

Downtown Almonte Heritage Conservation District ~ Proposed Study and Plan ~



Information Session and Public Meeting

Introductions




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Step 1: Determine if there is sufficient community support to proceed with the Study.

Step 2: Heritage Conservation District Study

Step 3: Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines

Agenda

Part 1 - Presentation

1. Introduction: Proposed Study Area
2. What is a Heritage Conservation District (HCD)?
3. Reasons for creating a Heritage Conservation District
4. Process to create a Heritage Conservation District
5. FAQs – *Frequently Asked Questions*
6. Do Heritage Conservation Districts work?

Part 2 - Breakout session

Questionnaire & table talk

Part 3 - Reporting back

Questions, comments & discussion

Additional information & resources

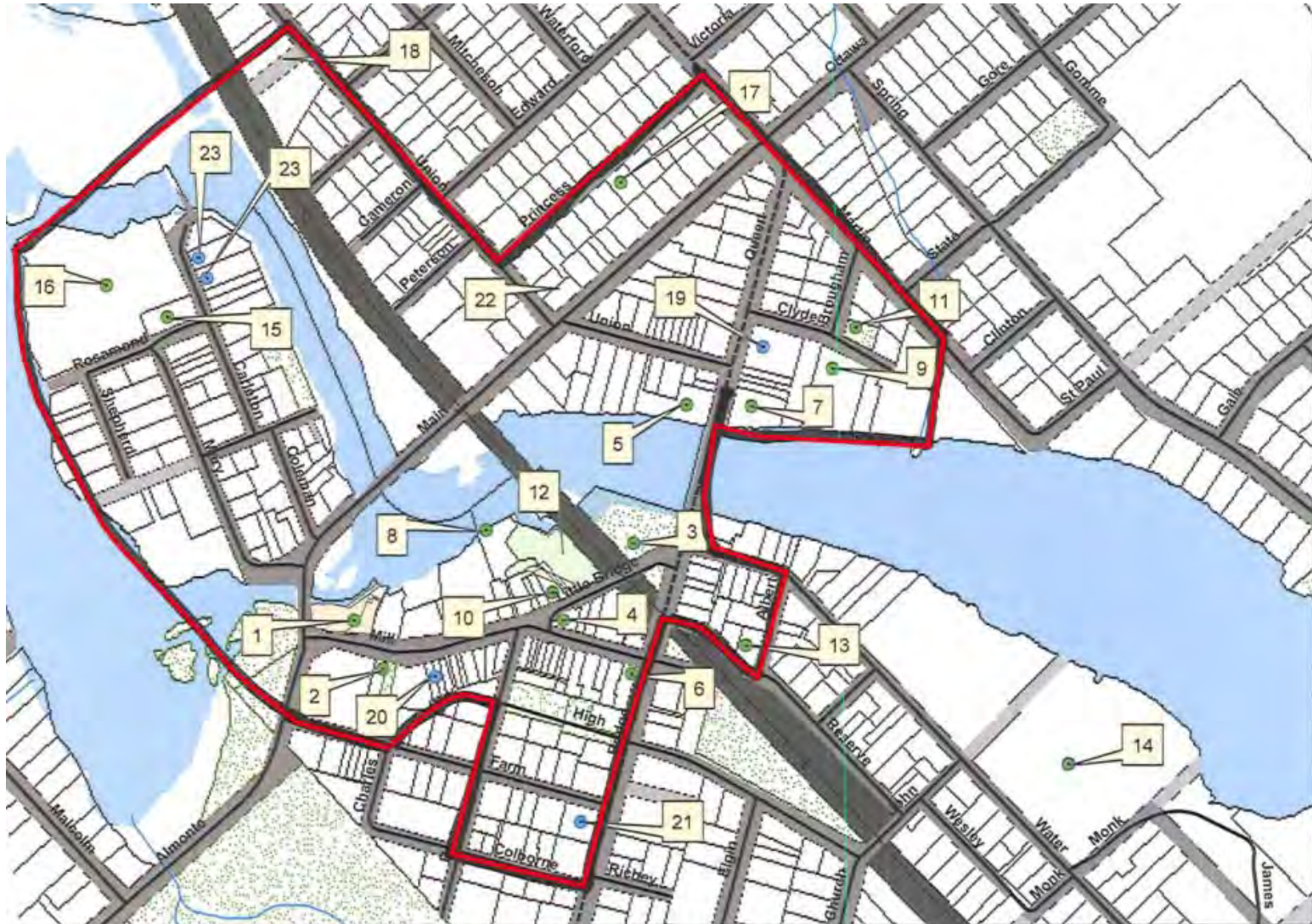
Next steps

1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte



