



Procurement:

The Yukon Government has large purchasing power and as such can help the technology sector grow by acting as an anchor tenant providing stability while allowing Yukon-based companies to focus on external growth.

With thousands of public servants responsible for purchasing, how would your Party ensure local businesses are prioritized through the recovery, and long-term?

The Yukon Liberal government responded quickly and decisively to the pandemic and prioritized economic supports to protect Yukon businesses and mitigate impacts on local employers and employees. We plan to continue to provide our suite of COVID-19 support programs, including the Yukon Business Relief Program, the Paid Sick Leave Program and the programs under the Tourism Relief and Recovery Plan, for as long as they are needed.

In the last four years, we overhauled the government's procurement process to make it more effective and responsive to the needs of Yukon businesses. We introduced a new online procurement system to reduce red tape, save businesses money, and make the procurement process easier, faster and more reliable. We also introduced a value-driven procurement process that incorporates First Nation participation and northern experience into the evaluation of proposals. Between March and September 2020, approximately \$197.5 million, or 79%, of all contracts were awarded to Yukon businesses, and we expect this trend to continue.

What is your stance on the First Nations Purchasing Policy (FNPP) and explain how you see it benefiting or being detrimental to the business community as a whole?

We believe the First Nations Procurement Policy will result in more contracts going to Yukon companies and less contracts going to Outside companies. As a government, we were proud to develop this policy in partnership with First Nations and have it endorsed at the last Yukon Forum. The Policy went into effect on February 22, 2021. We see this as a major step toward realizing the vision of Chapter 22 of the Umbrella Final Agreement in achieving equitable and sustainable economic growth and prosperity for the Yukon. We are pleased that the Yukon's business community supports the goals of the policy to strengthen outcomes for Yukon First Nations people and businesses by providing opportunities for Yukon First Nations governments,

businesses and people to participate in territorial procurements. We have heard concerns from local businesses about aspects of the policy, including the verification of First Nation businesses and Bid-Value reductions. We appreciate these concerns and we have committed to working together with our First Nation partners and the private sector to address these concerns. To that end we have extended the timeline to implement these aspects of the policy until October 4, 2021.

What tools would you use to leverage the government's purchasing power to bring support to the local businesses such as: long-term contracts, value-based contracting, supporting innovative start-ups, adopting technology and intellectual property developed by Yukon's private sector and the use of trade agreement exceptions?

Along with the budget, each year we will continue to publish a Five-Year Capital Plan, which we introduced in 2018. This reflects our commitment to openness and transparency by identifying the government's plans for the procurement, management and delivery of capital projects. Providing a five year plan helps local businesses plan to bid on projects. As noted above, we introduced a value-driven procurement process that incorporates First Nation participation and northern experience into the evaluation of proposals.

In terms of the tech sector specifically, we were proud to invest \$1.9 million in NorthLight Innovation, the first innovation hub in the North. We also invested in an innovative partnership with the Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation and Panache Ventures to support entrepreneurial and investor capacity-building in the territory. In addition to mentoring opportunities for local entrepreneurs, Panache Ventures plans to invest in local tech start-ups. We included funding in this year's budget to support the Innovation and Entrepreneurship program delivered in partnership with Yukon University. We also budgeted more than \$20 million to begin construction of the Dempster Fibre Line this year to provide more reliable internet access.

We will continue to use trade exemptions. We have used all 10 exemptions in the last two years, to benefit Yukon companies.

Education:

If elected, how do you plan to adjust the current curriculum to reflect a changing world i.e., coding classes, networking classes, etc. to get ahead of the stem curve?

Our understanding is that some coding classes are currently being offered. This is an issue we would work with your organization to move forward on and one that will be addressed in the finalized Innovation Strategy.

Telecommunications:

Many governments are trying to bring solutions to the digital divide by making the internet ubiquitous, affordable and accessible. Yukon still only has one internet connection to the south but the Dempster Highway project is progressing.

How will your government support the ongoing investment in telecommunications infrastructure, including access to internet and cellular coverage?

We know businesses rely on strong internet connections and consistent access. That's why we are moving forward with the Dempster Fibre project. This is an 800-kilometre fibre optic line along the Dempster Highway from Dawson City to Inuvik. The Dempster Fibre Line will connect to the existing Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link in Inuvik. The project will benefit communities in Yukon and NWT by providing a backup line in the event of a service disruption. Construction of the fibre line will begin this year and be complete in 2024.

Another project we supported is Northwestel's 'fibre to the home' project which aims to provide better broadband internet to communities and at rates comparable to those charged in Whitehorse. When this project is completed in 36 months, we will be the most connected place in Canada.

