



Department of Tourism and Culture

Session Binder

Fall 2025



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Department of Tourism and Culture

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Session Briefing Note

Convention Centre (Yukon Gathering Place)

Tourism and Culture

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Gathering Place will support job creation, enhance local business revenues and increase tourism spending across the Yukon.
- We look forward to working with our partners to identify a sustainable model for operation of the Convention Centre.

Additional response:

- For 2025-26, Tourism and Culture will work with Chu Níkwän Limited Partnership on completing final designs and costing for the new facility. This work is estimated to cost \$7.5 million or 10% of the total project cost.
- The \$7.5 million is 100% recoverable for the 2025-26 fiscal year through a pending agreement with CanNor.

Context—this may be an issue because:

There is strong interest in this project from the public, the tourism industry and the general business community.

Background:

- The continued development of this project supports the Yukon Party platform commitment: *Work with the tourism industries, the City of Whitehorse and proponents to develop a viable business model for the proposed Whitehorse Convention Centre.*
- Due to the lack of a suitable convention space, the Yukon is currently turning down meetings, incentive travel, conferences and business events (MICE). The new Convention Centre will have a capacity of 750 to 1,000 guests and can generate an economic impact of \$800 to \$1,200 per guest for three to five days of events.

Session Briefing Note

Convention Centre (Yukon Gathering Place)

Tourism and Culture

- The goal is to begin construction and complete the project within a five-year timeframe, with an anticipated opening in Fall 2030.
- In January 2023, the Yukon government and the Yukon Convention Bureau (YCB) agreed to collaborate on developing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a new convention centre in Whitehorse.
- The RFP issued on March 10, 2023, requested proposals from proponents with access to land in the Whitehorse area suitable for a convention centre accommodating 750 to 1,000 attendees. Kwanlin Dün's Chu Níkwän Development Corporation (CNLP) was identified as the highest-ranked proponent.
- By late fall 2023, TC, CNLP and YCB signed a Letter of Intent (LOI): Phase One: delivery of a schematic design, design program and Class C-level cost estimate (completed Summer 2024).
- Phase Two involves negotiations with CanNor and CNLP which are currently underway.

Approved by:

Type or print name

Sierra van der Meer

Deputy Minister, Tourism and Culture

November 28, 2025

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Cultural Sector

Tourism and Culture

Recommended response:

- We recognize the importance of the cultural sector and will continue to work with our community partners, non-governmental organizations, First Nation governments, and the private sector to advance arts, culture, and heritage in the Yukon.
- Supporting the sector is an essential part of growing healthy economies and communities, contributing to diversification of the economy, connected communities, cultural tourism, and mental wellness.
- We are contributing to an arts sector gathering happening in February 2026, hosted by Yukon Arts Centre. Some expected outcomes are: discovering collaborative approaches to administration and space needs; as well as other coordinated efforts within the sector.

Additional response:

- Funding for arts and culture operating costs has increased, and while we know the supply will never meet the demand, we were able to fund an additional eight (8) arts organizations this year through an increase to the Arts Operating Fund.
- Museums and cultural centres have also received a modest funding increase based on a new funding model that incorporates their annual O & M costs.
- Protected and interpreted heritage values is a key component of why visitors choose to visit the Yukon, and why Yukoners want to stay.
- From Yukon First Nation cultural centres to historic sites to globally significant artifacts, culture is deeply embedded in the Yukon.
- The Yukon's 2023 Culture GDP was almost \$83 million, representing 2.0% of the territorial economy.

Session Briefing Note

Cultural Sector

TAB # 2

Fall 2025

Tourism and Culture

Context—this may be an issue because:

The department delivers a variety of programs and services that support arts, culture and heritage.

Background:

- The department delivers ten funding programs for creative and arts organizations; with over \$4.4 million invested each year.
- The department with community collaboration and First Nation partners, conserves, interprets and manages Yukon's historic places.
- The department supports Yukon's archaeology, palaeontology, museums, cultural centres and place names programs in collaboration with First Nations.

