



Ontario BIA Association Accessing our Heritage Conference

October 20, 2021, 12:00-5:00pm

[REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE](https://bit.ly/3eSVWiz) [https://bit.ly/3eSVWiz]

- 12:00 **Welcome** - OBIAA
- 12:05 **Conference Host** - Alf Spencer
- 12:10 **Welcome** - Minister for Seniors and Accessibility Raymond Cho
- 12:20 **Keynote Speaker** - [Lesley Collins](#) - Evolving the Meaning of Heritage

1:00 Break

1:10 **Panel Discussion - Deep Dive and Discussion**

Moderator: [Jill Taylor](#)

Speakers: [Ann Sawyer](#), [David Lepofsky](#) and [Leroy Shum](#)

How can, and do, 'accessibility' and 'heritage' work together? What opportunities exist for making our heritage buildings more welcoming and inclusive of all? How have other countries, such as the UK, successfully tackled this challenge?

This panel of experts has many years of experience and in a range of disciplines - architecture, heritage conservation, planning, advocacy, the law, and accessible design. This group of experts will explore how our built environment legislations has restricted the adaptive re-use of heritage

buildings, what legislative changes could be made to allow for the de-standardization of heritage buildings, what has been done so far and what obstacles prevent us from doing more.

The UK has been able to not only make their heritage buildings accessible, but they have created a regular funding stream to support that work. What can Ontario learn from how other countries have kept their heritage buildings relevant and welcoming of all?

2:10 Break

2:20 **Breakout Sessions**

1. The Business Case for Accessibility

Moderator: Alfred Spencer

Speakers: [Rich Donovan](#) and [Michael Seaman](#)

Main streets in Ontario have many older and heritage buildings, however, property owners do not always see the value in making them accessible. Business tenants would like to bring in more customers through enhanced access but they may not be inclined to invest infrastructure funds into a building they do not own.

The session explores the reasons why it makes sense economically, socially and sustainably to invest in accessibility whenever, and wherever, possible. Learn more about the incredible consumer spending power of people with disabilities and how an investment in accessibility serves to strengthen the vitality of Ontario's main streets.

2. The Next Generation: Training Gaps and Opportunities

Moderator: [Jim Mountain](#)

Speakers: [Hayley Nabuurs](#) and others TBC

In order for change to happen, today's students must be included in the conversation about how heritage buildings can be made more inclusive. How is the topic accessibility included in the curriculum of students studying architecture, conservation, planning, engineering, etc.?

Employers are looking for graduates with a wide variety of knowledge and skills. An understanding of accessibility is no longer optional but rather a core competency as we move forward in our work to making Ontario inclusive of everyone.

3:00 Break

3:10 **Breakout Sessions**

3. Getting to Yes with the Right Communication

Moderator: [Lesley Collins](#)

Speakers: [Tatiana Dafoe](#) and [Lindsay Reid](#)

It is standard practice for municipalities to consult with their Heritage Committee when heritage building renovation proposals are submitted. But how many municipalities also consult with their internal Accessibility Advisory Committee on such proposals?

Presenters in this session will explore how staff and committees can work collaboratively on heritage renovation proposals and the role that built environment specialists, such as architects, can play in facilitating such communication.

4. Accessibility Solutions for Heritage Buildings

Moderator: [John Lane](#)

Speakers: [Thea Kurdi](#), [Lindsey Wallace](#) and [Amy Pothier](#)

So, what can be done to make heritage buildings more accessible for everyone - within the parameters of existing legislations? Come and see examples of heritage adaptive re-use in Ontario and the US. Learn about practical solutions, including low cost/no cost ideas, for removing, reducing and preventing access barriers. Get your questions answered by leading accessibility experts.

4:00 Break

4:10 **Presentation:** Crosby Cromwell, [The Valuable 500](#)

4:20 **Reflections** on the Conference by hosts Alfred and Lesley

4:40 **Next Steps, Wrap Up and Thank You**

ASL and closed captions will be provided. Other needs requests can be made to Kennishia Duffus: events@obiaa.com