



2023 ANNUAL REPORT
ATTACHMENT 1: ACTIVITIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MANDATE & MISSION

3

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

4

2023-24 TERM HIGHLIGHTS

6

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

7

BOARD MEMBERS & BIOGRAPHIES

10

EDMONTON HISTORICAL BOARD

MANDATE:

TO ADVISE CITY COUNCIL ON MATTERS RELATING TO CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORICAL ISSUES AND CIVIC HERITAGE POLICIES. TO ENCOURAGE, PROMOTE, AND ADVOCATE FOR THE PRESERVATION AND SAFEGUARDING OF HISTORICAL PROPERTIES, RESOURCES, COMMUNITIES, AND DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE.

MISSION:

In particular, the Board will undertake the following activities in fulfilment of its purpose:

- publicly acknowledge the efforts of individuals and groups who have:
 - worked towards the preservation and promotion of Edmonton's history or significant historical issues; or
 - made significant contributions to the historical development of Edmonton;
- provide advice to increase public awareness of the history of Edmonton through education or promotion;
- on behalf of the City, and with the approval of the City Manager, the Board may apply for and receive grants from foundations and other orders of government to carry out specific projects

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the **Edmonton Historical Board**, I am pleased to submit our **2023 Annual Report**, as approved by the Board on February 28, 2024. Included in the report, you'll find a summary of this past year's activities of the Board and our work to deliver on our mandate to promote and advocate for the preservation of Edmonton's heritage.

The Edmonton Historical Board (EHB) was established as a Council Committee under the Edmonton Historical Board Bylaw (Bylaw 13601). The bylaw defines the Board's mandate as "...[to] advise Council on historical issues and heritage policy; and to encourage, promote, and advocate for the preservation and safeguarding of historical properties, resources, communities, and documentary heritage." The EHB has a strong connection to the history of this city. The Board's timeline stretches back to 1947 with the creation of the Archives & Landmarks Committee then renamed the Edmonton Historical Board in 1966. In our 75-year history, we have been at the forefront of preserving the history and memories of our city. From the first register of historic resources in 1984 to the present, the City has now identified over 1000 historic properties, landmarks, and features across the city, and has protected over 184 Municipal Historic Resources. For our part, the Board has been pleased to support this process, recommending unique properties for the **Inventory of Historic Resources**, those then becoming eligible for designation as **Municipal Historic Resources**. While our focus on conservation only grows with the passage of time, the pressures threatening the conservation of heritage resources remain the same.

This was the third year since the re-organization of the Board's committees and their areas of focus. This streamlining of work is realizing success with an enhanced emphasis on Council's mandate for the Board to provide advice on historical issues and the city's-built heritage. In my view one of our main

challenges this year has been the fact that the entire Board including myself as Chair are relatively new at their positions. Most of the Board started their appointments in 2021 in the deepest part of the pandemic. We have only met once or twice in person but many times virtually. We now have a better understanding of the issues, the processes that we utilize, the challenges that we face and the opportunities in front of us. The Board is mindful of the vast diversity of stories and heritage that are woven through thousands of years of history in Edmonton. Over the past several years we have taken several positive steps forward, including engagement with the broader community and experts to provide us with advice and meaningful recommendations on the path forward.

In this past year, our sub-committees have worked diligently to meet our mandate. We continue to build our relationship with Council, Administration and heritage partners including the Edmonton Heritage Council and Edmonton & District Historical Society. I am particularly excited about our Planning and Policy Committee's work on the relationship between preservation of built heritage and climate change action, through a jurisdictional scan of existing literature and the preparation of an information guide.

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In July 2023 we held the first Historical Plaques Presentation in several years as a few had been cancelled due to the pandemic. The event was held at the historic Pendennis Building in downtown Edmonton and highlighted the presentation of 12 new plaques to newly designated buildings. There were also presentations that explained the mandate of the Edmonton Historical Board, its rich history and the process of having a heritage building designated as a Municipal Historic Resource. It was truly exciting to see the well attended event go extremely well.

In the coming year, we expect to refine our processes and structure, create new pathways for citizen engagement and collaboration with stakeholders, and launch several initiatives to better support and advise Council on the conservation of Edmonton's heritage. Our heritage is our legacy. **Protecting that legacy is our responsibility to you and the citizens of Edmonton.** I thank my Board colleagues for their dedication to this task, and as always, we look forward to future engagement with you to fulfill that mandate.

