Successes and Gaps in Budget 2026

The Saskatchewan Heritage Coalition, made up of Heritage Saskatchewan and the Museums Association of Saskatchewan, welcomes the federal government's recognition of the central role cultural heritage plays in connecting Canadians to their communities and one another. We will continue to monitor the release of further budgetary details over the coming month. **The following current commitments will help to safeguard and share Canada's cultural heritage:**

- $783.1 million over five years for Canada's national museums, the National Battlefields Commission, the National Arts Centre, and Library and Archives Canada for aging facilities, investment in national collections, and to support related exhibitions and performances.
- $3 million annually through 2029-30 to support the designation of Regina's RCMP Heritage Centre as a national museum.
- $3.6 billion over ten years for the management of 20,000 Parks Canada capital assets in national parks, marine conservation areas, and national historic sites.
- $300 million for investment in the Canada 160 Fund to support Heritage Minutes, the Trans Canada Trail, community spaces, and the creation of other signature experiences that will offer opportunities to help Canadians connect and celebrate their shared identity.

However, the budget highlights gaps that require further consideration.

The vast majority of investments are directed towards federally managed assets, with comparatively little new investment for community-run municipal, provincial, and private heritage places. For example, the national museum funding only covers one site in Saskatchewan out of over 250. Local museums and historic sites are essential to economic resilience and community vitality yet often lack the resources to address aging facilities and mounting maintenance needs. While provincial and municipal governments must be willing to invest in such places, federal support and municipal-provincial-federal partnerships are an important part of such strategic investments.

Further, we are concerned that reductions to Parks Canada's operating resources and workforce risk undermining these investments. Nearly 3000 Parks Canada employees will be affected by these cuts, with at least 500 full-time equivalent jobs to be eliminated over the coming three years. Historic sites can only welcome visitors and share their stories if they have the personnel and resources to properly care for them.

As Canada approaches its 160th anniversary, we must recognize that our heritage is not only preserved by national institutions, but by local museums, organizations, and volunteers across the country. We encourage the federal government to build on its commitments with sustained support for the people and places that safeguard Canada's cultural heritage as a living part of our identity.