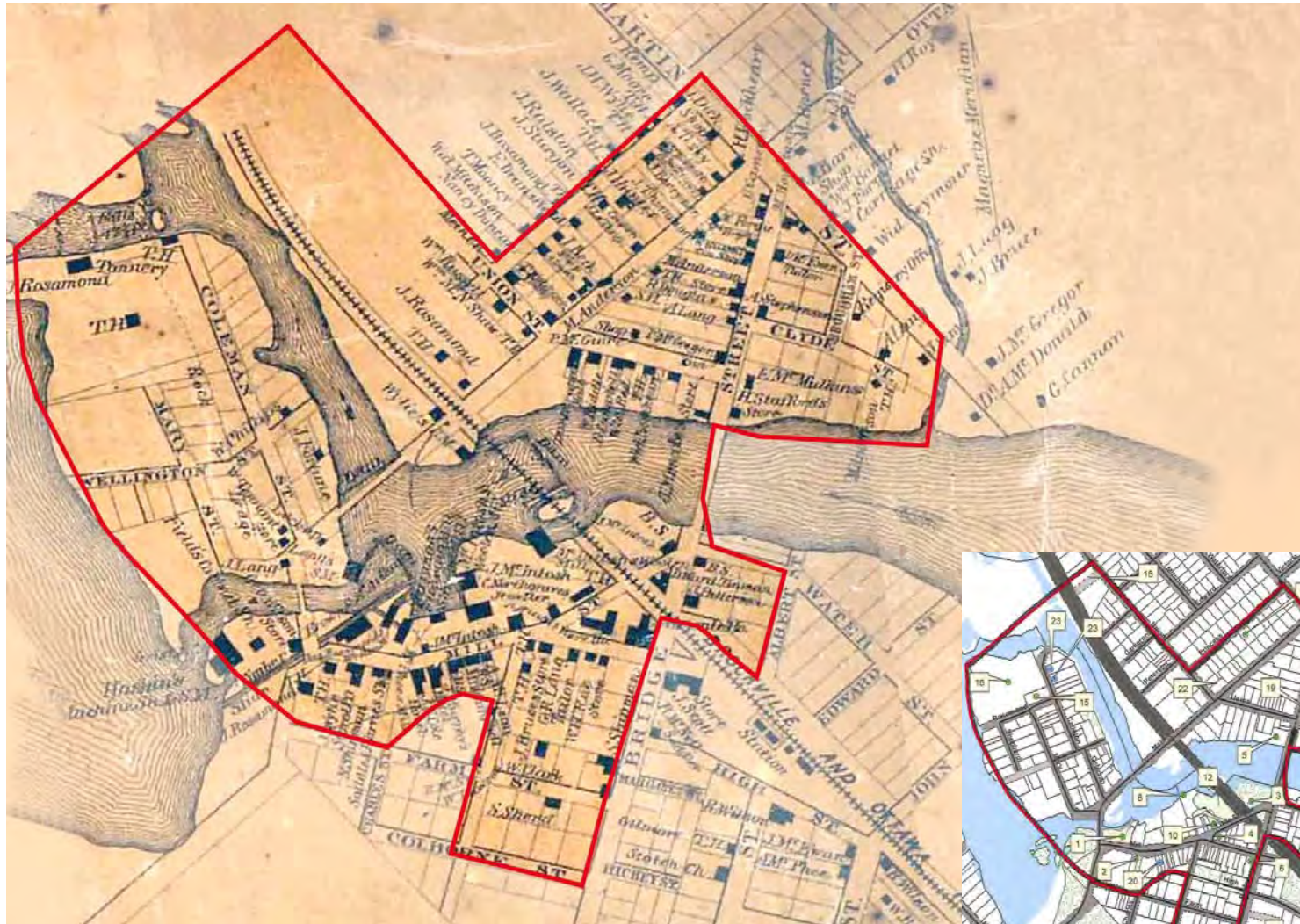
Photo courtesy of JOHN WEIR

1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte



Current Map of Almonte, showing proposed study area boundary.

1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte



Almonte, 1863



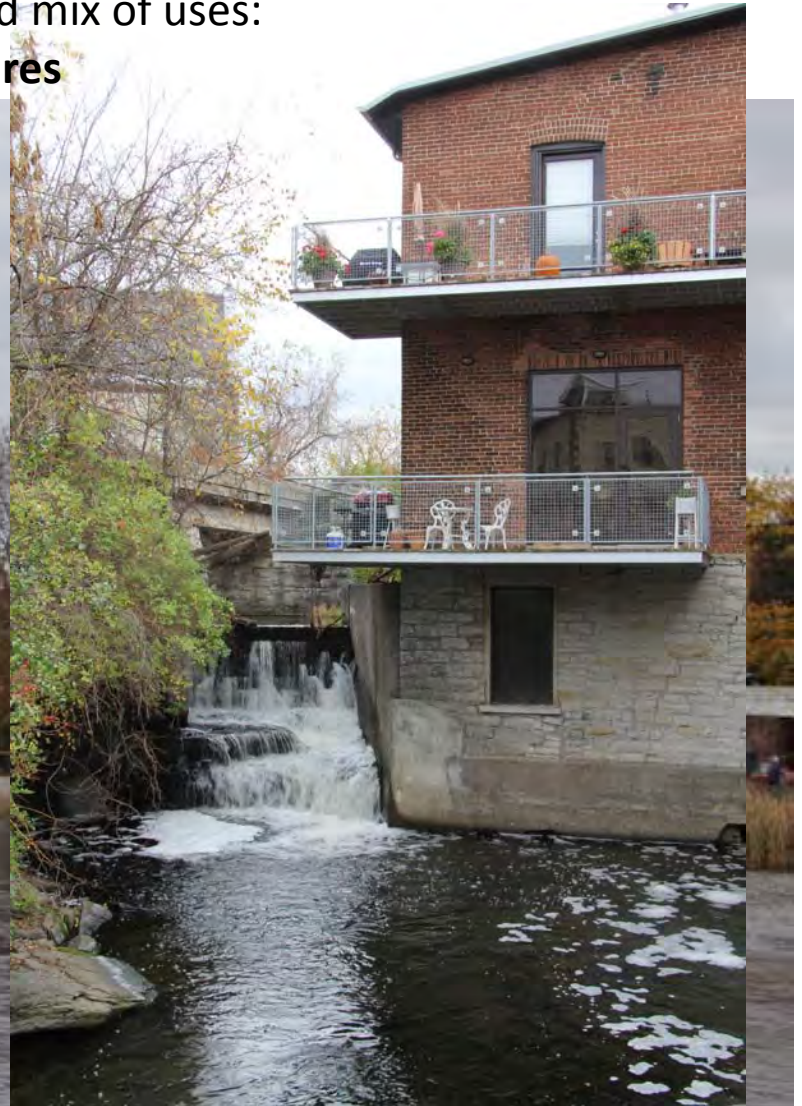
1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte

The proposed study area is characterized by a broad mix of uses:
commercial and residential areas



1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte

The proposed study area is characterized by a broad mix of uses:
industrial waterfront buildings and features

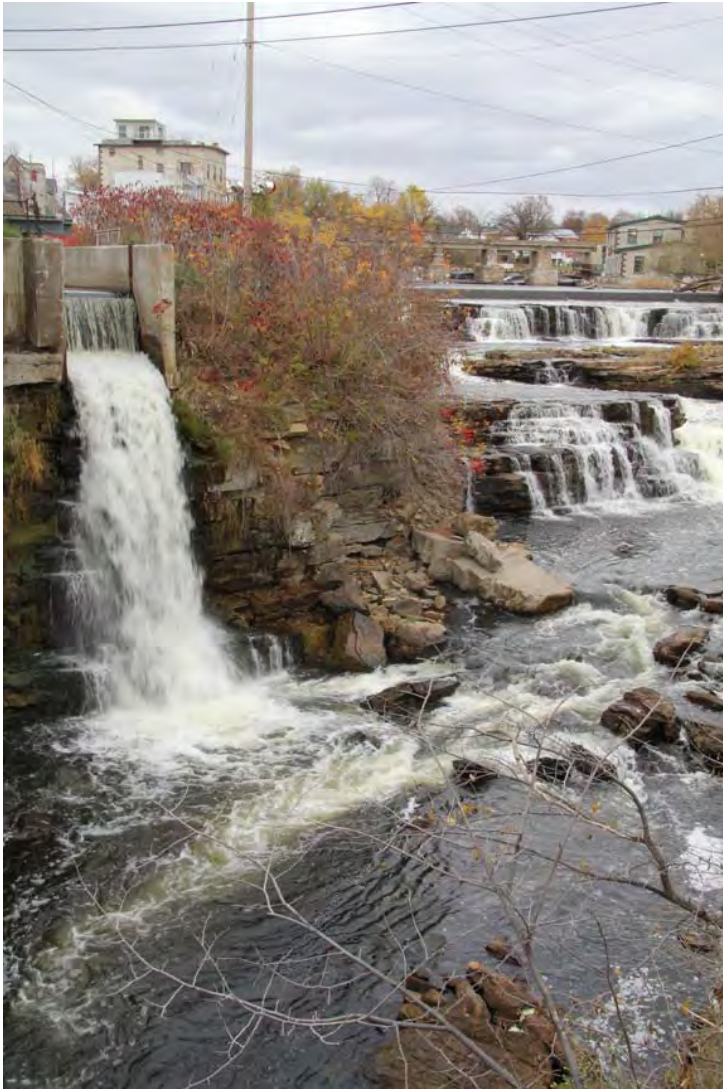


1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte

The proposed study area is characterized by a broad mix of uses:
**landscape features and structures, open spaces including parkland,
recreational areas and public spaces**



