

Date: June 13, 2025

To: **Mayor and Council.**

Name and title: Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

Subject: Response to Resolutions for Prince George Heritage Commission 2024 Annual Report

Attachment(s): None

Recommendation(s):

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated June 13, 2025, from the Director of Planning & Development, titled “Response to Resolutions for Prince George Heritage Commission 2024 Annual Report”.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a response to the resolutions passed at the Regular Meeting of Council on March 10, 2025 regarding the 2024 Prince George Heritage Commission annual report.

Background:

At the Regular Meeting of Council held on March 10, 2025, the Prince George Heritage Commission presented their annual report to Council. This annual report included the following five (5) recommendations:

1. Increase the number of Commission meetings from four (4) to seven (7) annually.
2. Endorse reconciliation with the Lheidli T'enneh through future Commission projects.
3. Provide additional financial support for updating and replacing heritage signs.
4. Increase Commission membership to twelve (12) to enhance capacity and collaboration.
5. Direct staff to investigate increasing staff support for the Commission.

At this same meeting, Council passed the following resolutions:

That Council REFERS to Administration the five recommendations noted in the 2024 Annual Report from the Prince George Heritage Commission for a report back to Council.

That Council AMENDS the main motion by adding “and includes information and funding for the Prince George Heritage Commission if designated as a Community Heritage Commission external of a Council Committee.

That Council REFERS to the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for June 25, 2025 recommendation number three noted in the 2024 Annual Report from the Prince George Heritage Commission.

That Council APPROVES the Prince George Heritage Commission 2025 Work Plan as attached to the report dated December 3, 2024, from the Chair of the Prince George Heritage Commission titled “Prince George Heritage Commission 2024 Annual Report” with the exclusion of line item 2A: Heritage Sign Revitalization Project.

This report provides a response to each of these resolutions with the exception the last one as it does not require further action.

Discussion:

Prince George Heritage Commission Recommendations

Administration has reviewed the five (5) recommendations from the Prince George Heritage Commission annual report considered by Council at the Regular Meeting of Council on March 10, 2025. Administration has prepared a response to each recommendation and resolution passed by Council.

1. Increase the number of Commission meetings from four (4) to seven (7) annually

The purpose of Commission meetings is to deliberate on agenda items and pass resolutions to authorize, approve, or endorse specific actions. Quarterly meetings allow working groups approximately two and a half months between meetings to research, deliberate, and prepare reports and recommendations.

Administration acknowledges that increasing the number of Commission meetings to seven per year would provide more opportunities for the Commission members to meet. However, this change would also increase the workload for staff supporting the Commission.

Under the current quarterly meeting schedule, the number of agenda items remains limited, and few tangible deliverables are reported. Staff are able to support the Commission at this frequency, as the associated responsibilities with the Commission are managed in addition to their primary duties.

Recommendation: *Administration recommends maintaining the current quarterly meeting schedule. If specific matters arise that require additional attention, Administration will coordinate and facilitate special meetings as needed. This approach will also help assess and inform the potential need for increasing the number of meetings in the future.*

2. Endorse reconciliation with the Lheidli T'enneh through future Commission projects

The City remains committed to strengthening collaboration and building meaningful relationships with Lheidli T'enneh. Efforts will continue to promote cross-cultural awareness and mutual understanding in support of the Memorandum of Understanding on Communication and Cooperation.

Recommendation: *Administration recommends that reconciliation efforts continue to be advanced through the existing Memorandum of Understanding on Communication and Cooperation, which serves as the framework for engagement between the City and the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation (LTFN). Should a heritage-related project arise that would benefit from LTFN input, Administration will coordinate with LTFN to ensure the project is appropriately presented for their consideration and feedback.*

3. Provide additional financial support for updating and replacing heritage signs

As directed by Council resolution on March 10, 2025, Administration will bring back a separate report to the Committee of the Whole on June 25, 2025. This report will address financial requirements for updating and repairing heritage signs.

4. Increase Commission membership to twelve (12) to enhance capacity and collaboration

City of Prince George Heritage Commission Bylaw No. 8133, 2008 ("Heritage Commission Bylaw") states, "the Commission shall consist of not less than five (5) and not more than nine (9) members appointed from the Public at Large by the Council of the City of Prince" (Section 2.2.1).

The Commission would like to increase their membership from a maximum of nine (9) members to twelve (12) members. The Commission currently consists of nine (9) members. Should the maximum number of members increase from nine (9) to twelve (12) the quorum requirement will increase from five (5) to seven (7).

Administration does not have concerns with the proposed increase to the maximum number of members.

Recommendation: *To increase the maximum number of Commission members from nine (9) to twelve (12), Administration requires direction from Council to amend the Heritage Commission Bylaw accordingly. Upon receiving such direction, Administration will prepare an amendment bylaw for Council's consideration at a future Regular Council Meeting.*

5. Direct staff to investigate increasing staff support for the Commission

The Heritage Commission Bylaw provides direction on the Commission's membership, scope and duties, meetings and procedures, and the role of Administration.

