

Nominee Background & Statements of Interest Election to Board of Directors, AGM 2015 Edmonton Heritage Council

The Edmonton Heritage Council (EHC) Board of Directors provides for accountability in governance, strategic leadership, and the active community and civic participation of EHC in the Edmonton region. In recruiting for the Board of Directors, the EHC strives to reflect the diversity, vibrancy, and character of the city and region that we serve.

The following biographies and statements of interest in serving on the EHC board have been provided by the six (6) candidates. Four (4) vacancies will be filled by election at this year's Annual General Meeting on May 27, 2015.

Alex Abboud

Alex Abboud is the Director, Communications & Fund Development for Homeward Trust Edmonton, where he leads a team responsible for corporate communications, public relations, government relations, events, and fund development. He was previously a Policy Advisor and Communications Manager with the organization.

Alex has more than 10 years of leadership experience in communications, government and stakeholder relations, and public policy. While attending the University of Alberta, he was elected Vice-President External of the Students' Union, and served as Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students. He is a National Trustee (Board Member) for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and chairs its Engagement Committee. He was previously the Chair of the Board of the CPAWS Northern Alberta chapter, and on the Executive Council for the Kappa Alpha Society (international men's fraternity). He is also a marathon runner, blogger, and hobby photographer.

Statement of Interest

I'd be honoured to join the board of the Edmonton Heritage Council, and contribute to the preservation and increased awareness of Edmonton's heritage. I offer a diverse set of skills, experiences, and knowledge, covering communications and public policy, experience on governance boards, and a familiarity with urban issues and the broader Edmonton community. I have a long-standing interest in heritage, and am keen to apply my expertise to the issue.

Heritage, in its many forms, is key to understanding a place, and fostering a sense of community. As a long-time resident of Edmonton, I am passionate about the city's heritage. I believe that, in a community with a large number of newcomers, it is particularly important to promote that heritage, and build awareness and a sense of place.

I believe that the Edmonton Heritage Council has taken many positive steps to addressing this, and I would like to help with this however I can.

Andy Grabia

Andy Grabia is a former educator who has worked in government relations and community relations at the University of Alberta. He has also worked in communications for the Edmonton Public Library, and was a speechwriter for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate of Canada. He currently works in the Office of Marketing and Communications at the University of Alberta, where among other responsibilities he manages the central UAlberta social media accounts.

In his free time, Andy likes to write, take photos, and engage in other creative activities. He was a writer for the popular hockey blog *The Battle of Alberta*, and is a past member of the Edmonton Journal Community Advisory Board. Andy also curated and wrote the catalogue for the University of Alberta Libraries exhibit on the comic book collection of Edmonton arts writer Gilbert Bouchard.

Statement of Interest

I was born and raised in Edmonton, and am a proud alumnus of the University of Alberta. Over the past five or six years, I have become increasingly interested in Edmonton's history, in no small part thanks to the work done by the Heritage Council, the Edmonton Historical Board, and many other like-minded individuals who want to share, invigorate, and protect that history.

My own personal interests include the history and architecture of the University of Alberta, as well as the preservation of an architectural heritage in Edmonton, in particular modernist buildings such as the Queen Elizabeth II Planetarium in Coronation Park. I am also an avid baseball fan, and am fascinated by western Canada's rich baseball history, and the history of baseball in the Ross Flats. I was involved in the #saveBMO63 project in 2011, and have done freelance communications work for the Edmonton Historical Board, including the communications plan around the creation of the Historian Laureate position in 2010.

My hope is that by sitting on the Board of Directors, I can not only learn more about Edmonton's history and heritage, but can also play a small part in helping preserve that history and heritage. I have a background in education, communications and social media, and have been impressed with the Council's many digital storytelling projects, such as the City as Museum Project and Capital Modern.

I enjoy collaborating with others, and working towards a shared objective. I believe my perspective and outlook would make me a valuable contributor to the Edmonton Heritage Council's Board of Directors.

