

December 22, 2011

Dear Donors and Friends of the CMHR,

We believe in this project because we believe in a very simple notion: that injustice, inequality, and inequity can be solved by action. The CMHR will stand as a testament to action and the results that come from our shared belief in humanity.

Together, we've undertaken what seems like an improbable task: a project that will see Canada's first museum for human rights take shape and call Winnipeg home. Today, the beautifully arresting structure that stands at the Forks reminds us of humanity's capacity to do the improbable.

Since the very beginning we've made excellence our guide. The Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) is constructing a museum like no other. Our goal is to capture a human rights story that deserves to be told – Canada's story. Anything less would not do justice to our country's history, its ambitions, and its commitment to excellence.

With each day, we are reminded that the work of human rights demands determination. Our donors from Manitoba, across Canada, and around the world expect excellence. Anything worth doing is worth doing right. We have to ensure we get this task right. We know that you expect us to get this right. For this reason, we are realigning our corporate goals and strategic objectives to meet these expectations.

It is no secret that we've faced a number of obstacles along the way. Over the past few months we've become aware of a series of unavoidable and unexpected challenges. The Museum is facing new capital costs and new costs associated with exhibit construction. After careful review and third party assessment of our strategic plan, the Museum has determined that our total capital project budget will be 351 million dollars. The leadership required to complete the Museum demands determination on the part of all partners, staff, and the board. Let us say without any hesitation that we are more determined than ever.

Our timetable envisions capital completion of the Museum's base building in 2012. We are working towards inauguration in 2014 and have aligned our project and work plans accordingly. The Museum is currently exploring a series of options that will help ensure this schedule is feasible and achievable. Funding security is a central element in our planning. We are looking to the private sector to continue leading the way. We are encouraged by the success that the Friends of the CMHR have achieved to date. We are grateful that our former Board Chair and donor Arni Thorsteinson has agreed to continue his leadership with the Friends of the CMHR to help ensure we can reach our ambitious private sector fundraising goal.

As we reflect on our accomplishments and the road that lies ahead, the CMHR is encouraged by the generous support from the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg.

These contributions by Canadians are invaluable. We thank our government partners for their continued commitment.

We remain focused on completing the CMHR in a timely manner, and in a manner that respects the courageous history of human rights in Canada and around the world.

The CMHR will look at the evolution of human rights in Canada and internationally; it will feature human rights champions and everyday victors who have fought tirelessly and persevered in the fight for human rights; it will feature today's human rights issues; and it will provide people with tools to take a stand for human rights. Among many themes, we will look at gender issues, the rights of persons with disabilities, sexual orientation, children's rights, women's equality, labour rights, poverty, racism, language rights, age, migration/immigration, and others. The Canadian Museum for Human Rights will inspire debate and dialogue about human issues, and will leave visitors with a sense of hope, knowing that their actions can create change. We hope to encourage our visitors to reflect on how human rights affect their own lives and ultimately provide them with the inspiration to take action in their homes, communities, schools, workplaces and beyond.

We are proud of the promise that the CMHR holds for Canada. The economic benefits of this project are already being realized. The construction project alone has created the equivalent of six thousand full-time jobs. We've attracted academics who now have adjunct or professional affiliate appointments at our universities; people who are here with their families solely because of the Museum. Professionals from small business, the public sector, private industry, and cultural institutions have joined us from across Canada.

The CMHR is part of Canada's human rights story. It is part our country's challenge, and it will represent a meaningful part of Canada's success.

As we look to the future, we ask that you continue this journey with us.

Sincerely,



Eric Hughes  
Interim Chair, Board of Trustees



Stuart Murray  
President and Chief Executive Officer