Authority: Planning and Housing Committee Item PH25.13, as adopted by City of Toronto Council on November 12 and 13, 2025
City Council voted in favour of this by-law on February 4, 2026
Written approval of this by-law was given by Mayoral Decision 3-2026 dated February 4, 2026

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW 84-2026

To designate the property at 150 College Street (Medical Sciences Building - 1 King's College Circle) as being of cultural heritage value or interest.

Whereas the Ontario Heritage Act authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact By-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of cultural heritage value or interest; and

Whereas authority was granted by Council to designate the property at 150 College Street (Medical Sciences Building - 1 King's College Circle) as being of cultural heritage value or interest; and

Whereas the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the lands and premises known as 150 College Street (Medical Sciences Building - 1 King's College Circle) and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust, Notice of Intention to designate the property, and has caused the Notice of Intention to be posted on the City's website for a period of 30 days in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 162, Notice, Public, Article II, § 162-4.1. Notice requirements under the Ontario Heritage Act; and

Whereas no notice of objection was served upon the Clerk of the municipality within the prescribed time under the Ontario Heritage Act; and

Whereas the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule A to this By-law;

The Council of the City of Toronto enacts:

1. The property at 150 College Street (Medical Sciences Building - 1 King's College Circle), more particularly described in Schedule B attached to this By-law, is designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest.

2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule B to this By-law in the proper Land Registry Office.

3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be served upon the owners of the property 150 College Street (Medical Sciences Building - 1 King's College Circle) at and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust and to cause notice of this By-law to be posted on the City's website for a period of 30 days in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 162, Notice, Public, Article II, § 162-4.1. Notice requirements under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Enacted and passed on February 4, 2026.

Frances Nunziata,
Speaker

John D. Elvidge,
City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

SCHEDULE A

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
REASONS FOR DESIGNATION
150 College Street (Medical Sciences Building - 1 King's College Circle)

Reasons for Designation

Description of the Property

The subject property is defined to include the "Medical Sciences Building" which fronts onto King's College Circle, extending from King's College Road to Queen's Park Crescent West, and comprises a sprawling, concrete-clad institutional building complex constructed between 1966 and 1970 with a raised outdoor terrace and a forecourt containing a freestanding concrete sculpture. The subject property is located within the University of Toronto's St. George Campus at 150 College Street and is identified by its convenience address of 1 King's College Circle. The asymmetrical and articulated massing of the Medical Sciences Building generally varies between three and six storeys above grade, with an additional two levels comprising a mechanical penthouse on the tower wings. It is situated among a collection of buildings, many of which are interconnected, that form a biomedical and health sciences precinct in the southeast area of the campus between College Street and King's College Circle.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Design or Physical Value

The subject property has design and physical value as a unique example of precast concrete construction in Ontario. The sculptural quality of this material is visible in the distinctive precast panels that comprise large portions of the building envelope of the Medical Sciences Building and by several integrated precast artworks that elevate the design excellence of this Modernist complex. The subject property serves as a significant example of this architectural material, helping to highlight and promote the versatility and sculptural possibilities of concrete that were being explored in the field of architecture and design during the late 1960s.

The subject property demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit through the design and fabrication of the precast concrete panels and sculptures, which were produced through a collaborative process involving sculptors Robert Downing and Ted Bieler, the project architects (Govan, Kaminker, Langley, Keenleyside, Melick, Devonshire and Wilson with Somerville, McMurrich & Oxley, including Peter Goering), and Beer Precast, a prominent local precast manufacturing company. Structural considerations of framing the window openings and manufacturing capabilities influenced the design of the precast concrete cladding panels from the outset, resulting in a collection of several patterned and highly three-dimensional variations of modular components that could be efficiently installed on site. Similarly, the artworks in precast concrete integrated into the east and north exterior walls of the lobby (Cube Wall and Medallion), the terrace (Muskoka Piece), and forecourt (Helix of Life) by the same artists were conceived with consideration for ease of installation as well as the location of each piece within the complex. In part for his contributions to the subject property, Bieler was awarded the 1969 RAIC Allied Arts Medal for outstanding achievement for artwork designed to be integrated with architecture.

The Medical Sciences Building also demonstrates technical expertise in its construction methods as an early application of rainscreen principles in the detailing of its envelope design. The concept of an air cavity with means of equalizing the air pressure between the cavity and the exterior to prevent the ingress of water was first presented in a National Research Council of Canada publication in 1963. These concepts were increasingly researched and evaluated through the 1970s, making the Medical Sciences Building, constructed between 1966 and 1970 to the designs of Govan, Kaminker, Langley, Keenleyside, Melick, Devonshire and Wilson with Somerville, McMurrich & Oxley, among the first major buildings in Canada to incorporate this technology. An innovative approach was also applied to the planning and management of the project, led by Canadian Bechtel Limited. They adopted a fast track project delivery method for construction before it was commonplace in the institutional sector by overlapping between the demolition, design, and construction phases of the project, thereby completing the complex ahead of the project schedule.

Historical or Associative Value

Through its physical form as a Modernist complex, the subject property is directly associated with the University of Toronto's (U of T) expansion during the 1960s, a period in which the U of T developed into a globally leading centre of teaching and research among public universities. It reflects the design principles that characterise this period through its materiality and functional massing. By enabling the expansion of programs in the medical field and consolidating related biomedical disciplines with similar programmatic requirements within a single research facility, the Medical Sciences Building was foundational in the establishment and growth of the system of teaching hospitals affiliated with U of T. It is also representative of a broader theme of large-scale academic building projects that occurred in response to increased demands for access to post-secondary education across Canada, particularly in healthcare education as Canada worked towards establishing a universal, publicly funded healthcare system.

