

# ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVANCY ONTARIO BACKGROUND #1

Prepared for: ACO Delegates to Heritage Advocacy Day, February 21, 2024

## Extend the expiry date for listed properties for five years

### Request to Province:

**Amend the Ontario Heritage Act to give municipalities an additional five years before heritage property listings expire (currently January 1, 2025).**

### **Background:**

- Bill 23 made amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act effective January 1, 2023. A major change affected listed (non-designated) properties on municipal registers: *all properties currently listed will lose their listing status and all protection after two years (on January 1, 2025) unless they are designated or otherwise protected. Properties that lose listing status cannot be re-listed for another five years.*
- This change affects some 36,000 properties\* in scores of municipalities across the province and will put those properties at risk.
- With the expiry date now less than one year away all affected municipalities, large and small, have been scrambling to review their municipal registers and prioritize properties for designation or other protection.
- For most of the affected municipalities — including their staff, heritage committees and councils — as well as for the property owners affected, this is an enormous task to undertake and complete in such a compressed timeline. Many have expressed concern that it will be impossible to designate more than a fraction of their listed properties. The cost involved is also a huge factor.
- An additional five years will give more time to plan, resource and implement this complex exercise and help ensure that properties are not “thrown off the list” prematurely and without input from property owners.
- With a five-year extension the new expiry date would be January 1, 2030.
- More background on listing:
  - Listing of non-designated property was introduced in 2005.
  - Its purpose was/is to provide an official, public process designed to flag heritage properties to owners and the public as well as within the municipal administration.
  - Listing provides only short-term protection: The owner of a listed property must give the municipality 60 days written notice of plans to demolish a building or structure on the property.

\*Source: Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism