



Patron  
*Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean*  
C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.  
Governor General of Canada

Présidente d'honneur  
*Son Excellence la très honorable Michaëlle Jean*  
C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.  
Gouverneure Générale du Canada

February 2, 2010

The Honourable Gary Goodyear  
Minister of State  
(Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)  
C.D. Howe Building  
235 Queen Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0H5

**Re: Southern Ontario Development Program Funding - City of Brantford  
“Downtown Core Revitalization”**

Dear Minister Goodyear,

As the national voice for the conservation of built heritage in Canada, the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF) is writing to express our great concern that a \$1.38 million contribution from the Southern Ontario Development Program (SODP) will result in the demolition of 41 heritage buildings on Colborne and Water Streets in the City of Brantford.

It is our position that the SODP and its federal funds should not be associated with a project of this nature. All of the buildings in question are on the City's Heritage Inventory and are being demolished on very short timelines. According to the local media, the urgency to demolish is being justified by SODP-imposed deadlines. We understand there are no solid plans in place to build on the site after the existing buildings are sent to the landfill.

Minister, we strongly urge you to grant an extension for the funding, and make the funding conditional on exploring the option to re-use and rehabilitate some or all of the 41 buildings.

This would surely be a better fit with Fed Dev's goal of downtown core revitalization. In the 1960s and early 1970s, mass demolition of older buildings was an “urban renewal” strategy employed in inner cities across Canada. Urban planning experts and community leaders now agree, however, that this was a severely flawed strategy, one that did little to regenerate neighbourhoods.

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The 41 buildings, owned by the City of Brantford, hold great potential to reinforce downtown Brantford's emerging role as a post-secondary hub. There are a number of historic property conversion projects in other parts of Canada which have acted as catalysts for downtown renewal: for instance, Red River College's Princess Street Campus in Winnipeg, CentreBeam Place in Saint John, and the Meduse complex in Quebec City.

We have written to Brantford's Mayor and City Council to strongly urge them to halt their controversial demolition plans and to conduct thorough structural assessments of all 41 buildings on Colborne Street to determine their potential for redevelopment. We have also urged them to conduct a comprehensive heritage assessment – building on the heritage study and inventory completed in 1992 – to afford a clear sense of the significance of the 41 buildings, individually and as an historic streetscape. And finally, we have encouraged them to consult expertise in heritage-centred revitalization strategies to learn how you can capitalize on these valuable community assets

Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Natalie Bull', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Natalie Bull  
Executive Director

cc. Mr. B.A. Archibald, President, Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario  
Mr. Phil McColeman, Member of Parliament, Brant