

# An Open Letter to the Citizens of Whitehorse

We are your neighbours and friends. We have chosen careers with the City of Whitehorse because we care deeply about the community where we live and work.

As you know, we have made no progress with our employer in our negotiations. The City is determined to divide us as a workforce, to create a two-tiered system where long time employees keep some key benefits while more recently hired colleagues are asked to accept much less. We don't think that's the way to build a healthy public service and we don't want to work in an environment where some workers are more valued than others. Our kids will grow up and work here; your children and grandchildren need to know a meaningful career in public service is an option for them.

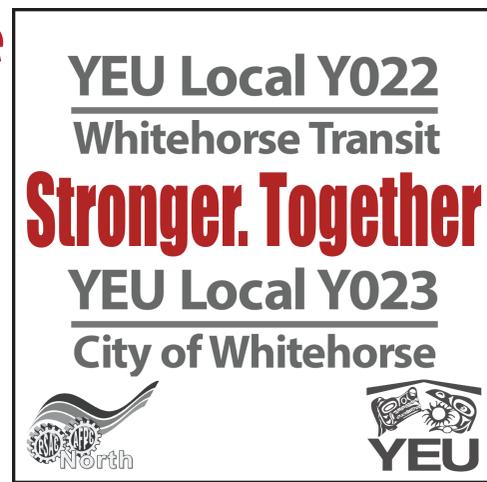
We don't have a pension. The loss of the long-term bonus and voluntary severance package would mean a 4% reduction in pay for any worker hired after we reach an agreement, when they reach 5 years of service. The City says they'll leave the benefits in place for long term workers, but they want some language *outside* the collective agreement in an Administrative Directive. That's something the employees will have no say over, which the employer is legally entitled to change at any time without any consultation with the union. We don't trust that offer.

The employer says their latest offer mirrors what the management team receives. True and not true. While management has given up their voluntary severance and long term bonus, they've seen increases in everything from employer RRSP contributions to management leave for predicted overtime. There is no comparison.

We have colleagues in Transit who were initially offered NO pay increase until 2024. How can we trust an employer who believes workers don't need fair compensation? Many full-time, year-round staffers for the City of Whitehorse occupy seasonal positions, one in winter and another in summer. These workers are not eligible for the same pay and benefits as other workers because of their seasonal status. Many of our co-workers in this situation have been loyal City of Whitehorse workers for decades. That's not acceptable to us, and we're trying to fix that.

The Union and our Bargaining Teams went into our first round of negotiations last fall in good faith, but met nothing resembling true collective bargaining. We came back to the table at conciliation hoping to find common ground and move toward a good contract for our members. We again came up against an employer unwilling to withdraw the concessions sure to hit members in the pocket book, and to divide us. In our most recent talks, the employer steadfastly refused to budge on the issues most important to our members. We worked late into the night, and made significant amendments to our proposal but on key issues, the employer hasn't moved.

***We don't want to strike - nobody wants to strike.*** We have so much invested in this city, in our neighbourhoods and our community. We have to protect the rights we've fought for in previous negotiations, and protect those workers who will come behind us. Our city depends on it.



***We ask for your support as we continue to try to reach a negotiated agreement.***

***Thank You***

***Local Y022 - Whitehorse Transit, Local Y023 - City of Whitehorse***