Daniel Rose

Dan Rose is born and raised in Edmonton and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Political Science from the University of Alberta. Having lived and worked in some of Edmonton's finest historic buildings, Dan has become active in Edmonton's heritage community advocating for historic preservation and awareness.

Dan serves on the board of the Old Strathcona Foundation (OSF), on the Civics Committee of the Oliver Community League, and he is a founding member of both HeritageForward! and the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian International Council (CIC). He was also previously employed by the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum.

Statement of Interest

In sharing Edmonton's history and preservation, its built and cultural heritage faces a number of challenges. The EHC must continue to reach out to Edmonton's diverse heritage and cultural stakeholders, and develop strategic communication and engagement opportunities accomplish its goals. It is also important that EHC maintain broad focus regarding initiatives taking place within Edmonton and ensure its processes are capable of supporting a diversity of projects dedicated to preserving Edmonton's history.

I have lived in Edmonton my whole life and I am passionate about our city and its built and cultural history. I have been actively involved in the heritage sector having worked in a local museum and in leadership positions with a number heritage non-profits for a number of years, including the Old Strathcona Foundation and HeritageForward. I firmly believe I can contribute in meaningful, productive and strategic ways and add value to the EHC as it evolves and works to meet the needs and fabric of Edmonton, and find new ways to engage Edmonton in our cities history.

Given my post secondary background in history and my diverse volunteer experience, I can bring a strategic vision and contribute strong analytical, research and written skills to the work outlined in the mandate of the EHC. As a young Edmontonian, I believe I can add a fresh perspective to the EHC and can speak to the interests and concerns of a changing population.

Beth Sanders

Beth Sanders is a writer, urbanist, consulting city planner, and President of POPULUS Community Planning, Inc. She received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Ottawa and a Master of City Planning from the University of Manitoba. She is a Registered Professional Planner (RRP) and a Full Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners (MCIP).

For over 20 years, Beth has worked with government, business, community organizations and citizens striving for cities that serve well. Beth currently serves on the board of the Canadian Institute of Planners and the Alberta Professional Planners Institute (Past President), and previously sat as an Advisory Board Member of the University of Alberta Applied Land Use Planning Program and in several roles on the Board of the Glenora Community League.

Statement of Interest

As a writer on the subject of the relationship between citizens and our city habitat, and a professional city planner, I live to explore the story of the city and the relationship citizens have with the city habitat we build for ourselves. I feel compelled to serve on the Board because I support the EHC's strategic goals. Here's how I relate to the goals:

- A strong relationship between Edmontonians' and our city's story means we will organize for a better future for ourselves;
- The quality of the social habitat we create for ourselves will catalyze deeper understanding of ourselves, and where we want to go as a city;
- It is essential to pay attention to the unfolding story of the city we make for ourselves because of the relationship we have with it - we reshape the city, and it reshapes us; and
- Structures that evolve as purposes evolve are essential to good governance.

If a museum is a place where objects of permanent value are kept and displayed, what stories does Edmonton have to tell us? What new stories are pulling us into the future? Who do we need to be to serve Edmonton's future? These questions are at the core of the Edmonton Heritage Council's story as it steps into being the creative director for the city as a living museum. I offer to serve as a city-pattern thinker, an unusual professional city planner, and an effective governor.

Karen Wall

Karen Wall is Associate Professor in Communication Studies and the Heritage Resources Management Program at Athabasca University. She has published research on topics including cultural and heritage policy, the social history of Alberta, Aboriginal education and citizenship, and the Banff School of Fine Arts.

Her community service has included conference organization for the Canadian Association of Women in Public History and the Alberta Parks and Recreation Association, as well membership in the Alberta Women's Memory Project Committee, the city's Writer in Exile Committee and Task Force on Homelessness, and various academic boards. She has also held positions as archivist, registrar and researcher for the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, University of Alberta Museums, Stony Plain Multicultural Heritage Centre, Alberta Historic Sites, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and as illustrator for museum exhibits and Alberta Education history curriculum materials. Current projects combine her ongoing visual art practice with collaboratory research on leisure environments in Edmonton's river valley.

