

# \* STATE OF HERITAGE REPORT

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TORONTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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## \* PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide a picture of the current state of heritage in Toronto and to lay out goals for strengthening the heritage sector.<sup>1</sup> One of the primary objectives of this report is to review what works or does not work when it comes to Heritage Toronto's four pillars of heritage – cultural, architectural, archaeological and natural – and to provide recommendations to improve resource allocation - including financial resources, human resources, and the resource of political will - over the coming years.

This objective was first pursued in 2001, when Heritage Toronto compiled an overview analysis of the heritage sector in the city and issued the report *Observations on the State of Heritage*. Providing City Council with an overview of the state of Toronto's heritage activities from the outside perspective of an arms-length agency, the recommendations contained in that 2001 report were intended to contribute to improved overall heritage management in the city.

### THE CONCLUSION OF THE 2001 REPORT STATES IN PART:

"If Toronto wants to assume the mantle of a 'truly international city,' the city's heritage must be an integral part of that effort. Given the meagre resources available to any single sector of the heritage field including the City, it will take a truly meaningful partnership among the public and private heritage sectors as well as with the larger community. It will also take more than money. For Council, it will entail the creation of innovative legislation in the realm of heritage zoning by-laws and other tools. Many of these will mean recourse to lobbying the legislature for the appropriate authorities. That will take real resolve on the part of Council."<sup>2</sup>

A follow up report prepared by Heritage Toronto and issued in 2011, *Heritage Voices*, took a slightly different approach. While it assessed the progress made since the 2001 *Observations on the State of Heritage* report, *Heritage Voices* also summarized a series of broad consultation sessions organized by Heritage Toronto in conjunction with the Toronto Historical Association. Through these consultations, the significant issues facing the heritage community in Toronto were determined and a set of recommendations was put forth.

The current report was informed by an expanded variety of dialogues with City staff and heritage sector professionals and volunteers. These dialogues included online surveys, individual consultations and group consultations, along with public symposia developed around the four aforementioned pillars of heritage. Information was also acquired through research and by analyzing various reports and accounts of discussions that had taken place within the heritage community over the past four years (the full list of participants and research sources is on the back cover). This is also the first report where a graded "Progress Report" on the state of Toronto's heritage sector has been produced to help readers understand, at a glance, where progress has been made and where there is room for improvement.



## \* EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reflecting on issues highlighted in the 2001 report and recommendations put forth in the 2010/2011 report, several concerns have been addressed and progress has been made on several key recommendations. However, many concerns detailed in the 2010/2011 report remain ongoing issues in the heritage community at large, and there is definitely room for improvement across the sector.

## \* TORONTO'S HERITAGE SECTOR: PROGRESS REPORT AT A GLANCE

This brief Progress Report provides a glance at where Toronto's heritage sector as a whole has made gains and where improvement is needed.

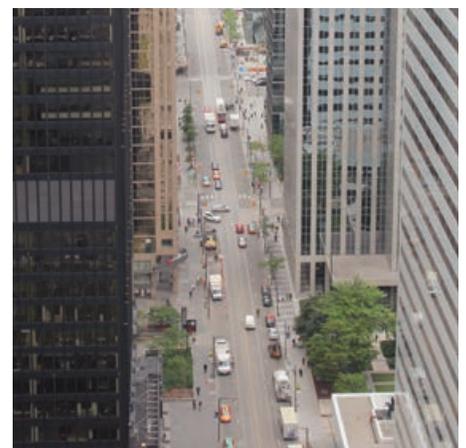
The detailed written report, following the Progress Report, provides explanations - based on our consultations, symposia and research - of the progress in the sector made against selected recommendations from the 2010/2011 *Heritage Voices* report.

In a nutshell, the Progress Report below reflects good work mainly on revising the Official Plan, starting to reposition heritage as a better aspect of city planning, and putting the *Inventory of Heritage Properties* into a single easily-accessible source. Improvements are needed to expand interpretation of Toronto's heritage beyond traditional pioneer history, improve communication, and enact stronger legislation and longer review timelines to avoid the loss of heritage sites.

*"Why should we care about heritage preservation?"*

In 2012, *NOW Magazine* published an article entitled, "5 Reasons we should care about heritage preservation:"<sup>3</sup>

- Architectural beauty is good for your brain;
- Historic buildings are physical links to our past;
- Historically significant buildings contribute to our city's cultural and economic well-being;
- Heritage designations boost property values; and,
- Heritage preservation is good for the environment and creates more jobs.



