



What We Heard

Public engagement on a new school in downtown Whitehorse

September 2025

Government of Yukon

Department of Education

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Background

The goal of this public engagement was to listen to Yukoners, hear their ideas and thoughts, and use what we learned to help plan a new school in downtown Whitehorse.

The engagement specifically sought input and ideas on:

Where the new school should be located?

What supports for learning should be prioritized?

How to ensure a safe and accessible school environment?

Why do we need a new public school in downtown Whitehorse?

Two factors drove this need:

1

Aging infrastructure: Many of Whitehorse's existing schools face maintenance and upgrade challenges due to aging infrastructure. This could impact the quality of education and the overall learning environment

2

Growing population: Whitehorse's population is growing steadily, putting pressure on existing schools. From 2019 to 2024, enrolment in Whitehorse schools increased by about 14 per cent. According to the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, the number of children under 18 in downtown Whitehorse and Riverdale is expected to grow by another 13 per cent over the next five years. This would mean approximately 162 more students, enough to fill a tier-one school, which typically serves between 150 and 275 students. A new downtown school would help relieve this pressure and create space to meet the needs of the Yukon's growing population.

The **two proposed locations** are:

1

The current **École Whitehorse Elementary School** site (4181 4th Avenue): This location offers the opportunity to revitalize an existing school site.

2

Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers): This location offers a unique opportunity to develop a new school in a central downtown location as part of a planned residential neighborhood.

Engagement process

The Government of Yukon is committed to engaging with the public on the development of future schools.

For this engagement several methods were provided for the public to participate – with a focus on targeting people who live in downtown Whitehorse.

The engagement process consisted of a **three-part approach**;

1 **An online survey** was conducted from May 14 to June 15, 2025.

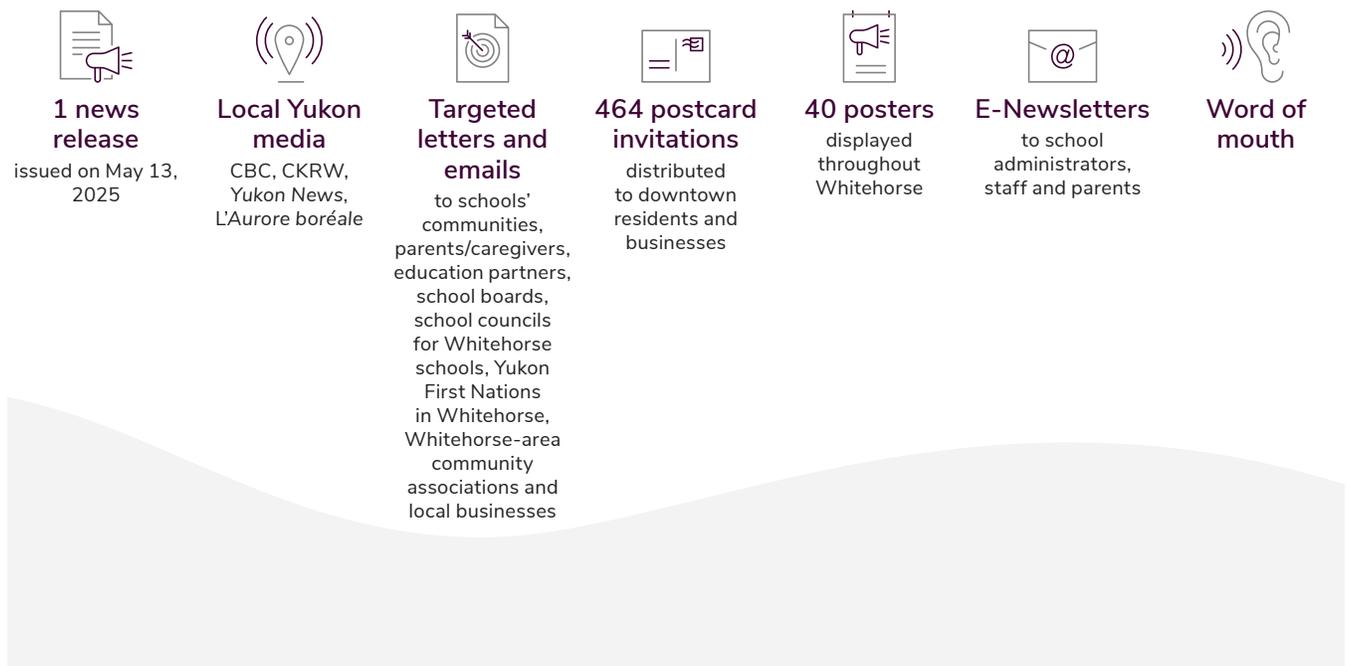
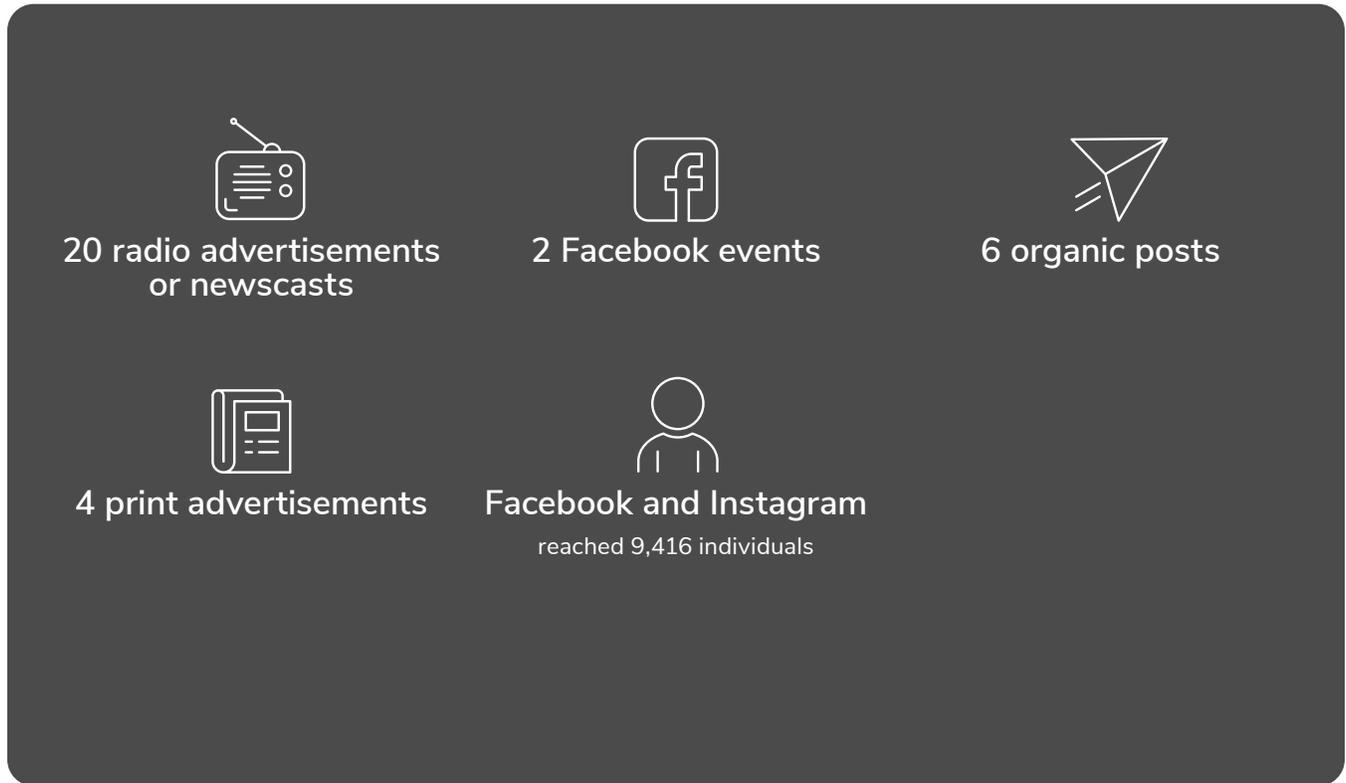
2 **Two public drop-in sessions** in Whitehorse, where participants could learn more, ask questions and share their perspectives directly with Government of Yukon officials. These sessions took place on May 29 and 31, 2025.