1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte



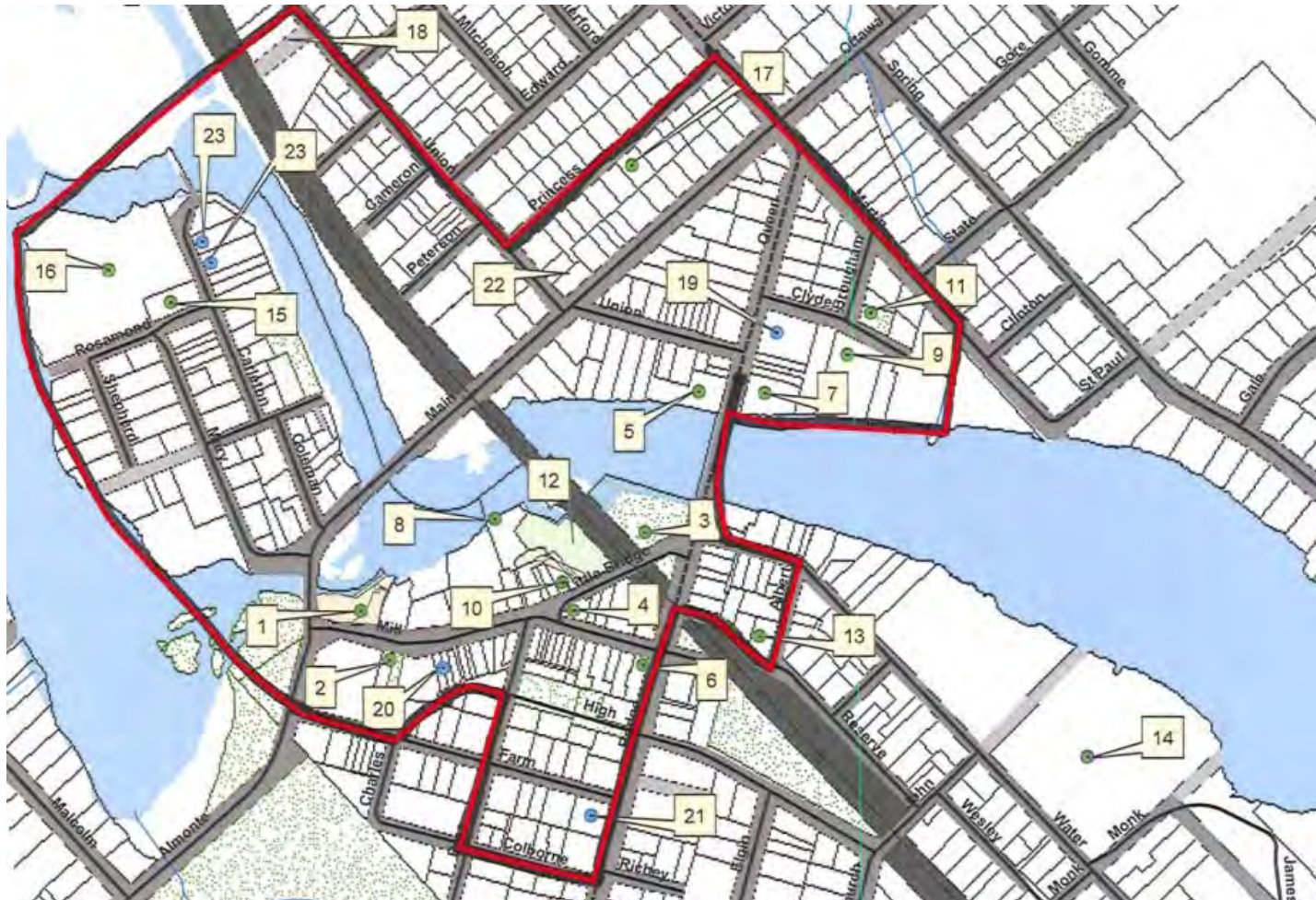
The proposed study area is characterized by a broad mix of uses:

Mississippi River shoreline, including bridges that cross the river, and utilities that use the water



1.1 Proposed Study Area: Historic Downtown Almonte

There are no HCDs in Mississippi Mills. However, there are a number of individually designated properties.



Current Map of Almonte, showing proposed study area and location of *individually designated* buildings.

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Residential buildings



Wylie House (Almonte Riverside Inn), 1882.
81 Queen Street



Doc Kelly Building (c. 1883-86). 77 Little Bridge St.



Menzie House (c. 1847-48). 80 Queen Street



Thatcher-Roy House. 109 Princess Street

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Commercial buildings



McArthur Block (aka Keepsakes), 1868.
96-102 Mill Street



Public Utilities Building (aka Mississippi River
Power Corp), c. 1916. 28 Mill Street

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Civic buildings



Old Post Office, 1889-90. 73 Mill Street. Also a National Historic Site. Photo Credit: Catherine Bulinski.



Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge Street



Lanark Registry Office (1879).
125 Brougham Street.

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Places of worship and gathering



St. Paul's Anglican Church (1863), Rectory and Parish House.
70 Clyde Street



Loyal Orange Lodge (1870). 151 Reserve Street

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Industrial buildings



Rosamond Mill, 1872, 1904 (Mississippi Valley Textile Museum). 3 Rosamond Street East.



Thoburn Mill, (1875-1918).
83 Little Bridge Street.



Victoria Woolen Mill, 7
Mill Street.



Rosamond Mill (Millfall Condominium).
1 Rosamond Street.



Mississippi Iron Works, 1887 (Barley
Mow). Little Bridge Street.

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Public space / Path of travel

A unique designation that does not include any buildings; rather it commemorates an activity – a path of travel – that is intimately linked to the history of the town.



Mill Workers Walkway (aka Bank Street), connecting Union Street to Rosamond Mill on Coleman Island.

1.1 Individually designated properties in Almonte

Individual versus District

While individual designations begin to tell a story about Almonte — its founding, its industry, its people — they can never hope to paint a complete picture. They remain snapshots.

This is where a Heritage Conservation District, which would include all of the buildings as well as the spaces in between the buildings, can tell a more effective and integral story about the cultural heritage value of the community as a whole.



1.2 What is a Heritage Conservation District?

1.2 What is a Heritage Conservation District?

A Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is a municipal planning tool enabled by the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and which allows a community to formally recognize and protect an area that contains significant heritage resources.

The intent of an HCD is not to freeze an area in time; but rather to provide guidelines that enable development and change to unfold in a way that is consistent and compatible with the history and special character of a place.

[Français](#)

Ontario Heritage Act

R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER O.18

Consolidation Period: From December 15, 2009 to the [e-Laws currency date](#).

Last amendment: 2009, c. 33, Sched. 11, s. 6.