AREA	SELECTED RECOMMENDATION	GRADE
GOVERNANCE, REGULATIONS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	<b>TAKE A MORE ACTIVE APPROACH TO AVOID IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO HERITAGE STRUCTURES AND SITES DUE TO INFORMATION AND POLICY GAPS:</b>	
	Allocate more staff and resources to enforce existing laws and heritage policies.	B-
	Revise the <b>Official Plan</b> to offer well-defined policy on heritage resources.	A
	Enact stronger legislation and longer timelines for demolition applications to receive a proper review from Heritage Preservation Services (HPS).	D
	Improve <b>coordination and communication</b> between HPS and other City divisions.	B-
	Integrate heritage conservation into the work of other City departments (especially Parks, Recreation and Forestry, and Economic Development).	B-
	Better communication to ensure public and volunteer concerns and questions related to the <i>Inventory of Heritage Properties</i> are addressed.	C-
	Work towards a more <b>holistic approach</b> to heritage conservation by including <b>cultural landscapes and natural heritage</b> features in listings on the <i>Inventory of Heritage Properties</i> .	B
	Reposition heritage as a progressive aspect of better city planning, and an explicit move towards a 'greener' city, to be woven into <b>development</b> decisions.	A-
	Situate heritage within the City's organizational structure so as to strengthen its role, allow for cooperation and vision, and foster a new long-term <b>Heritage Management Plan</b> that could be executed together by City staff, City departments and volunteer heritage organizations.	B-
	Update and consolidate the <i>Inventory of Heritage Properties</i> into a single, easily-accessible source.	B+
	<b>IMPLEMENT A TAX REBATE PROGRAM FOR PRIVATE HOMEOWNERS AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS:</b>	
	Revitalize and reinstate Heritage property owner <b>financial incentive programs</b> such as the Heritage Property Tax Relief and the Heritage Grants program in order to promote protection of heritage sites and buildings among private property owners.	B
	<b>PRESERVE MUNICIPALLY-OWNED HERITAGE PROPERTIES:</b>	
	Conduct Building Condition Assessments for all City-owned heritage properties and create long-term <b>Conservation Management Plans</b> for properties as required.	B-

AREA	SELECTED RECOMMENDATION	GRADE
AWARENESS, COLLECTIONS AND EDUCATION	<b>BUILD MORE HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATIONAL DISPLAYS AROUND ALL ASPECTS OF HERITAGE AND HISTORY:</b>	
	<b>Find more compelling and relevant ways to tell stories and engage new audiences</b> (including telling stories that connect with more diverse groups like the <b>younger generation</b> and <b>new Canadians</b> ).	<b>C</b>
	<b>Expand the interpretation of Toronto’s heritage beyond traditional pioneer history</b> to include more emphasis on the <b>20th century</b> , such as <b>modern and post-war heritage</b> .	<b>C-</b>
	Appreciate, celebrate, and commemorate <b>natural and intangible heritage</b> through <b>educational</b> programming.	<b>B-</b>
	Appreciate, celebrate, and commemorate <b>Aboriginal heritage</b> through <b>educational</b> programming.	<b>C+</b>

## \* UNDERSTANDING HERITAGE

In the 2010/2011 *Heritage Voices* report, participants collectively put forward progressive definitions of heritage that went beyond traditional “pioneer history” and included natural heritage and cultural heritage landscapes, practices and behaviours, as well as significant buildings and structures.<sup>4</sup> There was also a strong desire to both recognize cultural diversity and include Toronto’s Aboriginal history as part of the overall definition of heritage.

Stakeholders consulted for this current report repeatedly focused on an even broader definition of heritage to reflect a more diverse society. Heritage value no longer resides exclusively in the tangible fabric of history (the bricks and mortar of buildings) but in intangible concepts (such as associations and the role heritage resources play in supporting local identity as well as creating and celebrating a sense of place).

Most notable was an observation made at the Cultural Heritage Symposium that was held as part of the consultations for this report. With representatives from diverse organizations including the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA), the United Way, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, one attendee noted that the diversity of the panel clearly promoted and reflected our current diverse definition of heritage and it brought heritage into the here-and-now. As he observed **“heritage is not past tense, it’s present tense.”**

### *What is Heritage?*

“All that our society values and that survives as the living context – both natural and human – from which we derive our sustenance, coherence and meaning in our individual and collective lives.” (Ontario Heritage Policy Review, 1990)

“A broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as bio-diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral part of modern life.” (International Cultural Tourism Charter, ICOMOS, 1999)

“All inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility.” (Conservation Principles, English Heritage, 2008)



# \* CURRENT STATE OF HERITAGE IN TORONTO

The most striking observation from the 2012 public consultation process on heritage policies in the City of Toronto's Official Plan was the importance of the conservation of heritage buildings, structures and landscapes to the people of Toronto: Public interest ranges from the dedicated heritage advocates who work on heritage conservation every day to the tens of thousands of Torontonians who line up each year for Doors Open.<sup>5</sup> The consultation process showed that greater effort is required to retain existing heritage resources, while balancing Toronto's growth and keeping important historical touchstones.

