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Sent: October-27-15 4:54 PM
To: Finnerty, Chrisanne
Subject: Help Develop Ontario's First Culture Strategy

Make sure that your interests, and those of your community, are accurately represented in the new Culture Strategy for Ontario.

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HIGH PRIORITY **PRESS RELEASE**

Greetings friends and colleagues,

The Ontario Historical Society would like to inform you that the [Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport \(MTCS\)](#) is pursuing the development of a [Culture Strategy for Ontario](#). The Ministry's objective is to establish a vision for culture across the province, and **they want to know which aspects of Ontario's culture are valuable to you and your community.**

One of the most valuable cultural resources in Ontario is our heritage sector. All across the province, not-for-profit organizations such as historical societies, museums, archives, and other heritage organizations and institutions are working to preserve and promote our diverse history. Activities such as cemetery tours, historical walks, community bike tours, plaque unveilings, archaeological digs, and visits to museums and historic sites are just a few examples of how Ontarians participate in culture by connecting with their heritage. Many of Ontario's grassroots heritage organizations also work tirelessly to protect our natural history—which is a vital part of both our cultural

identity, and our tourism industry.

Since government funding to heritage organizations was both cut, and frozen, in the mid-1990s, the groups who provide these services to their communities have been forced to do more with less. These are the people restoring our train stations, preserving our lighthouses, defending our cemeteries, protecting our genealogical resources, and telling our stories through lectures, films, publications, and exhibitions. Despite all their valuable work preserving our historical landmarks and cultural landscapes, government funding to these not-for-profit organizations remains incredibly low.

These groups are also acting as a voice for their communities. Aboriginal history; women's history; the history of diaspora in Canada; black settlers who fled north to escape slavery; family genealogy—all of these narratives are pieces of our identity as Ontarians. We have hundreds of historical societies, museums, and other heritage institutions working to tell these stories, and many more. Help ensure that their valuable work is recognized and supported!

The deadline for public submissions to the MTCS is December 7, 2015. Make sure that your interests, and those of your community, are accurately represented in the new Culture Strategy for Ontario.

How to get involved:

The Ministry has developed a [Discussion Paper](#) outlining the importance of culture within our communities, and the many different events, institutions, and industries which help us to define and express that culture. **Pages 3, 14, & 15 will be of particular importance to those with an interest in heritage activities and services.** The Ministry has also provided a list of discussion questions at the end of the paper (**page 16**), for your consideration.

In addition to the discussion paper, the MTCS issued a press release defining the [Guiding Principles](#) of the Culture Strategy initiative, and announcing the members of the [Culture Strategy Advisory Group](#), who will provide expert

advice to the MTCS on the Culture Strategy.

This is a unique opportunity for Ontarians across the province to have their voices heard. The Ministry is offering a few different ways for you to participate in the discussion; 1) online, through [Culture Talks](#); 2) in-person, at local [town hall meetings](#); 3) by leaving a comment online (the link can be found below the Discussion Paper); and 4) by submitting your comments in writing—via fax, [email](#), post, or by visiting [Ontario's Environmental Registry](#). Page 17 of the [Discussion Paper](#) cites all the necessary contact information required for sending written submissions. A complete list of the remaining town hall meetings is included below.

City	Date	Venue	Guest Speakers	Time
Sudbury	October 29	Science North, Vale Cavern Webcast	Danielle Daniel (writer, painter); Jack Blum (actor, director, filmmaker)	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Ottawa	November 4	National Arts Centre, Fountain Room	To be announced	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Markham	November 10	Markham Museum, Transportation Hall	To be announced	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Toronto	November 12	National Ballet School, Currie Hall	Miriam Toews (author), Ravi Jain (playwright, actor, director)	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
London	November 19	Museum London	Camilla Gibb (writer); Ali Al-Aasm (web developer)	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Kingston	November 25	Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning, Malting Tower	Jamie Kennedy (chef), Marilyn Simonds (author, editor)	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Mississauga	December 1	Art Gallery of Mississauga	Bonnie Devine (artist, writer, professor); Arlene Paculan (musician)	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Windsor	December 3	Art Gallery of Windsor, Rodzik Gallery	To be announced	7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

(Two town halls will be broadcast live on the web to give Ontarians from all locations the chance to participate in this important conversation.)

Make sure that your voice is heard before the December 7 deadline!

Thank you for your continued support and engagement.



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OHS members, subscribers and friends

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