



News Release Communiqué

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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA INVESTS IN HERITAGE INFRASTRUCTURE AT THE FORMER HAMILTON CUSTOMS HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

Canada's Economic Action Plan investing in this National Historic Site of Canada

Hamilton, Ontario, February XX, 2010 – On behalf of the Honourable Jim Prentice, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, Mr. David Sweet, Member of Parliament for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale, announced today that the Government of Canada is providing infrastructure funding to the Former Hamilton Customs House National Historic Site of Canada. Today's announcement is part of Canada's Economic Action Plan to stimulate Canada's economy during the global recession. The Economic Action Plan includes major investments in national historic sites as a means of stimulating growth in the tourism sector.

"Ontario offers many spectacular natural landscapes and interesting historic treasures and this investment is helping to preserve and protect one right here in our community," said Mr. Sweet. "The Former Hamilton Customs House National Historic Site of Canada is of great value to the local community and it offers a wonderful opportunity to experience and learn from our diverse history and heritage."

Through the Economic Action Plan's National Historic Sites Cost-Sharing Program, the Government of Canada will be contributing \$13,100 to support a conservation project that involves work on the exterior of the building to repair the columns on the façade and replace the entrance steps at the Former Hamilton Customs House National Historic Site of Canada.

The Former Hamilton Customs House is now home to the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre. "We are pleased to receive this funding from Canada's Economic Action Plan, which will help us to restore the exterior stonework of the Customs House", said Executive Director Elizabeth McLuhan. "The Customs House is one of the oldest remaining federal public buildings in Canada and is one of Hamilton's foremost architectural landmarks. With this funding, the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre will be able to maintain its public programs while retaining the integrity of the architectural design."

"This project will help the Former Hamilton Customs House continue to be a place with cultural significance to the community," said Minister Prentice. "In our Economic Action Plan, our Government is helping to stimulate the economy as well as preserve and protect special places like this that are symbols of our country and tangible connections to our history."

National historic sites contribute to tourism in over 400 communities across Canada through direct spending, visitor spending and spin-off economic activity. The National Historic Sites Cost-Sharing Program, with a budget of \$20 million provided in part by Canada's Economic Action Plan, reflects the government's desire to support job creation by providing funding for conservation of National Historic Sites. This Program provides opportunities for skilled construction and conservation professionals to work on national historic sites across the country.

This Program is a contribution program whereby up to 50% of eligible costs incurred in the conservation and presentation of a national historic site are paid by the Program. Eligible recipients include other levels of government, not-for-profit organizations and not-for-profit aboriginal organizations.

Parks Canada works to ensure that Canada's historic and natural heritage is presented and protected for the enjoyment, education and appreciation of all Canadians, today and in the future.

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