The importance of heritage to Torontonians is further illustrated by the recent "Big Ideas" project. In January 2014, the *Toronto Star* newspaper and the University of Toronto's Martin Prosperity Institute launched a city-wide brainstorming session to unearth innovative proposals that would improve the Greater Toronto Area.<sup>6</sup> From over 1,000 submissions received for this project, 35 were put to a public vote. "Protecting Heritage Assets" was voted one of the top 10 issues most important to Torontonians. The *Toronto Star* reported that "the City should expand the Heritage Grant and Heritage Tax Rebate, among other programs, as well as improve support for Heritage Toronto. We should also expand models that have worked in the past, such as the Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) in which streetscapes are preserved and buildings are protected against demolition."<sup>7</sup>

**Progress made and key issues that remain outlined in this report are divided into two broad categories:**

**Governance, Regulations and Resource Management**

**Awareness, Collections and Education**

## *A stronger Ontario Heritage Act (2005)?*

Even designation under the newly strengthened *Ontario Heritage Act* does not guarantee that our collective heritage will be conserved: In November 2012, a designated building at 267 Queen Street East was demolished. The City of Toronto is pursuing legal action against the property owner for demolishing the heritage building without the written permission of City Council as required under Section 34(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act. Under the Ontario Heritage Act the court can impose a fine of up to \$1 million or a term of imprisonment.<sup>8</sup>

In January 2011, arson destroyed the historic Empress Hotel at Yonge and Gould Streets. The landmark building, then over 100 years old, had only recently been declared a heritage building in an effort to enable Council "to refuse the demolition of the building and encourage the retention and maintenance of its heritage values and attributes."<sup>9</sup> As a *National Post* writer noted, the loss of this building to arson exposed "our appalling negligence towards our architectural and cultural history," and in reference to designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the journalist wrote: "if huge numbers of Torontonians really cared about such buildings, such designations would have teeth."<sup>10</sup>

# \* GOVERNANCE, REGULATIONS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In 2010/2011, stakeholders felt strongly there was a public appetite for heritage, but indicated two overriding obstacles:

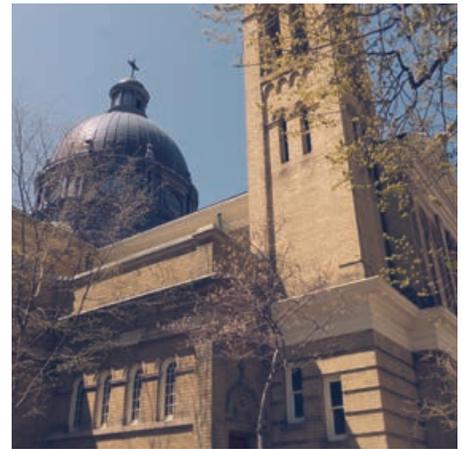
1. A lack of leadership and long-term vision at the political and bureaucratic level

2. Complex processes leave the volunteer sector feeling powerless

The dialogues leading up to this 2014/2015 report reveal that those perceptions have not changed.

Below is a summary of the 2001 and 2010/2011 reports on Governance, Regulations and Resource Management:

- » Around the need to **enact stronger legislation**, the Province made huge strides in amending the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2005 but participants in the 2010/2011 review expressed frustration that developers had become adept at working around the legislation; they felt there were compromises being made that continued to jeopardize Toronto's heritage resources. The focus moving forward is less about the campaign to improve the legislation and more about how the *Ontario Heritage Act* is being utilized.
- » Participants were concerned that **heritage expertise was underrepresented on the Ontario Municipal Board**, with only one Board Member of the Ontario Municipal Board having a significant background in heritage. The Board's decisions continue to be seen by consultation participants as unpredictable and inconsistent.
- » In the 2001 report, *Observations on the State of Heritage*, Heritage Toronto recommended that the City develop a **Heritage Management Plan**. Phase one of that plan was completed in 2007. Since that time, several initiatives contained in the plan have been accomplished including the adoption by Council of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* and the *Heritage Conservation District Terms of Reference*. In 2010/2011, the participants questioned the effectiveness of the Heritage Management Plan and called for a new document that promoted good management of heritage resources and provided guidance on the designation process to inform policy-makers, practitioners and the public so that all are working toward the same goals under the same framework. Participants also criticized weak **Official Plan** policies related to heritage.
- » The **coordination and communication** between City departments and divisions was noted as an issue in 2001 and continued to be flagged in 2010/2011, when it was recommended that heritage be embedded within the planning process.



*From 2006 – 2014  
approximately 5,000  
properties were added  
to the Inventory of  
Heritage Properties.*

*In an informal  
online Heritage  
Toronto survey of  
345 Torontonians:*

- 83% said Toronto's heritage is very important to them and 15% said it is somewhat important to them.
- Architectural heritage was ranked most important, followed by cultural heritage, then natural heritage, then archaeological heritage. However many did note that they see the four as being highly interconnected and thus found it difficult to rank their importance.