The subject property reflects the work of Canadian artists Ted Bieler and Robert Downing, who each made significant contributions to the visual arts in Ontario. Bieler had a long career as an educator and completed a number of commissions for large-scale public art in Toronto and elsewhere. In the years prior to the work for the Medical Sciences Building, he created several sculptural concrete pieces for Expo 67 in Montreal. Downing, who worked for a time as Bieler's assistant, was the first Canadian artist to hold a solo show at a major European art gallery, the renowned Whitechapel Gallery in London, England. Held in 1969, the exhibition comprised a study of cube-oriented geometry through 108 sculptural works, which became his most well-known project among his body of work. Two of the pieces created for the Medical Sciences Building, Rolling Cube and Cube Wall, were part of this series.

The subject property also demonstrates the work of Beer Precast, the country's foremost fabricator of precast concrete products in the 1950s - 1970s. The company was known for their innovation in developing new products as well as manufacturing processes that still enabled a high degree of customization, during an era when concrete was becoming more widely used in the construction industry. Along with the Medical Sciences Building, their well-known projects include the Beth David Synagogue (1957), the CIBC Building in Montreal (1960-61), and Toronto City Hall (1959-1964). In 1967, the company received an award from the Ontario Government for its leading role in the precast concrete industry.

Contextual Value

Contextually, the subject property is valued for supporting and maintaining the institutional character of the southeast corner of St. George Campus, a longstanding site providing space and facilities dedicated to science, engineering, and medical research and teaching. Fronting onto King's College Circle, the Medical Sciences Building's articulated massing defines the northern boundary of a biomedical and health sciences hub within this precinct, which generally comprises the buildings on the north side of College Street up to King's College Circle, and from Queen's Park Crescent West to King's College Road, which functions as the ceremonial entrance to St. George Campus. Through its monumentality and architectural design, the Medical Sciences Building, which spans eastward to Queen's Park Crescent West, supports and maintains the institutional and ceremonial character encircling the Queen's Park's Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the ceremonial character extending north from University Avenue to the viceregal suite of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

As a purpose-built medical research and teaching facility, the subject property is historically linked to its surroundings within the southeast corner of St. George Campus, a use that has historically anchored this precinct of the University. Within the St. George Campus, the area in which the Medical Sciences Building is situated is also the closest in proximity to University Avenue, where several of the research and teaching hospitals affiliated with the University are located.

Through its prominent location on King's College Circle, monumental scale, and distinctive appearance defined by its sculptural precast cladding, the subject property has contextual value as a landmark not only on the St. George Campus, but also within the city of Toronto.

Heritage Attributes

Design or Physical Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the subject property as being a unique example of sculptural precast concrete that elevates the design excellence of this Modernist complex with a high degree of artistic merit and craftsmanship, and demonstrative of a high degree of technical achievement:

- The sculptural precast cladding comprising three interrelated groups of panels (main facing panels, penthouse panels, and balcony panels)
- The integrated sculptural elements of the complex, as part of the design of the wall cladding and as site-specific installations in the forecourt and on the terrace
- The deep horizontal voids created by the balconies at the seventh floor, separating the sections of the main facing panels from the penthouse panels
- The precast concrete panels on the south elevation of the auditorium wing with projecting vertical window fins
- The precast concrete panels that are an early, large-scale application of a pressure-equalized rain-screen system

Historical or Associative Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the subject property as being a Modernist complex directly associated with the University of Toronto's period of expansion during the 1960s:

- The scale and asymmetrical massing
- The extensive use of precast concrete on the Medical Sciences Building's exterior
- The expression of horizontality, emphasized through the arrangement of voids and window openings
- The recessed entrance on the north elevation below a canopy of tiered massings, framed on either side by solid, simple volumes

Attributes that contribute to the cultural heritage value of the subject property as being demonstrative of the work of Ted Bieler, Robert Downing, and Beer Precast Concrete:

- The site-specific, integrated artworks by Canadian sculptor, Ted Bieler:
    - *Helix of Life*, located in the forecourt of the north entrance
    - *Muskoka Piece*, located on the terrace adjacent to the south elevation of the auditorium wing
- The site-specific, integrated artworks by Canadian sculptor, Robert Downing:
    - *Cube Wall*, integrated into the wall adjacent to the north entrance and cascading onto the terrace beneath the covered canopy
    - *Medallion*, located on the east elevation of the north lobby, at the axial terminus of the approach to the terrace through the covered passageway from the east
- The sculptural concrete elements that represent the high degree of skill and range of expertise of Beer Precast, including the sculptural precast panels and artworks

Contextual Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the subject property as supporting and maintaining the character of the biomedical and health sciences precinct in the southeast corner of St. George Campus and as being a landmark:

- The location of the Medical Sciences Building on the southeast corner of King's College Circle
- The composition of interconnected wings with articulated massing and a raised terrace that provides a passageway from King's College Circle to Queen's Park Crescent

- The scale of the Medical Sciences Building, which spans from King's College Road to Queen's Park Crescent West

SCHEDULE B
LEGAL DESCRIPTION

PART OF LOT 12
REGISTERED PLAN D-18
PART OF LOT 73
REGISTERED PLAN D-243
PART OF PARK LOTS 12 AND 13
CONCESSION 1, FROM THE BAY
(GEOGRAPHIC TOWNSHIP OF YORK)
CITY OF TORONTO