

Yukon Climate Action Network
Questions for Whitehorse Mayor and Council Candidates
October 2024

Answers from Anne Middler

Question 0: What is your name and what position are you running for in this municipal election?

Anne Middler for Whitehorse City Council

Question 1: Please provide your level of agreement with the following statement:

"Municipalities should consider costs to the climate for all budget items being considered. This would mean inclusion of the following considerations for each budget item: Will it help reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Will it increase greenhouse gas emissions? If yes, efforts must be made to minimize GHG impacts."

Agree

Question 2: The Council of Canadians Yukon Chapter has released a Climate Emergency Declaration, which has been endorsed by a number of businesses, organizations and individual residents. It can be found here: <https://www.cofcyukon.org/declaration> Would you commit to acting in alignment with the Declaration if you are elected?

Yes

Question 3: Is there a role for regional or municipal food policy to play in addressing the climate crisis and if so, what does it look like?

Absolutely. Lots of embedded energy, transportation emissions and vulnerabilities in our food system. We need to do whatever we can to promote local food production and preservation not only as a climate mitigation action, but also adaptation and resilience. Long transportation networks are vulnerable to disasters interrupting supply. We also need to not be so reliant on other places ability to grow our food. Food sovereignty and security will result in healthier food and will promote local jobs and economic development. Win win win. We could also look into anaerobic digesters to create biogas from our food waste, but better would be to reduce waste in the first place.

Question 4: Please provide your level of agreement with the following statement: "As Whitehorse, "The Wilderness City", faces more wildfires, landslides, erosion and flooding, due to climate change, subsequently forcing hungry bears into urban areas, we must act. By becoming a Bear Smart Community, as in 18 other Bear Smart communities in BC and Alberta, which includes adopting better waste management practices and educating residents in affected communities, we can reduce human-bear conflicts, keep residents safe, and prevent the killing of bears drawn to our city center neighborhoods and the city's wilderness edges."
Strongly agree

Question 5: The City of Whitehorse is in the process of developing its Climate Action Plan. What work would you do as part of Whitehorse City Council to ensure its success? What actions related to climate mitigation or adaptation do you think deserve the highest priority?
I would ensure that actions taken from the plan also achieve other goals in addition to reducing GHGs. It's important to be able to justify and persuade others of the benefits, and easier if the benefits are many. For example, displacing imported fossil fuels with local renewable energy. This plugs an economic leak, creates jobs, builds a local economy and reduces fossil fuels and GHGs. It also increases energy security so we're less dependent on fuel trucks coming up the highway. We also need to mitigate fire risk. We have a huge fire break. Can we grow food in there? Or create recreation opportunities? I like to think about cobenefits when considering climate actions when we consider financial constraints we need to work within. The Robert service way project is an adaptation project that is going to suck a lot of financial resources. Worth thinking differently about.

Question 6: The City's draft climate action plan (see <https://www.engagewhitehorse.ca/climate-action-plan>, page 7) shows that Whitehorse emissions have only kept rising since the City declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. Furthermore, the science behind climate change indicates that change is happening faster than previously predicted. Do you believe that the Whitehorse Climate Action plan should commit to aggressive greenhouse gas reduction goals with clear timelines that reflect the increasing urgency of the climate crisis?
Yes. And climate change is happening regardless as we can't control the increased emissions outside our borders. Again, I wholeheartedly support climate action (mitigation) but these actions need to have cobenefits - from adaptation/resilience, local economic development, energy and food security and sovereignty, and improving community health. I am a huge proponent of transportation equity: public transit and active transportation. There are many co benefits around human health, community well-being and pollution reduction that come along with investments in those climate actions. We need to be smart

with our limited funds so I support achieving many goals at once to be smart with our spending. Thank you for the questions and for all your work in the community. I worked for an ENGO for a decade in energy and climate change for the Yukon Conservation Society. I started a business Kicksled Revolution as I thought it was a climate solution - turns out it's more about community wellness so that's a win too. For more info about me and my values/approach please visit Facebook Anne Middler for Whitehorse City Council. Thankyou for this opportunity. Anne