- » The concern expressed in the 2001 report over the **protection of resources beyond buildings, namely sites and artifacts of archaeological importance**, was largely addressed when Council adopted an interim Archaeological Management Plan in 2005. The 2010/2011 report noted that the Archaeological Management Plan improved the understanding of archaeological potential within City Planning initiatives, and helped to standardize resource management procedures.
- » The concern expressed in the 2001 report over the **protection of resources beyond buildings, namely natural and cultural heritage landscapes**, also continued in 2010/2011 as participants continued to advocate for the identification and preservation of **cultural landscapes and natural heritage features on the *Inventory of Heritage Properties*** by recommending a more **holistic approach** to heritage conservation.
- » The shortcomings of the *Inventory of Heritage Properties* were laid out in the 2001 report. While the list was consolidated and put online to make it more accessible by the time of the 2010/2011 report, the problem remained the perceived slow pace of additions to the *Inventory* in comparison to development pressures despite the addition of many heritage properties between 2006 and 2014 (see sidebar). A serious issue flagged by participants is that conservation efforts are reactive rather than proactive — often a property is only listed once a development application is submitted. The recommendation in 2010/2011 was to allocate more staff and resources to the proactive identification of properties for the *Inventory*.
- » When the 2001 report was written, the post-amalgamation roles of the Toronto Preservation Board and the Community Preservation Panels were still unclear. By 2010/2011, the roles of the Board and Community Preservation Panels were clarified but the City was still in the process of working to support all former municipalities. In 2010/2011, participants in Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough felt that more support should be given to heritage organizations outside of downtown and that heritage issues needed to be addressed evenly across the city.
- » Participants in 2010/2011 felt that the City should recognize the environmental benefits of preservation.
- » In 2010/2011, those consulted felt heritage conservation was financially undervalued at the political level. Strengthening **financial incentives programs**, such as Heritage Property Tax Relief and Heritage Grant programs, allows Council to show it supports heritage. This continues to be a key recommendation carried forward from the 2010/2011 report. Initially established with reserve funding, these programs have since received increased, stabilized funding. These types of programs leverage private investment in heritage by providing financial incentives, thereby recognizing the contributions that heritage property owners, both residential and commercial, make to the city's livability, history and sustainability.
- » In 2001, there was a recommendation to preserve City-owned museums and other City-owned heritage properties owned or occupied by various City departments through **Conservation Management Plans**. This concern was reiterated in 2010/2011.

## Demolition or Façadism?

The practice of maintaining the front walls of an historical building while demolishing its internal structure to make room for a new building that meets current demands of density and property value is known as façadism. As far back as 1989, the Toronto Historical Board (later Heritage Toronto) put forth a policy trying to prevent this practice, noting that a heritage building is substantially diminished when the building is not preserved in its entirety. The retention of only the façades of historic buildings continues today. With standards and policies in place, how is it that façadism has become so common?

The demolition of the studio once owned and occupied by the important early-twentieth century Toronto architect John Lyle is one example that reveals the public's reaction to façadism. In an effort to retain some history of the site, the developer of One Bedford was required to reconstruct a small portion of the original façade. The property had a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City of Toronto and was designated by Council but, even with those tools in place, development of a prime corner at Bloor Street West and Bedford Road overruled heritage value.

As [urbantoronto.ca](http://urbantoronto.ca) wrote: “the reconstructed façade, deprived of its original context, does neither Lyle’s studio nor One Bedford much justice.”<sup>11</sup> Another news article stated: “The sad demise of the John Lyle Studio is but another episode in Toronto’s ignominious history of heritage preservation.”<sup>12</sup>

On the issue of façadism, one participant at Heritage Toronto’s “Legacies Gained, Legacies Lost: 40 Years of Preserving Toronto’s Built Heritage” symposium said that Toronto would become a very sterile place if only façades were kept. As the title of a thought-provoking *Toronto Star* article published in 2008 asked, “Is a little history worse than none?”<sup>13</sup>

Listed in 1973 on the *Inventory of Heritage Properties*, the Royal Canadian Military Club (1907) building on University Avenue was demolished to make way for a new high-rise condominium development. The location, adjacent to the subway and streetcar lines, made this site suitable for intensification, but the low-rise heritage building stood in the way. A modified replica of the heritage façade was reinstated at the base of the new tower.



## THE 2014/ 2015 VIEW: >>

The 2014/2015 research and consultations have shown that some of the aforementioned concerns have been addressed, while others continue to plague the heritage sector:

For example, the proposed amendments made in 2012 to the **Official Plan's** heritage policies were a huge step in the right direction; 48 policies were proposed as opposed to 14 previously. Amendments are being proposed to the Official Plan's environmental policies that will not only strengthen and update the natural heritage policies, but will also designate an additional 68 Environmentally Significant Areas beyond the existing 14. The plan won an Award of Excellence for outstanding achievement in heritage planning and policy from the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals!

Unfortunately, acceptance of the amendments to the heritage policies are delayed due to an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board hearing scheduled for March 2015. Meanwhile, valuable heritage resources could be lost during the wait for improved policies. For example, one of the new proposed Official Plan policies encourages the conservation of "whole or substantial portions" of a heritage building, concluding "retention of façades alone is discouraged."<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, "façadism" (a compromise between preservation and demolition where elements of the building's façade are kept) continues to be approved by City Council and the Ontario Municipal Board as a viable solution to development pressures. As one participant noted: "as long as there is a disparity between the size of the historic building and what the zoning by-law permits, then there is no incentive to preserve."<sup>15</sup> Another participant warned "Toronto would become a very sterile place if all we protect were the façades of buildings."<sup>16</sup>

The need to balance heritage conservation with the city's growing **development** is even more urgent as the city is undergoes rapid expansion. On a positive note, heritage has been acknowledged as an integral factor in city planning: The *Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study* (2010) included heritage as a variable; Council's *Strategic Action Plan* (2012) included heritage under the umbrella of "Strategic Action #1: Implement Smart Urban Growth Strategies"; and dedicated funding has been requested (\$10 million over ten years<sup>17</sup>) to further grow Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) as a key tool to protect areas that have heritage character and value. This kind of investment is certainly needed, yet some consultation participants noted it remains costly to do the research and prepare the studies necessary to approve an area as an HCD.



