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October 21, 2021

City of Thorold
3540 Schmon Parkway
P.O. Box 1044
Thorold, ON L2V 4A7

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

On behalf of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS) I am writing today to show our support for our member organizations, The Thorold Museum and the Thorold and Beaverdams Historical Society, and to emphasize the important role the museum and its historical collection hold in your community, our province and our country.

The OHS, founded in 1888, is a not-for-profit corporation and registered charity. The OHS is a non-government group bringing together people of all ages, all walks of life, and all cultural backgrounds interested in preserving and promoting some aspect of Ontario's history. *An Act to incorporate The Ontario Historical Society*, assented to 1st April 1899 at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, authorizes the OHS to incorporate an affiliated society as a non-profit corporation.

The Thorold and Beaverdams Historical Society was established in 1894 and incorporated as an independent not-for-profit by the OHS in 1899 as one of our original member organizations, and is thus one of the longest-running heritage organizations, not only in this province but in Canada, with one of the oldest collections of artefacts of national significance. The OHS incorporated The Thorold Museum in 2019 to better care and advocate for the society's museum collection.

The OHS's experience over decades working with historical societies and community museum in Ontario tells us that The Thorold Museum cannot move forward without a permanent home. This home, either through owning a building or having a formal long-term lease, will ensure the museum's stability and will grant them better access to a whole range of funding options through the governments of Ontario and Canada, corporations, foundations, planned giving, and individual donors. *(See for example the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries' Standards for Community Museums [http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/museums/museums_standards.shtml], that must be met for museums to be eligible for provincial funding.)*

Needless to say, the City of Thorold already has a perfect precedent. The OHS incorporated the Friends of Beaverdams Church (FBC) in 2013, and soon after your City transferred ownership of the church and cemetery to FBC. This not-for-profit organization has independently assumed all capital and maintenance costs ever since, freeing the City from any financial liability. *(See attached: front page article in the OHS Bulletin, April 2021 Issue.)*

A new secure home for the Thorold Museum should preferably be close to downtown with good public access for tourists and school groups. The Board of Directors of Thorold Museum must have

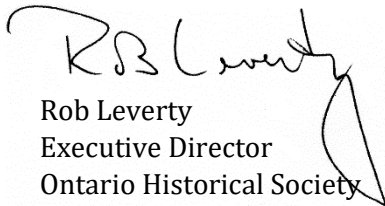
direct control over the space to properly display and store the artefacts and be able to establish the environmental and safety protocols needed to ensure this historic collection's survival.

It is important to remember that Ontario is unlike most provinces across Canada in that we have no provincial museum. Our tradition is that our history is displayed and stored in communities across our province. Therefore, the City of Thorold has a unique role to play in helping our fellow citizens protect not only *your* local history, but a collection of both provincial and national significance that tells the story of Ontario as a whole.

We know that progressive councils across our province have realized that museums and heritage infrastructure are critical to local economic development, maintaining a healthy community, and to attracting back tourism—more important now than ever as we recover from a pandemic. I hope that the City of Thorold will likewise show their support for their museum through direct and immediate action to establish a permanent museum site.

Thank you for your consideration on this important heritage matter.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Leverty
Executive Director
Ontario Historical Society