



April 2, 2021

Patricia Cunning
Director
MacBride Museum
1124 Front Street
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1A4

Dear Patricia,

I would like to thank you for your March 30 email requesting the Yukon Party's position on a number of issues important to the MacBride Museum. Our responses are recorded below:

We understand that tourism needed to be sacrificed to support community health. However tourism generally, and not just businesses, also need financial support. What actions is your party planning to support large NPOs like MacBride who are a key piece of both Yukon identity and Yukon tourism?

A new Yukon Party government is committed to providing necessary supports to tourism businesses and non-profit organizations to both mitigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism sector, and to move beyond the recovery stage to successful operation.

We acknowledge we also need to find new ways to attract visitors to our territory once it is safe to do so. The Yukon Party commits to appoint a Bid Committee to begin planning to host the 2027 Canada Winter Games. We will work with the tourism and arts sectors to develop a new annual anchor tourism event, and we will promote the Yukon as a sporting destination. We are open to suggestions and input from the community regarding future initiatives to attract visitors.

During the COVID pandemic the Yukon Government has allowed NPOs/businesses to focus on attracting locals with Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund. Will your party commit to this going forward?

The Yukon Party is committed to continue the Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund.

Will your party commit to long-term focus on local markets and primarily the Canadian market as a priority in Yukon tourism marketing? Or what is your marketing focus?

The Yukon Party recognizes that focusing on locals and the Canadian markets will be an effective way to attract visitors for the long-term. That said, we also think our marketing must have a mix and be diverse once border restrictions are lifted and international travel is allowed once again. We will work with the tourism industry, market researchers, and other experts to identify the best markets to target.



Will your party commit to more robust data measurement and data-sharing with industry? Beyond what is provided currently.

The Yukon Party will commit to enhancing data measurement and data-sharing with industry.

After 68 years of 100% tax relief, and despite resolution 2015-12-08, the City have taxed MacBride. We have worked with Yukon Government on a short-term solution.

MacBride members do not believe that museums should be taxed. Tax abatement for museums is common across Canada. We are trustees of material history and MacBride is a permanent community good serving our residents and visitors. All of the money we raise should be spent on providing value to citizens and taxpayers by delivering services and protecting Yukon's history for future generations.

The difference between MacBride and other land-owners is we are a non-profit community museum and a charity. Our goal is not to increase the value of our property for eventual resale but rather to best showcase the territory's history and culture to Yukoners and visitors in a financially responsible manner. It is unreasonable to tax a museum run by a charity at a business tax rate.

Would your party commit to a Yukon Government tax assessment level for society-run museums, like the one for churches, that would be very low so that municipalities could not tax these institutions?

Or what is your proposed solution to the MacBride tax situation as the only society-run museum being taxed?

The Yukon Party acknowledges that it is not fair to treat MacBride like a business and we want to ensure that the museum can remain sustainable over the long term. It is also not fair or acceptable for museum operations to be at risk over taxes.

We will work with the museum to develop a long-term solution to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the MacBride Museum.

MacBride can only operate because we support ourselves with earned revenue. We believe earned revenue is important for projects. We also believe that Government should cover the base level costs of operating in full as we are a public good operating as a far lower cost than if Government ran our facility.



The O&M funding in the museums sector is a series of historical decisions that mean MacBride receives a small amount of funding compared to other cultural attractions of similar size (like the Arts Centre, Dawson City Arts Society and Beringia). MacBride is in a funding tier with museums that only operate seasonally with the core funding received.

*Will your party commit to a robust review of the O&M situation for MacBride, in partnership with us and not imposed by government, to ensure the operations of MacBride are sustainable and properly funded given our size, contribution and long service to the Yukon?
Or what is your party's plan to level the playing field?*

The Yukon Party will commit to a review of the funding for museums to ensure that operational funding is keeping pace with costs and demands on these important institutions.

The waterfront trolley was a well-loved waterfront tourism and local attraction for many years. MacBride merged with Miles Canyon and agreed to operate their assets. MacBride successfully accessed half a million dollars of capital money from Yukon to completely rebuild the trolley and 1/3 of the track, making it safer and more energy efficient. Yukon government then did not renew the operating agreement. Will your government commit to operational funds for MacBride to run the trolley seasonally?

The current government removed a number of sections of the track, and it is unknown currently what work needs to be undertaken to get the trolley operational once again. A review would have to be conducted to assess the status and viability of the remaining track and determine work to be done.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to consider these questions.

Sincerely,

Currie Dixon
Leader of the Yukon Party