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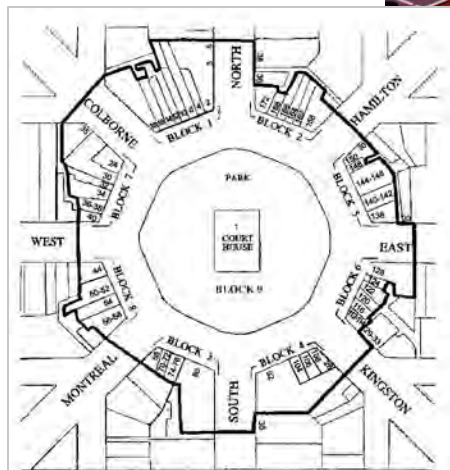
1.	Definitions	PART I
	HERITAGE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION	
2.	Administration of Act	
3.	Employees	PART II
	ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST	
4.	Definition, Part II	
5.	Ontario Heritage Trust	
6.	Non-application of Corporations Act	

1.2 What is a Heritage Conservation District (HCD)?

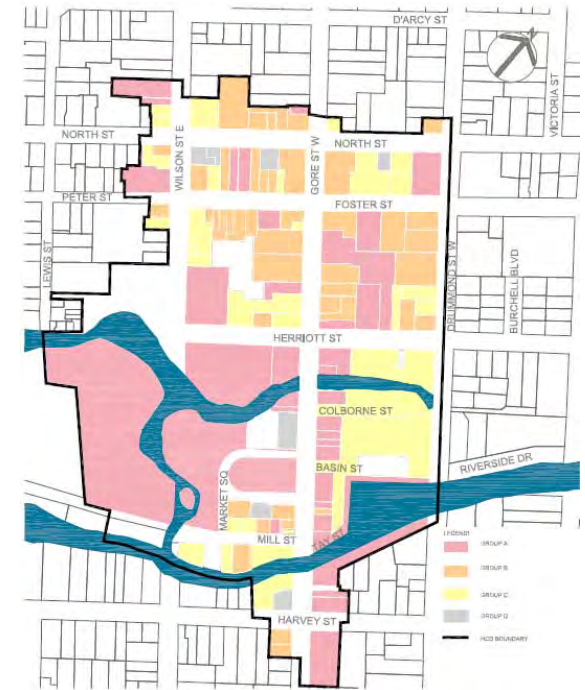
An HCD represents a concentration of heritage resources that have special character, historical associations, or socio-cultural connections that distinguish the area from its surroundings.



“The Square” Heritage Conservation District,
Goderich, Ontario.



1.2 What is a Heritage Conservation District (HCD)?



Downtown Perth Heritage Conservation District boundary and property rating, 2012.

1.2 What is a Heritage Conservation District (HCD)?

An HCD may also be distinguished by a strong sense of character and design. These are usually expressed in the scale, height and proportion of buildings, or in a unique use of materials, ornament, or other design features.

This design consistency results in a distinct sense of place and time.



Beacon Hill, Boston, MA. Credit: Mary Blauss.

1.2 What is a Heritage Conservation District (HCD)?

An HCD is not necessarily about the distant past, or about the buildings alone. It may be just as much about **the idea that created a place**, as the place itself.

Briarcliffe, located in a suburb of Ottawa, is Canada's first HCD recognizing Modern design and planning principles. Developed between 1961 and 1969, this area is distinguished by its collection of unique architect-designed homes. But also, and perhaps more importantly, it is about how the houses were carefully set into the landscape in a way that celebrated both their Modern design, and their unique Canadian context.



Butler House, 1 Kindle Court, Briarcliffe.

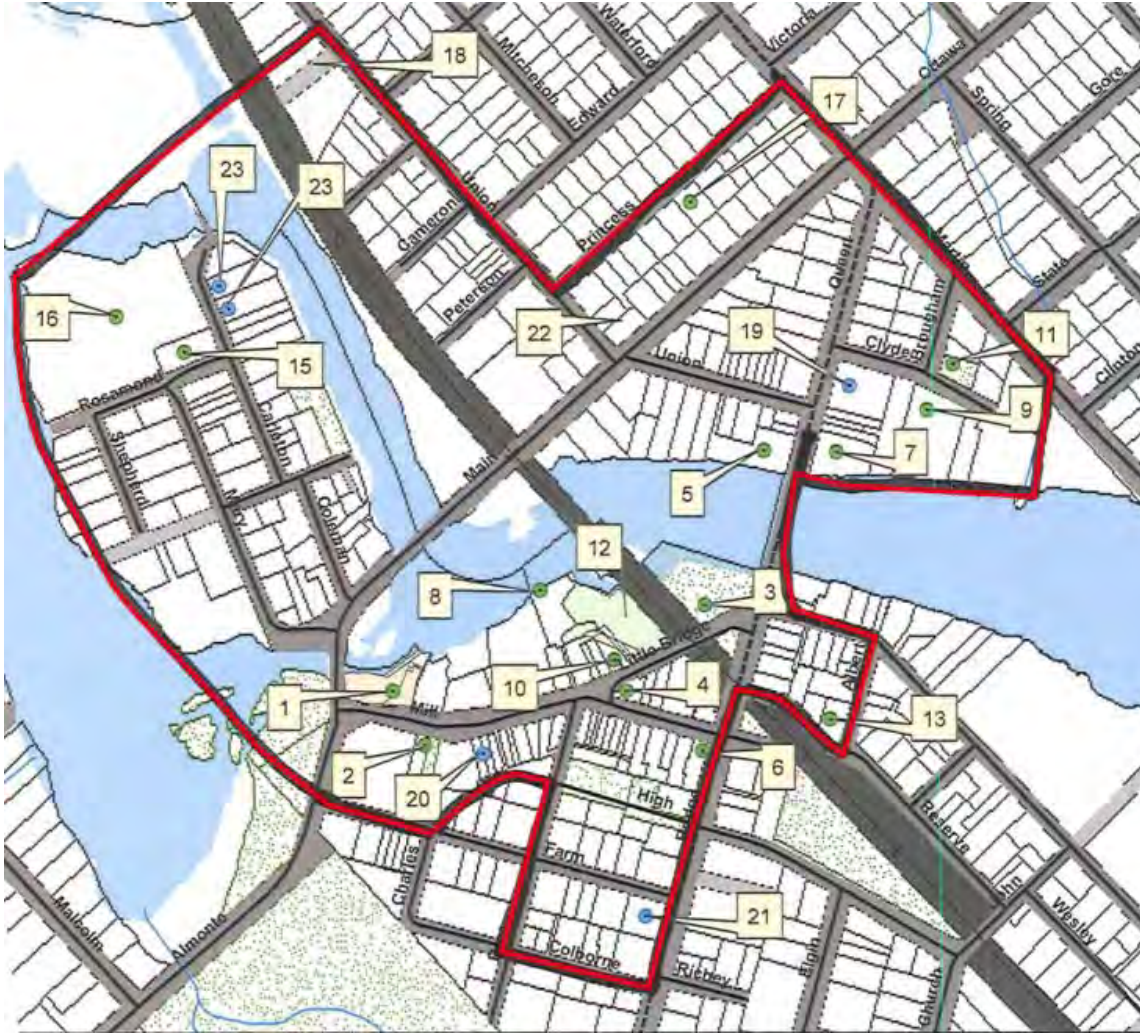


Duncan House, 19 Kindle Court, 1966.