Another major accomplishment over the past four years is the City of Toronto's undertaking of five HCD studies after four years of no districts being designated. Studies for the Garden District, Historic Yonge Street, King-Spadina, Queen Street East, and St. Lawrence Neighbourhood were all approved by Council for funding. All studies have commenced, with those for the Garden District, King-Spadina, and St. Lawrence Neighbourhood completed. However, one concern brought forth by consultation participants was the lack of a holding by-law during the Heritage Conservation District studies and plans, which means that heritage resources are lost as developers try to work ahead of the process.

Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) has proactively attempted to integrate cultural heritage interests with other City departments - for example, Toronto Building and Municipal Licensing Standards - but **coordination and communication** between departments remains a struggle. Stakeholders pointed out that the Archaeological Master Plan (AMP) has not been fully integrated throughout City divisions, which counteracts a proactive approach to protecting archaeologically-sensitive areas. Similarly, the AMP has not been integrated with systems relating to the Province's *Building Code Act*, resulting in a serious loophole: If the owner of a property located in an area of archaeological potential applies for a building permit, the permit must be issued unless it can be established that specific criteria under the *Building Code Act* has not been met. Criteria relating to known archaeological sites and areas of potential identified within the AMP are not specified within the *Building Code Act*. Therefore, the City of Toronto can only require an archaeological assessment and withhold the issuance of a building permit when the property is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or on the City of Toronto's *Inventory of Heritage Properties*. In this case, the legal ability to withhold the permit is under the authority of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and not the *Building Code Act*. Since known archaeological sites are not even addressed within the *Building Code Act*, this means that the City of Toronto's Chief Building Official lacks the legal authority to refuse to issue a building permit pending the completion of an archaeological assessment on a site of known or potential archaeological significance.

Moreover, our consultations revealed that in order to improve **coordination and communication**, heritage needs an equal voice at the table of City Planning: While Toronto's Chief Planner should be applauded for her efforts in prioritizing heritage, HPS operates through the Urban Design section, rather than existing as an autonomous section. Thus, reports and recommendations are filtered through a section with a multitude of interests. The creation of a Heritage Preservation section and the appointment of a Director of Heritage Planning would strengthen the role of heritage in City Planning.

In recognizing the need to protect **cultural landscapes and natural heritage** features, cross-departmental communication has often been successful between Heritage Preservation Services and the Parks, Forestry and Recreation department. In response to Toronto Hydro's pruning of a heritage tree, the Parks department, in consultation with HPS, published a *Protection of Heritage Trees* report.<sup>18</sup> On another positive note, In 2013, the *Every Tree Counts: A Portrait of Toronto's Urban Forest* study was updated, and Parks, Forestry and Recreation has been developing a park information system that will be online, providing a history of each park. The challenge remains how to protect **cultural heritage landscapes**.

The *Inventory of Heritage Properties* continues to garner much discussion. Many participants consulted for this report commented on the challenges of the *Inventory*, ranging from the limited awareness of its existence to the time

## THE 2014/ 2015 VIEW >>

## THE 2014/ 2015 VIEW »

required to recognize properties. Participants felt there should be less bureaucracy around the identification process. The consultations show that eager volunteers and advocates are frustrated by their inability to contribute to the process of ongoing identification. The designation process was described as long, bureaucratic and with limited **communication** – one participant said it was like a “black hole” once a request is submitted. There is only a small number of City staff to review applications and conduct necessary research. This research is key whenever the property’s designation is defended before the Ontario Municipal Board. This concern will continue until the designation process and the legislative requirements related to maintaining an inventory are improved at the provincial level.

The issue surrounding better utilization of the **Community Preservation Panels** by the City is still prevalent in the comments of stakeholders. Participants felt that the panels were seen as “marginalized committees in the whole system of heritage conservation.” This marginalization is evident by the lack of designated staff support and the limited communication with HPS. The volunteers felt that their time and expertise was wasted on tracking City agendas and issues, forcing them to be reactive rather than proactive, while at the same time they lacked overall knowledge of the complex planning system.

The consultations showed that many volunteer community organizations would like to participate in the identification of heritage resources but have no avenue to do so. **Strong central leadership at the bureaucratic and political levels** to create a new **Heritage Management Plan** with actionable goals for all stakeholders to work toward would be very helpful. The City is losing out on fully leveraging a substantial resource of dedicated knowledgeable people by failing to integrate them into broader heritage projects. This is an area which requires further research to find solutions.

On a positive note, **financial incentives** for heritage resources have been maintained. Over the last four years, Council awarded grants amounting to between \$250,000 and \$317,000 each year. A Heritage Grant workshop is one example of how HPS engages the public. Other examples include the HCD Blog and the Official Plan Amendment Consultations.

The Heritage Property Tax Rebate program was postponed in 2010/2011 in order to undergo a planned review following the two years of program implementation. Council adopted the revision to the program in the summer of 2014 but, due to the transitional year, no new applications were accepted. The renewed program is a step in the right direction, as is the new funding allocated to the creation of HCD studies and plans.