3 **In-person meetings** with education and community partners, and Yukon First Nations, including Kwanlin Dūn First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, the City of Whitehorse, Downtown Residents' Association and West End Developments. These meetings took place from January to June 2025. The meetings were about the engagement process, purpose, land options and timeline, with the call to action to share the survey and drop-in session information with their contacts and membership.



Notification and outreach

The engagement was promoted through:



What we asked

The focus of this engagement was to ensure the new school reflects community priorities and to hear from Yukoners on the possible locations for a new downtown public school. The discussion centred on three themes:

Potential site options

– Where should the new school be located?

Traffic and safety

– How can we ensure a safe and accessible school environment?

Educational needs

– What should be prioritized to support student learning?

In addition to these three themes, participants were also asked about the school environment and broader community needs. They also had the opportunity to share other ideas and considerations throughout the engagement process.

What we heard



Online survey

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**Summary of
the online
survey by theme**

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Online survey

The online survey contained fourteen questions and took about ten minutes for a respondent to complete. The online survey was only available to Yukon residents.

In total, 566 Yukoners completed the survey.



98.1%
live in the Whitehorse and the surrounding area*



68%
are parents or legal guardians of a child 18 years of age or younger*



38%
are aged 40 to 49*



work
in downtown Whitehorse*



neither live nor work
in downtown Whitehorse*



live
in downtown Whitehorse*

* For greater details, please see the Appendix I – Complete online public survey results, page 18.



Summary of the online survey by theme

Potential site options – Where should the new school be located?

A significant majority of participants expressed strong support for a new public school in downtown Whitehorse, with the Kèjān and Rogers site emerging as the preferred location.**



indicated support for a new public school



Kèjān and Rogers site



École Whitehorse Elementary School site

“A school downtown is absolutely needed.”

Traffic and safety – How can we ensure a safe and accessible school environment?

When choosing a location for a new public school in downtown Whitehorse, participants placed the greatest importance on wellbeing and safety, convenience and accessibility, and access to nearby amenities such as parks and trails. Traffic flow and parking were also key considerations.**



wellbeing and safety



convenience and accessibility



access to amenitie (e.g., parks, playgrounds, trails)



traffic and parking

“A safe environment for children to attend.”

Educational needs – What should be prioritized to support student learning?

A significant majority of participants supported including a third-party-operated early learning and child care centre in the new downtown school. A strong majority also prioritized outdoor learning spaces, such as gardens and playgrounds, as important educational resources.**



indicated support for a downtown Whitehorse public school that contains an early learning and child care education centre operated by a third-party organization (private or non-profit)



indicated outdoor learning spaces (e.g., gardens, playgrounds) as their most preferred educational resource to be included in the new downtown Whitehorse public school

“I support a downtown Whitehorse public school that includes an early learning and child care education centre because it fosters collaboration between government programs, similar to successful models in British Columbia.”

** For greater details, please see the Appendix I – Complete online public survey results, page 20



Drop-in public engagement sessions

Two drop-in public engagement sessions gave participants an informal opportunity to ask questions and share their thoughts and suggestions directly with Government of Yukon officials from various departments.

Summary of the May 29, 2025, drop-in public engagement session

– Held at the Old Fire Hall, Whitehorse

- **Support for a downtown school**, with a preference expressed for the current École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue) due to its central location and existing infrastructure.
- Some participants **preferred the Kèjān and Rogers** site for its proximity to social housing, which could foster a sense of community. Concerns included poor road access, traffic, and inadequate sidewalks.
- **Alternative sites were suggested**, such as the former Municipal Services Building or Wood Street.
- Some suggested **preserving the historical value of École Whitehorse Elementary School** through adaptive reuse.
- **Others proposed building schools at both potential sites**, or repurposing locations like Grey Mountain Primary to help meet capacity needs.
- Participants emphasized the importance of **inclusive, community-oriented programming** for a walkable neighbourhood elementary school. Suggestions included:
 - dedicated spaces for fine arts (e.g., music rooms, theatre)
 - after-school programs (e.g., baking, dance)
 - facilities for Elders and community groups, such as cadets
 - Yukon-specific curricula, including land-based learning
 - accessibility features (e.g., wheelchair-friendly spaces)
- There were also **varied views on the type of school**. Some participants proposed a middle school, high school, or dedicated French Immersion school, while others preferred a non-specialized school that would serve all students.
- Some also suggested mixed-use development at the Kèjān and Rogers site, such as **combining housing and a school**.
- Support for a **middle school** was also voiced, reflecting interest in age-appropriate educational transitions.
- Concerns focused on **long-term infrastructure** planning to avoid undersized schools, citing examples like F.H. Collins Secondary School and Whistle Bend Elementary School.
- Concerns were raised about the fact that the Government of Yukon **sold the Kèjān and Rogers site** (formerly 5th and Rogers) for one dollar to developers and whether the land could be repurchased in the future. The public noted that if it is bought back, it may not be for the same price.
- Some participants recommended **avoiding school sites at subdivision entrances** to help reduce traffic congestion. Others suggested increasing capacity at existing schools, such as Takhini Elementary.
- To address concerns about **slope stability and traffic** at the Kèjān and Rogers site, participants proposed innovative design solutions—such as having the school on moveable foundations and improved traffic management.



