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Continued Investment in Old Fire Hall Supports Yukon Arts and Business

WHITEHORSE – Following consultations with the Yukon Arts Centre in November 2008, the Government of Yukon is pleased to contribute \$450,000 over three years for continued use of the Old Fire Hall as an important cultural and community venue along the Whitehorse waterfront, Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor announced today.

“By continuing the positive working relationships we have with key stakeholders such as the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and the Yukon Arts Centre, we work toward a common goal of providing an environment for long-term investment and growth benefits,” Taylor said.

Members of the Yukon Arts Centre met with the Premier late last year following the Yukon government’s announcement to manage local impacts resulting from the global economic downturn.

A three-year contribution agreement with the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce of \$150,000 per year begins April 1, 2009, subject to legislative approval. The funding will contribute to improving technical equipment, marketing, signage and program coordination.

“The Old Fire Hall has become a facility in demand, meeting all of our expectations as a true example of partnerships between government, business and the arts benefiting the collective community,” Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce president Rick Karp said. “Thank you to the Department of Tourism and Culture and the Yukon Arts Centre for their support.”

“An insightful government took a risk and partnered with business, through the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, and with the arts, through the Yukon Arts Centre, to bring to life a heritage building centred on community engagement,” Yukon Arts Centre Executive Director Al Cushing said. “The Whitehorse waterfront has been energized by this exciting experiment, and now we are able to continue the excitement as our tripartite agreement is extended for three years.”

In the first half of 2008, 24 different groups used the venue for 43 events. The guestbook registered visitors from across North America and around the world. In total, more than 10,000 people came through the door.

The Old Fire Hall project complements other government investments on the Whitehorse waterfront, including the MacBride Museum expansion, trolley extension and other improvements.

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