
News Release - Communiqué

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Hamilton celebrates completion of the rehabilitation of the Art Gallery of Hamilton

HAMILTON – An official ceremony today marked the completion of the recladding and rehabilitation of the Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH). Tony Valeri, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons; Marie Bountrogianni, MPP for Hamilton Mountain; and Larry Di Ianni, Mayor of the City of Hamilton, were pleased to see this important Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Program project come to fruition.

The renovated Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH) makes an important contribution to improving the quality of life in Hamilton. Recladding and renovating the AGH not only protects the Gallery's permanent collection of over 8,500 works conservatively valued at \$160 million, but also transforms the building into an international art destination in the heart of downtown Hamilton.

The Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario each committed up to \$5 million to the project. The City of Hamilton, Dofasco Inc., and others committed the balance of the project's total eligible cost of \$18 million.

"The federal government, through the Canada–Ontario Infrastructure Program, is pleased to have been partner in this remarkable rehabilitation of the Art Gallery of Hamilton," said Mr. Valeri. "Fostering cultural institutions that aspire to excellence is an important component of the federal government's commitment to building vibrant and prosperous communities." The Government of Canada's funding for this initiative was provided for in the February 2005 federal budget and is therefore built into the existing fiscal framework, added Mr. Valeri.

"Arts and culture are essential to our quality of life," said Ms. Bountrogianni. "The transformation of the Art Gallery of Hamilton is part of the Government of Ontario's Cultural Renaissance initiative, which will ensure that our major cultural institutions live up to their potential as attractions that make meaningful contributions to the social and economic well being of our community."

"The newly-renovated Art Gallery of Hamilton is vital to the revitalization of our downtown," said Mr. Di Ianni. "Now transformed into an international art destination, the AGH will attract visitors to the heart of our city, showcasing not only a stunning building but the treasures of art within. The City of Hamilton is proud to partner with the provincial and federal governments,

with Dofasco and the steel sector and with the Art Gallery of Hamilton to launch this new chapter in the Gallery's 90-year history

"Supporting the Art Gallery of Hamilton project was a unique opportunity to make a meaningful and lasting contribution to arts and culture in our community," said Don Pether, Dofasco President and CEO. "We fundamentally believe that there is an integral link between the strength of the community and the strength of our company."

"Having been born and raised in Hamilton, and having a great interest in art, galleries, and cities, designing the new AGH has been both one of the most challenging and satisfying projects I have worked on," said architect Bruce Kuwabara of Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects. "While the challenges of working with an existing building have been complex and at times, onerous, the rewards of seeing the building transformed from the inside-out and the outside-in have been even greater. I see the real success of the project measured over time as the AGH engages members and new visitors in enriching and surprising ways, acting as a catalyst for revitalizing downtown Hamilton."

"The Art Gallery of Hamilton is truly fortunate to have the support of this extraordinary partnership," said Louise Dompierre, AGH President and CEO. "The building is stunning inside and out, the exhibitions on view are spectacular, and we have exciting new amenities to offer our visitors. This marks a new era for the Gallery in its storied 90 year history."

To date, the governments of Canada and Ontario have invested more than \$1.3 billion in over 500 essential infrastructure projects in Ontario.

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