2 in-person public sessions



28 individuals participated
in the two drop-in public
engagement sessions

Summary of the May 31, 2025, drop-in public engagement session – Held at the Francophone Centre, Whitehorse

- Support was expressed for a downtown elementary school, with a preference for retaining or expanding the current École Whitehorse Elementary School site due to its walkability and established infrastructure.
- An alternative site across from the Whitehorse Medical Clinic on 4th Avenue was mentioned.
- Programming that focuses on community, nature, and cultural elements reflective of Yukon's identity was indicated. A school that functions as a community hub, integrating programming such as daycare, and after-school activities (e.g., recreation programs) was suggested. There was a call for multi-age, accessible playgrounds with features like toddler areas and workout equipment.
- Key concerns included a lack of transparency in planning, particularly regarding the prior sale of the Këjän and Rogers site. A concern was expressed about construction timelines, noting the complexity of school development. There was opposition to an additional French immersion school, with a preference for inclusive, English-focused elementary education.





Meetings

To keep our partners well-informed about the new school planned for downtown, we proactively sent **25 letters and emails** inviting them to meet at their convenience.

Four partners, the Downtown Residents' Association, the City of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, responded and participated in meetings with Government of Yukon officials.

These meetings offered valuable opportunities for in-depth discussions and open, collaborative dialogue. Partners shared insights, raised concerns, and suggested ideas to help shape the project.

Overall, participants expressed strong support for a new downtown school, especially an elementary school within walking distance of homes and close to community amenities like trails and parks. Many saw the school as a chance to create shared community infrastructure, including public access to the schoolyard and playground.

Participants also suggested alternative locations, such as Yukon Housing property or converting the current Wood Street School into a general-purpose school instead of a specialty program. They highlighted **traffic as an important concern** and recommended making it a priority when selecting sites for future schools.



Next steps

We sincerely thank everyone who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in this engagement. The Department of Education is grateful for your thoughtful input and valuable contributions.

The feedback gathered through this process will help the Government of Yukon plan the location of a new public school in downtown Whitehorse. It will also inform future decisions about learning priorities, educational supports, resources, and accessibility requirements.

We will continue conversations with Yukon First Nations, stakeholders, and downtown residents as this work moves forward.





Appendix I – Complete online survey results



Demographic information

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Potential site options

Where should the new school be located?

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Traffic and safety

How can we ensure a safe and accessible school environment?

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Educational needs

What should be prioritized to support student learning?

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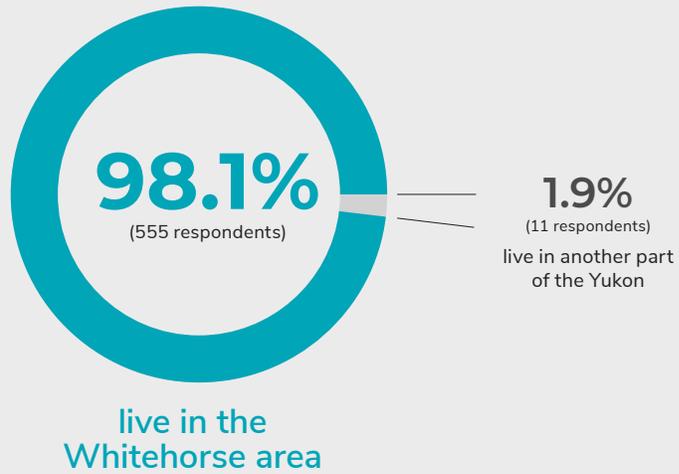
Additional comments or suggestions

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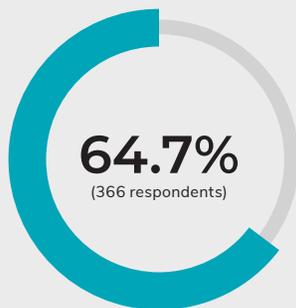


Demographic information

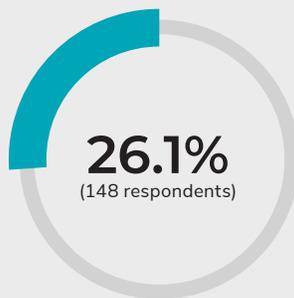
Where do you live?



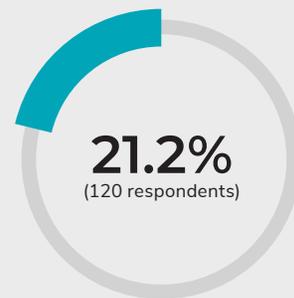
Do you live or work in downtown Whitehorse?



