



December 21, 2017

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
200 Sacré-Coeur Boulevard  
Gatineau QC K1A 0H3  
[ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca)

**Subject: Heritage Sector Response to ENVI Report #10, *Preserving Canada's Heritage: The Foundation for Tomorrow* (December 4, 2017) and ENVI Report #9, *Bill C-323, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (rehabilitation of historic property)* (November 28, 2017) – and Request to Meet**

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the national, provincial, and territorial heritage organizations listed below, and their thousands of members and supporters across the country, we commend your Government and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development (ENVI) for initiating the study that culminated in the report *Preserving Canada's Heritage: The Foundation for Tomorrow*. This report is being met with great interest from heritage NGOs, volunteers, charities, professionals, provincial/territorial and municipal policymakers, and property owners who invest in or care for heritage places across Canada.

In the course of the study, the Committee heard that historic places are more than just touchstones of history and identity: they are instrumental in building the economy of tomorrow, creating skilled, green jobs for young people, and growing the middle class. Further, as the leader of a government that has undertaken substantial initiatives on the environment and climate change, you will know that the renewal and re-use of buildings capitalizes on materials and energy already invested, reduces construction and demolition waste, and avoids the carbon and other environmental impacts associated with new development.

*Preserving Canada's Heritage* contains a comprehensive set of 17 recommendations for action which would be transformative for Canada's historic places, their owners and stewards, and the

.../2

people who care about them – whether they are in the hands of governments or Band Councils, private sector owners, not-profit organizations or charities. The Report also contains many laudable recommendations to get the federal house in order and to show national leadership through exemplary handling of the federal government’s own heritage property portfolio.

**With this response, the undersigned organizations collectively signal the priorities we urge you to act upon quickly, and offer you our assistance and support:**

### **Priority Recommendations**

At the grassroots level, more than 1,000 Canadians have already endorsed the following statement of priorities for federal action on historic places, and more continue to sign on:

*I request that priority be given to measures that would have the most tangible and immediate positive impact for the greatest number of rural and urban places in Canada, and a proven spin-off effect for the environment and our economy:*

- A. Measures that would encourage private sector investment in the revitalization of historic places that matter in our communities; and**
- B. Measures that help fund the efforts of Indigenous peoples, charities and not-for-profits to save and renew places of significance.**

***Proven measures include grants and contributions, tax-based incentives, and "heritage first" leasing and investment policies.***

Accordingly, we urge you to take action on the corresponding recommendations found in *Preserving Canada’s Heritage*:

- Recommendation 11 – Establishing a tax credit for the restoration and preservation of buildings listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places;
- Recommendation 10 – Funding for the National Cost-Sharing Program for Heritage Places to a minimum of \$10 million per year;
- Recommendations 15 & 17 – Supporting an Indigenous-led initiative to protect and preserve places important to them, including the legacy of residential schools;
- Recommendation 14 – Launching an initiative modelled after “Main Street America” to encourage public and private investment in commercial historic buildings in rural areas and small cities;

.../3

- Recommendation 8 – Requiring federal departments/agencies to give preference to existing heritage buildings when considering leasing or purchasing space; and
- Strengthening existing tools essential to the above recommendations, including the Canadian Register of Historic Places and the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, which is referenced in Recommendation 9.

We also point out that Recommendation 11, calling for income tax measures for historic places, represents an opportunity to incentivize investment in historic places without a negative impact on the Government’s financial framework. As reported in the ENVI study, the US Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program returns between \$1.20 and \$1.25 to the federal government for every dollar of tax credit invested. Such measures have longstanding widespread support in Canada: from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities; the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada; 58 Canadian municipalities who passed resolutions or expressed support for federal income tax measures for historic places; and hundreds of individuals who have written letters and met with their MPs.

