

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Built Heritage Sub-Committee / Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti  
May 11, 2017 / 11 mai 2017**

**and / et**

**Planning Committee / Comité de l'urbanisme  
May 23, 2017 / 23 mai 2017**

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**Submitted by**

**Soumis par:**

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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE  
LA VILLE**

**File Number: ACS2017-PIE-RHU-0012**

**SUBJECT: Update – Heritage Matters Task Force**

**OBJET: Mise à jour – Groupe de travail sur les questions relatives au  
patrimoine**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That Built Heritage Sub-Committee recommend that Planning Committee receive the attached report for information.**

## **RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Sous-Comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Comité de l'urbanisme de prendre connaissance du présent rapport.**

## **BACKGROUND**

In July 2016 the City of Ottawa announced the creation of a task force devoted to heritage matters to help encourage the proper maintenance and protection of the city's heritage buildings. In summary, the mandate of the task force was to:

- Review existing legislative tools and resources that assist with the preservation of heritage buildings;
- Develop a strategy for monitoring the condition of existing designated buildings;
- Highlight current practices and case studies in heritage preservation;
- Educate and engage stakeholders in the development industry and community to support the City's vision for heritage preservation;
- Look for new funding sources to assist property owners with the retention and preservation of built heritage; and
- Seek advice from other communities on best practices in the monitoring and managing of heritage buildings.

This information report outlines the work accomplished to date by the task force related to the monitoring of the physical condition of existing designated properties.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Heritage Matters Task Force has held three meetings to discuss its objectives and to review the work undertaken by staff since its establishment. The first meeting involved a brainstorming session to guide the work of the task force. The ideas generated can be divided into five categories: property taxes and funding; internal processes; by-law / regulatory changes; outreach / education / promotion; and other. When the results of the brainstorming session were compiled into the categories above, each was assigned a priority, and it was determined that the highest current priority was to focus on internal processes; specifically, to develop better communications between

By-law and Regulatory Services and Heritage staff and to undertake the completion of an inventory of vacant and boarded-up properties that are designated under Parts IV and V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. As a result of this priority, Heritage staff attended a Property Standards Officer team meeting in September 2016. In addition to this meeting, staff from both Property Standards and Heritage and Urban Design began to work together to build upon the Vacant Building Strategy established in 2013.

### Vacant Building Strategy

The Vacant Building Strategy was developed in 2013 as a tool to monitor all vacant buildings in the city. As developed, it had a special section devoted to heritage buildings. It is a collaborative initiative led by By-law and Regulatory Services in partnership with Building Code Services, Ottawa Fire Services, the Heritage Section, Legal Services and Finance. As a result of these orders, vacant heritage buildings were brought into compliance by being boarded up or repaired. Specific orders for heritage buildings were made possible by the 2013 amendments to the Property Standards By-law to include requirements enabled by the *Ontario Heritage Act* to restore heritage attributes or secure vacant buildings to a specific standard.

Building upon this earlier initiative, after the first meeting of the Heritage Matters Task Force and with the support of heritage staff, it was decided that a Property Standards Officer would survey all known vacant designated heritage buildings, identify their heritage attributes and issue property standards orders as required and create a new “Vacant and/or Boarded Up” list for designated heritage properties. A Property Standards Officer was assigned to this task and over the course of the winter (2016-2017) he surveyed known vacant heritage buildings and compiled an inventory that included certain information such as the address, a photograph, and a list of the structure’s heritage attributes. This list has now been completed (Document 1) and will be used as a baseline document and guide when monitoring vacant buildings. As a result of the work undertaken to compile this list, about 10 Property Standards Orders had been issued to ensure compliance. In addition, three were before the courts, four were in the process of being re-developed, 10 were properly secured. This number may have changed, as orders continued to be issued. In addition, heritage staff contacted some individual property owners regarding plans for their buildings, as they were part of large developments.

The list will be revised on an ongoing basis; when buildings are re-occupied as a result of a development project or new owner, they will be removed from the list, and new buildings may be added as they become vacant. In addition, buildings on the list will be monitored and updated by staff within Heritage and Urban Design and Property Standards, and additional Property Standards Orders will be issued as required. It

should be noted that there is no requirement to occupy a building, and that it is permissible to leave buildings vacant and boarded up as long as they meet the requirements of the Property Standards By-law.

### Next Steps

Having compiled the list of Vacant and Boarded-up Designated Heritage Buildings and created an internal business process to undertake ongoing review of the state of abandoned and boarded-up designated heritage properties, the focus of the task force will now shift to improving communication with heritage property owners and exploring incentives, programs and ideas from other municipalities that could be implemented in Ottawa to encourage heritage property owners to keep their properties in good repair or alter them as appropriate. Over the course of the summer of 2017, staff will conduct best practices research on other Ontario municipalities to identify options for the task force and the City to consider in order to further incentivize property owners to properly maintain their designated heritage buildings. Recommendations will be brought to the task force in the fall of 2017.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

Staff have reviewed this proposal and have determined that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLORS**

City wide report – not applicable.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with receiving this information report.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications association with the recommendation in this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this information report.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility implications associated with this report.

## **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

This project addresses the following Term of Council Priority:

HC-4 Support Arts, Heritage and Culture

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 Vacant and Boarded-up Designated Heritage Buildings

## **DISPOSITION**

Staff to continue to work on the monitoring of vacant and boarded up designated heritage buildings and to implement other recommendations of the Heritage Matters Task Force.