work
in downtown Whitehorse

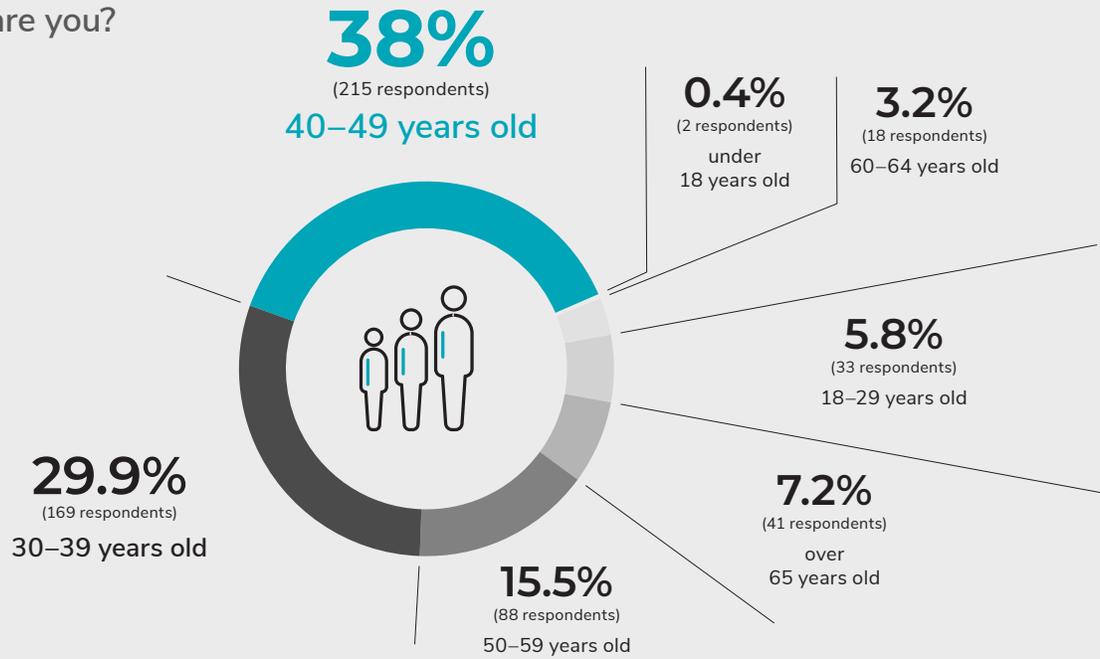


neither live nor work
in downtown Whitehorse

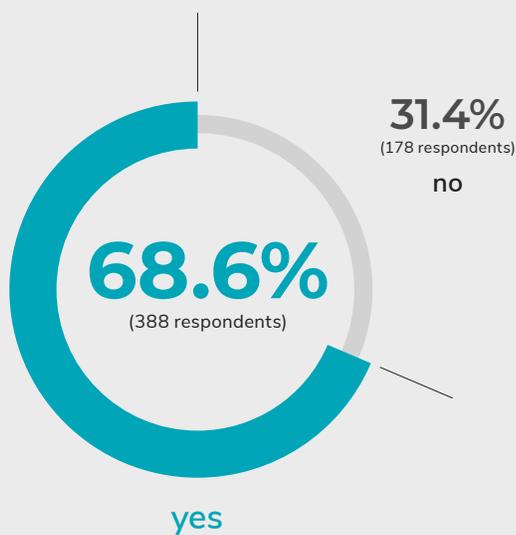


live
in downtown Whitehorse

How old are you?



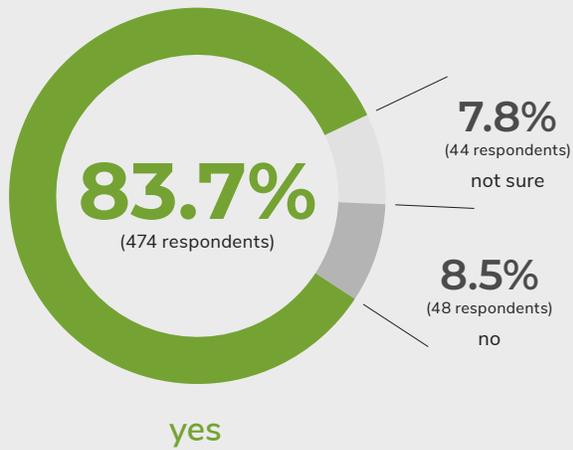
Are you a parent or legal guardian of child 18 years of age or younger?



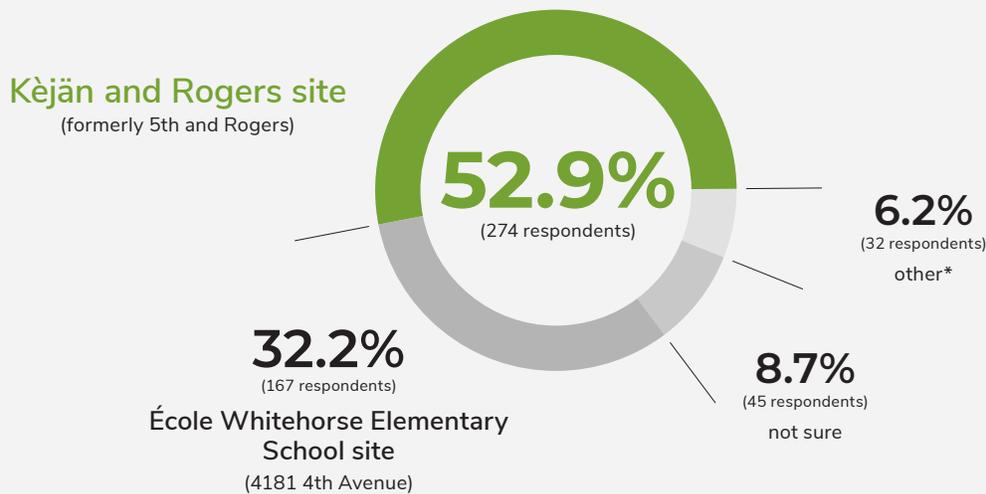


Potential site options – Where should the new school be located?

Do you support a new public school located in downtown Whitehorse?



If a downtown Whitehorse public school were to be built, which one of the following locations would you prefer?



* The comments from other highlight a diverse range of suggested alternative locations for a downtown Whitehorse, they are:

Location	Description	Participants Quote
Support for both École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue) and Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers)	4 Comments expressing support for using both the École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue) and Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers) sites, often suggesting multiple schools to address capacity or specific needs (e.g., elementary and high school or French immersion).	"Both locations, downtown elementary and middle/high school!"
Department of Education Building	2 Suggestions to use the land at the Department of Education building, noted for its size and proximity to trails, with a history as a vocational school site.	"The Department of Education building across the river is on a very large parcel of land that could accommodate a tier 1 school and is very close to trails."
Robert Service ball diamonds	2 Proposals to use the Robert Service ball diamonds, described as underutilized and suitable.	"Robert service ball diamonds— already cleared, barely get used."

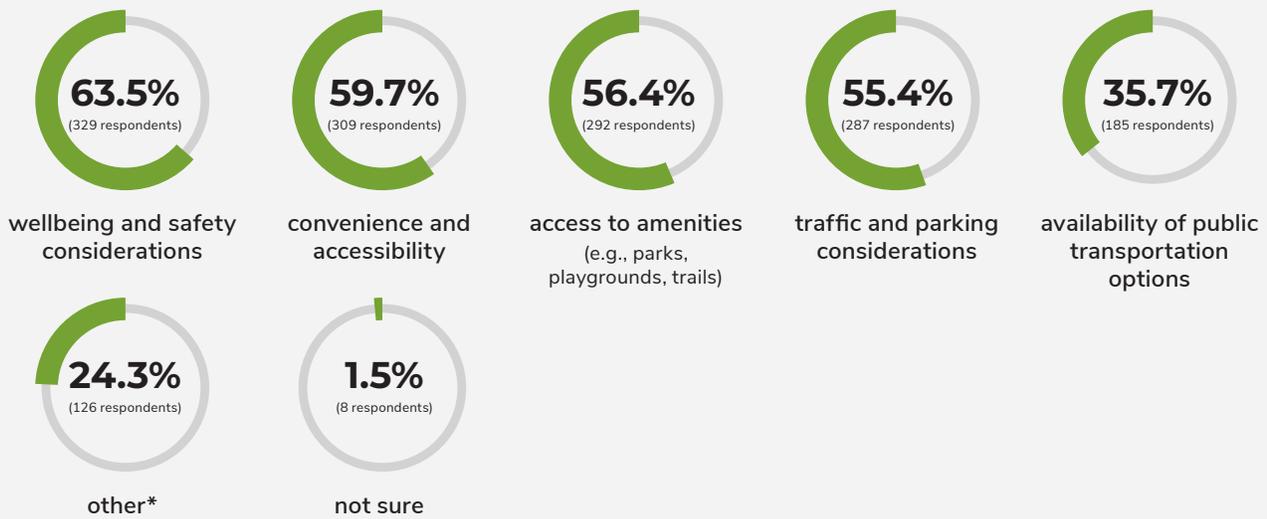
Other suggested alternative locations that were not stated on multiple occasion included; Whistle Bend, Wood Street School site, central workshop property, the industrial area, the land where the old City of Whitehorse building was (Municipal Service Building), behind the current École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue), 100 Robert Service Way and the F.H. Collins Secondary School site.



