



Championing heritage conservation in Ottawa for more than 50 years!

8 October 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington St.
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Re: Future of 24 Sussex Drive

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

Heritage Ottawa respectfully recommends the Government of Canada makes a decision to rehabilitate 24 Sussex Drive to continue to serve as the residence of the Prime Minister of Canada.

Heritage Ottawa is the foremost non-profit group in Ottawa dedicated to the appreciation and conservation of our National Capital's built heritage and special places. We have campaigned long and hard for the rehabilitation of 24 Sussex to be used as a home for prime ministers. As a secondary option Heritage Ottawa advocates for the retention of the building for another public use.

As you are very aware, 24 Sussex is not just any home. It is a nationally significant place that belongs to all Canadians, not to a prime minister nor to any political party. Prime ministers who live in this house are stewards of this nationally significant structure.

24 Sussex is part of a suite of buildings designed in the Gothic Revival Style erected at the time of Confederation. Built in 1867-68 by Joseph Merrill Currier, lumber baron and Member of Parliament, it, along with Earnscliffe (home to Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald), and the Parliament Buildings themselves are all part of an elegant collection of structures, located in one of the most dramatic – and iconic – landscapes in Canada that speaks to the creation of our nation. It has been the setting for many important political events. For these reasons, 24 Sussex is a Classified Federal Heritage Building. Adding to its significance, 24 Sussex has served as the home of all Canadian prime ministers, save one, since Louis St-Laurent in the early 1950s until 2015. The three private owners of the building before expropriation by the Government of Canada each served as a Member of Parliament.

In December 2019, Heritage Ottawa wrote to former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to recommend that the Government of Canada appoint a committee headed by a widely respected, non-partisan Chair to make recommendations concerning 24 Sussex and Prime Ministerial accommodation.

We wrote to him again in April 2024 recommending that the Government of Canada accept the generous offer made by former Prime Ministers Jean Chrétien and Stephen Harper to raise funds privately to restore 24 Sussex. This offer, made in the spirit of bipartisanship, would result in the rehabilitation of a national treasure that belongs not to prime ministers, but to all Canadians.

It is tragic that 24 Sussex has been allowed to deteriorate. The National Capital Commission has recently done its best to stabilize the structure, but a political decision concerning the future of 24 Sussex needs to be made.

Heritage Ottawa advocates for conservation of this building for the reasons given above. Good heritage conservation allows for buildings to be upgraded and to evolve. In the case of 24 Sussex, it is the exterior walls and landscape which have been identified as historically significant. That given, there is great scope for imaginative and creative rehabilitation and new design. The greenest buildings are those that are already there or that are renovated for use. Please do not condemn this fine building to demolition.

We hear the voices of those who feel that rehabilitation of this house during a housing crisis sends the wrong message. But is it not also a wrong message that an otherwise sound structure is sent to landfill? That it continues to lie vacant? That a nationally significant property is allowed to fall into ruin?

Finally, it is lamentable that federally recognized places have no legislative protection in Canada; we are the only G7 country to lack such protection.

Please make a timely decision on the future of 24 Sussex, preferably restored imaginatively to serve as the prime minister's residence, or repurposed for another public use. Let this project stand as an example of our respect for Canada's heritage.

Sincerely,



Katherine Spencer Ross
President, Heritage Ottawa

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Cc:

The Hon. Stephen Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture

The Hon. Joël Lightbound, Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement.

The Hon. Julie Aviva Dabrusin, Minister for Environment and Climate Change

The Hon. Pierre Poilievre, Conservative Party of Canada

The Hon. Don Davies, New Democratic Party of Canada

The Hon. Elizabeth May, Green Party of Canada

Tobi Nussbaum, CEO, National Capital Commission

Dr. Patricia Kell, Executive Director, National Trust for Canada

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