Respectfully yours,



Stephen Rees
Chair, Edmonton Historical Board

2023-24 TERM HIGHLIGHTS

6

Meetings with Council

200 +

Volunteer hours

2

Letters to Council

8

Inventory of Historic Resources Additions

8

Municipal Historic Resource Designations

2023 Designations



Boardwalk Building



Hawrelak Park Pavilions (5 Structures)



Revillon Building

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

Historic Plaques Committee

The work of the Historic Plaques Committee within the Edmonton Historical Board is year round. The committee oversees the creation of plaques for historic resources that have been preserved in the city, as well as maintaining the “Edmonton's Architectural Heritage” (EAH) website.

This year, the committee coordinated the creation of eight plaques for designated buildings and locations.

Unfortunately, due to a staffing change and a lack of cooperation from the GoDaddy company, we lost the domain to the “Edmonton's Architectural Heritage” Website. In response, we purchased a new domain and intend to refresh the website in its entirety during 2024. Losing the website meant some of the intended updates, including new articles, were unactionable.

As part of our mandate to make Edmonton's history accessible to all citizens, the Board held a plaque presentation in conjunction with *Open Doors Edmonton* and District Historical Society in July of 2023 at the Pendennis Building. This presentation was a great success with many participants. It helped generate new designations and more interest in the program. We will hold a similar event in 2024.

Some of the sites added to the Inventory in 2023 include:



Montague Residence



Griesbach Barracks
Physical
Training Building



Elizabeth Bell Residence



Schuetze Residence

POLICY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

As one of the newer committees for the Edmonton Historical Board, the Policy & Planning Committee has had the opportunity to shift and adapt to Edmonton's goals and climate in regards to history and heritage.

Last year our committee thought a lot about how to bring heritage into the climate change conversation. With the philosophy "the greenest building is the one that already exists" we created a pamphlet to distribute to city councilors and those interested in designation. By aligning the benefits of keeping and retrofitting existing buildings Edmonton can contribute towards climate reduction goals that it's already outlined in its carbon reduction strategy.

We also had the privilege of sending our committee chair to the National Trust Conference in October to present our strategy for aligning heritage preservation and climate change in Edmonton as well as see how other cities are adapting heritage sites to align with climate goals in Canada.

Lastly, with the new zoning bylaw being passed, we have had lots to talk about and will continue to discuss how this affects our historical buildings over the next year.

HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW PANEL (HRRP)

2023 IN REVIEW

The Historic Resources Review Panel (HRRP) actively identified potentially viable properties for review and recommendation onto the Inventory of Historic Resources (Inventory). Aiding in this process is a dedicated and diverse body of individuals, chiefly City of Edmonton Heritage Planners David Johnston, and Sydney Gross. City Archivist Kathryn Ivany provides invaluable support, as do other staff members at the Archives, members of the EHB, community members at large, historians, architects, and advisors from the Province. These volunteers and professionals provide a wide breadth of expertise, opinion, and experience that provides for engaged dialog and informed recommendations.

The number of properties on the Inventory being demolished continues to outpace additions to the Inventory, which the HRRP views as a notable concern.

REVIEWED SUBMISSIONS

The heritage planners worked closely with building owners to explain the process of research, application, review and eventual designation. We were gratified to see continued interest in the program from the community, with applications from the community received and reviewed. The properties were diverse not only in their types and ages, but also in their utilization, condition, zoning, scale, and architectural styles.

As funding constraints continue to impede neighbourhood inventories to identify potential properties of interest from being conducted, the HRRP had to rely solely on applications brought by interested property owners, which culminated in the quantity of properties reviewed being significantly below the HRRP's capacity.

Edmonton Historical Board 2023-24 Members

STEPHEN REES, CHAIR | First Appointed: 2021

Steve is a proud born and raised Edmontonian. He has worked in Healthcare Engineering for over 40 years. He recently retired from the Chief Program Officer of Capital Management position at Alberta Health Services (AHS). Steve continues to work at AHS as a Special Advisor in Corporate Services. He also serves as Vice President of the International Federation of Healthcare Engineering (IFHE). Steve has a true passion for the history of Edmonton and the protection of our heritage infrastructure.

SHALENE WILLIAMS, VICE CHAIR | First Appointed: 2021

Shalene grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia, and since moving to Edmonton in 2015, she has developed a strong interest in the history of Edmonton and its built heritage. Particularly, in how built heritage shapes our identities, relationship to spaces and understanding of the past. She looks forward to contributing to the development of a policy agenda on heritage and planning matters and working with stakeholders. Shalene currently works for the Government of Alberta and holds a bachelor's degree in history and a Masters of Archival Studies degree from the University of British Columbia.