Statement of Interest

In the prospect of serving on the board of the Edmonton Heritage Council, my motivation is to become more directly involved in long-term planning and proactive policy development around heritage in Edmonton. The city is at a potentially transformative point in public support and advocacy for heritage-related initiatives across a broad range of organizations.

As an associate professor with Athabasca University, I write and teach online courses in the Heritage Resource Management program and in Communication Studies, and have been involved in AU's partnership with the Alberta Women's Memory Project. Other community involvements have included participation in local sketching groups, public talks, multicultural events and theatre productions. Currently I am interested in developing bridges between academic research and local networks and groups working in creative ways to develop and promote popular knowledge about the city.

My academic work focuses on the history of Edmonton and Alberta, building on a doctoral dissertation on the heritage of commercial activity as culture in the city. Recent work has focused on histories of arts education and cultural citizenship, heritage tourism, and urban space; a current project concerns Edmonton's urban Aboriginal presence and related policy and other initiatives. My book *Game Plan: A Social History of Sport in Alberta* (2012) was the first comprehensive study of sport in the province from perspectives of everyday life and diverse community meanings.

As a prospective board member I seek to support effective heritage management with my skills in cultural policy analysis, public education, media relations and recreation administration. These interests and enthusiasms continue to be sustained through a wide network of people involved in local heritage work, community activism, the arts and education.

Jesse Watson

Jesse Watson is an urban planner with a background in Economics, Planning and Heritage Conservation. He has Bachelor degrees in Economics from the University of Lethbridge and in Urban and Regional Planning from Ryerson University. Originally from Alberta, Jesse spent several years in Ontario advocating for and residing within a national historic site in Hamilton. His advocacy efforts led him to work in various roles for both the City of Guelph and the Ontario Heritage Trust. He currently works for the Government of Alberta as a Planner.

Having always been keen on owning a historic home, he found a charming character-filled house in the beautiful community of Calder. He is also the Heritage and Special Projects Coordinator of the Calder Community League and serves as a Member of the Alberta Legislature Grounds Monument Committee.

Statement of Interest

We may interpret 'heritage' to mean different things, but we likely agree that value is important to each of us on a personal, a neighborly, community and citywide level. I want to be a part of a team that contributes to a greater understanding of what it means to live and to be part of our community.

Heritage value often involves the effective telling of stories and the interconnection of economic, social, environmental and cultural pillars. Heritage value is what makes a historic landmark significant to a community. This is a field that deals with both individual and community desires affecting our past foundations and our future directions; it is about the management of change so that the past can evolve the future of our community. Heritage value is no longer assessed purely on architectural merits. We are beginning to recognize the modest and the simple, not just the grand and aesthetically pleasing. Historic places are valued for a broad range of meanings including association, architectural, social, spiritual, cultural and contextual – one or all of these values together form a living heritage resource.

As a living heritage resource changes, so does Edmonton. With this change we are witnessing rejuvenation. The loss of heritage properties is on the rise, with infill and development pressures over the last couple of decades. Many of us have witnessed this loss on a personal level; not just the loss of building, but a loss of a story and sometimes, an identity. The EHC is mitigating this loss through grants, awareness and educational programs. It is clear that your team is viewing 'heritage' progressively and differently than other heritage committees across Canada.

As heritage stewards, we have a duty to maintain the unique style and character of the hundreds of communities in Edmonton. We need to not only identify and protect the City's cultural heritage resources, but encourage a change in the way we view and value 'heritage'. Protecting heritage resources celebrates the unique features, protects what is known to have value, creates stability, establishes a sense of place, strengthens property values, and honours our past.

Within my community I advocate for heritage preservation. What the EHC prioritizes to be of value, is what I value. I'd like the opportunity to be a part of a team that contributes to a greater understanding of what it means to live and to be part of our community.