1.3 Why designate a Heritage Conservation District?

1.3 Why designate an HCD in Almonte?



1.3 Why designate an HCD in Almonte?

Some might say that Almonte is thriving as it is, and wonder what advantage a heritage district would bring that Almonte doesn't already have.

A Heritage Conservation District is a planning tool that complements and reinforces other existing planning mechanisms (Official Plan, Zoning By-law, Cultural Plan). What distinguishes an HCD is that it is the only planning tool that takes heritage as its central focus and imagines how that special and unique area of a community can and should evolve over time. Creating an HCD allows for an area to be managed as an integral whole, and as a place of cultural significance that is distinct from and greater than the sum of its constituent parts.

Historic properties are valuable cultural, aesthetic, educational and economic resources. The role of a Heritage Conservation District is not to freeze the community in time, nor to discourage new development. Rather, the HCD provides tools and a review mechanism that ensure that future change in and around these resources happens in a way that is compatible with and does not detract from their special character.

1.3 Why designate an HCD?



While managing change, an HCD also aims to prevent incompatible developments that may disrupt historic patterns, and threaten the legibility and integrity of a culturally significant area.

1.3 Why designate an HCD in Almonte?

The Community Official Plan identifies the designation of a Heritage Conservation District as a preferred planning tool to protect Almonte's heritage.

Some objectives of the District might include:

- Promote appreciation for cultural heritage value of Almonte
- Encourage conservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings and streetscapes
- Encourage compatible new development
- Protect important views (e.g. view looking up Mill Street, views across the river)
- Link cultural heritage value with economic development by promoting the historic town centre as a visitor destination, as well as business destination



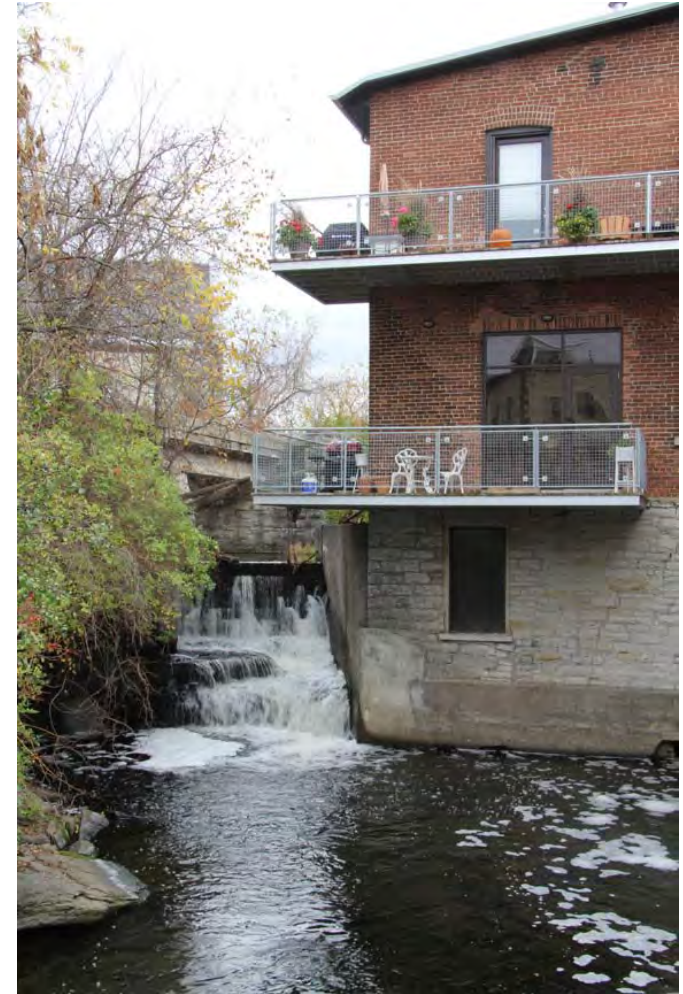
1.3 Why designate an HCD in Almonte?

There are few HCDs in Ontario that include an important stock of historic industrial mill buildings, such as those found in Almonte.

The Town would be unique in being one of the first in Ontario to formally recognize its milling past!



Ruins of former gristmill ...
Power Glen HCD.



... versus an adaptively reused mill, Almonte.

1.5 How is a Heritage Conservation District created?

1.5 Process for creating a Heritage Conservation District

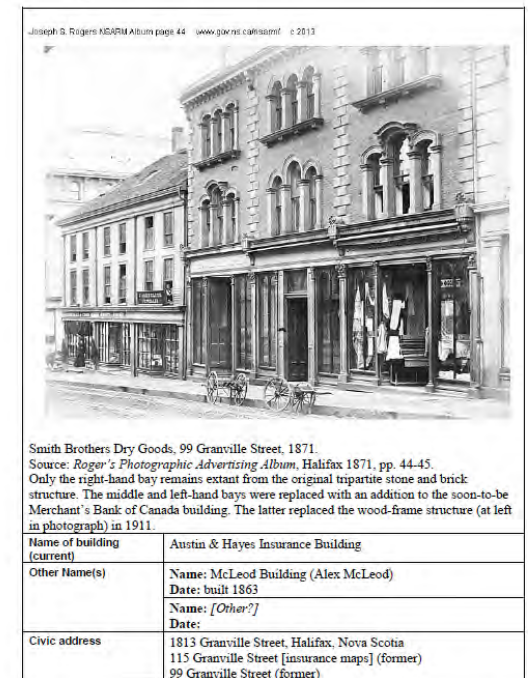
- **Phase 1:** Study the history and character of the area to evaluate the cultural heritage value and advise on how best to conserve this unique part of Almonte.
- **Phase 2:** Prepare a Plan & develop Guidelines for managing change in the District over time.

1.5 HCD Process: Phase 1 — Study

- An **inventory** of individual properties (does not include building interiors)
- A thematic **history** provides an overview of the development of the town over time
- Definition of **boundaries** (which properties should be included or not)
- Confirmation of findings through **consultations**
- Definition of the **objectives of the district**, and confirmation that these are compatible with other planning directives



1869 Plan of the Town of Almonte (Library and Archives Canada (LAC))



Sample of property data sheet.

1.5 HCD Process: Phase 1 — Study



Almonte, looking north on Queen Street, c1910. Menzie House on left, Wylie House on right (LAC).



1879 painting by Philip Boyce "View in Almonte" (LAC).

