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OLD FIRE HALL WILL CONTINUE AS ARTS VENUE IN 2008

WHITEHORSE – Following the success of the pilot project for the use of the Old Fire Hall this past summer, the Yukon government will continue to partner with the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and the Yukon Arts Centre to provide arts programming at this venue for 2008, Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor has announced.

“Given the initial success of the pilot project, and the overall acceptance of the Old Fire Hall as a cultural venue, the Yukon government looks forward to working with the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and the Yukon Arts Centre to build on that success,” Taylor said. “We thank them for their good work on this initiative this past summer.”

The pilot project ran from mid-May to mid-September, hosting approximately 60 distinct events from June 1 to August 31. The venue was open 57 days and attracted 15,000 people.

An evaluation report on the use of the Old Fire Hall for summer 2007 is available at www.tc.gov.yk.ca. The report is the result of interviews with the business community, the arts community, neighbours of the Old Fire Hall, and users of the facility.

Findings in the report include (but are not limited to):

- enthusiasm for the use of government owned heritage buildings as a market/retail venue in the downtown/waterfront area;
- indications by local merchants that use of the Old Fire Hall complemented commercial/retail activities;
- recommendations against the use of government owned heritage buildings for office space.

“We were pleased to partner with the Department of Tourism and Culture, and the Yukon Arts Centre to help bring some excitement to the Whitehorse Waterfront this past summer,” Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce President Rick Karp said. “With this success behind us, we expect that future initiatives with similar objectives will bring even more people out to visit the downtown core of Whitehorse.”

The further use of the Old Fire Hall as a cultural venue will complement other Whitehorse waterfront development initiatives which consist of the MacBride Museum expansion, trolley extension to Spook Creek, relocation and refurbishment of the Round House and \$18 million in Canada Strategic Infrastructure funds in support of identified projects by the City of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, Ta’an Kwach’an Council and the Yukon government.

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