Recommendation 11 is consistent with the Liberal Party of Canada’s willingness to consider financial incentives for historic places, expressed in an October 2015 pre-election message to the heritage sector. Responding to written questions from the National Trust for Canada, Liberal Party president Anna Gainey wrote: *“A Liberal government will work in collaboration with the heritage sector and other stakeholders to examine measures that promote the preservation and rehabilitation of Canada’s heritage buildings. We are open to measures that use the tax system that stimulate private investments in heritage buildings.”*

Support for federal tax measures for Canada’s historic places was echoed in ENVI’s Report #9 – Bill C-323 – An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (rehabilitation of historic property): “The Committee is supportive of the principle of Bill C-323 and believes that financial incentives, including tax credits, which encourage investment in the rehabilitation of historic properties and heritage places is necessary [...]”

### **Request to Meet**

Minister, we urge you to ensure that Budget 2018 includes measures that will encourage investment in the revitalization of historic places (particularly tax-based incentives and grants/contributions), and fund the efforts of Indigenous peoples, charities, and not-for-profits to save and regenerate places of significance.

.../4

Leaders of the undersigned organizations would be pleased to discuss these matters with you in more detail, and to assist you in any way. The National Trust will be in contact with your scheduling assistant. Thank you for your consideration of these important issues.

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Bull  
Executive Director  
National Trust for Canada

**On behalf of the following national and provincial/territorial heritage organizations who have endorsed the above response, as of Dec 21, 2017:**

1. Association for Preservation Technology Canada
2. Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals
3. Canadian Museums Association
4. ICOMOS Canada
5. National Trust for Canada / La Fiducie nationale du Canada
6. Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
7. Action patrimoine
8. Architectural Conservancy of Ontario
9. Association of Heritage Industries Newfoundland and Labrador
10. Association Heritage New Brunswick
11. Canadian Heritage of Quebec/L'Héritage canadien du Québec
12. Community Heritage Ontario
13. Fédération Histoire Québec
14. Heritage BC
15. Heritage Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador
16. Heritage Saskatchewan
17. Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
18. Historical Society of Alberta
19. Manitoba Historical Society
20. Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust
21. Ontario Historical Society
22. Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation
23. Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network / Réseau du patrimoine anglophone du Québec
24. Yukon Historical and Museums Association

.../5

- C.c. The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada  
 The Honourable William Francis Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P., Minister of Finance  
 Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
 Ms. Deborah Schulte, M.P., Chair, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 The Honourable Ed Fast, P.C., M.P., Vice-Chair, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Ms. Linda Duncan, M.P., Vice-Chair, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. John Aldag, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. William Amos, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. Mike Bossio, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. Darren Fisher, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. Mark Gerretsen, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. Joël Godin, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. Robert Sopuck, M.P., Member, House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Mr. Thomas Bigelow, Clerk of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
 Paul Kuenstner, Executive Director, Association for Preservation Technology Canada  
 Gerry Zegerius, President, Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals  
 John G. McAvity, Executive Director and CEO, Canadian Museums Association  
 Christophe Rivet, President, ICOMOS Canada  
 Maria Cook, Communications and advocacy manager, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada  
 Émilie Vézina-Doré, Executive Director, Action patrimoine  
 Leslie Thompson, President, Architectural Conservancy of Ontario  
 Jane Severs, Executive Director, Association of Heritage Industries Newfoundland and Labrador

.../6

Koral LaVorgna, Executive Director, Association Heritage New Brunswick  
Jacques Archambault, Executive Director, Canadian Heritage of Quebec  
Wayne Morgan, President, Community Heritage Ontario  
Richard Bégin, President, Fédération Histoire Québec  
Richard Moorhouse, President, National Trust for Canada  
Paul Gravett, Executive Director, Heritage BC  
Jerry Dick, Executive Director, Heritage Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador  
Ingrid Cazakoff, CEO, Heritage Saskatchewan  
Joe Ballard, President, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia  
Linda Collier, President, Historical Society of Alberta  
Gordon Clarke, CAO, Manitoba Historical Society  
Cory Thorne, President, Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust  
Robert Leverty, Executive Director, Ontario Historical Society  
David Keenlyside, Executive Director, Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage  
Foundation  
Matthew Farfan, Executive Director, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network / Réseau du  
patrimoine anglophone du Québec  
Lianne Maitland, Executive Director, Yukon Historical and Museums Association