Section 4.4.9 of the Heritage Commission Bylaw states, “the City Manager shall, from time to time, appoint a member of City Staff to serve the Commission as Staff Liaison, whose role shall be that of liaison and contact between the Commission and City Administration”.

Section 4.4.10 of the Heritage Commission Bylaw states, “The City Clerk shall appoint a member of City staff to act as Committee Clerk, whose role shall be to provide clerical and other support services in consultation with the Chairperson and at the direction of the Clerk”.

It is understood that both the Staff Liaison and Committee Clerk serve in a support capacity to the Commission, each with distinct but complementary responsibilities.

The Staff Liaison acts as the primary point of contact between the Commission and City Administration. This role includes ensures alignment with City policies and strategic priorities, coordinating staff input on agenda items, and facilitating follow-up on Commission recommendations. The Staff Liaison may also support the development and implementation of Commission work plans.

The Committee Clerk is responsible for the administrative and procedural support of the Commission. This includes preparing and distributing meeting agendas and minutes, maintaining official records, ensuring compliance with legislative and procedural requirements, and providing guidance on meeting protocols. The Committee Clerk also facilitates communication between Commission members and ensures that meetings are conducted in accordance with applicable bylaws and policies.

Together, these roles ensure that the Commission operates efficiently, transparently, and in alignment with its mandate.

The Staff Liaison role is currently assigned to a Land Use Planner within the Development Services Division. This responsibility is in addition to the Planner’s core duties and day-to-day workload. Expanding the Staff Liaison role to provide additional support to the Commission would significantly impact the Planner’s capacity to manage existing workload, potentially resulting in delays and increased processing times within the division.

Moreover, the expanded scope of responsibilities associated with an enhanced Staff Liaison role is not currently reflected in the Land Use Planner’s job description. Any amendments to this role would require formal approval through the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), in accordance with collective agreement provisions and job classification procedures.

Should Council wish to expand the level of support provided to the Commission, an enhancement would be required to establish a new position, such as a Heritage Planner. At this time, Administration is unable to determine whether the creation of a new position is warranted, as the Commission’s current level of activity and number of deliverables remain limited. A clearer understanding of the Commission’s future scope and workload would be necessary to justify and define the need for additional staffing resources.

Recommendation: Administration believes the current scope of the Staff Liaison role provides appropriate and sufficient support for the Commission, given its present level of activity and deliverables. At this time, there is no demonstrated need for additional staffing resources.

Should the Commission's workload increase or its mandate expand in the future, and a clear need for enhanced support be demonstrated, Administration would seek Council direction to explore the creation of a new role (i.e. Heritage Planner). This would involve assessing the appropriate scope of duties and determining whether the position should be full-time or part-time, with the understanding that such a role would likely constitute a staffing enhancement.

Creation of Community Heritage Committee

As mentioned previously, at the March 10, 2025, Regular Council Meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

That Council REFERS to Administration the five recommendations noted in the 2024 Annual Report from the Prince George Heritage Commission for a report back to Council.

That Council AMENDS the main motion by adding "and includes information and funding for the Prince George Heritage Commission if designated as a Community Heritage Commission external of a Council Committee."

The Commission was established in accordance the *Local Government Act* and currently operates under the governance of the City of Prince George Heritage Commission Bylaw and the Committees, Commissions and Boards Procedures Manual. Additionally, the Commission has an annual budget allocation of \$7,000.

Under the provisions of the *Local Government Act*, the local government may designate an existing organization to act as a community heritage commission. Further to this, it is also possible that a community heritage commission establish itself as an independent not-for-profit society.

Transitioning the Heritage Commission to an independent not-for-profit society could offer several advantages. This status would enable the Commission to access a wider range of funding opportunities, including grants from local, provincial, and federal levels of government, private foundations, and community donors. It would also provide greater autonomy in setting priorities, initiating projects, and managing operations, allowing for more responsive and flexible engagement with heritage initiatives. As a not-for-profit, the Commission could establish a governance structure tailored to its mission, potentially enhancing its credibility and visibility within the community. Additionally, this model could foster stronger partnerships with other cultural and heritage organizations, supporting broader community involvement and collaboration.

A Community Heritage Commission may be an option to further explore in more detail as the current structure of the Heritage Commission has limitations with respect to capacity of municipal resources (i.e. budget and staff).

Summary and conclusion:

This report provides Council with a response to the resolutions passed at the Regular Meeting of Council on March 10, 2025 regarding the 2024 Prince George Heritage Commission annual report. Administration recommends that Council receives this report for information.

Respectfully submitted:

Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

Approved:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: 2025/06/23