

***Expression of Condolence for Gerald Robinson
by Toronto City Council***

Moved by: Councillor Josh Matlow

Seconded by: Councillor Dianne Saxe

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are saddened to learn of the passing of Gerald Robinson. Gerald was a fine architect, engineer, artist, musician, professor, author, and sharp wit. He thrived in community. He loved Toronto. It was where he landed when he left England, via Harvard. He was resident of Toronto for almost 70 years, most of that time living in Toronto St. Paul's. He surrounded himself with artists during the Beat years, collaborated with engineers on projects, involved himself at the grassroots in civic politics, and loved his neighbours and his Toronto neighbourhood, Tarragon Village. Educated as an Architect and Structural Engineer, Gerald attained his Bachelor of Science and PhD in Structural Engineering from Leeds University, United Kingdom, and his Master of Architecture from Harvard University, Cambridge USA. From 2005 through 2020, he was an adjunct Professor at Trinity College where he founded and designed the University of Toronto Campus Co-op daycare.

Some of Gerald's achievements and contributions to the City of Toronto include being the 1959-63 Architect of the Colonnade, the first mixed-use urban development in Canada, setting an example of how residential and commercial uses could be integrated in the heart of the city. As the first of its kind, the Colonnade was an inspiration world-wide for a new style of human-centred development that was given designation as a historical listing in the 1980s.

In the 1960s and '70s Gerald was involved with the "Reform" movement to preserve downtown neighbourhoods, including campaigns to stop the Spadina expressway and save the old city hall. In 1972, he was a member of David Crombie's first mayoral campaign team. He was a representing architect who fought to save the demolition of the Church of the Holy Trinity (built in 1847) by negotiating with Cadillac Fairview during the redevelopment of the Eaton Centre. Gerald also planned the repositioning of the historical Scadding House and was the architect for its redesign as a Children's Art Centre for Inner City Angels. He was the architect for the Cathedral Court Cooperative in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, along with many other retirement, nursing and long-term care homes built in Toronto and throughout Ontario.

Gerald's accolades include winning the Governor General's Award for Design 1980s and being a 2000 recipient of the Ontario Association of Architect's Lifetime Achievement Award (the Order of Da Vinci).

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Gerald Robinson.

February 5, 2025