

Please help us create a visual history of Toronto's triumph over COVID-19.

Dear CEMA Member:

As The City of Toronto begins executing its COVID-19 Recovery Plan, we have commissioned photographer Randy VanDerStarren to document life across our City. We have asked him to photograph the heroic and the human, the isolation and the connection, the hardship and even the moments of whimsy that comprise daily life during this life-altering pandemic.

It is important that we record, remember and preserve for the future, images of one of the most historically important events in our City's history. The work of Mr. VanDerStarren and his team will be shared with the public in a photographic book and exhibition, and preserved in the City's historical archives.

We are asking Torontonians to help us complete this project by providing the team with access to your location. Access will allow the photographers to document life as it is currently playing out in your surroundings. Your co-operation will allow them to photograph now empty public or private spaces which would normally be energized by masses of people; spaces such as religious facilities, public pools, movie theatres, stadiums, playgrounds, retail locations and even private homes. It will enable them to capture how life can still go on with physical distancing and restricted public spaces. Later, when life returns to normal, another set of photographs will be taken to highlight the contrast.

Mr. VanDerStarren expects the resulting book to be available in late October, with 100% of the proceeds from its sale to be donated to DonateTO, Toronto's official COVID-19 charity.

We would be grateful if you would be willing to participate. We are asking that you permit Mr. VanDerStarren and his team to photograph at your location and grant them the rights to use the images that are taken. Of course, the photographers will practice physical distancing, act with the utmost respect for your personal privacy and abide by any reasonable conditions that you may require.

In return, life in your domain through this period will become a permanent part of Toronto's history.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please stay safe.

Yours Truly,



Michael Thompson
Deputy Mayor
Chair, Economic & Community Development
Councillor, Scarborough Centre
Ward 21