One outstanding recommendation from the 2001 and 2010/2011 reports is to have **Conservation Management Plans** in place for City-owned heritage buildings across various City departments. While much important work has been done to conduct Building Condition Audits (BCAs) on most City-owned heritage properties, thus determining where the more immediate priority issues lie, some properties still require BCAs. Longer-term conservation plans for buildings where BCAs reveal major concerns would be the next step. The Economic Development & Culture (EDC) department, which owns 40 of the City-owned heritage properties, has a rolling 10-year budget plan for the conservation and restoration of the 40 City-owned heritage properties it manages. Casa Loma is a key example of change since 2001. The final phase of the building envelope restoration is on schedule to be complete in December 2015. EDC took over responsibility for the property in 2001 and significant financial investments have since been made. The Norman Tower is on track to open to the public again in early 2016.



## GOALS FOR 2015-2018 »»

- » Approve and enact the new proposed Official Plan heritage policies
- » Explore less cumbersome processes for adding properties to the *Inventory of Heritage Properties*
- » Complete a proactive survey of potential properties to be added across the amalgamated city
- » Leverage the knowledge and input of dedicated heritage advocates and volunteers, especially the Community Preservation Panels, by creating a new Heritage Management Plan with actionable goals that all involved in the sector can work toward
- » Equalize the role of Heritage Preservation Services within City Planning by appointing a Director of Heritage Preservation
- » Address the need to find a proper repository for archaeological artifacts, perhaps by collaborating with post-secondary institutions
- » Conduct Building Condition Assessments for the remainder of City-owned heritage properties which have not been assessed and prepare longer-term Conservation Management Plans as required



## \* AWARENESS, COLLECTIONS AND EDUCATION

**The need for education cannot be overestimated and is one of Heritage Toronto's primary roles. With a broader awareness of heritage, more citizens would understand its value and its role in a successful city.**

**Participants advocated for a more interdisciplinary approach within education, building upon shared values with arts, cultural and environmental groups. Within the consultations there was an overwhelming belief that, beyond educating the general public, more City departments and Councillors should be informed on what heritage is, why it matters and how best to conserve our collective heritage.**

**The discussions in 2014/2015 exposed a continued belief that education is key to the future of heritage conservation. Preservation starts with an understanding of heritage. While the last decade has brought enabling changes to conservation efforts (including regulations, policies and financial incentives), there remains a general lack of understanding of the importance of conserving heritage resources.**

**Below is a summary of the 2001 and 2010/2011 reports on Awareness, Collections and Education:**

- » Shortcomings of the *Inventory of Heritage Properties* were not confined solely to the incompleteness and process of adding properties, but also to the fact that the *Inventory* is not being used as an **educational** tool. Beyond enlightening

students at various levels of education, the knowledge provided by the *Inventory* could benefit those in sectors involved in city building. These sectors include property development and real estate, as well as the general public.

- » The discussions in 2010/2011 stressed the need to **engage new audiences** such as the younger generation and new residents to Canada and acknowledge that their concepts of heritage are a valid part of the ever-expanding definition.
- » Previous recommendations encouraged more opportunities for **collaboration** between heritage organizations and the City-owned museums to expand on educational potential.
- » In 2010/2011, the participants suggested that heritage should be expanded beyond traditional “pioneer history” to include more emphasis on **modern and post-war heritage**.
- » Participants described heritage as a marketable commodity. Heritage resources create a “sense of place” which, when promoted through tourism, can result in economic returns. Many people consulted in 2010/2011 felt that elected officials were either not aware of, or did not place enough value on, the economic benefits of preserving heritage resources, or on the valuable role these resources play in creating an interesting and vibrant city.
- » The desire to create a **City of Toronto Museum** has been discussed for decades. It has long been considered a key to public education and awareness and a catalyst for recognizing the diversity and breadth of Toronto’s heritage. Having such a museum, supported by the satellite museums already in existence, would create a strong sense of civic identity and pride and become an economic generator for the city. It could showcase much of the City’s diverse and extensive artifact collection, much of which is currently in storage.

*Some successful approaches to community outreach and education about heritage that consultation participants highlighted:*

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario’s NextGen Program  
Artscape Youngplace  
Annex Residents’ Association – Dupont Street Study  
Harbord Village Residents’ Association – Oral History Project  
Seaton Village Residents’ Association – Lane Naming Project  
First Story App  
City of Toronto Biodiversity Booklet Series

## THE 2014 VIEW »»

The research and consultations leading up to this report have revealed that there have been many good public outreach initiatives in progress.



In preparing this current report, a wide range of organizations provided examples of public outreach. The examples range from projects and initiatives targeted to the **younger generation** to those that capitalize on online media:

- The 2011 founding of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario’s NextGen (a group of students and emerging professionals in the heritage sector)
- The Ryerson University Architecture Mobile App, which allows users to hold their smartphone up to display former buildings, streetscapes and landscapes.

The need to expand heritage to include **modern and post-war resources** has been advanced by several initiatives including the North York Historical Society’s 2010 symposium on North York’s Modernist Architecture. Heritage Toronto’s tour program added new topics around all four pillars of heritage that supported the expanded definition of heritage beyond “old buildings.”

