

Downtown Smiths Falls Heritage Conservation District Plan

Final Report

January 8, 2026

Prepared for:
Town of Smiths Falls
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Downtown Smiths Falls Heritage Conservation District Plan

Limitations and Sign-off

January 8, 2026

Limitations and Sign-off

The conclusions in the Report titled Downtown Smith Falls Heritage Conservation District Plan are Stantec's professional opinion, as of the time of the Report, and concerning the scope described in the Report. The opinions in the document are based on conditions and information existing at the time the scope of work was conducted and do not take into account any subsequent changes. The Report relates solely to the specific project for which Stantec was retained and the stated purpose for which the Report was prepared. The Report is not to be used or relied on for any variation or extension of the project, or for any other project or purpose, and any unauthorized use or reliance is at the recipient's own risk.

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Executive Summary

The Town of Smiths Falls (the Town) retained Stantec Consulting Ltd. (Stantec) to prepare the Downtown Smiths Falls Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan as part of the process to designate a portion of downtown Smiths Falls under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as an HCD.

The purpose of an HCD is to conserve a community's heritage resources by creating policies and guidelines to manage change when alterations, additions, new development, demolition, landscaping, or streetscaping occur. Changes in the HCD are managed through council approval, a system of heritage alteration permits, and the guidance of the contents of this HCD.

HCDs are not intended to stop all change or 'freeze' a place within a specific time. Rather, they are an important community tool for balancing the ongoing needs for property maintenance and development while conserving the physical characteristics that define a place and its history. Every HCD is unique and reflects the history and values of the community within which it is located.

The Downtown Smiths Falls HCD consists of a concentration of late 19th and early 20th century properties historically connected and cohesive in their massing, materiality, and building types. The HCD is centered along Beckwith Street North/South and extends south from Elmsley Street North to Confederation Drive.

The following are the objectives to establish and implement the HCD Plan, and are to be followed by Town Council when considering heritage alteration permit applications or Town undertakings in the HCD:

- Provide:
 - a framework for managing changes to existing buildings and public spaces to conserve the heritage "look and feel" of the commercial character of Beckwith Street North/South, Main Street East and West, Russell Street



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East and West, William Street East and West, Chambers Street West, and the west side of Market Street North and South

- Maintain and enhance:
 - the existing low-rise commercial character along Beckwith Street, Main Street, and Russell Street with a mix of two to three storey commercial properties with a consistent street wall and frontage at the public realm
 - the existing character of the north portion of Beckwith Street, defined by the presence of civic buildings and places of worship that help provide a northern gateway to the HCD
 - the mix of open spaces and mature trees within Centennial Park
 - existing policies and programs that support the implementation of an HCD for the commercial area such as the Community Improvement Program (CIP) that provides funding for the protection and enhancement of HCD-specific heritage attributes, and urban design guidelines that support compatible development and renovation within the HCD

- Encourage and support:
 - existing use or adaptive re-use of contributing buildings within the HCD
 - the retention of heritage building fabric, building profiles, and traditional façade arrangements when considering adaptive re-use
 - development that complements the identified heritage value in the HCD
 - connectivity from within the HCD to the public parks and trails, and other community assets and heritage areas
 - the enhancement of the public realm and municipally owned properties within the HCD in a manner compatible with the district character
 - celebration and commemoration of the HCD's industrial roots by incorporating commemorative and interpretive elements within the HCD and connectivity to similar areas outside of the HCD boundary

- Collaborate:
 - With property owners and business owners to encourage and provide incentives for the conservation, restoration, and appropriate maintenance of heritage buildings



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- Avoid:
 - the loss or demolition of heritage attributes or heritage fabric within the HCD

The policies and guidelines of this HCD Plan are intended for property owners, Town staff, Town Council, and the Municipal Heritage Committee. By applying the principles, policies, and guidelines of this HCD Plan, the cultural heritage value of downtown Smiths Falls can be conserved for future generations as the community continues to grow and evolve.

The Executive Summary highlights key points from the report only; for complete information and findings the reader should examine the complete report.



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Acknowledgements

During the preparation of the Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, many individuals, groups, and organizations provided valuable information on the community's rich history and their hopes for its future heritage. The project team wishes to acknowledge the following for their assistance and input during the project:

- Town of Smiths Falls
- The Municipal Heritage Committee
- The HCD Steering Committee
- Property owners, business owners, residents and community members who attended public meetings and/or provided input into the project process and reports



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1 Introduction

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the HCD Plan

The Town of Smiths Falls (the Town) initiated the Downtown Smiths Falls Heritage Conservation District Plan (the HCD Plan) to establish planning tools and policies to manage intensification and compatible development, while protecting its cultural heritage value and heritage attributes that define the sense of place of its downtown. The HCD Plan is the second phase in the HCD process. The first phase of the process, the HCD Study was completed in November 2024 and recommended that a portion of the Study Area of the HCD Study be considered as an HCD. On December 17, 2024, Town Council accepted the findings of the HCD Study and recommended that Stantec prepare an HCD Plan under Part V, Sections 41 and 41.1 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (Resolution 2024-12-254). The development of the HCD is also referenced as an initiative under the “Redevelopment of the Waterfront and Downtown” section of Council’s 2023-26 Strategic Plan.

HCDs are intended to:

- Create a planning process that respects a community’s history and identity
- Manage change with a process of heritage alteration permits for certain types of renovation, restoration, and new construction
- Foster an appreciation of a community’s heritage resources
- Protect the integrity of buildings, streetscapes, structures, landforms, and natural features
- Promote cultural tourism

HCDs are not intended to:

- Stop or discourage new construction or redevelopment
- Cause owners to lose all property rights
- Require all new construction match a specific historical style
- Make owners require a heritage alteration permit for minor alterations



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The HCD Plan provides the tools for implementing designation under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, providing the policies, guidelines, and recommendations for property owners, Town staff, Town Council, and the Municipal Heritage Committee to manage change and make decisions regarding the alteration of properties within an HCD. This framework also allows for compatible new designs that coexist with the historic fabric of a community, rather than freezing a place in time. The HCD Plan will be implemented in coordination with existing municipal planning documents.

The HCD Plan aims to build on the longstanding pride of ownership and maintenance demonstrated by property owners throughout the HCD, who have conserved the area's heritage buildings and character for many generations. The HCD Plan will continue to conserve this character and assist property owners in maintaining and making changes to their properties by providing policies and guidelines that support compatible alterations and additions.

As per Section 41.1(5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, HCD Plans are required to contain the following content:

- (a) a statement of objectives to be achieved in designating the area as a heritage conservation district;
- (b) a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the heritage conservation district;
- (c) a description of the heritage attributes of the heritage conservation district and of properties in the district;
- (d) policy statements, guidelines and procedures for achieving the stated objectives and managing change in the heritage conservation district; and
- (e) a description of the alterations or classes of alterations that are minor in nature and that the owner of the property in the heritage conservation district may carry out or permit to be carried out on any part of the property, other than the interior of any structure or building on the property, without obtaining a permit under section 42.

