



774-2025-133

May 29, 2025

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

Dear Mr. Sinclair:

This letter serves as an addendum to the Annual Letter of Direction for the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) dated October 3, 2024.

Ontario recognizes the current turbulent landscape resulting from the U.S. tariffs and related U.S. trade policies, and the significant uncertainty for Ontario's workers and businesses. Immediate action is critical to protect the province's economy. This addendum Letter of Direction is intended to provide information on our government's approach moving forward, and to acknowledge the important role of the Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth (MNEDG) and the NOHFC during these times.

As outlined in Bill 5, *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025*, the province is implementing changes to build an economy that is more competitive, more resilient and more self-reliant. By building faster and more strategically, Ontario can protect its industries, protect the environment, mitigate the impact of trade disruptions and ensure the long-term prosperity and security of its economy.

Ontario also committed to eliminating internal trade barriers and red tape by streamlining processes to foster an environment conducive to increased growth and development. The ministry's focus on this strategic approach opens opportunities for MNEDG to serve as a catalyst for growth, driving economic development, boosting the competitiveness of Northern Ontario and ensuring the region remains a pivotal leader in the province's economic landscape.

In light of the current trade and geopolitical challenges, I expect NOHFC to take the same approach with decisions of prioritizing projects which will be an economic catalyst as well as those with strategic economic importance. I also expect NOHFC to be responsive to the economic challenges including fast-tracking solutions, as necessary, for sectors or communities impacted by tariffs as well as those that will have significant and broad economic impact.

As you are aware, the government committed to expanding NOHFC programming and eligibility to include the District of Muskoka. This expansion is accompanied by an increase to the NOHFC annual funding allocation by an additional \$30 million over the next three years, allowing the NOHFC to extend support and resources to a broader area. This will create new opportunities for collaboration and advancement, further strengthening our commitment to regional development in the North.

I appreciate your understanding and support as we navigate this challenging period and strategically mitigate the impact of trade disruptions. I thank you and your fellow Board members for your continued commitment and dedication to the NOHFC.

Together, through innovative, sustainable and accountable direction, we can serve as the catalyst for growth, realize the full potential of the North and help protect the long-term prosperity and security of the Northern Ontario economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Pirie', with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

The Honourable George Pirie
Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth
Chair, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation

- c: Drew Vanderduim, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth
John Guerard, Executive Director, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation
Richard Scott, Assistant Deputy Minister, Northern Development Division, Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth
Scott Mantle, Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Management Division, Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth
Jamie Brunette, Acting Director, Strategic Initiatives Branch, Northern Development Division, Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth