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November 12, 2025

Mayor Brad Schlossberger and Council
Town of Claresholm
111 - 55 Avenue West
PO Box 1000
Claresholm, AB T0L 0T0

Dear Mayor Schlossberger and Council:

RE: Municipal Support for Museums in Alberta

On behalf of the over 500 members of the Alberta Museums Association (AMA), it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your recent election as representatives for the people of Claresholm.

The AMA leads, facilitates, and supports the province's museums through multifaceted programs and services, including advisory resources, professional development opportunities, award-winning publications, and a grants program. As an advocate for the museum community, the AMA champions our membership's commitment to creating innovative, sustainable, and engaging opportunities for life-long learning and celebration of Alberta's heritage. This work ensures that Alberta's museums are leading contributors to the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our province.

As representatives for the Town of Claresholm, I encourage you to continue and strengthen your support for the museums in your municipality, including the Claresholm & District Museum. This museum is among the many participants in the AMA's Recognized Museum Program, an accreditation program for museums in Alberta that ensures proper stewardship of our province's collections and a quality visiting experience for all Canadians.

I wanted to share that in recent national surveys conducted for the *Reconsidering Museums* project (reconsideringmuseums.ca) we learned that members of the public strongly value local museums. 74% of Canadians agreed that local museums bring value to their community, and 70% agreed that local museums provide a sense of community. Your support for museums comes in various forms, but did you know Alberta museums receive the highest proportion of their funding from local governments, at 30%¹? Local governments in Alberta are integral partners in the preservation of our unique heritage and culture, and we appreciate your contribution.

We hope you will endeavour to support and enhance the vital role of museums in Claresholm, and in the excellent quality of life in Alberta. Please feel free to contact me at 780.424.2626 ext. 1 or jforsyth@museums.ab.ca to discuss how we can best work towards engaged, thriving, and inclusive museums at the heart of Alberta's communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Forsyth".

Jennifer Forsyth
Executive Director / CEO
Alberta Museums Association

¹ Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions: 2021 Report, Department of Canadian Heritage



MUSEUMS MATTER TO CANADIANS

We value museums because they make sense of the world around us. They collect our tangible and intangible heritage and invite us to share in the many stories they help tell. Their collections broaden, inspire, and facilitate a shift in our thinking, but the most important work of museums is in collecting perspectives: in showing us how our stories are told.

3 in 4 Canadians think museums are a very important part of Canadian society.

We heard from Canadians across the country that they value and trust museums, and think they are an important part of Canadian society.

ACCESS:

Canadians know about and visit museums, feel welcome in them, and recognize them as spaces for reflection, learning, and dialogue. They value museums even if they do not visit them regularly. Museums are seen as accessible and inclusive spaces, where people can go to see themselves reflected in exhibits, collections, and programs.

Our national identity is changing. As Canada becomes more diverse, it is important to have accessible, inclusive, and welcoming public spaces where Canadians can see themselves in the stories that we tell about our country.

94%

agree that museums make them feel welcome and provide what they need for their visits

88%

agree that the museum is a safe place

76%

agree that museums give people a sense of belonging and membership in a community

AUTHORITY:

Canadians continue to trust museums and to consider them a credible source of information. They value museums for their role in preservation and learning. Canadians want museums to continue to tell the truth, but to also embrace more diverse types of expertise, including community knowledge and lived experience.

While trust in public institutions is decreasing, museums continue to be seen as trustworthy by Canadians. In an age of misinformation, it is important to have credible institutions that can help us understand ourselves and our place in the world.

95%

agree that the museum is a place to preserve and care for art and objects, and to tell their stories

95%

agree that the museum is a place to learn and be inspired

80%

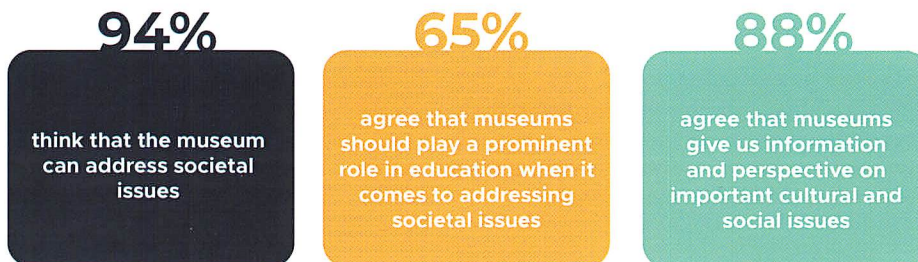
agree that museums are a highly credible source of information, above daily newspapers and television



ACTIVISM:

Canadians think that the museum has value as a teacher, ally, and an agent of change. They see museums as a possible leader, and a model, poised to act on important societal issues like reconciliation, climate change, and growing inequalities.

We are living in a time of increased urgency around the need for social change. Museums are positioned to help lead Canadians as they navigate those changes, and to provide a space for critical thinking and dialogue about the issues that matter to them.



METHODOLOGY:

Launched in 2020, Reconsidering Museums was undertaken in partnership with a consortium of provincial and territorial museums associations and the Canadian Museums Association, led by the Alberta Museums Association. The online engagement campaign, Museums for Me, asked the public about the role, value, and future of museums. It included a series of consultations including a survey, public opinion polling, and dialogue sessions undertaken by Hill+Knowlton Strategies Canada on behalf of the consortium.

Visit reconsideringmuseums.ca to learn more.

The Alberta Museums Association gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Cultural Investment Fund and the Province of Alberta through the Community Initiatives Program for the Reconsidering Museums project.