(Government of Ontario 1990)



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1 Introduction

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This HCD Plan has been divided into several sections with subheadings for different topics and components as required above. Summarized, these include:

- Section 2 outlines the reasons for designation, the HCD boundary, Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Heritage Attributes.
- Section 3 contains the goals, objectives, and principles of the HCD Plan.
- Section 4 contains the HCD policies and guidelines for the development pattern, contributing resources, non-contributing resources, demolition, new development, parks and open space areas, streetscape and landscape for public and private realm, accessibility, sustainability, Part IV designations, and properties adjacent to the HCD.
- Section 5 provides an outline of how the HCD may be implemented and contains a summary of the HCD heritage alteration permit process, and a list of activities where permits are not required.
- Section 6 provides a concluding statement for the HCD Plan.
- Section 7 provides the key sources referenced in the HCD Plan.

1.2 Implications of the HCD Plan

Policies and Guidelines of the HCD Plan apply to all properties, public and private, within the designated area. Different policies and guidelines are prepared for different building types as well as contributing and non-contributing properties. HCDs are intended to benefit the Town and the community as a long-term strategic planning tool that helps to manage change in an area by conserving and celebrating local heritage. When implemented diligently, HCDs can conserve heritage for future generations, and have lasting benefits in a community.

Above all, it is important to note that property owners within an HCD will be responsible for following policies and guidelines when altering their property or planning new construction. New construction, demolition, and some alterations will require approval of a heritage alteration permit from Town Council. Alterations outlined in Section 5.2.4 do not require a heritage alteration permit.



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It is important to be clear that implementing an HCD does not require property owners to automatically ‘revert’ their properties back to a specific time period, or to undo renovations that have already occurred. The purpose of the HCD Plan is to manage changes going forward in the HCD so that future alterations, additions, and new development are compatible and sympathetic to the area’s heritage character.

It is also crucial to recognize that the Downtown Smiths Falls HCD contains a wide variety of property types, uses, and architectural/design influences resulting from its evolution over the course of the late 19th and 20th centuries. The HCD is expected to continue to evolve over time. Not all policies within the HCD plan will be a perfect fit for every situation, and some alterations, proposals, or changes not considered in this plan may need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Flexibility will be required depending on the nature of the application.

It is the job of Town Staff, property owners, and Town Council to apply these policies and guidelines in a consistent, careful, and considered manner in accordance with the objectives of the HCD Plan. The overall goal is to conserve and enhance the ‘look and feel’ of the HCD character that is experienced in the public realm by supporting change that is compatible with the HCD. There are many ways to achieve this, using a variety of design approaches, construction methods, and materials.

1.3 How to Use the HCD Plan

Property owners and developers of property adjacent to the HCD are not subject to the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan, but in accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), may not develop adjacent to an HCD in a manner that adversely impacts its heritage character. Adjacent development must follow the process outlined in Section 4.12.



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Owners of property within the HCD and the Town are expected to consult the HCD Plan when considering alterations, additions, or demolitions to property within the HCD boundary (Figure 1). For private property owners, it is encouraged that you first identify whether you are a contributing or non-contributing property (See Figure 2 or Appendix A for a list).

- Contributing properties directly support the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and heritage attributes of the HCD. These properties were designed or constructed in the late 19th to early 20th century as part of the commercial core and retain historic building fabric or heritage features that distinguish them as older buildings of a particular era, type, or place. Some structures were originally built as residences but have been converted to commercial use. As a result, they form part of the commercial core of the HCD and support its overall character.
- Non-contributing properties still play a role in the overall HCD, but do not directly support the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and heritage attributes of the HCD. These properties may have been constructed more recently or may be older properties that have been modified to such an extent that historic building fabric or detailing has been substantially altered, removed, or obscured.

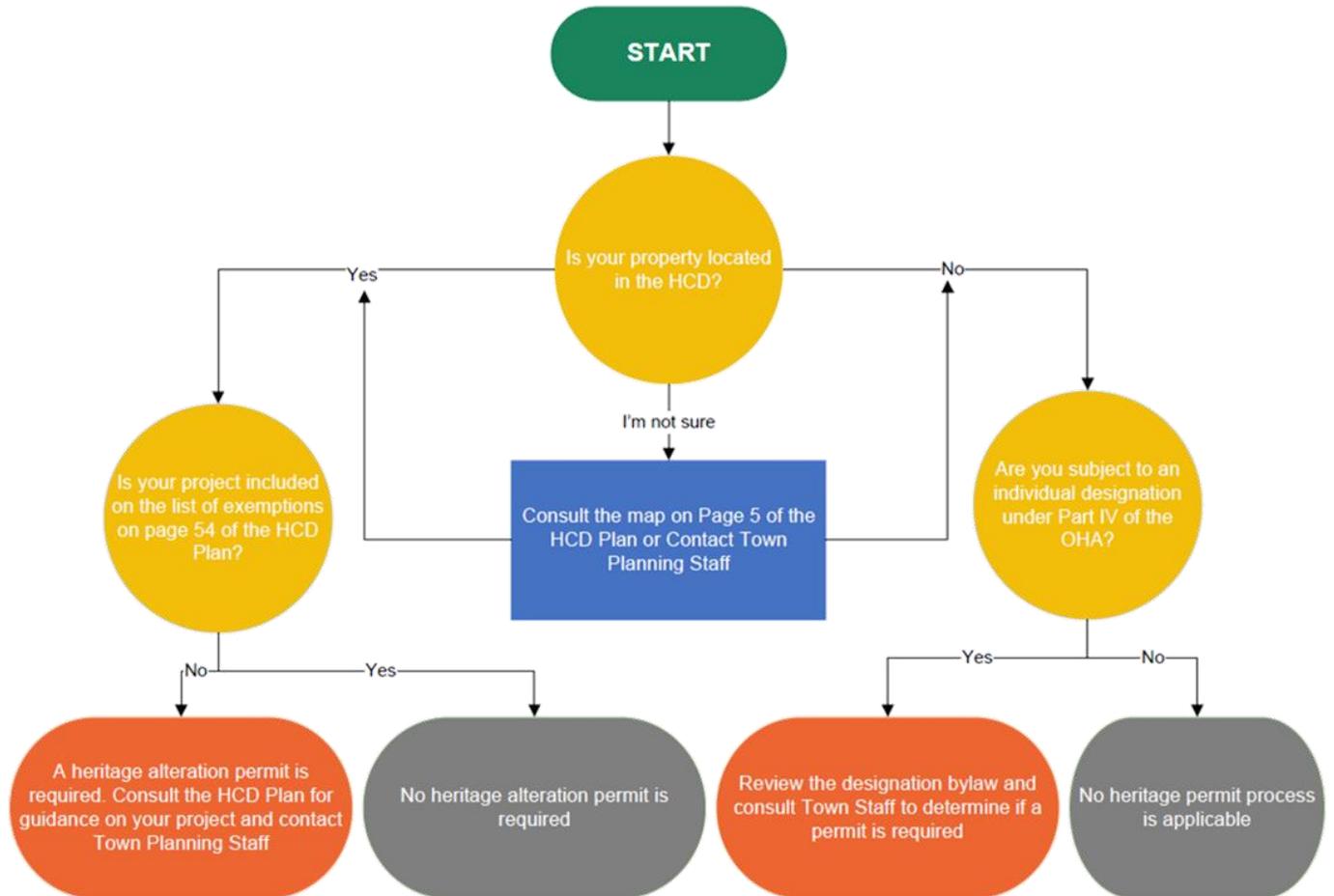
Once it is determined whether your property is contributing or non-contributing, consider the project you are planning and consult the HCD Plan to determine whether the work will require a heritage alteration permit (See Section 5.2). If so, review the guidance in the plan specific to your property type, building type, and project type and prepare an application for a heritage alteration permit in line with the policies and guidelines. It is always encouraged that you consult with the Town early in the process to help guide your application. The flow-chart below provides an overview of the Heritage Alteration Permit Process:



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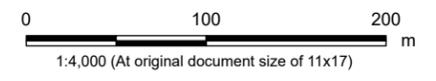


When the Town is planning changes within the HCD boundary, Town Council must review the proposed plans and only approve changes that are in keeping with the character of the HCD. Town staff, the Municipal Heritage Committee, and Town Council are all expected to review and follow guidance in the HCD Plan.





