



January 9, 2015

Toronto City Council
100 Queen Street West
clerk@toronto.ca

MM3.6.11

Re: MM3.6 Catching Up with the Past: Improving the City's Heritage Preservation Framework

Mayor and Members Toronto City Council

I am writing as President of the Toronto Branch of Architectural Conservancy Ontario to offer our whole-hearted endorsement for this motion and also our support in the implementation of the initiative. ACO is a province wide organization, founded in Toronto in 1933.

Over the years our membership has worked to try to get buildings on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties, with varying degrees of success. We agree that the current process in the City of Toronto is too slow to be effective and the introduction of a new category to listing would assist. Our membership across Toronto and many others interested in enjoying Toronto's familiar and treasured places will be more than willing to assist with the survey process identified in the motion.

The process of "listing" in the City of Toronto has been developed to suit conditions in Toronto; much more work goes into developing Toronto's listings than is required by the Ontario Heritage Act. The Ontario Heritage Act requires that:

(1.1), the register may include property that has not been designated under this Part but that the council of the municipality believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest and shall contain, with respect to such property, a description of the property that is sufficient to readily ascertain the property.

In many municipalities those lists are simply a list of addresses, some with photographs and additional information as it becomes available; indeed many of the properties placed in the 1970s and 80s on Toronto's Inventory not contain much minimal information regarding the reasons the properties were placed there. Our point is that in our opinion **no change to the Ontario Heritage Act is needed to**

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implement the proposed listing category, it could be a subcategory of Toronto's "listed" properties. Being on such a list would put a roadblock in place to issuing a demolition permit, but given Toronto's administrative complexities, it would be difficult to move a property which has not been researched through a designation process within the 60 day notice period.

Another avenue that the City should explore in parallel is to consider Toronto's built fabric as city resources that should be conserved through environmental regulation. **Our buildings should be recycled, not put in the garbage.** The City should make repurposing our existing buildings a clearly stated objective in our official plan for environmental as well as cultural reasons.

On the support side, ACO Toronto is in the process of re-building and re-launching the [T.O. Built](#) data-base to allow ACO Toronto members to post information on properties with any research that may be available. We currently have nearly 7000 properties in T.O. Built with photos of each property. We look forward to working with as many Toronto citizens as possible in building it to be a comprehensive record of Toronto's properties. We hope that that Toronto's architects will take advantage of this opportunity to post information on their projects, past and future. ACO Toronto will also be retaining a student this summer to connect our T.O. Built property information to the relevant listing and designation reports found on the City of Toronto website.

I would be more than happy to meet with any of you or with City staff to discuss measures to explore to ensure that Toronto's buildings and places are conserved into the future.

Yours sincerely,



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c.c. Mary MacDonald, Heritage Preservation Services

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