Modern sites participating in Doors Open have progressively increased over the past four years – in 2011, post-war properties represented 18% of sites open to the public, whereas, in 2014, 25% of properties were from that era.<sup>19</sup> The designation of the 1950s modernist Parkway Plaza Supermarket in Scarborough successfully illustrates the acknowledged significance of this period of architecture to Toronto’s heritage. However, a review of designations under the *Ontario Heritage Act* over the past four years shows that few modernist buildings are protected.



The need to **educate the public on the expanding definition of heritage** – one that reflects the diversity of the City of Toronto and acknowledges its Aboriginal history – was supported by initiatives both public and private. From Doors Open granting access to sites such as the Bosnian Islamic Centre, to the creation of the Shared Path Discovery Walk highlighting Aboriginal, English and French histories, to the Moccasin Identifier First Nations education program to be integrated into planning projects (such as the Waterfront and Port Lands developments as well as Ontario Place’s revitalization), public and private organizations are opening up the opportunities for learning about heritage. It’s important that these types of projects continue to be integrated into planning efforts as development ramps up.

Various neighbourhood organizations and historical societies continue to embark on notable **educational** projects. For example, volunteers from the Harbord Village Residents’ Association and the North York Historical Society have conducted oral history projects. In the case of the Harbord Village Residents’ Association, a successful collaboration was built between the University of Toronto Faculty of Information with financial support coming from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

One suggestion was to revise a specific and prohibitive requirement around lane renaming, since lane names serve as a useful public **educational** tool. It was noted the City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy should be revised so that heritage names belonging to those who were integral to early communities be exempt from the requirement to provide written consent from next-of-kin, as it is often difficult to track relatives down.

In reference to the existing **City of Toronto museums** and heritage sites, participants in both the 2010/2011 and 2014/2015 consultations emphasized the need to better reflect changing demographics and more diverse perspectives as well as improve collaboration with other groups and private partners. During the past four years, the City’s Museum and Heritage Services division has developed funding opportunities and partnerships with a wide range of community, educational, corporate, government and media organizations. For example, the commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 included partnerships with a significant number of organizations and funding from various levels of government. Projects at Spadina House Museum and Gibson House were made possible by forging partnerships with private sector funders, including media organizations. The recent restructuring of Museums and Heritage Services will provide stronger linkages to the large variety of arts, cultural and heritage groups that currently occupy the heritage buildings owned by the City of Toronto.

The opening in September 2014 of the new Fort York Visitor Centre has been a pivotal project for educating citizens about the City’s heritage. It represents the culmination of the efforts of many dedicated partners (both governmental and non-governmental) working together over a sustained period of time to revitalize this important National Historic Site. Its high-profile success stands to benefit the entire heritage sector through increased media attention.

While most existing City museums interpret sites dating to the nineteenth-century, their programming is not necessarily restricted to that period. That said, there is work to be done across the sector to expand the interpretation of Toronto’s heritage beyond traditional pioneer history. A major opportunity to do this is the creation of a **City of Toronto Museum** that provides more space to the story of Toronto’s Aboriginal history and interprets the very important story of Toronto’s growing cultural pluralism, one of the most defining features of the City’s development over the past 50 years.

## THE 2014 VIEW »»

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The issue of having a proper repository for the vast number of artifacts unearthed throughout the city during archaeological investigations remains a concern. While one participant concluded that Toronto is “way behind in caring for its archaeological finds,” the new Official Plan policies would enable the City to take possession of artifacts and to provide a suitable repository. Currently individual archaeologists are responsible for finding space to store their collections. **Archaeological resources** could be better preserved if the City and the education sector partnered. For example, the idea of building partnerships with universities was suggested. Working with the City, the institutions could catalogue and store artifacts as an interim way to help transition artifacts out of the private collections of individual archaeologists and eventually into a central public repository.

Another untapped educational resource is the *Inventory of Heritage Properties*. An interactive map with images of listed properties would make it a more compelling resource for teachers, or to market to Tourism Toronto. Similarly the Archaeological Master Plan (AMP) could be a useful tool if it were used for educational initiatives for the general public, perhaps in conjunction with the Association of Professional Archaeologists.

Overall, stakeholders who participated in consultations consistently emphasized the value of collaboration and partnerships.

## GOALS FOR 2015-2018 »»

- » Weave Aboriginal origins and oral traditions into City-run museums and heritage programming
- » Develop opportunities for communication among the various neighbourhood associations and heritage organizations that can share success stories with regard to educational initiatives in their respective geographic areas
- » Develop opportunities for the *Inventory of Heritage Properties* to be used more widely, such as for educational and tourism purposes
- » Improve relations with Tourism Toronto and promote heritage sites and activities to travelers
- » Collaborate with allied organizations (e.g. the Association of Professional Archaeologists), to broadly disseminate information about Toronto’s archaeological resources
- » Take action on the long-awaited City of Toronto Museum and ensure it includes a breadth of voices as well as strong partnerships

## \* ENDNOTES

1 The heritage sector includes advocates and volunteers as well as with public and private sector professionals.

2 Heritage Toronto. *Observations on the State of Heritage*, June 2001.

3 Enzo DiMatteo, “Five Reasons we should care about heritage preservation,” *NOW Magazine*, March 29-April 5, 2012.

4 Heritage Toronto. *Heritage Voices*, 2010.

5 City Planning Division Staff Report, “Official Plan Five Year Review,” May 24, 2012.

6 *Toronto Star*, September 17, 2014.

