



Association of  
Canadian Archivists

Association canadienne  
des archivistes

email [aca@archivists.ca](mailto:aca@archivists.ca) [www.archivists.ca](http://www.archivists.ca)

Mayor Brian Bowman  
Mayor's Office  
510 Main Street  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3B 1B9

Dear Mayor Bowman,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) in respect to the decision of the City of Winnipeg, Executive Policy Committee (EPC) to not redevelop 380 William Avenue to deliver Archives and Access and Privacy Office programs. The ACA is a national not-for-profit organization representing archivists across Canada. With headquarters in Ottawa, the ACA's mandate is to provide the archival profession leadership and to facilitate an understanding and appreciation of Canada's archival heritage.

The ACA's concerns about decision of the EPC are two-fold. First and foremost, by deferring the suitable relocation of the Archives yet again, the City of Winnipeg is implying that Winnipeg's heritage is simply not important enough to warrant serious attention and support. The decision also suggests that the Archives are not valued as an institution and core service in Winnipeg. The Archives and its programming directly support cultural, heritage, educational and business initiatives in Winnipeg. This civic enterprise goes well beyond casual associations to frivolous history or nostalgia. With years of commitment to the delivery of top-tier archival programming, the City of Winnipeg's archival collection is now renowned across Canada and stands as one of our nation's most valued repositories.

Secondly, the ACA questions the commitment of the City of Winnipeg to ensure that its information is indeed freely available to the public. In 2015, you announced your commitment to ensure better access to civic government public documents in an effort to build a more open and transparent City for the peoples of Winnipeg. A program of openness and transparency at the City cannot occur without a stable base of operations for its Access and Privacy Office. It is inconceivable that this Office can respond efficiently to access to information requests in its current office setting, nor can its staff be expected to work closely with City administrators on matters of fair access and privacy with their existing working location and associated conditions.

The ACA commends the EPC for its decision to consolidate existing capital funds into a new 2016 project to enable immediate improvements to the City's Records Management program, but would ask that it extend a comparable financial commitment to the Archives and Access and Privacy Office. We understand the pressures of capital expenditures and the need to develop new infrastructure in Winnipeg, however, any decision that results in the continued neglect and consequent destruction of one of the City's most important



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heritage buildings at 380 William is irresponsible and reckless. The City's first public library, while undeniably old and in need of repair, should be viewed as an asset, and not as a liability.

The ACA is well aware of the excellent support the City of Winnipeg has shown Archives in the past and we are simply asking for that support to continue. The price of housing the Archives at 380 William may at present appear high, but the cost of not committing the appropriate resources to your Archives is much higher. The negative and far-reaching impacts of EPC's current decision to meet only the minimum fiduciary requirements for the Archives should not be underestimated. We strongly encourage you, Mayor Bowman, to reconsider the options for the City of Winnipeg Archives.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by:*

Jordan Bass  
Vice-President