ELYSE ABMA-BOUMA | First Appointed: 2021

Elyse works for Know History as a Historical Researcher. She came to Edmonton to study history at The King's University and briefly left to pursue an MA in Public History at the University of Victoria. Elyse has lived in Edmonton for ten years and has written tours about the city including its architectural history and has worked on many different heritage projects throughout Edmonton including oral histories and climate conservation projects within the heritage sector.

JOHN BEAMISH | First Appointed: 2022

John was born, raised and educated on Treaty Six territory and is a long-term Edmonton resident. He is an emeritus professor of physics at the University of Alberta following a career teaching and doing research in Canada, the US and France. Since retirement he has devoted most of his time to his life-long fascination with local history, exploring Edmonton's old neighbourhoods on his bicycle and preparing material for archives. His interest in finding and restoring historic photographs of the city led him to the Edmonton Historical Board where he is a member of the Historic Plaques Committee.

JOSHUA BUDINSKI | First Appointed: 2022

Joshua is a graduate of MacEwan University. He is currently a Senior Manager with the Canadian Aviation Transportation Security Authority at the Edmonton International Airport. He is a former Board member of the Alberta Transportation Safety Board and served as Vice President of Elmwood Park Community League where he continues to assist in different capacities.

ELIZABETH CYTKO | First Appointed: 2021

Passionate about learning, Elizabeth has a Masters of Information and a Masters of Museum Studies from the University of Toronto. She is intensely curious about the history of Edmonton and how the stories we tell influence how we understand the city today. Elizabeth spends her time engaging with Edmontonians through creating pop-up exhibitions, volunteering for the Tomorrow Foundation for a Sustainable Future, and writing fiction based in the city.

JAMES McTAGUE | First Appointed: 2019

James is a lifelong resident of the Edmonton area. He holds a Bachelor of Science, a Master of Science, and a Juris Doctor, all from the University of Alberta.

He has a passion for history, the restoration of historic structures, and the preservation of the unique impact historic structures have on our community. James works as a civil lawyer with a firm that has been part of the Edmonton community for over a century. James values the integration of historic resources into our City and appreciated the notable impact such structure have on our sense of community and connection with the past.

HARRISON SHEREMETA | First Appointed: 2021

Born in Edmonton but raised in Athabasca, Harrison holds a Bachelor of Environmental Studies in Honours Planning from the University of Waterloo. He is passionate about built heritage and is an advocate for the preservation of architecturally-significant buildings in Edmonton. Harrison works as a principal planner at the City of Edmonton managing an affordable housing investment program. He lives in a heritage home in Alberta Avenue with his wife, son and dog and can often be seen on foot or bike exploring Edmonton's historic neighbourhoods.

DARREN N. WAGNER | First Appointed: 2022

Darren Wagner is a lawyer and a historian. He grew up in Parkland County and attended the University of Alberta for his undergrad and his law degree. He also has a doctorate in the history of medicine. He held research and teaching positions as a postdoctoral fellow at McGill University and the Charité University of Medicine in Berlin. He was recently an articling student at the Court of King's Bench of Alberta in Edmonton and is now an associate with Field LLP. He believes buildings are like trees—they are best when old and still standing.

CINDY YAN | First Appointed: 2022

Cindy has lived in Edmonton all her life but is passionate about travelling around the world, experiencing different cultures, and witnessing cultural monuments. She has an undergraduate degree in Commerce and a Masters in Business Administration degree and has worked in the architecture/construction industry for over 15 years. As an Edmontonian, she's committed to bringing more awareness and participation in preserving Edmonton historic buildings and sites for younger generations or new Edmontonians to appreciate and learn from.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

HISTORIC PLAQUES COMMITTEE

- Elizabeth Cytko (*EHB, Chair*)
- John Beamish (*EHB*)
- Cindy Yan (*EHB*)

POLICY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Harrison Sheremeta (*EHB, Chair*)
- Elyse Abma-Bouma (*EHB*)
- John Beamish (*EHB*)
- Shalene Williams (*EHB*)
- Jared Althouse (*Community Member*)

HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW PANEL

- James McTague (*EHB, Chair*)
- Joshua Budinski (*EHB*)
- Harrison Sheremeta (*EHB*)
- Dane Ryksen (*Historian*)
- Dorothy Field (*Historic Places Stewardship Section Representative*)
- Ian Morgan (*Architect*)
- Joe Friedel (*Community Member*)
- Darren N. Wagner (*EHB*)



**EDMONTON
HISTORICAL
BOARD**

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