Traffic and safety

– How can we ensure a safe and accessible school environment?

What factors shaped your decision in supporting a downtown Whitehorse public school location?



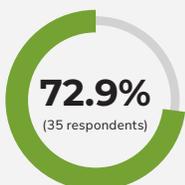
* The comments from other highlight a variety of different reasons beyond what was asked in relation to supporting a downtown Whitehorse public school location. Such comments were stated on multiple occasions.

Location	Description	Participants Quote
Current École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue)	15 Support for using the current École Whitehorse Elementary School site on emphasizing its existing infrastructure, central location, historical significance, and contribution to downtown vibrancy.	"Just rebuild WES at its current location. It's worked for decades."
Downtown (general)	15 Support for maintaining a school in the downtown core, without specifying a particular site, to enhance community vibrancy, walkability, and family-friendly urban living.	"I believe a downtown school keeps Whitehorse vibrant and family friendly. Cities should be lived in (and learned in), and urban activities should be diverse."
Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers)	7 Support for using the Kèjān and Rogers site often noted for its residential setting, proximity to green spaces, and potential to serve low-income families, despite concerns about land ownership or geological risks.	"The new site at Rogers and 5th is a fantastic opportunity to allow for a quiet, residential, neighbourhood-focussed school that kids and families can walk to."
Residential neighborhood (non-specific)	5 Preference for locating the school in a residential neighborhood, often highlighting benefits like safer transportation, proximity to families, and community integration, without specifying a particular site.	"Being in a residential neighbourhood increases safe transportation options for kids including biking to school, away from heavily traffic areas."
Behind the current École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue)	2 Proposal to build a new school directly behind the existing École Whitehorse Elementary School site, distinct from using the current site itself, to maintain proximity and leverage existing land.	"Why build 2 schools when you only need one if you just build the new Whitehorse elementary directly behind the current school."

Other suggestions that were not stated on multiple occasion included; repurpose the F.H. Collins site for the new school and to utilize both École Whitehorse Elementary School (4181 4th Avenue) and Kèjān and Rogers (formerly 5th and Rogers) sites as multiple schools to meet different needs.



Why do you not support a new downtown Whitehorse public school?



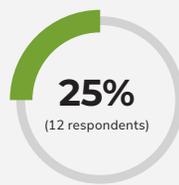
site suitability:
I do not think the downtown location is a good fit for a school



wellbeing and safety:
I worry that the downtown location could pose safety risks for students



competing community needs:
I worry that the downtown location could pose safety risks for students



other**



financial sustainability:
I am concerned that the school would be too costly

** The comments from other highlight a variety of different reasons beyond what was asked in relation to not supporting a new downtown Whitehorse public school.

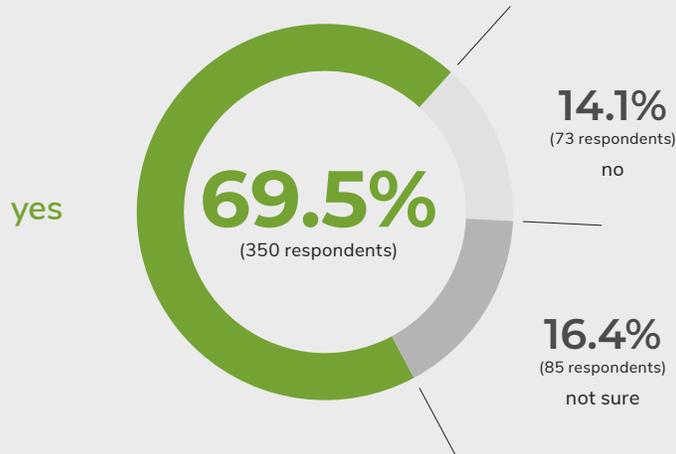
Theme		Description	Participants Quote
Traffic congestion concerns	2	Worry that adding a school with several hundred students would exacerbate existing traffic congestion in the downtown core, especially without proper traffic planning.	"Serious congestion exists in the downtown core, a school with several hundred students does not help."
Need for comprehensive planning for both elementary and high school needs	2	Criticism of the current plan as inadequate, with a call for creative solutions that address both elementary and high school capacity issues, particularly the overcapacity at F.H. Collins.	"Creating a new elementary school without addressing the needs of the already over capacity downtown high school is poor planning."
Safety concerns related to drug activity and shelter	1	Concerns about the proximity of proposed school sites to drug dealers, drug abusers, gang activity, and the "harm reduction" practices at the shelter, leading to needles and unsafe conditions.	"Both site options are too close to the drug dealers, drug abusers, and gang activity. With the shelter using the 'harm reduction' idea, needles and everything else that comes with it are strewn all over the downtown."
Insufficient student population to justify a new school	1	Belief that there are not enough children living in the downtown area to warrant building a new school.	"I don't believe there are enough kids living downtown to justify a school."
Lack of evidence for economic feasibility	1	Concern that no evidence has been provided to show that upgrading the existing school building is not economically viable.	"I have not been presented with evidence that the existing building cannot be upgraded economically."
Importance of consulting educators	1	Emphasis on the need to consult teachers and administrators at both elementary and high school levels to better understand infrastructure needs for students' K-12 journey.	"Please consult with teachers and administrators at the elementary and high school levels. These are the people who will best know what infrastructure is needed to support learners through their k-12 journey."
Lack of access to green space	1	Concern that the proposed school sites have limited access to green space, impacting the quality of the school environment.	"Little access to green space."
Adequacy of existing schools in other areas	1	Argument that the current number of schools in Riverdale is sufficient to support students from both downtown and Riverdale, suggesting no need for additional downtown schools.	"The current number of schools in Riverdale should support the students from downtown and Riverdale."



Educational needs

– What should be prioritized to support student learning?

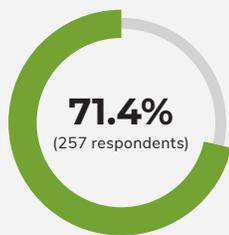
Would you support a downtown Whitehorse public school that contains an early learning and child care education centre operated by a third-party organization (private or non-profit)?



