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Archived - September 2016 Mandate letter: Tourism, Culture and Sport

Premier's instructions to the Minister on priorities.



September 23, 2016

The Honourable Eleanor McMahon
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport
900 Bay Street
9th Floor, Hearst Block
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2E1

Dear Minister McMahon:

Welcome to your role as Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. As we mark the mid-point of our mandate, we have a strong and new Cabinet, and are poised to redouble our efforts to deliver on our top priority — creating jobs and growth. Guided by our balanced plan to build Ontario up for everyone, we will continue to work together to deliver real benefits and more inclusive growth that will help people in their everyday lives.

We embark on this important part of our mandate knowing that our four-part economic plan is working — we are making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, making postsecondary education more affordable and accessible, leading the transition to a low-carbon economy and the fight against climate change, and building retirement security for workers.

Building on our ambitious and activist agenda, and with a focus on implementing our economic plan, we will continue to forge partnerships with businesses, educators, labour, communities, the not-for-profit sector and with

all Ontarians to foster economic growth and to make a genuine, positive difference in people's lives. Collaboration and active listening remain at the heart of the work we undertake on behalf of the people of Ontario — these are values that ensure a common purpose, stimulate positive change and help achieve desired outcomes. With this in mind, I ask that you work closely with your Cabinet colleagues to deliver positive results on initiatives that cut across several ministries, such as our Climate Change Action Plan, Business Growth Initiative, and the Highly Skilled Workforce Strategy. I also ask you to collaborate with the Minister Responsible for Digital Government to drive digital transformation across government and modernize public service delivery.

We have made tangible progress and we have achieved the following key results:

- Delivered the largest, most successful Pan Am/Parapan Am Games ever, leaving a legacy of best in class infrastructure initiatives, inspiring civic engagement and boosting Ontario's real GDP by up to \$3.7 billion between 2009 and 2017.
- Building on the success of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, the province released *Game ON* - the Ontario government's Sport Plan.
- Launched Ontario's first Culture Strategy to guide the government's support for culture over the next five years. The strategy aims to promote participation in arts and culture, build on the sector's economic impact in communities across the province and help Ontarians tell their stories and express themselves.
- Supported 200 festivals and events across the province through the 2016 Celebrate Ontario program, drawing tourists, creating jobs and growing local economies.
- In 2016-17 the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund will support 129 projects, allowing participation in community sport, recreation and physical activity.
- Established a permanent Ontario Music Fund with a \$15 million annual investment to increase music production activity in the province.
- Enhanced the Community Aboriginal Recreation Activator program from 20 to 27 communities, to support physical activity, sport and recreation in Indigenous communities.
- Launched the Ontario Libraries Capacity Fund to improve Information Technology resources at libraries.
- Renewed the Ontario Games program, with an increase in hosting grants for municipalities, and supported the successful delivery of the 2016 Ontario Summer Games and 2016 Ontario 55+ Games.

Your mandate is to work on delivering top tourism and recreation experiences to Ontarians and visitors, and promoting the tourism sector to drive economic growth. Your specific priorities include:

Supporting Arts and Culture in Ontario to Bring Us Together and Make Our Communities and Economy Stronger

- Implementing the Ontario Culture Strategy and work with partners and communities, including Indigenous partners, to:
 - Promote cultural engagement and inclusion.
 - Strengthen culture in communities.
 - Fuel the creative economy.
 - Promote the value of the arts throughout the government.
- During winter 2016-17, develop the Arts Policy Framework as a key action under the Culture Strategy, to promote the contributions of artists and the broader arts sector throughout the Ontario government.
- Building on the best year on record for film and TV, market our talented film crews, world-class facilities, and stable tax credit infrastructure to the world.

Celebrating 150 years of Ontario and the Federation

- Co-ordinating cross-government efforts and work with community organizations to celebrate Ontario 150, our sesquicentennial in 2017, as well as the 150th anniversary of Canada. This celebratory year will create a strong economic, social and cultural legacy for Ontarians, with a particular focus on youth.

Preserving Our History and Stories and Support the Climate Change Action Plan

- Working in 2017 with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change to establish a program under the Climate Change Action Plan to fund energy retrofits of heritage buildings. The program should showcase the benefits of reducing energy consumption and preserving these important and historic buildings for the enjoyment of future generations.

Supporting a Dynamic Tourism Industry

- Developing and releasing in fall 2016 the Strategic Framework for Tourism as a tool for industry and government to maximize the growth and competitiveness of Ontario's tourism sector. The framework will build on enhanced partnerships to drive greater investment, workforce development, marketing activities and product development, and include the implementation of commitments outlined in the June 2016 Action Plan for Tourism.