Legend
 Proposed HCD Boundary



Notes
 1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
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 160941038 REV2
 Prepared by bfonseca on 2025-06-11

Client/Project: TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS
 HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLAN

Figure No.: **1**
 Title: **Downtown Smiths Falls HCD Boundary**

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- Legend
- Proposed HCD Boundary
 - Contributing Resources
 - Non-Contributing Resources



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Figure No.: 2

Title: Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

2 Heritage Conservation District Characteristics

2.1 Reasons for Designation

The Downtown Smiths Falls HCD consists of a streetscape of commercial properties along Beckwith Street forming the commercial core of the community. It includes projecting side streets which consists of predominantly late 19th century to early 20th century buildings that make up a mixed streetscape of attached and detached commercial structures on Main Street and Russell Street. The HCD contains the historic cultural and commercial centre of Smiths Falls and is characteristic of the development of the community in its connection to early merchants and industrialists.

The boundary reflects both historical and visual considerations. The area includes a high concentration of buildings that were constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, containing urban form and architecture representative of these eras. The boundary also contains a high degree of integrity, evident in the visual cohesion noted particularly in the commercial, residential, and mixed-use streetscapes. These are typically between one to three storeys in height, with generally consistent setbacks, and similarity in architectural styles, building materials, and building forms. These qualities contribute to the sense of time and place experienced within the proposed boundary area.

2.2 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

2.2.1 Description of Historic Place

The Downtown Smiths Falls HCD is located in the Town of Smiths Falls, Ontario, and includes properties fronting on Beckwith Street North and South between Elmsley Street North and Confederation Drive, properties fronting Main Street East and West between Maple Avenue and Market Street, and properties fronting Russell Street East between Beckwith Street North and Market Street North. The HCD also contains Centennial Park and Veteran's Memorial Park, which links to the rest of the HCD through Old Mill Road.



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The HCD consists of a streetscape of commercial properties within the main downtown district of Smiths Falls. The properties are historically connected to the development and growth of Smiths Falls stemming from its location adjacent to the Rideau River and Rideau Canal.

2.2.2 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The HCD contains a representative collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial properties that reflect the growth and development of Smiths Falls. The area's design and physical value is characterized by two-to-three storey vernacular commercial structures that form near continuous streetwalls throughout the proposed HCD. The late 19th century to early-to-mid 20th century architectural character is dominated by the Ontario Vernacular style with some examples or influences of Renaissance Revival, Second Empire, Edwardian, Italianate, and Modernist architectural styles. The cultural heritage value of the HCD lies in its role as a representative example of a traditional main street and commercial corridor in eastern Ontario.

The development of the properties within the proposed HCD is linked with the evolution of the Town of Smiths Falls. The built form and landscape are representative of the historical periods through which the historical commercial core of the Town developed. Beginning with Loyalist and American migration during the late 18th and early 19th centuries and up to the completion of the Rideau Canal in 1832, the development of Smiths Falls was centered around the Rideau River, near the present-day locations of Centennial Park and Veteran's Memorial Park.

As the Town continued to grow through the 19th century, the arrival of the railway in 1859 led to expansion of commercial development northwards along Beckwith Street. The commercial developments were established along a planned wide roadway, which exists today as Beckwith Street. The construction of the railway coincided with a period of economic prosperity in Smiths Falls as industries were attracted to the area by its



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strategic location along three railways and the Rideau Canal and relative proximity by rail to markets in Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, and New York. This resulted in a construction boom and the beginnings of the structures that make up the commercial main street of the HCD.

The start of the First World War led to difficult economic conditions in Smiths Falls until the Second World War due to changing industrial demands. The Town recovered in the 1940s and early 1950s due to increased demand during the war and subsequent baby boom. However over the next several decades, many industries closed in Smiths Falls as many existing factories were outdated or companies preferred to relocate to more populated areas. Throughout the 20th century, the increased presence of personal cars and pleasure crafts expanded the economy of Smiths Falls to include recreation and tourism based on its proximity to the Rideau River and Canal. Properties in the downtown core and the types of commercial structures within the HCD changed to meet new needs of the community. Former industrial lands were developed to create public parkland, such as Centennial Park and Veteran's Memorial Park.

The HCD contains contextual value for its representative collection of commercial properties that form a visually cohesive streetscape and character through their consistent setbacks, materiality, and location along wide roadways. Two significant entry views were identified in the HCD based around the change in grade throughout the HCD. The northern entry includes the view of the commercial main street looking down towards the Rideau Canal, while the southern entry includes the view of the rise of the town from the Rideau Canal. Both views are framed by the commercial structures on the east and west sides of the roadway.



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2.2.3 Heritage Attributes

The following heritage attributes have been identified as reflective of the cultural heritage value of the Downtown Smiths Falls HCD:

- The concentration of late 19th and early-to-mid 20th century commercial structures, including:
 - Vernacular style two-to-three storey structures that are physically attached and form a cohesive commercial street wall along Beckwith Street North and South, Main Street East and West, and Russell Street East
 - Detached commercial structures that support the commercial character of the Downtown Smiths Falls HCD along Market Street North and South, William Street West and Russell Street West
 - Common architectural details associated with late 19th and early-to-mid 20th century commercial structures including:
 - Storefront windows and entrances on the ground floors
 - Regular fenestration patterns on upper storeys
 - A flat roof with decorative parapets and cornices
 - Stone lintels and brick voussoirs with decorative brick and wood detailing
- The presence, form, and materiality of places of worship, civic, and institutional structures within the HCD
- The historical and contemporary uses of Centennial Park and Veterans' Memorial Park that date to the early loyalist settlement of the area and the development of the Rideau Canal, transforming into a park-like settings adjacent to the Rideau Canal waterway
- The landscape area along Old Mill Road that links the parks and rest of the downtown and includes vistas of 'the falls'
- The width of Beckwith Street North and South and of Main Street East and West, reflective of its early planned survey as a main commercial and transportation thoroughfare
- The remaining early 20th century metal street signs affixed to properties located at intersections



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2 Heritage Conservation District Characteristics

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- The landmarks in the HCD, including:
 - 1-15 Chambers Street West, the former Rideau Theatre
 - 11 Church Street West, Westminster Presbyterian Church
 - 20 Beckwith Street North, the Rideau Hotel
 - 73 Beckwith Street North, First Baptist Church
 - 77 Beckwith Street North, the municipal government complex
 - 81 Beckwith Street North, the Carnegie Library
 - 34 Beckwith Street South, the East and West Mill Complex
 - The Water Tower in Centennial Park
 - The Rideau Canal and Rideau River
- Approaches into the HCD, including:
 - From Beckwith Street North and South looking south from Church Street
 - From Beckwith Street North and South looking north from Chambers Street