Approved by:

Type or print name

Sierra van der Meer

Deputy Minister, Tourism and Culture

December 16, 2025

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Tourism Sector

TAB# 3
Fall 2025

Tourism and Culture

Recommended response:

- We recognize tourism as a vital industry in the Yukon's economic development, culture and community growth. We are committed to reviewing the current needs of the industry, and meeting with our industry partners to discuss priorities.
- The tourism sector in the Yukon serves as a vital economic driver, contributing significantly to job creation, revenue generation, and overall economic growth. Tourism contributes 5% to the GDP and creator of 9% of jobs in the Yukon.

Additional response:

- The department will work collaboratively with the **sport tourism** sector to promote sport tourism to enhance economic development and community wellbeing.
- The government understands **Indigenous tourism** is important to a thriving tourism sector and in turn strengthens the territory's economy, supports cultural preservation and promotes indigenous entrepreneurs.
- We are committed to working directly with First Nation governments, the First Nation Chamber of Commerce and First Nation stakeholders to ensure the continued growth of the sector.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners, Yukon tourism businesses, and sector stakeholders may be interested in the Yukon's tourism investments and programming.
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Session Briefing Note

Tourism Sector

TAB# 3
Fall 2025

Tourism and Culture

Background:

- The department's ongoing work with the sport tourism sector will support the Yukon Party platform commitment: *Develop a Sport Tourism Strategy to enhance the territory's ability to host major games and ensure access to practical and functional sports infrastructure.*
- The department facilitates programs for destination development and research that support community and Indigenous tourism development.
- The department promotes Yukon tourism through creative marketing, eye-catching campaigns, and strategic partnerships –in Canada and internationally.
- The department actively promotes the Yukon as a travel destination in 13 countries around the world: Canada, USA, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Australia, UK, Japan, Mexico, France, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

Approved by:

Sierra van der Meer

Deputy Minister, Tourism and Culture

November 28, 2025

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Tourism and Culture

Financial Summary O&M and Capital

Recommended response:

- For its 2025-26 supplementary request, the Department of Tourism and Culture is seeking an increase of \$8.3 million over the Main Estimates budget of \$33.9 million bringing our total revised budget to \$42.2 million.
- Of the increased amount, \$150,000 will be used to supplement two microgrant programs: the Express Microgrant for those in the creative and cultural industries and the SPARK Tourism Microgrant. These programs allow access to funding for short-term development initiatives.
- \$7.5 million, which was previously included in a Special Warrant, is to finalize designs and costing for the Yukon Gathering Place Convention Centre.
- A \$509,000 contingency has been included in O&M: \$333,000 as a provisional contingency for price and volume pressures; and \$176,000 as a general contingency to ensure compliance with financial authorities.
- Of our \$8.3 million request, 92% is recoverable through the Government of Canada.

Operations and Maintenance:

- The supplementary request will bring the Operations and Maintenance budget to \$32.9 million, which is \$760,000 more than the 2025-26 Main Estimates.
- O&M changes are:
 - \$176,000 towards the implementation of Creative Potential, the creative and cultural industries strategy:

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Tourism and Culture

Financial Summary O&M and Capital

- \$86,000 towards ensuring advancement on care of the territory's visual arts collections,
- \$15,000 toward a forthcoming cultural sector gathering to foster innovation and collaboration, and
- \$75,000 to maintain the Express microgrant program budget at \$150,000; and
- \$75,000 for the SPARK Tourism microgrant program making a total of \$150,000 available for applicants.
 - The \$75,000 is 100% recoverable through a three-year agreement with the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor).
- \$333,000 provisional contingency for price and volume pressures, including inflation, increased demand for public services, and potential wage increases resulting from ongoing collective bargaining.
- \$176,000 increase as a general contingency to ensure compliance with financial authorities.

Capital

- The 2025-26 supplementary budget includes \$7.5 million in capital funding towards completion of Class A designs and final costing of the Yukon Gathering Place Convention Centre.
- This additional funding is 100% recoverable for the 2025-26 fiscal year through a pending agreement with CanNor.
- Inclusion of the convention centre project will increase Tourism and Culture's Capital budget for 2025-26 to \$9.4 million.