Community input and participation is vital to uncovering hidden resources, and to guiding and validating research findings

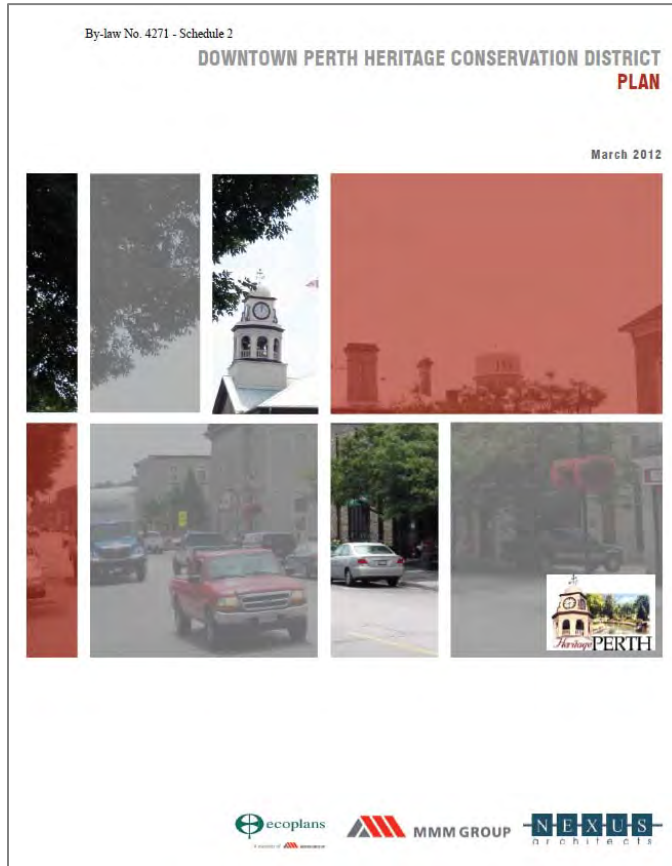


Ramsay Township (showing Almonte), *Historical Atlas for the Counties of Renfrew and Lanark* (LAC).

1.5 HCD Process: Phase 2 — Plan & Guidelines

Contents of the Plan & Guidelines:

- A *statement of objectives* for the designation
- Description of cultural heritage value and the elements that illustrate or exemplify this value
- A set of *guidelines* for managing future change



Downtown Perth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines.

9.3 Additions to Heritage Buildings

9.3.3. design - scale

The overall design of an addition encompasses scale, proportion, articulation, composition, and detail. Only a balance of these elements results in a successful and compatible design. Drawing from the design of the existing building will make a complementary addition more easily achievable.

Although in some cases large additions are necessary, it is encouraged that additions be modest in scale compared to the existing buildings. It is often possible for large additions to be reconfigured into smaller structures and create a significant improvement to the overall presence.

Guidelines

1. The design of additions should reflect the scale of the existing heritage buildings.
2. An addition should not be greater in scale than the existing building.



Existing building before addition.



Encouraged: modest new addition of compatible design and scale.



Appropriate: new addition of compatible design, although scale is large.



Not Appropriate: scale of addition exceeds that of existing building.

Unionville Heritage District Plan

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Design guidelines for additions to buildings. Unionville HCD, Markham, Ontario.

1.4 Frequently Asked Questions

1.4 Frequently Asked Questions about HCDs

I'm planning some renovations, **will I be able to make changes to my building?**

- Yes! The creation of an HCD does not preclude making alterations or additions to buildings.

4 Heritage Design Guidelines

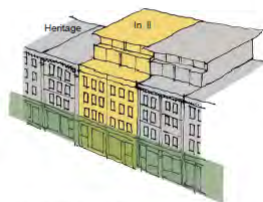


Consistent cornice line

4.2.1 Cornice Line

The cornice is the topmost projecting part of a facade, typically detailed with a decorative moulding. The cornice line is the extended horizontal definition of the building that indicates where the facade ends and the roof begins. When abutting buildings have a continuous cornice line they result in a harmonious streetwall.

- a. Maintain the same or similar cornice height established by existing heritage buildings for the podium (building base) to create a consistent streetwall height, reinforcing the 'frame' for public streets and spaces.



Consistent first storey height

4.2.2 Sidewalk Level Height and Articulation

The sidewalk level of a building is the portion of a building with the greatest presence on the street. Over time a building may change use, and with that, will change the requirements of the sidewalk level. Buildings with a generous grade sidewalk level floor height, and with a detailed articulation, will have the greatest flexibility and prominence over time.

- a. Maintain the same or similar height of the first storey of new buildings to the first storey datum line of heritage buildings (i.e. the height of intermediate cornice lines or frieze boards between the first and second storeys).
- b. Maintain other heights and proportions in the first storey such as:
 - sign band height and size;
 - window height, size and proportion, including transoms;
 - door height, position, and setback, and;
 - maintain the prevailing at-grade use (i.e. retail or residential) while considering the intended use and role of the street.

9.3 Additions to Heritage Buildings

9.3.3. design - scale

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Although in some cases large additions are necessary, it is encouraged that additions be modest in scale compared to the existing buildings. It is often possible for large additions to be reconfigured into smaller structures and create a significant improvement to the overall presence.

Guidelines

1. The design of additions should reflect the scale of the existing heritage buildings.
2. An addition should not be greater in scale than the existing building.



Existing building before addition



Encouraged: modest rear addition of compatible design and scale



Appropriate: rear addition of compatible design, although scale is large



Not Appropriate: scale of addition overwhelms original house

Unionville Heritage District Plan

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“User-friendly” guidelines for commercial infill, Downtown Halifax, Heritage Design Guidelines, Land Use By-law.

Example of “user-friendly” design guidelines for additions to residential buildings. Unionville HCD, Markham, Ontario.

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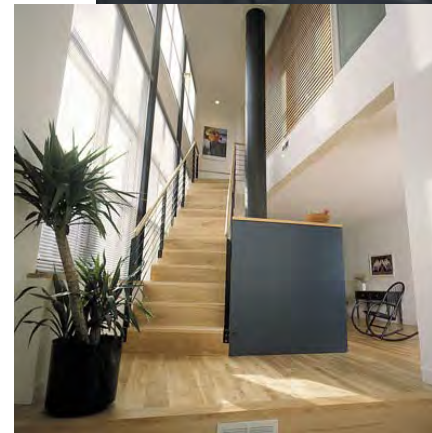
1.4 Frequently Asked Questions about HCDs

Will I have to restore my building to its historic appearance?

- You **do not have to restore your property** or building to its original historic appearance.



Where documentary evidence exists, historic elements can be recreated, but it is not mandatory. Credit: Paul Denys Designs.



Contemporary but sympathetic infill house in historic neighbourhood. Maynard Street, Halifax. Credit: MLSA.

New construction does not have to “look old”.

1.4 Frequently Asked Questions about HCDs

Do property taxes go up when a heritage conservation district is created?

- Properties located in an HCD are assessed and taxed at the same relative tax rate as every other property in the municipality.
- That said, **property values tend to rise more consistently in HCDs** than in surrounding areas. While there are many factors that determine residential tax rates, resale values could contribute to tax increases. These can be offset by *Heritage Property Tax Relief* programmes, where they exist (c.f. Robert Shipley, U Waterloo).

Heritage Designation and Property Values: Is there an Effect?