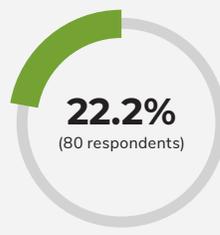
Why do you support a downtown Whitehorse public school that contains an early learning and child care education centre?



possible after school care



convenience and accessibility



other*



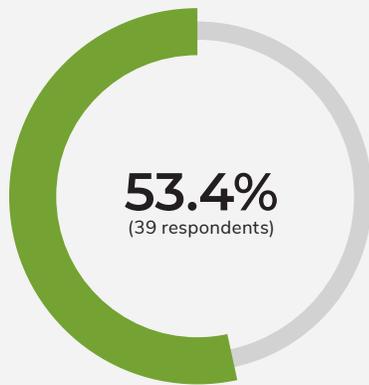
not sure

* The comments from other highlight a variety of different reasons beyond what was asked in relation to supporting a new downtown Whitehorse public school that contains an early learning and child care education centre.

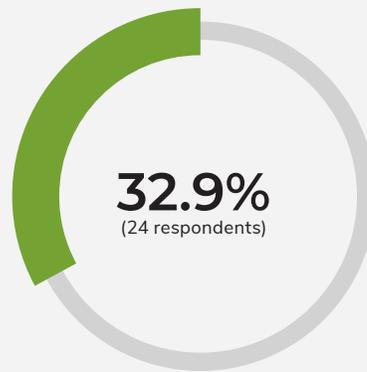
Theme	 Count	Description	Participants Quote
Community building and vibrancy	10	Emphasis on early learning and child care centres fostering community connections, integrating diverse age groups, and enhancing vibrancy through shared spaces and activities.	"It extends the school community and provides opportunities for collaboration. This is common in other jurisdictions."
Convenience for families	9	Benefits of co-locating early learning and child care with schools, including easier drop-offs for parents with children of different ages, reduced commuting, and support for working parents.	"It is an opportunity to make a nice environment for early childhood care and to make it easier on families who could drop their children at just one location in the morning."
Improved transition to formal schooling	7	Support for early learning and child care centres easing children's transition from daycare to school by familiarizing them with the school environment, staff, and routines.	"Easy transition for daycare children when they go to Kindergarten."
Addressing child care shortages	7	Recognition of the high demand for child care spaces in Whitehorse, particularly for early learning and after-school programs, and the need for more accessible options.	"Whitehorse needs more early and after school childcare options and the more 'public', the better."
Enhanced learning opportunities	6	Opportunities for enriched learning through interactions between different age groups, integration with school programs, and exposure to diverse educational activities.	"I can envision grade-school aged kids participating in activities with younger children and I think those types of interactions are beneficial to kids' growth."
Support for diverse needs	5	Benefits for specific groups, such as children with disabilities, teen parents, or First Nations families, through tailored programs and early intervention.	"I support a downtown Whitehorse public school that includes an early learning and child care education centre because it fosters collaboration between government programs, similar to successful models in British Columbia."
Infrastructure and operational efficiency	5	Advantages of using school infrastructure for early learning and child care, including efficient use of space, adherence to regulations, and year-round utilization.	"Efficient use of the infrastructure. Better able to ensure daycare regulations are adhered to."
Quality and standards of early learning and child care programs	3	Emphasis on ensuring high-quality, regulated early learning and child care programs, preferably non-profit or government-run, to meet educational and safety standards.	"I would like to see a quality early learning space that is not for profit or government run in order to really provide quality that is lacking."
Support for teachers and staff	2	Benefits for school staff, particularly teachers with young children, by providing on-site child care, improving convenience and retention.	"Teaching staff could have their own children onsite, and parents of older students would have the ease of bringing siblings to the same safe location."
Alignment with educational goals	2	Support for integrating early learning and child care into the public education system, including lowering the school start age or aligning with broader educational objectives.	"I hope that one day all elementary schools in the Yukon lower the age at school start to age 4 rather than age 5."

Other comments that were not stated on multiple occasion included; cultural and reconciliation considerations as well as economic and community development.

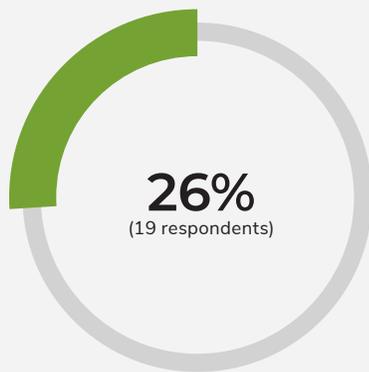
Why do you not support a downtown Whitehorse public school that contains an early learning and child care education centre?



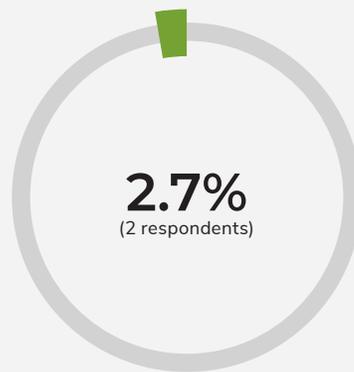
prefer a standalone
child care facility



other*



existing child
care options are
sufficient



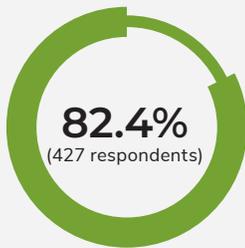
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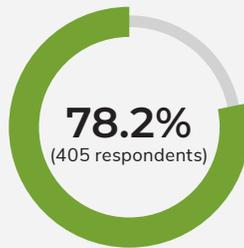
Theme	 Description	Participants Quote
Preference for public over private/ third-party operation	7 Strong preference for early learning and child care centres to be government-run rather than operated by private or third-party organizations, citing concerns about regulation, liability, and socio-economic issues.	"I do not support it being a private/third party organization. Privatization of education creates numerous socio-economic issues. Make it public instead."
Opposition to mixing age groups	4 Concerns that combining young children (e.g., preschoolers) with older school-aged children in the same facility is developmentally inappropriate or disruptive, potentially affecting educational quality or safety.	"Inequity. Developmentally inappropriate to have 12-year-olds and 2-year-olds in the same spaces."
Traffic and congestion concerns	3 Worries that integrating an early learning and child care centre with a school would exacerbate traffic, parking, and congestion issues, particularly in busy areas.	"Would compound traffic and congestion."
Blurring lines between childcare and education	3 Concerns that co-locating early learning and child care with schools confuses the roles of childcare and formal education, potentially leading to perceptions of schools as babysitting services.	"It blurs the lines between childcare and education within a school. Schools need to be seen less as babysitting and mainly childcare."
Prioritizing core educational needs	2 Argument that the focus should be on addressing existing educational challenges (e.g., school capacity, quality) before adding early learning and child care facilities, which could strain resources.	"There are already enough issues with the delivery of satisfactory education in the grade levels, no need to add additional ages prior to sorting out the current problems."
Space and capacity constraints	2 Concerns that adding an early learning and child care centre would reduce available space for the school, leading to overcrowding or smaller facilities.	"We need spots for students - the school will be over capacity in no time."
Need for clear government role and standards	2 Calls for the Yukon government to define its role in early learning programming and ensure high standards before building an early learning and child care facility.	"The Yukon government needs to figure out what its role is with respect to early learning programming before building a facility."