Session Briefing Note

**Financial Summary O&M and
Capital**

Approved by:

Sierra van der Meer

December 4, 2025

Deputy Minister, Tourism and Culture

[Date approved]

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action is central to our government's commitment to reconciliation.
- We will continue to collaborate and work in partnership with Indigenous governments and groups on advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action to create meaningful change and better programs and services for Yukon First Nations Peoples and all Yukoners.

Additional response:

- We are tracking our actions and initiatives in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- It has been 10 years since the report and Calls to Action were published. The Official Opposition may ask for an update on the government's progress in addressing the Calls to Action.

Background:

- Released in 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)'s report *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from residential schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- YG and YFNs collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- YG has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

- implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).
- YG last reported on its progress to implement the TRC Calls to Action in fall 2023 through a status report and Pathways magazine. The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across YG and in collaboration with YFN governments in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

Approved by:

KL

November 28, 2025

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date Approved

2025–26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 – CORPORATE

Finance

Recommended response:

- By bringing these Supplementary Estimates to the Legislative Assembly for debate, we are providing transparency to the public about how the government is allocating taxpayer dollars.
- These Supplementary Estimates serve as an update on spending from the previous government, to fulfill the obligations and contracts already committed to by departments for the current fiscal year.
- We want to increase transparency and accountability around spending, rather than relying on special warrants for the remainder of the year.
- We look forward to bringing forward a budget this spring that we have had the opportunity to shape, and that is reflective of our priorities and commitments to Yukoners.

Contingencies

- Our guiding principle has been that these Supplementary Estimates will provide the resources needed by departments to take them to the end of the fiscal year, without requiring further changes or dependence on additional spending.
- There is a provisional contingency for price and volumes pressures, including inflation, increased demand for public services, and potential wage increases resulting from ongoing collective bargaining.
- There is also a general contingency to ensure compliance with financial authorities. These contingencies are included to ensure all departments remain within their voted budgets for the fiscal year given the potential for unforeseen pressures.

2025–26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 – CORPORATE

Finance

Summary:

- The 2025-26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$150.4 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$8.3 million in recoveries. The net increase in O&M spending is forecast at \$142.0 million when accounting for recoveries.
- Capital adjustments in the Supplementary Estimates No. 1 reflect an overall increase of \$1.0 million in spending and a \$1.6 million increase in capital recoveries. This results in a net decrease in capital spending of \$594 thousand.
- Budgetary revenues are projected to increase by \$5.9 million, primarily due to a \$5.7 million increase in accrued interest on loans to the Receiver for Victoria Gold Corporation.
- The Government of Yukon continues to maintain a budgetary surplus forecast for 2025-26 of \$12.5 million, revised down from the \$82.0 million forecast in the Main Estimates.

FTEs:

- There is an increase of 71.2 FTEs or “Full-Time Equivalents” in the Supplementary Estimates. This is primarily for 57.3 FTEs in Education, including teachers, Educational Assistants, and other positions to provide enhanced support for students.
- This increase also includes 11.4 positions in Health and Social Services for both frontline and administrative positions, and small personnel additions to the Department of Justice (2 FTEs) and the Public Service Commission (0.5 FTEs).

2025–26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 – CORPORATE

Finance

Borrowing:

- Total anticipated territorial borrowing was \$773.9 million in the 2025–26 Main Estimates, inclusive of \$400 million in long-term borrowing authorized in the *First Appropriation Act 2025–26*. We expect to proceed with the second tranche of this borrowing in the spring, using the remaining \$200 million authorized.
- Significant energy infrastructure pressures require an increase of \$100 million to the Yukon Development Corporation’s short-term borrowing limit. This includes \$50 million authorized by the previous government, and an additional \$50 million being authorized by this government to address critical work in Mayo.
- Other factors include a decrease of \$966,000 in a loan payable by Yukon University and a \$3.15 million increase in accrued interest payable.
- Revised estimated total borrowing in 2025–26 is \$876.1 million. This leaves \$323.9 million available within the \$1.2 billion borrowing limit.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2025-26 Second Appropriation Act will be tabled during the fall sitting.

Background:

- Supplementary estimates are introduced by the government to account for unforeseen spending at the time of tabling the annual Budget.

Approved by:

Katherine White

December 8, 2025

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date approved