

Expression of Condolence for Fred Luk by Toronto City Council

Moved by: Councillor Michael Thompson

Seconded by: Mayor Olivia Chow

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Fred Luk at the age of 70, who passed away peacefully on October 29, 2025, surrounded by his loved ones, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Born in Hong Kong on June 24, 1955, to Sze Chik and Ivy Luk, Fred moved to Toronto at the age of 16 to complete his education. He attended the University of Toronto, earning a degree in science, and it was during this time that he discovered his passion for the restaurant industry, a passion that would shape his life and leave a lasting mark on Toronto's culinary scene.

Fred's career as a restaurateur was both pioneering and prolific. He launched his journey with two instant successes, Filet of Sole and The Whistling Oyster, and went on to open several acclaimed establishments including Cha Cha Cha, Wally Gators, The Strip House, and the iconic Fred's Not Here, along with its beloved companion restaurant, The Red Tomato. Known for his creativity, vision, and tireless work ethic, Fred helped shape Toronto's dining culture, introducing the city to innovative fusion cuisine long before it became mainstream.

Beyond the food, Fred was celebrated for his eye for design and artistic flair, curating warm and welcoming spaces that reflected his love of community, hospitality, and art. He was equally admired for his generosity and mentorship, often guiding young professionals in the hospitality industry and supporting colleagues with humility and grace.

After more than three decades of success, Fred retired from restaurant ownership in 2019 and moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake with his beloved wife, Janice Solomon, and their dog, Skippy. Though he stepped back from daily operations, his passion never waned as he remained active as Vice Chair of the Smart Serve Board and continued to share his insights and leadership with others.

Fred received many awards for his outstanding contributions to the hospitality industry, including induction into the Ontario Hospitality Institute Hall of Fame. His impact extended far beyond his professional achievements as he was known for his warmth, humour, and generosity of spirit, and for the joy he brought to those fortunate enough to know him.

Fred is lovingly remembered by his wife of 31 years, Janice, and his siblings Ford (Sheilagh), Dennis (Ginger), and Hazel, as well as by his many in-laws, nieces, nephews, great-niece, and great-nephew. He will be remembered with deep affection and gratitude by his family, friends, and the countless people whose lives he touched through his hospitality, mentorship, and kindness.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our deepest sympathy to Fred Luk's family and his extended community.

November 13, 2025