



June 20, 2025

To: Paul Johnson, City Manager  
4th Floor, East Tower, City Hall 100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Johnson:

On June 9, 2025, the Board of Directors of Heritage Toronto unanimously adopted a request to City Council to approve a reduction in size to the Heritage Toronto Board from 23 members to 13, by removing ten members at large positions while retaining the Indigenous seat. The Board request with the proposed amendments is detailed below.

The Board Resolution unanimously approving the Report recommendations was as follows:

*HT 25-13: MOTION to approve the Report for Action: Change to Heritage Toronto Board Composition  
Moved by Christopher Castellano, seconded by Suzanne Kavanagh, and approved unanimously.*

In accordance with the City's Relationship Framework with Heritage Toronto and City Council policy, the Board is hereby requesting that you transmit this Board report and recommendations on their behalf to City Council through Executive Committee for approval.

The Board wishes to extend thanks for the support provided by staff of the City Manager's Office and City Clerk's Public Appointments Office during this review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ligachala", followed by a horizontal flourish.

Board Chair, Heritage Toronto Board of Directors  
12 Glen Robert Drive South  
Toronto, Ontario M4B 1J5

cc. Jean Abou Saab, City Manager's Office  
cc. Karen Jones, City Manager's Office  
cc. Vicki Long, City Clerk's Public Appointments Office

**ATTACHMENT:** Report with Board approved recommendations

## **Change to Heritage Toronto Board Composition**

**Date:** June 9, 2025

**To:** Executive Committee

**From:** Executive Director, Heritage Toronto, on behalf of the Board of Directors of Heritage Toronto

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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This report seeks authority to amend the Relationship Framework between the City of Toronto and Heritage Toronto to change the size of the Board from 23 members to 13 members to increase efficiency and effectiveness of Board operations.

These changes were developed by the Task Force established by the Board, in consultation with the Board of Directors and Executive Director of Heritage Toronto and are intended to increase the efficiency of the agency while maintaining the governance of the board.

Further to the recommendation of its appointed Task Force, the Board of Directors submits this recommendation to City Council for consideration and approval.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Executive Director, Heritage Toronto, on behalf of the Board of Directors of Heritage Toronto requests that:

1. City Council amend the composition of the Heritage Toronto Board of Directors by reducing the number of public members from 21 to 11, so that the overall composition of the Board would be reduced from 23 members to 13 members as follows:

- The Mayor or a Council Member appointed by the Mayor as the Mayor's designate
- 1 Member of City Council
- 10 public members at large, and
- 1 Member of the Indigenous community.

2. City Council amend the City's Relationship Framework with Heritage Toronto to reflect the amendment to the Board's composition set out in Recommendation 1.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of March 20, 2025, the Board of Directors of Heritage Toronto received an update from the Task Force on process and requirements for the City of Toronto to consider an adjustment of the Board's Composition:

March 20, 2025, Board Minutes: Agenda Item D. Other Business, 1. Board Composition Task Force (page 4-5).

At its meeting of December 11, 2024, the Board of Directors of Heritage Toronto struck a Task force to bring forward recommendations for the resizing and restructuring of the board: Agenda Item C. Reports, 1. Chair of the Board (Dec 11, 2024) (page 3).

At its meeting on December 4, 5 and 13, 2018, City Council further adopted CC1.1: Recalibrating City Council's Governance System for 26 Members in which the composition of the Heritage Toronto Board was revised to reduce the number of Councillors on the Board by 1 Council Member.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2019.CC1.1>

At its meeting of April 26, 27 and 28, 2017, City Council adopted EX 24.2: Changes to Heritage Toronto Relationship Framework and Board Composition amending the size and membership of the Board from 29 to 24 members, reduced the number of meetings to 4 per year, and amended the Relationship Framework of the City with Heritage Toronto and Chapter 103, Heritage, of the Toronto Municipal Code.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2017.EX24.2>

## **COMMENTS**

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As an agency of the City of Toronto, Heritage Toronto builds a better city by bringing people together to explore Toronto's shared past and peoples' lived experiences. It delivers 80+ public programs annually including: walking, cycling and bus tours; plaques, digital programs and exhibitions; the Heritage Toronto Awards; the Emerging Historian program; community events programming; and the Heritage Equity Initiative.

In 2024, the Board of Directors began discussions on how to increase the efficiency of the Board. At 23 members, the Board is three times larger than the fulltime staff complement which creates a significant bureaucratic workload especially as conflicting schedules make scheduling meetings and achieving quorum difficult. Members also felt that, as a larger board, they had less time to discuss issues in necessary depth and the ability to hear individual members.

To address these concerns, the Board appointed a Task Force, consisting of three Board members and three staff. Following input from Board staff, the Task Force met with staff of the City Manager's Office and the Public Appointments Secretariat of the City Clerk's Office. The Task Force met an additional three times, provided regular updates to the Board, and discussed the issue and their draft recommendations to reduce board size at the March 20, 2025 meeting.

The proposed amendment and composition to be considered by the Board is set out in the table below:

Current Board Composition	Proposed Amendment	Resulting Proposed Composition
23 members and is composed of: the Mayor or a Council member appointed by the Mayor as the Mayor's designate 1 member of City Council 20 public members at large 1 public member from the Indigenous community.	Reduce by 10 at-large public members	13 Board members composed of: the Mayor or a Council member appointed by the Mayor as the Mayor's designate 1 member of City Council 10 public members at large 1 public member from the Indigenous community.

The Board's Task Force noted that resizing the board will make Heritage Toronto comparable to other agencies whose boards range from 6-12 members. It will significantly reduce staff workload and scheduling challenges. A smaller group will also allow the board and staff to dedicate more time to tackle issues in greater detail and allow for meaningful sharing of ideas.

Bringing the board to an optimal size to support decision-making and engagement will have no adverse effect on public representation, as working with the public is embedded in operations.

## Community Involvement

Since the Board size was last amended in 2018, Heritage Toronto has introduced numerous initiatives to increase direct public involvement in its operations including:

- members of the public sitting on Board subcommittees:
- public member juries adjudicate the Heritage Toronto Awards
- 100+ public volunteers help deliver the annual walking tours
- public town halls are regularly held as part of the State of Heritage Reports to City Council
- members of the public nominate and develop plaque projects
- 39 community partnerships produced programs in 2024.

In addition, opportunities to apply to be a board member are promoted by the City's Public Appointments Office through partner and City channels to attract diverse qualified candidates.

In addition to the general eligibility requirements set out in the Public Appointments Policy, the public members of the Board should collectively demonstrate a range of qualifications within the following areas as previously approved by City Council:

- knowledge of cultural, environmental, archeological or built heritage and the role it plays in connecting people within the city
- business skills including IT, legal, human resources and financial management
- marketing and social media experience
- fundraising, including philanthropy, corporate sponsorship, and partner development
- community leadership and partnerships

## Implementation Points

To the extent possible, implementation would be through the management of vacancies. Moving forward, all board seats would be filled as appropriate according to the City's Public Appointments Policy.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

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Allison Bain  
Executive Director, Heritage Toronto