

## SUMMARY OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 31<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATURE

The 36-day First Session of the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislature recently concluded. Your Members of the Legislative Assembly have taken major steps toward rebuilding the Yukon's private sector economy.

The most significant steps of this rebuilding have been:

- **Passing the third largest Capital and O & M budget in Yukon history (\$555,434,000)**
  - Lowered trajectory of spending by over \$40 million
  - Without terminating programs, laying off personnel, increasing fees or taxes
  - Created stand-alone departments of Economic Development and Tourism-Culture
- **Completing devolution (April 1, 2003)**
  - Passed the five pieces of "Mirror" legislation
    - Bill #22 – Placer Mining Act
    - Bill #23 – Quartz Mining Act
    - Bill #24 – Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act
    - Bill #25 – Waters Act
    - Bill #26 – Environmental Assessment Act
  - Began implementation of the Devolution Transfer Agreement
    - Successfully transferred more than 240 employees
    - Joint training program with Public Service Alliance of Canada
- **Advancing government-to-government economic partnerships with First Nations**
  - Reached a Memorandum of Understanding on Whitehorse Correctional Centre with the Kwanlin Dun
  - Abeyance of legal challenge to devolution by the Kaska Nations
  - Letter of Understanding then formal signing (May 9<sup>th</sup>) of bilateral economic agreement with the Kaska Nations
  - Agreement with Vuntut Gwitchin to complete establishment of Fishing Branch Park
  - Kluane First Nation initialled land claim and self-government agreement (April 11/03)
- Signing a bilateral accord between Yukon & NWT; continuing an existing accord between Yukon & Alaska and working toward a Yukon – BC accord
- Reinstating Women's Directorate to its former status
- Contributing \$1.2 million to Firesmart and \$1 million to CDF
- Contributing \$1 million to the Yukon College managed Community Training Fund to reinstate its funding to \$1.5 million level – THIS CAN BE LEVERAGED TO \$4.5 MILLION
- Contributing \$1 million to City of Whitehorse for 2007 Canada Winter Games and \$400,000 to the 2007 Host Society

- Making an immediate commitment of \$230,000 toward the wages and O & M of childcare and day home operations – ALSO developing a program to increase childcare workers' salaries as training levels are increased
- Passing an unusual number of motions – One Government, Four Government Private Member and Five Opposition Motions

Other important steps and budget items achieved were:

#### Economy:

- Support for resource and tourism initiatives:
  - Exemption from road tax on fuel consumed in sawmill and golf course operations
  - White Pass and Yukon Route re-established in Whitehorse; construction of eight rail cars in Whitehorse; its own brand of Yukon bottled water
  - development of a Forestry Policy Framework
  - Implementation of three-year Market and Product Development Strategies
  - promotion of affordable and accessible international and domestic air access for Yukon
  - support for Yukon Convention Bureau to market Yukon as a year-round convention destination
  - \$20 million for Shakwak Project
  - \$2 million for construction between Mendenhall and Haines Junction
  - \$2.2 million rehabilitation work on Teslin Bridge
  - \$1 million for Dawson City Airside Improvement
  - \$250,000 for Dawson Art Society
  - \$350,000 for Whitehorse Trolley
  - implementation of a five-year agriculture policy
  - development of a regulatory process for pipelines
- Created resource certainty by:
  - one-year hardrock claim assessment holiday
  - developing an accord between Department of Fisheries and Oceans and placer miners
  - placing flawed Yukon Protected Areas Strategy on hold
  - continuing Yukon Mining Incentive Program and Yukon Mineral Exploration Tax Credit
  - maintaining support for the Yukon geoscience data base

#### First Nations Relations:

- \$1.1 million over two years in budget for the Aboriginal Languages Services Agreement
- \$500,000 budgeted for riverbank stabilization in Old Crow
- extended First Nations Elders Project to five schools

#### Education and Social Issues:

- ratified 3-year contract with Yukon teachers
- bilateral agreement between Yukon and NWT on economic and educational issues
- \$2.9 million for completion of addition to Eliza VanBibber School in Pelly Crossing
- \$605,000 for school information technology, distance education, and video conferencing
- new mathematics program to improve achievement in grades 4 – 6
- continuing alternative programming at the Wood Street Annex

- pressure federal government to negotiate Pan-Northern agreements: ie: \$20 million over three years health care agreement which covers annual health care cost increases
- raised Pioneer Utility Grant by 25%, indexed it against inflation, and lowered surviving spouse's age limit to 55 years
- \$190,000 committed to assist 2004 Whitehorse Seniors' Games
- three northern territories got support from provinces on April 16/03 for changes to how social housing funding is calculated due to small populations and extra costs for construction
- commitment to deal with FASD and to ensure safe drinking water
- \$4.5 million for three-year Primary Health Care Transition Fund
- \$1.2 million for Carcross sewage disposal
- \$225,000 for new fire truck in Beaver Creek
- \$685,500 for three-year Quit Smoking Campaign
- initiatives to employ disabled in government and to review the Workplace Harassment Program
- pilot project to collect waste oil in five communities

### **Motions Agreed to:**

#### **Government Motions:**

- Motion #41 on request for Government of Canada to reinstate Yukon Placer Authorization

#### **Government Private Member Motions:**

- Motion #12 on Government-to-Government Relations with First Nations
- Motion #32 on permanent Government of Canada funding for pan-northern health care needs
- Motion #36 on request for Government of Canada support for Alaska – Canada Railway
- Motion #59 on WP & YR transportation corridor and Port & Tidewater Access

### **Opposition Motions:**

#### **NDP:**

- Motion #46 on Standing Committee on DFO visit the Yukon and hold hearings on YPA
- Motion #67 on stable, long-term funding for NGO's
- Motion #80 on provision of information to opposition

#### **Third Party:**

- Motion #8 on holding a special legislative sitting in Mayo on its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Motion #65 on adopting Child Welfare League report recommendations

### **Legislation Passed:**

- Bill #2** -- Third Appropriation Act, 2002-03
- Bill #3** -- Fourth Appropriation Act, 2001-02
- Bill #4** -- First Appropriation Act, 2003-04
- Bill #5** -- Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2003-04
- Bill #21** -- Act to Amend the Pioneer Utility Grant Act
- Bill #22** -- Placer Mining Act
- Bill #23** -- Quartz Mining Act
- Bill #24** -- Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act
- Bill #25** -- Waters Act
- Bill #26** -- Environmental Assessment Act
- Bill #27** -- Act to Repeal the Government Accountability Act
- Bill #28** -- Act to Amend the Fuel Oil Tax Act
- Bill #29** -- Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act

- Bill #30** -- Act to Amend the Supreme Court Act  
**Bill #31** -- Act to Amend the Income Tax Act  
**Bill #32** -- First Nation Indemnification (Fire Management) Act  
**Bill #33** -- Act to Amend the Forest Protection Act  
**Bill #34** -- Act to Amend the Municipal Act

**Other Legislation Submitted:**

- Bill #101** – An Act to Amend the Taxpayer Protection Act (Duncan Mar 3/03)  
**Bill #74** – An Act to Amend the Public Service Act (Duncan Mar 18/03-whistleblower legislation)

**Petitions:**

- #1** -- Request for increased funding to Yukon College from constituents of Pelly-Nisutlin (Dean)  
**Mar 20/03** -- Non-conforming petition opposed to Whitehorse Copper land development (Cardiff)  
**Apr. 1/03** -- Non-conforming petition requesting full funding to Dawson Shelter Society  
(Fairclough)