Fulfilling the Vision for a Revitalized Ontario Place

- Creating economic opportunities for tourism and investment through the revitalization of Ontario Place into a year-round, vibrant, waterfront destination while building on the site's legacy of innovation, fun and live music.
- Completing the construction and opening of the new Urban Park and William G. Davis Waterfront Trail to the public in 2017.
- Continuing to transform Ontario Place through key public and private sector partners and deliver on a plan that integrates the West Island as a cultural hub and transforms the East Island as a celebration common. The process for selecting partners for this transformation should start this year and the results should be announced in 2017.

Supporting Opportunities for All Ontarians to be Physically Active in Sport and Recreation

- Implementing *Game On* – the Ontario government's Sport Plan and enhance opportunities for Ontarians to participate in sport, recreation and physical activity, with a special emphasis on advancing opportunities for women and girls.
- Supporting the Rowan's Law Advisory Committee as it develops recommendations to prevent and mitigate head injuries in sports and to create awareness about head injuries in sports by fall 2017.
- Implementing the refreshed Ontario Trails Strategy and *Supporting Ontario Trails Act* to manage and promote the use of trails in Ontario, and develop a world-class system of diversified trails.
- Working with the Minister of Transportation and others, support cycling and walking as part of a healthy, active lifestyle, including supporting work across government to make commuter cycling easier and safer. As well, develop cycling as a tourism and environmental heritage draw in Ontario communities.

Strengthening Agencies and Enhancing Accountability

- Continuing to support agency initiatives that enhance their sustainability and maximize their economic contributions to the province.
- Continuing to work with agencies to provide oversight and support their efforts to meet best practices for good governance, fiscal management and public accountability.

Building Partnerships and Engaging with Indigenous Communities

- Collaborating across government and with industry partners to identify opportunities and advance Indigenous tourism in Ontario, including support of the next phase of the Aboriginal Tourism 2020 strategy.
- As part of Ontario's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission launching, in 2017, the Indigenous Cultural Revitalization Fund. The fund will support cultural activities with the goals of revitalizing cultural practices, raising awareness of the vitality of Indigenous cultures in Ontario and promoting reconciliation.
- Supporting the successful hosting of the North American Indigenous Games in summer 2017.

In addition to the priority activities above, I ask that you also deliver results for Ontarians by driving progress in the following areas:

- Work with the Minister of Children and Youth Services on Ontario's Youth Action Plan to expand youth development programs, and focus government funding on those youth and communities most in need of support.
- Work with the Minister of Education on Ontario's Well Being Strategy to enhance mental and physical health of students and contribute to healthy child development today to ensure a strong future tomorrow.
- Continue to develop opportunities for Indigenous community recreation.

As you know, taking action on the recommendations contained in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report is a priority for our government. That is why we released *The Journey Together*, a document that serves as a blueprint for making our government's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples a reality. As we move forward with the implementation of the report, I ask you and your fellow Cabinet members to work together, in co-operation with our Indigenous partners, to help achieve real and measurable change for Indigenous communities.

Having made significant progress over the past year in implementing our community hubs strategy, I encourage you and your Cabinet colleagues to ensure that the Premier's Special Advisor on Community Hubs and the Community Hubs Secretariat, at the Ministry of Infrastructure, are given the support they need to continue their vital cross-government work aimed at making better use of public properties, encouraging multi-use spaces and helping communities create financially sustainable hub models.

Responsible fiscal management remains an overarching priority for our government — a priority echoed strongly in our 2016 Budget. Thanks to our disciplined approach to the province's finances over the past two years, we are on track to balance the budget next year, in 2017–18, which will also lower the province's debt-to-GDP ratio. Yet this is not the moment to rest on our past accomplishments: it is essential that we work collaboratively across every sector of government to support evidence-based decision-making to ensure programs and services are effective, efficient and sustainable, in order to balance the budget by 2017–18, maintain balance in 2018–19, and position the province for longer-term fiscal sustainability.

Marathon runners will tell you that an event's halfway mark is an opportunity to reflect on progress made — but they will also tell you that it is the ideal moment to concentrate more intently and to move decisively forward. At this halfway mark of this government's mandate, I encourage you to build on the momentum that we have successfully achieved over the past two years, to work in tandem with your fellow ministers to advance our economic plan and to ensure that Ontario remains a great place to live, work and raise a family.

I look forward to working together with you to build opportunity and prosperity for all Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wynne
Premier

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