



October 10, 2019

Ranj Pillai
Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources
Minister of Economic Development
Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation
Minister responsible for the Yukon Energy Corporation

Dear Minister Pillai:

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.

In all your ministerial roles, you have a leadership responsibility for completing an integrated strategy that reduces Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions, ensures Yukoners have access to reliable and affordable renewable energy, adapts to the impacts of climate change and builds a green economy. Working with the Minister of Environment, your other ministerial colleagues and government partners in Yukon, 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 actions to:

- Support renewable energy solutions and clean alternatives, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels
- help industries respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change
- Promote the availability and use of zero emission vehicles
- Increase the availability of electric vehicle charging stations across Yukon, including exploring potential options for stations on highways that connect with neighbouring jurisdictions
- Support energy efficient retrofits and other measures to improve building resiliency
- Encourage green businesses to foster a green economy in Yukon

In addition, as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, you are expected to:

- Complete a mineral development strategy to guide a long-term vision for the industry, following an independent panel's engagement with Yukoners
- Work with the Minister of Highways and Public Works to advance Yukon Resource Gateway projects;
- In collaboration with the Premier, work with partners to ensure Yukon's socio-economic and environmental assessment and regulatory regime effectively address concerns related to development projects without unnecessary duplication
- Clarify the approach to mineral staking within municipalities and zoned communities
- Develop and implement regulations to address the impacts of off-road vehicles by designating sensitive ecological areas where they are not permitted; work with the Minister of Highway and Public Works to develop future licensing regulations under a new Motor Vehicles Act
- Complete a forest management plan for the Whitehorse-Southern Lakes region to create harvesting opportunities, mitigate forest fire risk and grow a renewable biomass industry in the territory
- Implement the Peel Watershed Land Use Plan and support other land use planning processes, in collaboration with the Minister of Environment
- Complete and implement a new agriculture policy to support the continued development of the industry and increase Yukon's ability to be more self-sufficient in food production

- Work with Yukon First Nations to develop successor resource legislation to replace the two statutes governing land management in Yukon
- Work with the Minister of Community Services to make lots available for Yukoners and create opportunities for private sector land development

As the Minister of Economic Development, you are to:

- Support economic diversification through investments in the knowledge and technology sector, working with business and industry partners and First Nations development corporations
- Complete an innovation plan and a five-year funding plan for innovation in the technology sector
- Work with the Premier and the Minister of Environment 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
- Complete the review of economic funding programs to make this programming more responsive with less red tape
- Enhance immigration to the territory, including implementing a pilot program that allows for more flexibility under the Yukon Nominee Program to respond to the needs of seasonal employers;
- Work with the Minister of Education to take advantage of increased funding and flexibility on initiatives to meet Yukon's labour market needs
- Work with the Ministers of Community Services and Highways and Public Works to reduce red tape and regulatory impediments

As the Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation, you are to encourage a greener future through the increased availability of renewable energy solutions. This includes:

- Developing a plan on the future of renewable energy
- Working with First Nations, municipalities and the private sector to develop additional renewable energy projects through the Innovative Renewable Energy Initiative Fund and the Arctic Energy Fund
- Working with the Yukon Energy Corporation to implement solutions that reduce the corporation's reliance of fossil fuels
- Support the development of a renewable biomass industry

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sandy Silver', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Sandy Silver
Premier