Of course, there have already been cellular improvements in local areas, such as Mendenhall and Champagne in recent years. We will continue to work with the private sector to improve service to new parts of the Yukon.

What will your party do to ensure that internet redundancy is implemented?

We have significantly advanced the Dempster Fibre Line. We have secured funding to build the fibre optic line and got the project through the assessment process. Work is now underway and we budgeted more than \$20 million to construct the Dempster Fibre line this year to improve internet data and cellular service reliability for Yukoners and businesses.

Investing / Angel Networks:

Yukon has a growing set of start-ups that require capital to grow. Many jurisdictions such as British Columbia, Alberta and North Ontario have more advanced ecosystems with targeted incentive programs for investment in order to capitalize on the growing importance of high-growth startups. The National Angel Capital Organization (NACO) has just released a report for Yukon that outlines the key steps in developing the investment component Yukon's venture ecosystem including the formation of an angel investment group as well as investment incentives.

Would your party support dollar matching or similar incentives for an angel investors network to support the gap between "friends and family" and venture capitalist?

The Yukon Liberal government was proud to invest \$1.9 million in NorthLight Innovation, the first innovation hub in the North. We also invested in an innovative partnership to support entrepreneurial and investor capacity-building in the territory. We are interested in continuing to explore investment opportunities for Yukon's tech and knowledge sector, including providing incentives. A multi-year partnership with the National Angel Capital Organization (NACO) will increase our understanding of Yukon's potential for starting an angel network and angel funds.

Would your party partner with a local angel investor group in its mission to develop and invest in Yukon's startup entrepreneurs?

In 2019 the Yukon Liberal government invested in an innovative partnership with the Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation and Panache Ventures to support entrepreneurial and investor capacity-building in the territory. In addition to mentoring opportunities for local entrepreneurs, Panache Ventures plans to invest in local tech start-ups.

Analytics / Data Literacy:

The application of modern business intelligence and analytics tools (e.g., Tableau, Qlik, PowerBI) to Yukon Government operations holds great potential to improve the quality and effectiveness of public services delivered to Yukon people. What is your plan to raise the level of data literacy within the Yukon public service and implement modern business intelligence and analytics tools across government?

We are always looking at how to equip and empower government employees to excel at their jobs and provide excellent service to Yukoners.

What is the level of commitment of your party to use modern business intelligence and analytics tools (e.g., Tableau, Qlik, PowerBI) to share knowledge across departments and create a more unified and real-time approach to Yukon Government service delivery?

The Liberal government worked with Proof to improve the case-work response system in the cabinet office and in some government departments. We can certainly agree this is an area that needs to be improved.

Electronic Government:

Modern governments are implementing electronic service delivery online with digital identity to improve service and lower costs. What is your commitment to implementing online services including digital identity?

We recognize that information technology improvements support Yukoners in many ways. We have identified nearly \$160 million in IT investments in the Five-Year Capital

Plan. These focus on business improvement projects, new eService projects and asset management projects.

Recruitment / Employee Retention:

Many local IT based businesses have had challenges recruiting and retaining employees. Local talent in the north is limited and many businesses have had to recruit outside the territory. How will your party help resolve these challenges and what steps will you take to ensure there are proper training and educational opportunities to grow the local talent pool?

There is a reason Whitehorse was named one of the top communities in Canada for entrepreneurship and that is the entrepreneurs who have made this place their home. We have helped by cutting business taxes by over \$12 million since 2017 and by helping Yukon College become Yukon University but it is people like Chris Lane and Dave Larkin and Ben Sanders and so many others who are putting this place on the map.

It's the ecosystem we have helped create by supporting entrepreneurs through Northlight Innovation Centre and through our work with Yukon University's Innovation and Entrepreneurship program.

There have been new ideas like supporting First Nation investment in the Panache Ventures Fund and working with the National Angel Capital Organization to bring investment to the territory.

Our government is in the final stages of completing an Innovation Strategy. Tech Yukon has been involved in that work to date.

Our recent budget includes a universal childcare program which will also address some of the recruitment issues that businesses are experiencing.

Our platform released recently includes a new immigration strategy to support increased workforce requirements of business and industry. That will include working with Canada to access what they call the 'Global Talent Stream'. It also includes establishing an Innovation Commission to attract new technology startups and grow the Yukon's digital ecosystem.

We know housing is also an ongoing issue and we have spent heavily over the last four years to catch up after many years of inaction from the previous government.