Robert Shipley
University of Waterloo
Ontario Canada

Appeared in:
The International Journal of Heritage Studies
Volume 6 Number 1, 2000

(approximately 6,000 words)

Abstract

This paper describes research that was designed to examine the assertion that historic designation of properties, under the heritage legislation in Canada's largest province, has a negative impact on the values of those properties. The actual selling price of subject properties was used to establish their value history trends, which were then compared to ambient market trends within the same communities. Almost 3,000 properties in 24 communities were investigated, in what is believed to be the largest study of its kind ever undertaken in North America. It was found that heritage designation could not be shown to have a negative impact. In fact there appears to be a distinct and generally robust market in designated heritage properties. They generally perform well in the market with 74% doing average or better than average. The rate of sale among designated properties is as good or better than the ambient market trends and the values of heritage properties tend to be resistant to down-turns in the general market.

1.4 Frequently Asked Questions about HCDs

Will I have to apply for a permit to alter a designated building, and will approval times be longer?

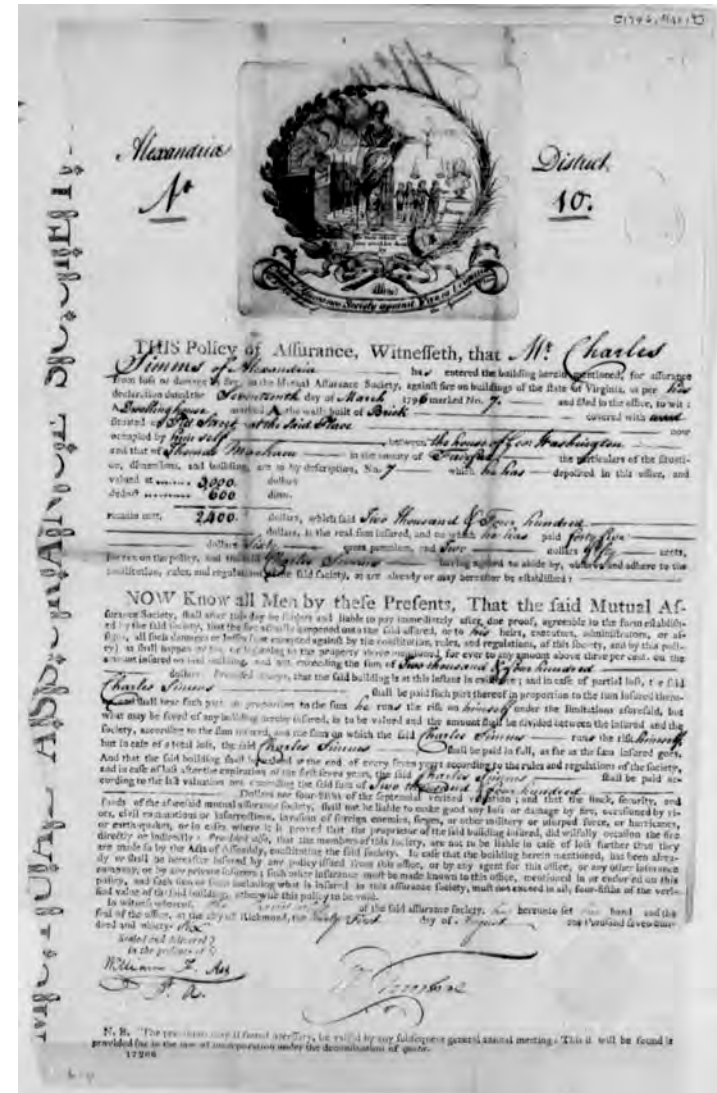
- The HCD Guidelines will lay out the classes of alterations that require a Heritage Permit.
- A process for heritage approvals is already in place in Mississippi Mills. These are managed quickly and efficiently. It can be expected that this performance will continue after the designation of an HCD.
- In most municipalities, there is no fee associated with applying for a Heritage Permit.



1.4 Frequently Asked Questions about HCDs

Will my insurance premiums go up?

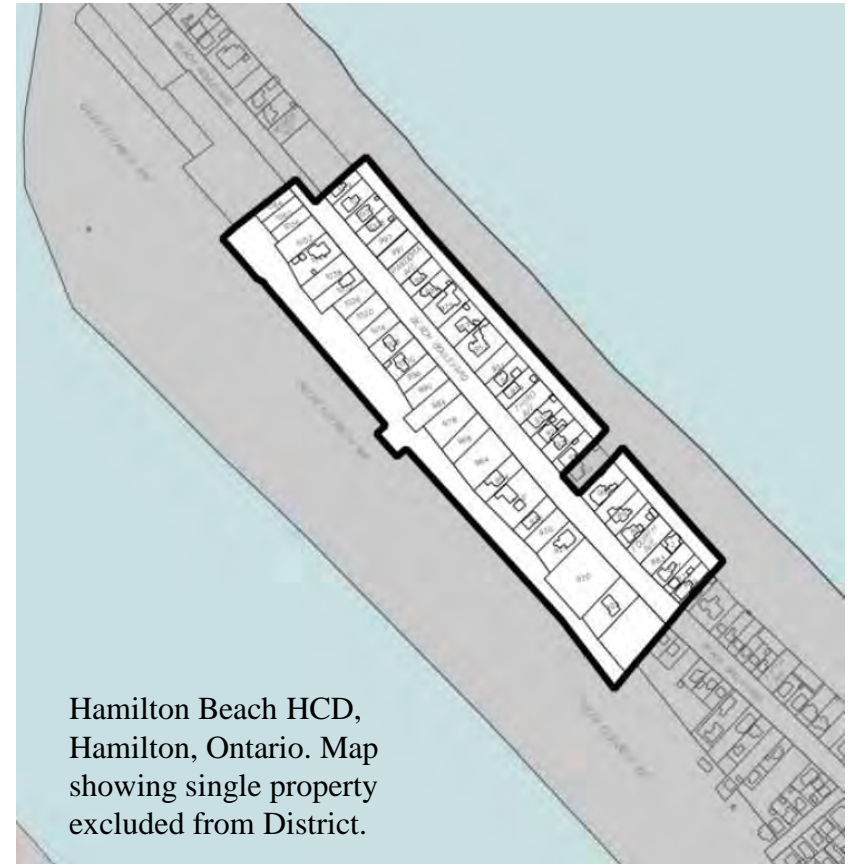
- Older buildings are more expensive to insure, regardless of heritage status
- Insurance rates tend to increase because of other factors related to the age of a building – not its heritage status (e.g. old wiring, old plumbing, lack of fire detection devices).



1.4 Frequently Asked Questions about HCDs

What if I don't want my property to be part of the District?

- It is possible, through an appeal process to the OMB
- However, when properties are excluded, it challenges the integrity of the district.
- One property benefits the protection that an HCD provides, but without contributing to it.



Hamilton Beach HCD,
Hamilton, Ontario. Map
showing single property
excluded from District.

1.6 Do Heritage Conservation Districts work?

1.6 Do Heritage Conservation Districts Work?

There are 113 HCDs in Ontario communities.

