

For Immediate Release – October 1, 2021

Edmonton, AB – Community Coalition responds to U of A's decision to remove historic Ring Houses

The volunteer-led and community-driven Ring House Coalition is deeply disappointed with today's announcement that the University of Alberta will remove the four remaining Ring Houses from the main campus, thus greatly diminishing their value as historic places.

"The University has ignored the community's call for a moratorium on removal or demolition to arrive at a better solution. This relocation is not a meaningful option for a transparent and accountable 'in place' solution. The University has no immediate plan for the land on which these sit and no compelling reason to remove them," notes David Ridley, Coalition co-chair and executive director of the Edmonton Heritage Council

The Coalition sees this decision as poor stewardship of these important Alberta historic resources, falling far short of better practices across Canada. The removal of historic places from their location greatly diminishes their importance, stripped of relationship to their original place and context. The Ring Houses were listed among Canada's most endangered places by the National Trust of Canada earlier in 2021.

The Ring House Coalition maintains that the University community and all Albertans should expect more from its senior educational and cultural institution. We will continue to push for policy and legislative measures to ensure the University of Alberta lives up to its obligations as a steward of historic places of local, provincial and national significance. The Coalition is calling for a University Senate task force to elevate the University's heritage policy, which was not evident in its decision on the Ring Houses.



Sketch of Ring House 4 by Marlena Wyman

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