3 Heritage Conservation District Goals, Objectives, and Principles

3.1 Goals and Objectives

The ultimate goals of the HCD Plan are to provide a framework for decision-making in the HCD and manage change in a way that is compatible with the heritage character of the HCD. To achieve these goals, all Town Council decisions related to alterations, additions, new construction, and demolition in the HCD should align with the following objectives for the HCD:

- Provide:
 - a framework for managing changes to existing buildings and public spaces to conserve the heritage “look and feel” of the commercial character of Beckwith Street North/South, Main Street East and West, Russell Street East and West, William Street East and West, Chambers Street West, and the west side of Market Street North and South
- Maintain and enhance:
 - the existing low-rise commercial character along Beckwith Street, Main Street, and Russell Street with a mix of two to three storey commercial properties with a consistent street wall and frontage at the public realm
 - the existing character of the north portion of Beckwith Street, defined by the presence of civic buildings and places of worship that help provide a northern gateway to the HCD
 - the mix of open spaces and mature trees within Centennial Park
 - existing policies and programs that support the implementation of an HCD for the commercial area such as the CIP that provides funding for the protection and enhancement of HCD-specific heritage attributes, and urban design guidelines that support compatible development and renovation within the HCD
 - the area along Old Mill Road that links the parkland with the commercial downtown area centered around the falls
- Encourage and support:
 - existing use or adaptive re-use of contributing buildings within the HCD



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- the retention of heritage building fabric, building profiles, and traditional façade arrangements when considering adaptive re-use
 - development that complements the identified heritage value in the HCD
 - connectivity from within the HCD to the public parks and trails, and other community assets and heritage areas
 - the enhancement of the public realm and municipally owned properties within the HCD in a manner compatible with the district character
 - celebration and commemoration of the HCD's industrial roots by incorporating commemorative and interpretive elements within the HCD and connectivity to similar areas outside of the HCD boundary
- Collaborate:
 - With property owners and business owners to encourage and provide incentives for the conservation, restoration, and appropriate maintenance of heritage buildings
 - Avoid:
 - the loss or demolition of heritage attributes or heritage fabric within the HCD

3.2 Principles

The principles of the HCD Plan are drawn from heritage best practices established at the provincial, federal, and international levels through guiding documents and charters. The principles outlined in this report are derived from the 1964 Venice Charter (International Council on Monuments and Sites 1964), the *Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties* (Government of Ontario 2022), and the 2010 *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* (Parks Canada 2010). The following principles form the basis of the HCD policies and guidelines:

- **Preserve the historic context:** A heritage building represents the individuals and periods from history with which it has been associated. The building records the original designer's and builder's intentions as well as the historic forces that were at play when it was constructed. Subsequent alterations to the building also demonstrate the historic context at the time of the alterations and may need to be considered when planning restorations, alterations, or redevelopment.



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3 Heritage Conservation District Goals, Objectives, and Principles

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- **Maintain and repair:** All buildings require some continuous methods of conservation as they are exposed to the constant deteriorating effects of weather and wear from use. Owners are encouraged to undertake appropriate repair and maintenance activities of heritage properties.
- **Find a viable social or economic use:** Buildings that are vacant or underutilized come to be perceived as undeserving of care and maintenance regardless of architectural or historic merit. Town Council and staff should actively encourage and support appropriate forms of adaptive reuse when necessary to preserve heritage properties.
- **Preserve traditional setting:** A building is intimately connected to its property and to the neighbouring landscape and buildings. Land, gardens, outbuildings, and fences form a setting that should be considered during plans for restoration or change. An individual building is perceived as part of a grouping and requires its neighbours to illustrate the original design intent. When buildings need to change, there is a supportive setting that should be maintained.
- **Preserve period-appropriate decoration and fittings:** Buildings in the HCD are linked to the history of downtown Smiths Falls and many contain elements and details of that reflect its type, construction period, or architectural style and influences. The exterior decorations such as wood trim, metal, or brick cornices and parapets are all subject to weathering and the whim of style. Avoid removing or updating these features or replacing them with incompatible replacements. Their form and materials are an inextricable part of the historic design and should enjoy the same respect as the whole building. Where practical, fittings and equipment should be preserved or re-used.
- **Restore to authentic limits:** Avoid embellishing a restoration and adding details and decorations that would not have been part of the history or relevant to the construction period, style, or type of building.
- **Employ traditional repair methods:** Deteriorated elements and materials that cannot be salvaged should be repaired or replaced with the same materials and inserted or installed in a traditional manner that was employed at the time of the building's construction. In some cases, some modern technologies ensure better and longer lasting repairs than traditional methods and should be employed if proven to be an improvement.



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- **Respect historic accumulations:** A building is both a permanent and a changeable record of history. The alterations that have been made since construction also tell part of the history of the place and the building. Some of those alterations may not tell a significant part of the story, and research may determine that they can be removed. Other alterations and additions may have merits that warrant incorporating them into the permanent history of the building. In many cases, it is unnecessary to fix a point in history as the target date for restoration. It may be more appropriate to aim for an overall period of significance and be flexible in accommodating more recent interventions that are sympathetic or have improved the functional nature of the building.
- **Make new replacements distinguishable:** The construction eras and historical progression should be self-evident. Although new work should be sympathetic to the original it should not attempt to appear as if built as part of the original, unless it is an in-kind replacement of a component part.
- **Understand the value of a historic place:** Refer to the heritage value and character defining elements to understand the significance of the HCD and to guide appropriate change.
- **Respect documentary evidence:** When repairing, restoring, or rehabilitating historic buildings or features, rely on documentary evidence such as historic photographs, drawings, or physical evidence where available. Avoid restoring based on conjecture.
- **Design alterations with reversibility in mind:** When making additions or alterations that may cover, obscure, or remove original materials, consider methods that could be reversed in the future to retain the original features, materials, and/or character.



4 District Policies and Guidelines

4.1 Introduction

The *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that a district plan include a statement of policies. A statement of policy is intended to provide for consistent decision making within the HCD. Policies reflect the objectives of the HCD Plan to maintain and enhance the character of the HCD boundary as outlined in Figure 1. Policies clearly explain what changes and alterations are appropriate and likely to be approved in an HCD. Policies are intended to directly support the goals and objectives of the HCD and it is the Town and Council's responsibility to make decisions that are consistent with HCD policies. In this HCD Plan, policies are clearly indicated using phrases with words such as 'shall', 'must', or 'will'.

This HCD Plan also contains guidelines. Guidelines may be used where there are various alternatives that help to support a policy. The provision of guidelines allows the Town and Council to take flexible approaches to heritage alteration permits and decisions in the HCD. Not all guidelines will be applicable in every situation, but through discussion with staff, property owners, the Municipal Heritage Committee, and Council, the guidelines can be applied on a case-by-case basis once the policies have been met. Guidelines may also be used where the community indicated through the consultation process that the priorities for these items are not as strong as other areas but still want guidance to follow when making decisions.

The following sections contain the policies and guidelines for the development pattern, alterations, additions, new construction, and demolition. The sections are arranged by type of action (alteration/addition), and by contributing and non-contributing properties. Policies to preserve this outward character should aim to maintain the original appearance regardless of the current use. To determine if your property is a contributing or non-contributing property, refer to Figure 2 or Appendix A.



