

I don't have to spell it out for the MLA for Klondike, but we are working with our community partners, and we do have a land development protocol agreement that we've had in force and effect with the City of Whitehorse over the years, and it has worked relatively well. Again, you know, when it comes to the community of Whistle Bend, I commend the City of Whitehorse for their good planning for the subdivision, the zoning, the consultation that was undertaken coming to fruition. I commend the previous mayor and council who actually provided years and years of planning and discussions with the community, like they did with the Ingram subdivision, which is now in the heart of my constituency. Thanks to their efforts, again, working in collaboration with the Yukon government, we actually have lots available over the counter. We haven't seen that in awhile, so this is a good thing — so too are there lots available over the counter in many other communities.

I know my time has pretty much elapsed, but again, I would like to thank my colleague for bringing forth this motion of importance. I think it is an opportunity for all members of the Assembly to come together — I'm not saying to sing *Kumbaya*, but I am saying perhaps we could at least agree on this particular motion of importance to the Yukon.

**Ms. Stick:** I thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this motion forward. I've sat here and listened today,

and I have many notes in front of me of what I was going to say. It has just been interesting at the end of this time to reflect on this motion and what is being suggested, or being moved, by the motion.

The first part of it speaks to working collaboratively with the Government of Canada, and lots of people mentioned that that was an obvious fact and I agree. It's not only an obvious fact, but it's our expectation. When I say "our", I speak of all Yukoners. We understand that 80 percent of our funding comes from the Government of Canada, and I don't know what would happen if we didn't work collaboratively with the Government of Canada, so I hope this government will continue to work collaboratively with the Government of Canada because it would be foolish not to.

We, the Yukon government, Yukon citizens, are extremely dependent on the federal dollar. As the Member for Klondike mentioned, those numbers over the last decade have increased exponentially, a huge amount. But our dependence remains the same. These dollars need to flow. We need this money for infrastructure. No one here will say that we don't need that. Of course we do. Improve our highways — yes. We hear in the House of highways that need improvement — frost heaves, too much traffic, highways breaking down. Yes, we need to continue funding to improve our highways. It's pretty clear. Construct new schools — another good example of what government should be working collaboratively with the federal government to do. We need schools in a timely manner. We need schools for our growing population. We have students who still have to travel from their home communities to complete their high school, so should this government be constructing new schools? Absolutely.

Should they work collaboratively with the federal government for funding to carry on these projects? Absolutely — no argument. Expand the current hospital — well, we know we have the funding for an MRI. We know that people still have to travel Outside to go through that procedure. So yes, we should work collaboratively with the Government of Canada to expand the current hospital to house that new MRI — no argument — as long as that's what that part means and we're not talking about something else suggested in the Stantec report.

Investment in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure — well, we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and energy, transportation and communication infrastructure continues to change. Yes, we have airports that we need to upgrade. We have phone systems that we need to deploy to all communities and points in between so that people travelling our improved highways are always able to be in contact.

Energy — we talk a lot about that in this House. We have mines that depend on it. Do we need to invest in these things — energy, transportation, communication? Absolutely. We can't argue that these infrastructure needs are there and that we continue to rely on Canada's investments. Yes, this government needs to continue to collaborate because if we didn't, I'm not sure what would happen.

But at the end of the day, all this motion is doing is pointing out what the job of this government is — that's it. When we were in municipal politics, we talked about jurisdiction and

what was ours and what wasn't ours; who is responsible for this and which level of government is responsible for that? This motion talks about this government's job — that's all. If we were to put it down very simply — way less words — the motion would read: encourage this government to do its job — that's all — and be collaborative with the federal government so that we can have that funding in place to do those important things: improve our highways; construct new schools; expand the current hospital; invest in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure.

Maybe we should have added a few. There were other things that could have been on this, but the bottom line is that all this motion is asking is for the government to do its job. That's what I came to at the end of this day after listening to everyone and hearing about all the projects that government is doing — and some feel they are doing well and others feel they are not doing so well and the consultation and collaboration and all of those things, and who should we talk to and who should we not. At the end of the day all this motion does is direct this government to do its job in collaboration with the federal government so that we still have those funds coming in that we depend on. That's all the motion says. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Mr. Hassard:** I have to agree with the Minister of Community Services, it has been a very interesting afternoon. I'll just keep carrying on and hopefully we'll see unanimous consent again for this vote. Thank you.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

#### Division

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

#### Bells

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Agree.

**Ms. McLeod:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Agree.

**Mr. Hassard:** D'accord.

**Ms. Hanson:** Agree.

**Ms. Stick:** Agree.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Agree.

**Ms. White:** Agree.

**Mr. Tredger:** Agree.

**Mr. Silver:** Agree.

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

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

*Motion No. 430 agreed to*



**Speaker:** The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.*