Other comments that were not stated on multiple occasion included; disruption to early learning and child care operations, attracting developmentally delayed students, preference for pre-kindergarten only and a third-party reliability concern.

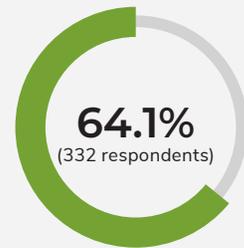
What educational resources, or facilities would you like to see in a downtown Whitehorse public school to support the growth and success of students?



outdoor learning spaces
(e.g., gardens, playgrounds)



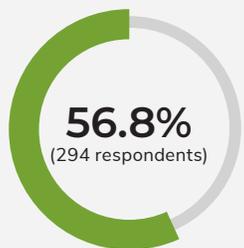
community spaces
(e.g., gym, auditorium)



special education resources



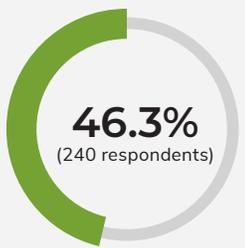
mental health and
wellness supports



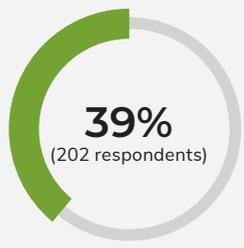
environmental
sustainability features



First Nations language and
culture focus



culturally enriched spaces



French immersion



other*



not sure

* The comments from other highlight a variety of different reasons beyond what was asked in relation to what educational resources, or facilities would you like to see in a downtown Whitehorse public school to support the growth and success of students.

Theme		Description	Participants Quote
Inclusive and culturally enriched programming	5	Support for inclusive programs incorporating First Nations, Filipino, and other cultural activities, land-based learning, and broad accessibility to reflect diverse demographics.	"As stated earlier keep it as French Immersion school. That being stated also provide space for FN and other cultural activities to be taught and shared as per the curriculum."
Specialized classroom features	4	Support for classrooms with in-class bathrooms (especially for primary grades), reading or sensory rooms within classrooms, and functional square-walled designs to enhance learning and accessibility.	"A bathroom in every classroom, especially primary. Every classroom comes with a in class reading room or sensory room."
Focus on core academics	4	Emphasis on prioritizing numeracy, literacy, advanced math, and other core educational programs to prepare students for further academic or career pursuits.	"A focus on numeracy and literacy!"
Community and multi-use facilities	4	Support for designing the school with mixed-use characteristics, such as spaces for community programs, senior housing integration, or disaster shelter facilities, to benefit the broader community.	"Depending on how it would be designed, perhaps a downtown school could have other mixed-use characteristics that benefit the downtown area."
French immersion support	3	Advocacy for maintaining or including French immersion, potentially as a partial program, to serve downtown students while ensuring sufficient capacity.	"These are all pretty obvious features of a Yukon school. I think French immersion should remain downtown (and make it large enough to accommodate all the students!)."
Advanced and specialized academic programs	3	Calls for programs like Advanced Placement (AP) courses, streaming for gifted students, and support for high-achieving students to address diverse academic needs and prevent boredom.	"Please bring back streaming! Put in some AP courses, have the kids who aren't good at analysis in their own classes."
Accessibility and inclusive design	3	Emphasis on disability-accessible features, such as playground equipment, well-lit paths, and safe, fenced outdoor spaces, to ensure inclusivity for all students.	"Accessible playground equipment, well-lit paths, parking and safe fenced spaces for outside activities."
Arts and music programs	3	Advocacy for dedicated spaces and programs for performing arts, visual arts, music, and science to enrich the curriculum.	"Elementary performing and visual arts emphasis."
Adequate school size and capacity	3	Concerns about underbuilding, with calls for a school large enough to accommodate growth and reduce strain on existing schools like Selkirk.	"Big enough to accommodate growth. Stop underbuilding."

Other comments that were not stated on multiple occasions included:

- opposition to French immersion;
- support for outdoor and land-based learning spaces;
- before and after school programming;
- recreational facilities for all ages;
- forward-thinking and Yukon-specific design;
- downtown location preference;
- safety and shelter proximity concern;
- alternative schooling for complex needs;
- meal services and dedicated eating spaces;
- support for online media literacy;
- opposition to publicly funded religious education;
- settlement worker support;
- support for community wrap-around services;
- dedicated and safe play spaces;
- need for clarity on cultural spaces;
- support for grade 7-8 school;
- urban environment design;
- emergency shelter facilities; and
- Montessori model of education.

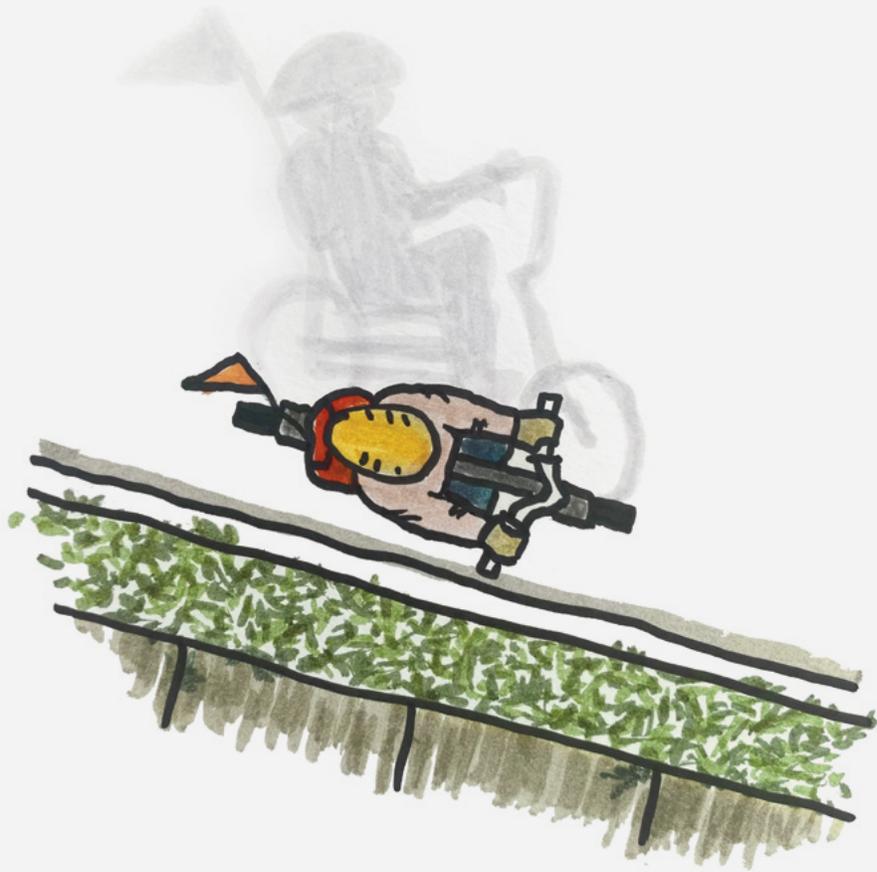
Additional comments or suggestions

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

A variety of themes emerged ranging from strong support for a downtown school to sustainability features.

