



May 18, 2022

TO: Community and Protective Services Committee

RE: Vacant Property By-law ACS2022-EPS-PPD-0001

Heritage Ottawa strongly endorses the recommendation to establish a new permit system for vacant properties and we appreciate the special attention paid to designated heritage buildings.

We have extensive experience with the difficulties in protecting vacant heritage properties from “demolition by neglect” and have lobbied city staff and elected representatives with some success, such as the Heritage Matters Task Force.

The fact that the Vacant Property By-law will hold property owners accountable for managing their vacant properties is an important improvement and will lead to better identification of property standards and maintenance violations. The permit system will also provide staff with the tools for early identification of problems with vacant buildings. This will help prevent “demolition by neglect” by addressing issues of deterioration or loss of built heritage resources before these properties are damaged beyond repair.

The requirement for owners to identify vacant properties, provide and post on site current contact information for the owners or their agents and to visit the vacant property every two weeks, at a minimum, to identify issues on site and resolve violations before they escalate should ensure more consistent protection for vacant properties.

In light of our mandate, we particularly appreciate the special consideration given to heritage properties in the recommended by-law:

- applies to vacant designated heritage properties city-wide, including heritage properties rural areas
- owners of vacant properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* will automatically receive a Vacant Heritage Building information sheet from the Heritage Planning Branch. This information

HERITAGE OTTAWA | PATRIMOINE OTTAWA

2 DALY AVENUE, OTTAWA, ON K1N 6E2 | 613-230-8841 | INFO@HERITAGEOTTAWA.ORG | WWW.HERITAGEOTTAWA.ORG

sheet will identify all known heritage attributes at the property and provide educational material concerning the owner's obligations to preserve heritage attributes.

- all vacant heritage properties, and exterior heritage attributes, will be photographed by City staff following the issuance of a permit and at all subsequent inspections. This will serve to document the state of heritage attributes, identify any deterioration, and inform recommendations for remediation or enforcement actions.

We concur with the staff's assessment that the proposed permit regime may result in additional heritage properties being identified and added to the vacant building list and endorse the recommendation to monitor this workload and to consider an additional fee for vacant heritage property owners to recover costs for additional resources.

The Vacant Property By-law is an important step towards better management of vacant buildings for Ottawa's neighbourhoods, business areas, and particularly for our built heritage resources. Heritage Ottawa urges you to approve this by-law.

Sincerely,

Linda Hoad, Director
Heritage Ottawa

HERITAGE OTTAWA | PATRIMOINE OTTAWA

2 DALY AVENUE, OTTAWA, ON K1N 6E2 | 613-230-8841 | INFO@HERITAGEOTTAWA.ORG |
WWW.HERITAGEOTTAWA.ORG