



October 10, 2019

Pauline Frost
Minister of Environment
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation

Dear Minister Frost:

Our government is now in its third year of building a prosperous Yukon with strong environmental stewardship and supporting the wellbeing of Yukon people and their families.

I want to thank you for your dedication and commitment to our collective work of serving Yukoners and making their lives better.

As we enter the latter half of our mandate, this letter is to provide you with guidance in building on our achievements to date and implementing our commitments to Yukoners.

In coming into office, we were clear on our priorities. Our government has advanced collaborative and integrated care in the territory through initiatives such as the mental wellness hubs across the territory. Partnerships with schools, parents, educators and First Nations are stronger. The first university north of 60 is taking shape, increasing the opportunities for a range of post-secondary options for Yukon students closer to home. More lots and affordable housing solutions are available to meet an increased demand for places to live. We remain committed to building on this progress to help Yukoners lead healthy, productive lives and to support vibrant, sustainable communities throughout the territory.

Yukon's economy is flourishing. The largest gold mine in Yukon's history is beginning production and other mining projects are advancing. The number of visitors to our territory is growing; and there is a clear plan to build a vibrant, sustainable tourism industry over the next decade. Dynamic new start-up companies are expanding our knowledge sector. We will continue to work with these and other industries and Yukon businesses to ensure they have the supports, infrastructure and certainty they need to grow. At the same time, we will continue to take steps to ensure our economic goals are integrated with a commitment to environmental sustainability.

Clearly, the impacts of climate change represent the biggest challenge of our generation. The North is warming at a faster rate than the rest of Canada. It is time for governments to take definite actions. Our work on establishing greenhouse gas reduction targets and putting in place concrete measures to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change will be integrated with our efforts to build a green economy and an energy sector with a growing focus on renewable sources.

In making these and other commitments to Yukoners, we will continue to deliver results and report back to citizens. Our government has released two performance plans on our progress to date. These reports included performance measures and we are strengthening these measures by developing indicators of community wellbeing that reflect Yukon circumstances.

We have always recognized that what matters to people is not just what we do but how we do it. We promised to be open and transparent and listen to what Yukoners had to say. We have engaged Yukoners on what is important to them and what solutions they favoured – whether implementing the legalization of cannabis in the territory, designing Yukon's carbon rebate program or planning the future of our health care system or our parks and campgrounds. We have had, and will continue to have, conversations in communities across the territory because we believe local issues are best addressed through local solutions.

We will continue our positive approach to working with our government counterparts, whether these are First Nations and municipal governments here in Yukon or our governmental partners across the country and beyond. Through this approach, we have achieved progress on issues that are important to Yukoners and Yukon businesses. This includes securing significant flexibility in federal infrastructure programs that allows us to tailor projects to fit the territory's needs. We have transformed our relationship with Yukon's First Nations and will advance solutions to mutual interests through respectful, ongoing collaboration as partners. Reconciliation is, and will continue to be, an ongoing priority of our government.

As a ministerial team, we have provided leadership for a one-government approach working for the betterment of Yukon. In furthering our positive, respectful relationships with deputy ministers and the public service, we are fostering a culture of collaboration and cooperation across departments. This is critical to ensuring government policies, programs, services and practices are grounded in a strong appreciation of the needs of citizens and communities and are adaptable to changing circumstances. It means there is shared purpose in our collective work and a common understanding of the implications of decisions before they are taken. The non-partisan advice and expertise of our dedicated public service remain key to our collective responsibility to reach fair, evidence-based and balanced decisions.

We have made fiscally sound decisions when it comes to government priorities and budgeting. With the advice of our public service, we have increased our ability to forecast our budgetary needs more effectively, understanding that Yukoners expect to see what we plan to spend in a year in the main budget estimates tabled each spring.

The work of the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel will continue to inform decisions to increase the efficiency of government operations and to ensure taxpayers get value for the services they receive. Our ongoing commitment is to make balanced, well-considered decisions about government spending to support meaningful and effective investments in jobs, in people and in communities across the territory.

As the Minister of Environment, you have a key role in Yukon's response to the challenges posed by climate change. Working with your other ministerial colleagues and government partners in Yukon, you are to help lead the completion of an integrated climate change, energy and green economy strategy. Effective action by our government will reduce Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and ensure it can mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change as we build a greener future.

