

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Yellowknife Tourism Support
Committee of the Whole—2017-2018 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Industry, Tourism and Investment—February 26, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment of the Minister to do that. I just want to turn to Yellowknife visitor services. It's \$161,000 as shown on page 225. That is actually less than the cost of the visitors' centre in Dawson City, Yukon. I don't know how many visitors they get, but we seem to get a lot of visitors in Yellowknife now. Is the Minister looking at increasing support for tourism in Yellowknife and visitor services beyond \$161,000 a year? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it's a bit early to make a decision on that yet. We are working with the City of Yellowknife to determine the long-term model delivery of the visitors' information centre.

To Mr. Vanthuyne, it's "DMO." DMO is the acronym that he was trying to figure out there. We need to pull all of these things together, and we will be working very closely with the city moving forward to see what supports are going to be needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I heard the Minister say that he is open, then, to receiving more information about how the destination marketing organization is going to roll out and what additional support our government might provide to help support the burgeoning tourism industry here in Yellowknife? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I said, we are working with the city to determine a long-term model of the delivery of the tourism information centre, and we'll work closely with the City of Yellowknife and keep committee informed on where this initiative is going. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes. I am sure he is prepared to work with his colleague, the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, to get that Cities, Towns and Villages Act changed before the House so that they can start up to build up the destination marketing organization pot. Maybe the Minister can tell us, too, what is happening with the old visitors' centre that is boarded up, just a few hundred metres from this building? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the infrastructure side of things, the department is having a look at it. We had a couple of consultants assess the building and develop options for the future of the building. Hopefully, we will have the

final reports complete with a detailed review of engineering options and costs related to that fairly soon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister share those reports, then, with standing committee? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll find out. If there are no types of conflicts, certainly we can do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Anybody who has walked downtown in Yellowknife these days knows how active the tourist sector is. We have tourists walking in our neighbourhood now. I live on Forrest Drive, and they are walking in the neighbourhood, looking for things to do. We have got to find a better way to provide services for the tourists that do come here. We want to make sure that they are made welcome and that they have more activities to do than just walking around in neighbourhoods, which is fine if they want to learn about Yellowknife, but I am sure we can do a lot better. Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is all that I have.