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March 23, 2023

Re: ANSM Response to Positive News in Nova Scotia Provincial Budget 2023-24

Dear ANSM Members,

On Thursday, March 23, the Nova Scotia Government delivered Budget 2023-24. We at the Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM) were eagerly watching in the hope of increased funding for museums. We are very pleased to report that the government has shown a commitment to supporting museums in our province, with an increase of 5.1 million dollars to Arts and Culture, which includes an additional \$650,000 to the Community Museum Assistance Program (CMAP), and 2.1 million dollars to locally managed Nova Scotia Museum sites. This funding increase comes with no reductions to any project funding.

ANSM has been working closely with the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage to emphasize the importance of museums in Nova Scotia, as well as the dire financial situation that museums currently face. This message was heard loud and clear, also recognizing the important role museums play in supporting a healthy economy and healthy communities. More details about specific increases will be released in the next few days, including increases to the CMAP, the Nova Scotia Museum, and Culture and Heritage Development project grants. ANSM will continue to work with our members and the Department to assist with this rollout.

ANSM is committed to helping museums become resilient and sustainable organizations that reflect and actively serve their diverse communities. In January 2023 ANSM conducted a survey with our members. Without increased funding this year, over 50% of responding museums indicated they would need to reduce their hours of operation, staffing, and responsiveness to community needs. We are hopeful that this increase in funding will help alleviate these situations. Over the coming months, ANSM will use the "Reconsidering Museums" project (reconsideringmuseums.ca) to help Nova Scotians and museums better understand the critical role that museums play in making Nova Scotia a prosperous, healthy, and vibrant province.

This increase in funding will help many museums, but as museums navigate new post-pandemic realities, conversations around changing and ceasing operations have become increasingly common. In 2022-23, to support museums considering sunset options, ANSM, with the support of the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage,

engaged a consultant to develop a “Museum Life Cycle Completion Toolkit.” We are releasing this toolkit today. The toolkit can be found on ANSM's website:

ansm.ns.ca/ansm-releases-museum-life-cycle-completion-toolkit

ANSM will continue to work with the Nova Scotia Government to advocate for resilient and sustainable museums that represent and serve all Nova Scotians. We are grateful for the support of our members (including the members of the ANSM Advocacy Working Group), Nova Scotians, and the Nova Scotia Government for today's positive budget. We encourage all museums and their boards to use this opportunity to also send their thanks to their local MLAs and invite them to visit museums this summer to show the impact of this increased funding. Today's announcement is a positive step forward for the museum sector in Nova Scotia.

Thank you and we look forward to a great 2023 for museums in Nova Scotia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. MacIntyre'.

Maggie MacIntyre
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katie Tanner'.

Katie Tanner
President