Examples comparable to Almonte include:

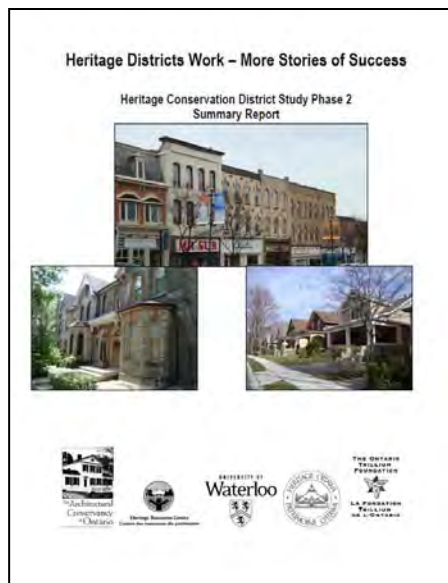
Municipality	Heritage Conservation District Name	No. of Properties	Year Designated	Population (2011)
Arnprior	Downtown	49	2007	8114
Bluewater	Bayfield Village Main Street	31	1982	1023 (7044)
Centre Wellington	Brock Avenue, Fergus	6	1998	19126 (26693)
Cobourg	King Street East	106	1990	18519
Collingwood	Downtown Core	260	2002	19241
Goderich	The Square	29	1982	7521
Huron East	Main Street Seaforth	56	1984	2627 (9264)
Loyalist	Main Street Bath	9	1982	1042 (16221)
Niagara-on-the-Lake	Queen and Picton Streets	150	1986	15400
Orangeville	Downtown	68	2002	27975
Perth	Downtown	126	2012	5840
Prince Edward County	Picton Main Street	138	in progress	4487 (25258)
Port Hope	Walton Street	39	1997	12230 (16214)
Scugog	Downtown Port Perry	60	2010	8981 (21569)
St. Mary's	Main Street	152	2012	6655
Wilmot	New Hamburg Core Area	32	1992	11953 (19223)

1.6 Do Heritage Conservation Districts Work?

Many of these Districts are thriving. Why? Because the District attracted investment and tourism, and encouraged building improvement through financial incentives:

- Port Hope, Walton Street (comm'l)
- Niagara-on-the-Lake (commercial)
- Huron East, Seaforth (commercial)
- Collingwood (commercial)

Univ. of Waterloo study looked at 32 HCDs designated before 2003. The Study found positive economic impacts in many districts, high satisfaction levels among residents, and improving performance of HCDs over time.



Port Hope



Above: Seaforth, Huron East. Below: NOTL.



1.6 Do Heritage Conservation Districts Work?

It's not always successful. See the Bank Street HCD, Ottawa (commercial, designated 2000). The goals of the District have not been met: historic buildings are not being preserved and maintained; new development is out of scale with the historic streetscape. Result has been a loss of historic fabric and disused buildings.

What's the lesson?

The success of a District requires a combination of a **well-drafted plan and guidelines**, **political will** to enforce the plan, and **economic and community activities that support the objectives** of the District.



1.6 Do Heritage Conservation Districts Work?

See for yourself! Nearby comparable examples:

- Downtown Perth (mixed use, designated 2012)
- Downtown Arnprior (commercial, designated 2007)
- King Street East & West, Cobourg (res / comm, designated 1990-92)
- Kingston has two of the oldest districts in Ontario
 - Barriefield Village (residential, designated in 1980)
 - Market Square (commercial, designated in 1984)



Downtown Arnprior



King Street East, Cobourg

Downtown Almonte Heritage Conservation District



Part 2 - Breakout Session & Table Talk

Downtown Almonte Heritage Conservation District



Part 3 – Reporting Back

3.1 Reporting back from discussions

Comments, Q&A

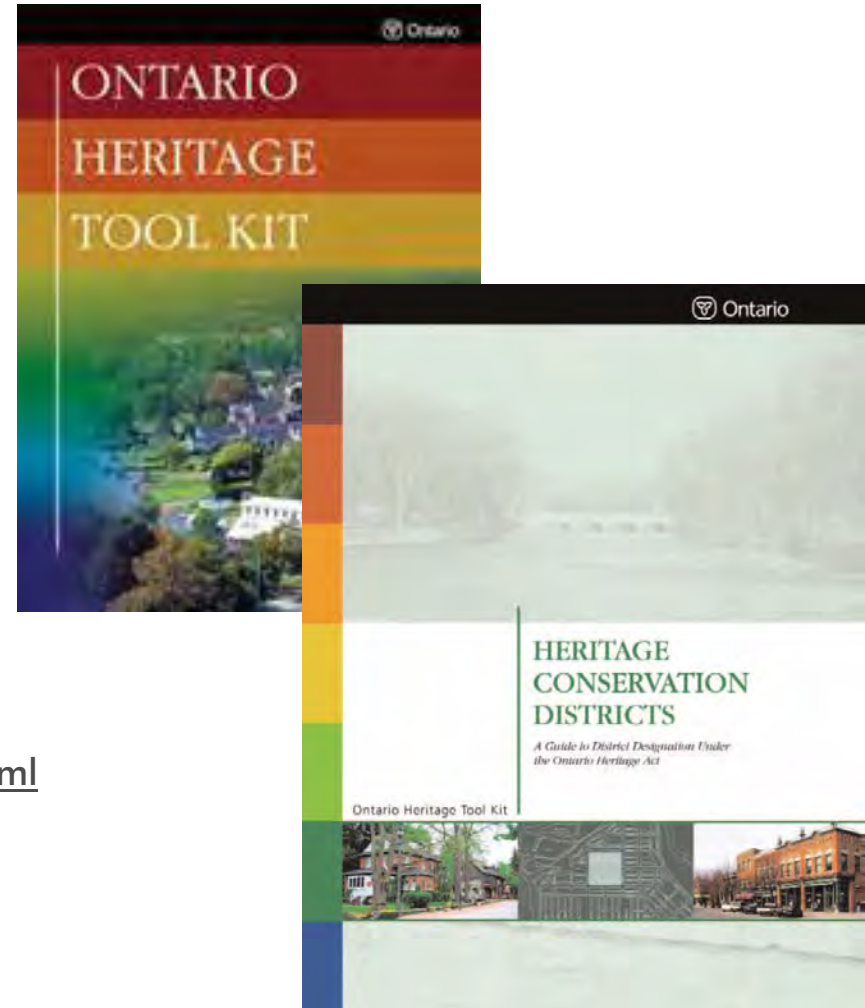
1. Reporting back from table discussions

3.2 Additional Information and Resources

- *Strengthening Ontario's Heritage: Identify, Protect, Promote*
- *Ontario Heritage Toolkit*
 - Property Evaluation
 - Designating Heritage Properties
 - Designating Heritage Conservation Districts

Ontario Ministry of Culture website

- <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/tools.shtml>



3.3 Next Steps

Evaluation of public support for proceeding with the Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan

If the HCD Study proceeds:

- Historical / documentary research
- Field investigations (survey of individual properties)
- **Public consultation** and community engagement is an essential component of the Study phase, and will help validate and confirm findings.
 - *Various tools will be used.*



Thank you!



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