7 *Toronto Star*, September 20, 2014.

8 News Release, “City of Toronto serves property owner and contractor with summons for demolition of heritage building,” May 24, 2013.

9 City Planning Division Staff Report to Toronto Preservation Board, May 17, 2010.

10 Chris Selley, “A Bright side to Heritage Apathy,” *National Post*, January 8, 2011.

11 Edward Skira, “Facadism Mars an otherwise great looking One Bedford Condo by Lanterra Developments,” *Urbantoronto.ca*, October 28, 2010.

12 *West Annex News*, December 4, 2010.

13 Christopher Hume, “Is a little history worse than none?” *Toronto Star*, November 30, 2008.

14 Official Plan Policy 27

15 Roundtable discussion of the Planning and Growth Management Committee, June 6, 2011

16 Legacies Gained, Legacies Lost? 40 Years of Preserving Toronto’s Built Heritage (Built Heritage Symposium), August 6, 2014

17 2014-2023 City Planning Capital Program

18 This is a Staff Report from General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to the Parks and Environment Committee, October 2, 2013

19 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doors\\_Open\\_Toronto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doors_Open_Toronto)

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We would also like to thank the moderators and panelists in our key events tied to this report, including the mayoral debate (held August 2014) and the public symposia focused on natural, archaeological, cultural and architectural heritage (held between November 2013 to September 2014). Thanks to Toronto Public Library and St. James Cathedral Centre for providing space to hold such events.

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## THE ORGANIZATIONS BELOW PROVIDED FEEDBACK ON THE STATE OF TORONTO'S HERITAGE SECTOR VIA OUR CONSULTATIONS:

+VG Architects  
ABC Residents Association  
Allan Killin Architect Inc.  
Archaeological Services Inc.  
Architectural Conservancy of Ontario  
Artscape Youngplace  
Association of Professional Archaeologists  
Beach and East York Historical Society  
Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals  
City of Toronto – City Planning (Heritage Preservation Services)

City of Toronto – Economic Development & Culture (both Capital Assets and Museum & Heritage Services)

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Deer Park Residents Group

East York Historical Society

Etobicoke York Community

Preservation Panel

Harbord Village Residents Association

High Park Residents Association

Huron-Wendat Nation

Huron Sussex Residents Association

Malvern Community Coalition

Mississaugas of the New Credit

First Nation

Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

North York Community

Preservation Panel

North York Historical Society

Ontario Association of Architects

Parkdale Village Historical Society

Preserved Stories

Riverdale Historical Society

Scarlett Janusas Archaeology Inc.

South Rosedale Residents' Association

Strata Consulting

Thanks for the Memories Senior

Citizens Centre

The Beach and East Toronto

Historical Society

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Toronto East York Community Preservation Panel

Toronto Entertainment District

Residents Association

Town of York Historical Society /

Toronto's First Post Office

## THE INDIVIDUALS BELOW WERE INVOLVED IN OUR PUBLIC SYMPOSIA CENTERED AROUND THIS REPORT:

### Natural Heritage Symposium

Moderator: Geoff Cape, Evergreen

Panelists: Barbara Heidenreich,

Ontario Heritage Trust; Carolyn

Woodland, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority; Franz Hartman, Toronto Environmental Alliance; Jane Weninger, City of Toronto

### Before Ontario: Archaeology and the Province's First Peoples (Archaeological Heritage Symposium)

Moderator: Shawn Micallef, journalist and Toronto Public Library Writer-in-Residence

Panelists: Andrew Stewart, Strata Consulting; Chief Kris Nahrgang, Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation; Dr. Marit Munson, Dr. Susan Jamieson, and Dr. Anne Keenleyside of Trent University; Dr. Ron Williamson, Archaeological Services Inc.

### Legacies Gained, Legacies Lost? 40 Years of Preserving Toronto's Built Heritage (Built Heritage Symposium)

Moderator: Sean Fraser, Ontario Heritage Trust

Panelists: Alex Spiegel, Windmill Developments; Cathy Nasmith, Architectural Conservancy of Ontario; George Baird, Baird Sampson Neuert Architects; Harold Madi, City of Toronto; Mike Yorke, Carpenters' Union Local 27

### Our Shared Past: Toronto's Diverse People, Places and Events (Cultural Heritage Symposium)

Moderator: Karen Carter, Heritage Toronto

Panelists: Carolyn King, Former Chief of Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation; Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, City Councillor for Ward 20 (Trinity Spadina); Nation Cheong, United Way Toronto; Scott Kettles, Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA); Tanzina Islam, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)

### Heritage Matters Mayoral Debate

Moderator: Nicole Swerhun, Swerhun Facilitation

Panelists: Mayoral candidates David Soknacki, John Tory, and Olivia Chow