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Policies and guidelines are also provided for landscaping and streetscaping on public and private property, parks, and open spaces. Additional considerations have been provided for accessibility, sustainability, and alternative energy, as well as Part IV designations within the HCD and properties adjacent to the HCD.

The policies and guidelines apply to common architectural components found in many commercial buildings throughout the HCD (Plate 4.1). Additional descriptions for these architectural components can be found in Appendix B.

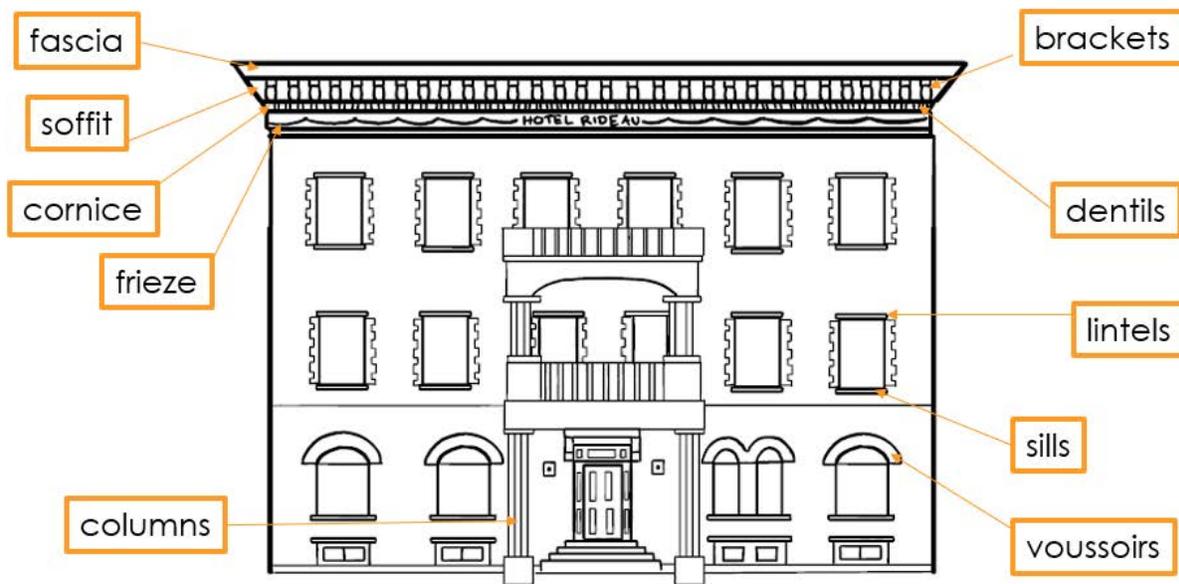


Plate 4.1 Common Architectural Components in the Smiths Falls HCD

4.2 Development Pattern

The development pattern of the HCD is an important part of its historic character. Downtown Smiths Falls grew around the north shore of the Rideau River near the locks and dam associated with the Rideau Canal. The HCD is located within the original 1833 survey of Smiths Falls completed by William Simpson and Abel Ward. By the mid-19th century, development in Smiths Falls was mostly concentrated near the Rideau River



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and from Beckwith Street east to Elmsley Street. In the late 19th century, brick and stone buildings gradually replaced earlier frame structures. Further development along Beckwith Street, Main Street, and Russell Street yielded the construction of a street wall with consistent setbacks to the sidewalk.

Policies

- 1) Maintain the historic development pattern of Beckwith Street, Main Street, and Russell Street, consisting predominantly of purpose-built two to three storey buildings with commercial form on the first storey and residential or mixed-use form on subsequent stories.
- 2) Maintain the development pattern of tightly abutting commercial buildings with narrow profiles and frontage on Beckwith Street, Main Street and Russell Street.
- 3) Maintain the setting of commercial buildings with tight frontage to Beckwith Street, Main Street and Russell Street, setbacks consistent with neighboring properties and abutting exterior walls where appropriate.
- 4) Maintain the typical lot frontages on Beckwith Street, Main Street and Russell Street of between 5 and 15 metres.
- 5) Maintain the general rectangular/cuboid massing of buildings within the HCD.
- 6) Maintain the characteristic of building widths consisting of a single historic lot, or visible architectural divisions on the elevation of wider buildings to give the appearance of lot-sized segments.

4.3 Alterations

4.3.1 Alterations to Contributing Properties

The area along Beckwith Street, Main Street and Russell Street contains a high proportion of contributing resources that support the commercial streetscape as key commercial arteries within the HCD, and Smiths Falls as a whole. There are several commercial properties within this area that contribute to the cohesive nature of this purpose-built corridor. The areas include design, massing, form, setback, materials and architectural character. The following outlines specific aspects of these contributing commercial properties for consideration as part of this HCD.



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4.3.1.1 Maintenance

Maintenance is crucial to the preservation of buildings in the heritage conservation district. Guidelines for the preservation and restoration of the buildings in the HCD are based on the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*. General Maintenance guidelines can be found in Appendix C.

Policies

- 1) Adhere to property maintenance standards of the Town of Smiths Falls Property Standards By-law as it applies to all properties within the municipality, which states that all heritage attributes of Part V heritage properties shall be:
 - a) Maintained, preserved and protected so as to prevent deterioration; and
 - b) Repaired in such a manner that minimizes damage to the heritage values and attributes and maintains the design, colour, texture, grain, or other distinctive features of the heritage attribute.

Guidelines

- 1) Undertake regular maintenance and upkeep of the exterior of contributing resources as the appearance of these buildings and their visible exterior condition can greatly benefit and impact the overall character and feel of the downtown core. Regular maintenance and repairs of historic features and materials can enhance their longevity and avoid costly replacements in the future. For additional guidance on maintenance, refer to sections specific to historic materials in this Plan, or consult the resources in Appendix C.

4.3.1.2 Façade Pattern

Façade patterns are the vertical and horizontal patterns created by architectural elements in the building elevations, such as windows, doors, roofs, building heights, storefronts and others. Façade patterns in the HCD include cohesive use of materials, setback, heights and massing along Beckwith Street, Main Street and Russell Street that together create a unified visual commercial heritage corridor with a noted vertical division between commercial fronts, proportions of solid wall and openings, roof line heights and setback.



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Policies

- 1) Maintain and restore existing windows and doors in their original openings and sizes. Where interior room configurations are changed, avoid visual changes that affect the exterior façade.
- 2) Maintain and restore existing architectural elements (such as pilasters or pillars) that divide and break up the façade into smaller sections.
- 3) Maintain, restore, or sympathetically replace existing parapets and rooflines.
- 4) Do not cover up or build in existing window openings.
- 5) Maintain overall setback that forms the unified and consistent streetscapes along Beckwith, Russell, and Main Streets and heritage fabric of the HCD (Plate 2 and Plate 3).
- 6) Do not remove or alter architectural elements that contribute to a building's architectural style or the HCD attributes as defined in Section 2.2.3.

Guidelines

- 1) Should there be a part of the building that is beyond repair and cannot be restored, use materials and forms that replace in kind or with sympathetic materials.
- 2) Avoid making imitations based on conjecture rather than evidence in documents or existing building elements.



