



September 29, 2021

Mr. David Sinclair
Vice-Chair
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation
deadbrokedave@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Sinclair:

As you begin planning for the upcoming fiscal year, I am pleased to write to you in your capacity as Vice-Chair of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). Pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter provides direction and sets out my expectations for the NOHFC for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Ontario's board-governed agencies are vital partners in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to Ontarians. The work that you and your fellow Board members undertake to establish the goals, objectives, and strategic direction for the NOHFC plays a critical role in ensuring consistency with government priorities, the NOHFC's mandate, key policies and directives, and my directions, as appropriate. I thank you for your dedication and willingness to serve.

As part of the Government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value-for-money to taxpayers.

This includes:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within your agency's financial allocations.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Identifying and pursuing efficiencies and savings, including those due to COVID-19, as applicable.
- Working with the ministry, where appropriate, to advance the *Ontario Onwards Action Plan*.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, accounting standards and practices, and the *Public Service of Ontario Act* ethical framework, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.

3. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information-sharing and reporting, including by leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Supporting transparency and privacy requirements of data work and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.

4. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization or digital modernization strategies for online service delivery and continuing to meet and exceed customer service standards through transition.
- Adopting digital approaches, such as user research, agile development and product management.

5. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Demonstrating leadership of an inclusive environment free of harassment.
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

6. COVID-19 Recovery

- Identifying and pursuing service delivery methods (digital or other) that have evolved since the start of COVID-19.
- Supporting the recovery efforts from COVID-19.

In addition to these government-wide priorities, I expect the NOHFC to focus on:

- Providing superior client service.
- Continuing to deliver renewed NOHFC programming that will make it easier for more people and businesses to apply; support more projects in rural northern communities; target existing and emerging market opportunities; provide more work opportunities for Indigenous people; address the skilled labour shortage; and aid in the recovery from COVID-19.
- Supporting broader Northern Ontario planning efforts and regional economic development priorities.

Through these measures, we can ensure that the NOHFC continues to fulfill its mandate to promote and stimulate initiatives that grow and diversify the economy of Northern Ontario, as set out in the *Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Act*.

Once again, thank you for your dedication and service. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Rickford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and "R".

The Honourable Greg Rickford
Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry

c: Helen Mulc, ADM, Northern Development Division
Richard Scott, Director, Strategic Initiatives Branch, Northern Development Division
John Guerard, Executive Director, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation