

Expression of Condolence for Peter Oliver by Toronto City Council

Moved by: Mayor John Tory

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Peter Oliver – celebrated restaurateur– who passed away in Toronto on September 21, 2022, after a battle with late-stage cancer.

Born in Cape Town, South Africa, Peter moved to Canada in 1967, settling in Montreal where he attended McGill University. Peter began a successful career in stockbrokerage and commercial real estate, later moving to Toronto in 1978, to pursue a career change. Peter then opened his first restaurant, a small sandwich shop called Oliver's Old Fashioned Bakery, in Midtown Toronto at Yonge and Eglinton.

After opening the small sandwich shop, Peter would spend the rest of his career in the service and hospitality sector. In 1993, he partnered with Chef Michael Bonacini, to go on and co-found Oliver & Bonacini Hospitality, the influential and celebrated group of restaurants for which he was best known for. His decades-long career in the hospitality sector helped to enrich the status of Toronto's culinary scene, elevating the customer experience, quality of service and standards in the industry.

Peter was also a notable philanthropist, who advocated for a variety of issues that were close to him. His philanthropic endeavours included hospitality education, for which he earned honorary degrees from both the Toronto Metropolitan University and George Brown College. Peter also supported vulnerable youth in Toronto and South Africa through his foundation, the Leacock Foundation, as well as founding the Ride to Cure Diabetes, which has raised tens of millions of dollars to date.

Peter will be remembered as a pioneer and visionary, whose enthusiasm, leadership, and belief in others was an inspiration to many. Peter is survived by his wife, children, and grandchildren.

The City Clerk is asked to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to his wife of 48 years, Maureen, his children, Vanessa, Jessica, Andrew, and Marc, his grandchildren, their families and the many friends, peers, and colleagues whose lives he touched.

September 28, 2022