Theme		Description	Participants Quote
Strong support for a downtown school	76	Emphasizes the critical need for a school in downtown Whitehorse to support families and community vitality.	"Downtown needs a school. Full Stop."
Preference for current École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue)	56	Favors rebuilding on the existing École Whitehorse Elementary School site (4181 4th Avenue) due to its central location, infrastructure, and historical significance.	"Build the new school on the current site."
Schools as community hubs	52	Views schools as essential for fostering community connection and preventing a commercialized downtown.	"A school in the downtown core is vital for building community."
Traffic congestion and safety	41	Concerns about traffic congestion and advocates for safer pedestrian and bike access.	"Consider traffic congestion and various commuting (bike, walk, drive etc.) needs when planning layout to help prevent congestion."
Concerns about proximity to Whitehorse Emergency Shelter	34	Highlights safety concerns due to the École Whitehorse Elementary School site's proximity to the shelter, citing exposure to drugs and crime.	"The current site of Ecole Whitehorse Elementary is in a comparatively unsafe area of town, right near the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter."
Walkability and accessibility	33	Stresses the importance of a walkable school to reduce transportation needs and support downtown families.	"A walkable school is crucial to maintain and develop a healthy downtown family community."
Criticism of government planning and transparency	31	Expresses frustration with the Yukon Government's planning process, citing lack of transparency and short-sighted decisions.	"I am extremely bothered that the wording at the start of this survey included something along the lines of 'the possible need for a downtown school.' The entirety of Whitehorse has been loud and clear that a downtown school is ABSOLUTELY a necessity."
Support for Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers)	30	Supports the Kèjān and Rogers (formerly 5th and Rogers) site for its residential setting and potential for nature integration.	"5th and Rogers look to be more in a residential setting, easier access and promotes family orientation."
Clay cliff stability concerns at the Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers)	27	Expresses worries about landslide risks at the Kèjān and Rogers site (formerly 5th and Rogers) due to unstable clay cliffs.	"Keep in mind all the issues with the clay cliffs recently. Do we really want to build a school full of small children right against a huge slide risk?"
Preference for inclusive, non-specialized schools	27	Advocates for a school open to all, not limited to French immersion or culturally specific programs.	"A downtown school should be for all who live there, and/or need a school there. It should neither be language exclusive nor culturally specific."
Large gym and community spaces	24	Advocates for large gyms and multifunctional spaces for community use, such as sports and cultural events.	"The downtown school needs to have large recreational field and facilities to be used by not only the kids but also other local user groups."
Outdoor and green spaces	20	Calls for nature-integrated spaces like mini-forests, trails, or playgrounds to support land-based learning.	"Could plant a mini forest as part of the rebuild on the current WES site... It would be an amazing multi-generational project."

Theme	 Description	Participants Quote
Balancing needs of downtown	20 Calls for a school to balance downtown's focus on social services with family-friendly amenities.	"By concentrating services almost exclusively on vulnerable populations while relocating the downtown school out of the core, the government is missing a crucial opportunity to create a downtown that truly serves all citizens."
Adequate school size for future growth	19 Emphasizes building a school large enough to accommodate future population growth, avoiding past design flaws.	"Just make it big. Stop making small schools with small gyms."
Support for growing downtown population	18 Justifies a downtown school due to the growing number of families driven by new housing developments.	"The number of families and children living in the downtown core is significant and likely to increase."
Support for French immersion downtown	17 Supports maintaining French immersion downtown for accessibility and to meet demand.	"Please keep French immersion downtown and build a larger school that can meet demand."
Multi-story building design	16 Supports multi-story designs to maximize outdoor space in the constrained downtown area.	"I like the design of WES and how it utilizes space (3 story high building) which allows it to maximize the size of the outdoor play area."
Need for long-term strategic planning	16 Calls for a comprehensive, long-term plan for Whitehorse's educational infrastructure to address aging schools.	"Create a long-term plan to address the issue with aging schools."
First Nations school or programming	15 Proposes a First Nations-focused school or programs emphasizing land-based learning and Indigenous languages.	"Strongly feel we need a First Nations school where all Yukon First Nation's languages are taught."
Opposition to downtown school due to safety	14 Opposes a downtown school due to safety issues like crime and drug use, advocating for suburban locations.	"The downtown core is a frightening place for children with the increased amount of homeless and drug and alcohol use, as well as crime."
Special education and support needs	14 Calls for dedicated resources and trained staff to support neurodivergent students and mental health needs.	"Having a school with special education resources and teachers who are trained to best support our neurodivergent students would be better."
Urgency and timely action	14 Urges the government to act quickly to avoid delays in providing a downtown school.	"It needs to be built ASAP. Speed up the process."
Practical and land-based learning	12 Suggests incorporating practical skills and land-based learning into the curriculum.	"Add some real-life education. How to change a tire, how to change oil, how to make a fire, shelter, keep warm, cook food."
Safety features in design	12 Proposes design features like fenced courtyards and safe bus chutes to enhance student safety.	"Please build a proper and safe bus chute for the school, that includes barriers between the buses and parent vehicles."
Community engagement and educator input	12 Suggests involving educators and the community in planning to ensure practical, functional school designs.	"Please consult educators when building, as two of the newer schools have glitches and functional issues which are not optimal learning environments."
Alternative or specialized programs	10 Proposes specialized schools for trades, arts, or at-risk youth to address diverse educational needs.	"A sports school would be super cool here. Or an alternative program school that includes Wood Street, ILC, and AVS together."
Alternative site suggestions	8 Suggests alternative locations, such as near Robert Service Way or Hamilton Boulevard, for the new school.	"Another option for a school near downtown would be the lot adjacent to 100 Robert Service Way - TKC lot."
Sustainability features	8 Suggests sustainable design elements like solar collection, food production, and water management.	"I would like to see sustainability, using roof space for growing food, or water and solar collection."





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