

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

Answers from Sarah Newton

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

Sarah Newton and 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."

Strongly 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?

Absolutely

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?

Yes, the environmental grant has provided funding for a number of food security initiatives. Municipal garden boxes and lands could be used to produce food for citizens, particularly from vulnerable communities.

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?

The Climate Action plan should be implemented as soon as possible and then further action needs to be taken. This is only the first step. Climate action broadly needs to be expedited starting with aggressive reduction in GHG emissions.

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?

Absolutely