In your role as Minister of Environment, you are to help ensure Yukon takes effective action to build a clean future by meeting the vision, values, goals and actions of the strategy. This includes:

- Tracking greenhouse gas emissions on a regular basis
- Conducting regular assessments of the impacts of climate change on Yukon and reporting to Yukoners on the effectiveness of actions in meeting targets and reducing emissions
- Working with colleagues to integrate risk assessments and mitigation actions into government policies, practices and projects
- Working with the Minister of Community Services to reduce waste through better waste management and recycling programs
- Using scientific, local and traditional knowledge, enhancing understanding of how climate change will affect watersheds and the habitat for fish and other wild species

In addition, as the Minister of Environment, you are to:

- Work with the Minister of Community Services to implement a ban on single use bags in Yukon
- Implement the Peel Watershed Land Use Plan and support other land use planning processes, in collaboration with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources
- Work with your ministerial colleagues to complete a wetlands policy
- Complete a new parks strategy to support future planning and development of Yukon parks and campgrounds
- Develop new animal protection legislation
- Work with parties to the Porcupine Caribou management agreements to support a healthy Porcupine Caribou Herd through lobbying and other efforts to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other key habitat

- Develop legislation to protect Yukon species at risk while taking other actions aimed at protecting vulnerable species
- Work with the Premier and Minister of Economic Development to establish and implement a co-lab as an open and creative process in which people work together to generate practical solutions related to economic and environmental sustainability

As the Minister of Health and Social Services, your principal responsibility is to enhance the long-term wellbeing and quality of life for Yukon people, from infants to seniors and Elders. Considerable progress has been made under your leadership towards building more comprehensive and coordinated programs and services to meet people's health and social service needs, when and where they need them.

In building on achievements to date, you are to:

- Complete the comprehensive review of health and social services and initiate early actions that respond to recommendations of the independent expert panel
- Complete the aging in place strategy and action plan to help Yukoners remain in their homes and communities as they age, taking into consideration recommendations from the comprehensive review
- Working with community partners, develop a long-term plan to ensure the effective operation of the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter
- Open the Housing First facility in Whitehorse to reduce homelessness among vulnerable people
- Working with community partners, support work through the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services to demonstrate effective models for housing with supports that meet people's needs
- Develop models of care to support regulated midwifery
- Modernize the *Child and Family Services Act*, taking into account the recommendations from the advisory committee that reviewed the Act
- Develop a strategic framework for early childhood development, initially focused on rural Yukon communities, in collaboration with the Minister of Education
- Develop a plan for government support of land-based programming based on an evaluation of community wellness plans, in collaboration with the Minister of Justice
- Work with the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, the Minister of Justice and the Yukon Advisory Council to develop a comprehensive Yukon action plan that addresses the calls for justice in the report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Work with the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate on legislation to ban conversion therapy
- Work with the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate and the Minister of Justice to complete the implementation of the Sexualized Assault Response Team (SART) and take other actions to improve services for victims of violence and sexualized assault

- Work with the Minister responsible for the Yukon Cannabis Corporation and the Minister of Justice to develop Yukon rules for the safe distribution and sale of edible cannabis products based on federal regulation

Our government is actively working to meet the need for more housing in the territory, whether through new building lots, increased community housing or more affordable rental suites. Under your leadership, the Yukon Housing Corporation has invested or committed funds to more than 400 homes in the past two years. As the Minister, you are to continue responding to needs across the housing spectrum through your work with the private sector, other governments and non-governmental organizations, guided by Housing Action Plan. This is to include:

- Using the Housing Initiatives Fund and other programming to increase affordable places to live that meet community needs
- Working with community partners, supporting work through the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services to demonstrate effective models for housing with supports that respond to people's needs
- Modernizing the approach to providing social housing throughout Yukon
- Working with Yukon First Nations to ensure they have equitable access to funding through the federal Indigenous Housing Strategy and the Low Carbon Economy Fund
- Working with the Minister of the Public Service Commission to implement a fair approach to staff housing that includes opportunities for private sector housing development

In my first letter to you as Minister, I set out my expectations with respect to the principle of ministerial accountability and the responsibilities you have to work in the public interest. This included the obligation to meet the highest standards of ethical behaviour. These expectations remain unchanged.

As Premier, I appreciate the strong sense of purpose and the diligence you have brought to your ministerial duties over the past two years. You have my continued support – and gratitude – as we work together to fulfil our commitments to Yukoners.

I know I can count on you to work with courage and compassion in meeting our ongoing responsibility to the people we serve and building a better Yukon for all.

Sincerely,



Sandy Silver
Premier