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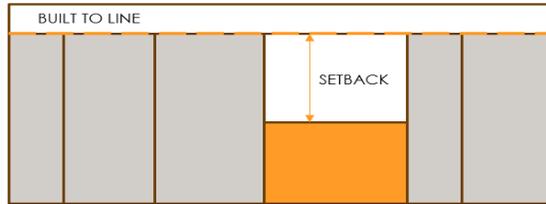
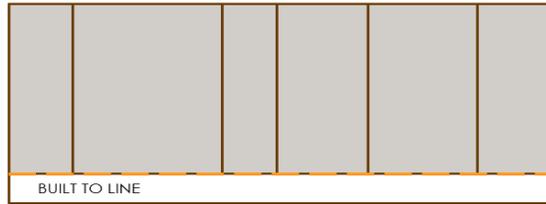


Plate 2 Maintain the setback of properties along the streetscape façade that forms a consistent and unified heritage fabric along the street wall, as noted in the left illustration. Deep setbacks from the street wall should be avoided, as depicted in orange on the right illustration. If a setback exists, consider adapting this for a new infill project or an urban park.

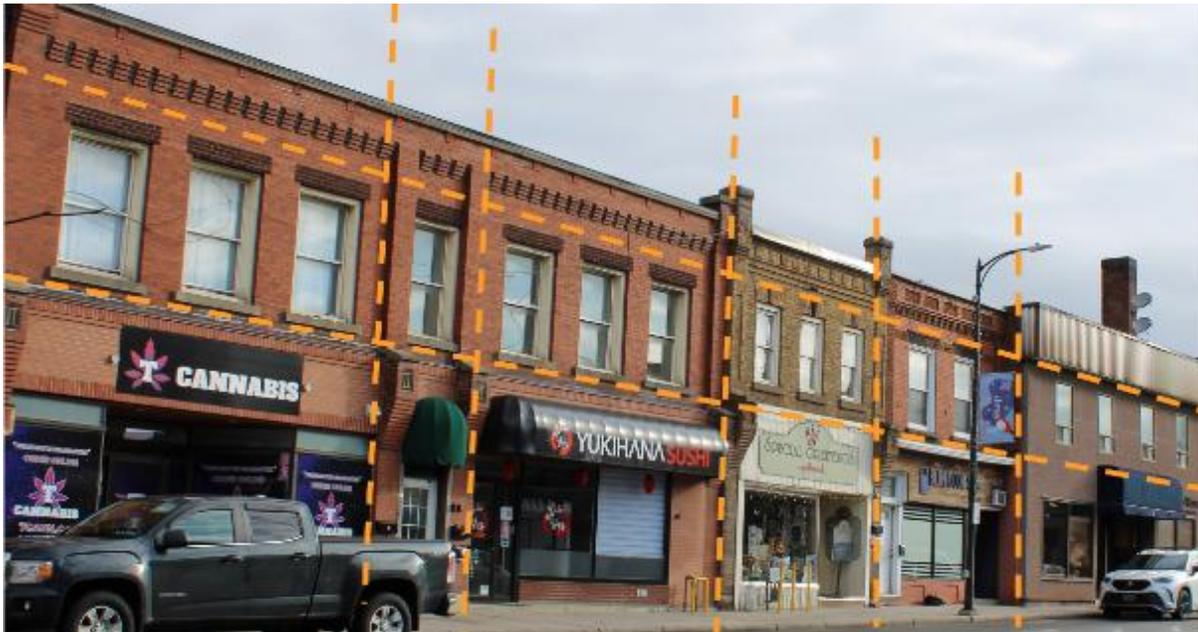


Plate 3 Maintain the rhythm of windows and doors in the façade that make up the traditional commercial/mixed-use façade pattern in the HCD.



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4.3.1.3 Windows

Windows in the HCD are important elements that contribute to the vertical and horizontal patterns of the district. Windows are often a significant heritage element of contributing resources and where original, efforts should be made to retain them. Heritage windows can be as efficient as new thermal units if they are maintained properly. If maintained, they can be longer lasting than the newer thermal units.

Policies

- 1) Conserve, repair and maintain rather than remove all important character-defining elements to windows and doors including but not limited to:
 - a) steel, aluminum and wood frames and windows
 - b) muntin and sash profiles
 - c) dimensions of openings
 - d) operable double and single hung windows
 - e) original opening mechanisms and hardware
 - f) decorative surrounds
- 2) Retain wood framed windows wherever possible.
- 3) Where windows when cannot be repaired, replacement is acceptable. Keep current proportions and glazing configuration. Replacement windows may be of contemporary materials but will reflect the character and style of the building and the historic glass pane divisions from that period. If muntins or grilles are used, they must be applied to the exterior of the window rather than between the panes for a more historically appropriate appearance.
- 4) Do not block or alter the shape and size of existing historic window openings. It is not permitted to fill in windows openings with alternative materials.
- 5) Do not replace windows with units that are different than the original proportions, colours, functionalities and configuration.
- 6) Allow for replacement of contemporary windows with other contemporary windows and maintain the existing shape and opening of the window. Where existing contemporary windows do not fill the size of the original window opening, windows sizes closer to the original condition must be installed to better fit the original openings of the window when replacement is considered.



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Guidelines

- 1) If windows have been updated with contemporary units, they may be replaced with historically accurate window sizes and shapes based on documentary evidence or period appropriate designs.



Plate 4 Examples of window types and shapes in the HCD. Rectangular, round arch and segmental arch are most common. Avoid incompatible infill in historic windows (example in top middle photo).

4.3.1.3.1 *Glass and Glass Products*

Policies

- 1) Retain historic glass, particularly decorative leaded or stained glass.
- 2) Replace irreparable or missing glass panels in kind or with sympathetic material, whenever repair is not possible.

Guidelines

- 1) Protect glass from breakage, chipping and abrasion.
- 2) Assess the reason for the breakage and deterioration of glass which might be due to its frame and structure.
- 3) Consider contacting a knowledgeable and experienced practitioner when undertaking restoration of lead glass.



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4.3.1.4 Storefronts

Storefronts are on the ground floor of a building and usually make up the commercial part of the building. They are a character defining element of commercial buildings.

Policies

- 1) Conserve, maintain, and restore elements such as display windows, doors, transoms, cornices, corner posts and the materials they are made from, wherever possible.
- 2) Do not alter the geometry of the storefronts, such as recessed shop entrances and the width of the building and the display windows. If changes are needed for accessibility, consult section 4.10. Where modifying the width of an entrance or window is the only way to allow for accessible entry, changes may be permitted but must maintain a balance between entrance and storefront window that is compatible with the historic character of the HCD.
- 3) Replace in kind or in a manner compatible to the character of the HCD where conservation and restoration of historic storefront materials is not possible.
- 4) Allow for awnings on commercial buildings, where they are sympathetic in materials and design (ie. using canvas, vinyl, acrylic or polyester which are compatible in colour with the building).



Plate 5 Examples of storefronts within the HCD.

4.3.1.5 Exterior Materials

The majority of buildings in the Smiths Falls HCD are constructed with or clad with brick. Brick was a common construction material in the late 19th and early 20th century and plays an important visual role in contributing to the district's sense of time and place. Stone, wood and concrete block were also used in building, cladding, and decoration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Over time, other materials including stucco, paint



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and siding have been used on more recent buildings and to cover the materials of historic buildings.

