

The Honourable Lisa MacLeod
Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
6th Floor, 438 University Ave
Toronto, ON M7A 1N3

June 7, 2021

Dear Minister MacLeod,

On behalf of the Ontario Museum Association and its members representing 700 museums, galleries, and heritage sites across the province, we would like to follow up on the *Three Step Roadmap to Reopen*, and in particular the forthcoming regulations to ensure that museums can reopen safely to provide visitors and communities the experiences that are key to the province's economic and tourism recovery.

Our province's museums are respected, trusted and safe places staffed by diligent trained professionals who are committed to safety and health of all visitors, staff and volunteers. Ontario museums have proven this throughout the various stages of the pandemic and the summer of 2020, with safety protocols and health measures, like physical distancing, in place to provide safe experiences.

In order for museums to be positioned for recovery we request clarity be provided to our museums so that they can plan for a safe summer reopening and for welcoming their community once again as restrictions allow.

The Ontario Museum Association is requesting that Ontario's government consider two recommendations in the regulations:

1. Allow the operation of outdoor guided tours by museums and historic sites in Step 1 of the Roadmap, in alignment with restrictions on outdoor "In-person teaching and instruction" with observed health and safety protocols and physical distancing
2. Allow indoor museums to open in Step 2, alongside other public venues like libraries, also institutions with collections, and non-essential retail, based on the ability of museums to maintain appropriate distancing and health protocols.

For summer 2020, museums that were able to reopen successfully implemented protocols that kept their staff and visitors safe. These protocols, informed by Reg. 263/20 under *the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, can be repeated to offer safe, hyperlocal experiences in summer 2021.

The Association is also available to assist the Ministry and the government in the development of regulations and programs that meet the needs of Ontario's museums and the communities they serve. We look forward to our continued collaboration with the Ministry in support all of Ontario's museums.

Sincerely,



Paul Robertson

President

(City Curator, Cultural Services, City of Kingston)

cc:

Kevin Finnerty, Assistant Deputy Minister, MHSTCI

Susan Truppe, Chief of Staff, MHSTCI

Marie Lalonde, Executive Director, Ontario Museum Association