4.3.1.5.1 *Brick, Stone, and Masonry*

Policies

- 1) Maintain and repair corbels, parapets, pilasters, voussoirs, soldier courses, window surrounds, and decorative brickwork that contributes to the historic character of the HCD.
- 2) Do not paint unpainted exterior surfaces as they create a non-permeable coating that does not allow for moisture to dry through the brick. Surfaces that have previously been painted may be repainted if the paint is not causing damage to the assembly.
- 3) Clean masonry with gentle techniques where brick has been heavily soiled, has graffiti or paint that is damaging to the masonry. Only clean when necessary, as masonry cleaning can be damaging to the material.
- 4) Avoid abrasive cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, sanding disks and grinders, as they clean by removing a small portion of the surface and permanently damage the material. Use cleaning methods such as water cleaning (the gentlest cleaning method) and steam cleaning. Examples of cleaning with water are low pressure water cleaning and using natural detergents. When cleaning with water keep in mind freezing temperatures and time needed for brick to dry.
- 5) Maintain and restore brick or stone masonry by using appropriate techniques for repointing and using an appropriate mortar when repointing historic masonry. Older buildings use high lime content mortar, which is weaker than contemporary Portland cement mortar. Using appropriate mortar will prevent further deterioration. The mortar in masonry assembly is the sacrificial element, being the weakest in strength. Mortar strength shall be appropriate to the brick so that all the thermal expansion happens at the mortar joints first. For more information on mortar type and mortar strength refer to Appendix C.
- 6) Choose materials that are similar in kind, colour, strength and durability when using mortars and masonry units to replace existing deteriorated or damaged units. Using materials that are incompatible can cause more damage in the long term.



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Guidelines

- 1) When choosing paint for masonry that has previously been painted, select an acrylic, latex, or other elastomeric paint that is intended for exterior use and specifically designed for masonry, stucco, and/or brick. Newer types of silicone based masonry paints may also be appropriate.
- 2) Undertake repointing early in the year to allow mortar to dry and cure before cold weather sets in.
- 3) Refer to the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places, available online, for in depth information about masonry restoration.



Colour difference due to accumulation of dirt on brick. Cleaning for aesthetics reasons may be considered.



Elaborate brick detailing should be preserved.



Avoid painting masonry or using abrasive cleaning techniques.

Plate 6 Considerations for Maintaining Brick in the HCD.

4.3.1.5.2 *Metals*

Some buildings in the HCD feature metal framing, cladding or decorative elements. Identifying the type of metal will help to determine the most appropriate conservation, maintenance and cleaning techniques.

Policies

- 1) Conserve decorative historic metal elements on front facades. Retain sound and repairable metals.
- 2) Re-apply appropriate paint or coating to decrease corrosion rate.
- 3) Stabilize deteriorated metals by reinforcement and weather protection.
- 4) Replace deteriorated or missing elements in kind or with sympathetic materials based on documentary evidence.



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- 5) Determine the metal type and appropriate cleaning method. Soft metals such as lead, tin, copper, aluminum, brass, silver, bronze, and zinc shall be cleaned with non-abrasive methods. Use gentle cleaning methods on hard metals.

Guidelines

- 1) Refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* for a more detailed list of recommendations for maintenance and preservation.

4.3.1.5.3 **Woodwork**

Policies

- 1) Maintain and repair wood that contributes to the character of the building or HCD, including decorative brackets, bargeboard and trim, cladding, door surrounds, porch or entry features.
- 2) Replace in kind or with sympathetic materials when repair is not feasible.
- 3) Maintain and update paint coats on wood elements to protect them from damage and rot.

Guidelines

- 1) Apply paint or coatings that are compatible with the material and only after proper surface preparation, such as cleaning with tri-sodium phosphate.
- 2) Stabilize deteriorated wood by providing reinforcement and weather protection.
- 3) Replace decayed or damaged wood and find cause of deterioration where possible to avoid future damage.
- 4) Prevent water penetration and weathering by providing proper drainage.
- 5) Refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* for a more detailed list of recommendations for wood maintenance and preservation.



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Plate 7 Examples of wood in the HCD. Paneling, decorative detailing and pilasters are common.

4.3.1.6 Overcladding

Overcladding is the covering of original materials with alternative materials. When covering original materials, important architectural elements of the building may be hidden. Overcladding is sometimes done to create a more contemporary look, or to reduce maintenance and repair requirements on underlying materials. Overcladding has the potential to result in mismatching materials that are not in harmony with the surrounding buildings. Sometimes overcladding designs are done with the end goal of creating a “blank façade wall” which is undesirable as it does not relate to the street and the pedestrian experience.

Overcladding is not an appropriate substitute for maintenance. Covering up deteriorated facades does not solve the problem of regular maintenance and may create more serious problems such as rotting, rusting, cracking and spalling of brick and deterioration of mortar joints, which can cause serious structural issues. It may hide underlying issues.

Policies

- 1) Do not cover up facades and elements with materials that do not complement the HCD, drastically change the look of the building, damage the original materials and create “blank walls”.



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Guidelines

- 1) Remove existing overcladding to reveal, repair, restore or appropriately replace historical elements underneath.
- 2) Remove overcladding in sections if removal of all overcladding is not possible.

4.3.1.7 Roofs and Parapets

The roofline of streetscapes in the HCD is not uniform but of similar heights between two to three stories. Roofs and parapets are an important character defining element and they are most important when visible from street level. Elements of the roof and parapet assemblies include: drip moulds, classical motifs, roof cornices and friezes, cupolas, turrets, cresting, chimneys, gutters, gables, eaves, parapets, dormers, soffits and fasciae, and components such as the cladding, substructure, insulation, vapour controls, flashing and ventilation. Roofs and parapets are particularly exposed to the elements more than any other part of the building and their maintenance is critical.

Policies

- 1) Conserve, maintain and restore character defining roof and parapet features. This includes, but is not limited to, cornices, soffits, fascia, dentils and decorative brackets
- 2) Maintain the existing roof shape of the building (e.g., flat, gabled, hipped, etc.) and maintain the existing pitch (high pitch, medium pitch, low pitch).
- 3) Allow for contemporary roofing materials such as asphalt, metal, and composites that are installed in a compatible and sympathetic manner.
- 4) Install mechanical equipment, penthouses, rooftop patios and other rooftop elements back from the façade line so that they are not visible from street level.
- 5) Protect and maintain rooftop element by properly diverting water through gutters, downspouts and roof drains.

Guidelines

- 1) Repair based on historical evidence or replace in kind or with sympathetic materials when roof materials are deteriorated.
- 2) Consider neutral colours (grey, black, brown) for roof pitches visible from the street.



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Plate 8 Examples of parapets and roof types in the commercial corridor of the HCD.

4.3.1.8 Exterior Paint

Late 19th to early 20th commercial colour palettes were typically simple, repeating two highly contrasted colours throughout the signage, storefront, and exterior details. A review of historic imagery from the Smiths Falls Digital Archive indicates that dark or bright colours were popular for sign backgrounds and architectural features like cornices, window sashes, doors, and wood panels contrasted with white or light coloured writing and accents (Plate 9 and Plate 10) (Smiths Falls Public Library n.d.). The reverse was also popular with lighter colours used for sign backgrounds, cornices, window sashes, doors and wood panels with dark colours used for lettering and accents (Plate 11 and Plate 12).

Traditional oil-based paint such as linseed oil paint were historically used. When applied properly, oil-based paints are long-lasting and they are absorbed into surfaces, thus allowing them to penetrate and the materials to breathe. Contemporary oil-based paints are available from various companies. Mineral based paints can be appropriate for previously painted surfaces such as brick, stucco, or metal. Mineral based paints work like a stain rather than paint- they are long lasting, allow surfaces to breathe, and they do not create an impermeable layer that traps moisture. Acrylic and latex based paints are readily available and used prominently today. However, acrylic and latex based paints might not always be the best solution for historic buildings and especially materials such as masonry and wood, as they have the potential to seal the material and trap



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moisture if used in the wrong conditions. In preparation for painting, surfaces must be properly cleaned from dirt and previous paint.

Policies

- 1) Do not paint masonry surfaces, including brick and stone, in order to prevent improper drying and damage to the masonry.

Guidelines

- 1) Consider identifying historical paint colours, if desired. For owners who would like to determine the original colour of their building and have the financial means, a paint analysis can be conducted. For owners who are on a budget and want to find a close match to the original paint colour, it is advisable to peel off a small area of paint in an inconspicuous area of the building.
- 2) Consider cohesive color schemes when using multiple colours of paint on a single building. Paint can have a dramatic effect on the building, highlighting different elements such as windows, trim, sculptural detail, etc. Benjamin Moore has a *Historical Colour Collection* that is available in all its product lines, including exterior paints (Benjamin Moore & Co. 2025). Similarly, Sherwin Williams offers *Exterior Home Style Color Palettes* with collections that include body, trim, and accent colour recommendations appropriate for historical buildings (The Sherwin-Williams Company 2025).
- 3) Consider consulting a heritage masonry specialist for exterior brick surfaces that have been already painted to determine whether to repaint peeling paint or remove paint completely.



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Plate 9 L.A. Wilson's Drug Store at Beckwith and Main Street East, *circa* 1936. Note the high contrast of the sign colours and the dark colour of the window sashes.



Plate 10 Bell's Jewelry Store, *circa* 1924. Note the dark colour of the door and wood paneling with writing in a contrasting light colour.



Plate 11 McGillivray's General Store Main Street, 1924. Note the light coloured window sashes and use of contrasting light and dark colours on the doors.

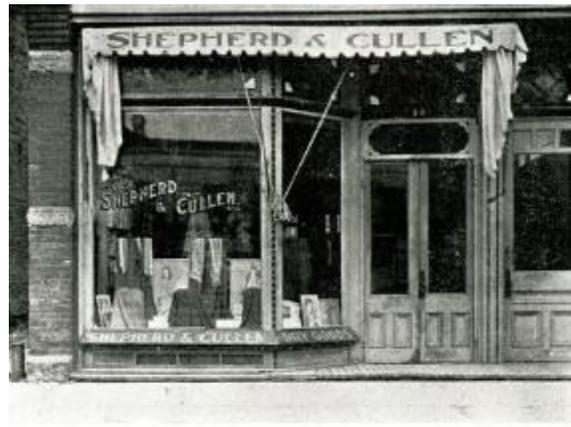


Plate 12 Shepherd and Cullen's Dry Good Store, *Circa* 1924. Note the primarily light coloured door and paneling with the "Shepherd & Cullen Dry Goods" panel painted in a darker background colour.



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4.3.1.9 Side and rear elevations

Typically, HCD policies and guidelines focus on the front façade of buildings as these are most often experienced in the public realm. Within the HCD, some rear and side elevations are visible from side streets and parking areas. These are usually visible on properties situated on large lots that have multiple frontages, on corner lots or adjacent to parking. As such, guidelines have been prepared to address side and rear elevations.

Policies

- 1) Maintain, repair, conserve or restore historic cladding materials on side or rear elevations that are visible from the public right of way.
- 2) Maintain and upkeep side and rear elevations in accordance with the Town of Smiths Falls Property Standards By-law.
- 3) Complement the character of the HCD on side and rear elevations that are visible from the public realm regarding material type, and proportion of material (e.g., brick/masonry or siding sizes compatible with surrounding buildings), and colour. Contemporary cladding materials are permitted on rear elevations of new construction but will be compatible with the character of the area.
- 4) Use rear elevations not on corners for delivery access facilities, utility services, parking, outbuildings, satellite dishes, required roof vents, skylights, solar panels, and metal chimneys.

Guidelines

- 1) For side and rear façades that are not visible from the public realm, contemporary materials are permitted. Even if not visible from the public realm, consideration should be given to materials and colour schemes that encourage a cohesive appearance for the overall building.

4.3.2 Alterations to Non-Contributing Properties

4.3.2.1 Maintenance

Maintenance is essential to the preservation of buildings in that support the overall character of the heritage conservation district. General Maintenance guidelines can be found in Appendix C.



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Policies

- 1) Conduct regular maintenance on the property as needed, including side and rear elevations where visible from the public realm. Adhere to the Town's Property Standards By-law as it applies to all properties within the municipality.

4.3.2.2 Façade Pattern

Façade patterns are the vertical and horizontal patterns created by architectural elements in the building elevations, such as windows, doors, roofs, building heights, storefronts and others. Façade patterns in the HCD include cohesive use of materials, setback, heights and massing along Beckwith Street, Main Street and Russell Street that together create a unified visual commercial heritage corridor with a noted vertical division between commercial fronts, proportions of solid wall and openings, roof line heights and setback.

Policies

- 1) Maintain a similar glass to solid material proportions in storefront compositions as in the surrounding HCD contributing resources.
- 2) Support the character of the HCD when making changes in the façade composition of non-contributing buildings, by choosing complementary or compatible window and door openings, materials and proportions.
- 3) Do not design "blank walls" with no window and door openings.
- 4) Avoid double height storefronts when making alterations to non-contributing resources.

Guidelines

- 1) Allow for awnings on commercial buildings, where they are sympathetic in materials and design. Awnings were historically used on commercial properties and can help non-contributing properties fit into the rhythm of the streetscape.



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4.3.2.3 Windows and Entrances

Windows and entrances in the HCD are important elements that contribute to the vertical and horizontal patterns of the district and that support the commercial character of the HCD. Windows and entrances on street-facing façades should be conserved and enhanced to contribute to the overall character of the HCD.

Policies

- 1) Replace existing windows and entrances when required. Contemporary materials are appropriate for non-contributing buildings but shall maintain the existing opening sizes and proportions of the window or doorway.
- 2) Single entrances may be expanded to double entrances to improve accessibility but should adhere to universal accessibility requirements.
- 3) Do not cover up and fill in existing windows and entrances.
- 4) Maintain the historic solid wall to openings proportions from the existing streetscape. Ground levels with store fronts should have higher proportion glazing on the ground floor, while second and upper levels should have less than 50% glazing. Replacement windows should follow the original/character defining size/shape, not that of an incompatible or more contemporary replacement.
- 5) If replacing previously altered or filled-in windows and entrances, base the replacements on documentary evidence, where available, or on examples of similar historic buildings for guidance to identify appropriate proportions and locations.

4.3.2.4 Exterior Materials and Overcladding

Many non-contributing buildings in the HCD have been clad with contemporary materials including stucco, paint and siding or these materials have been used to cover the historic cladding of buildings. Overcladding is the covering of original materials with alternative materials. Overcladding is sometimes done to create a more contemporary look, or to reduce maintenance and repair requirements on underlying materials.



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Overcladding is not an appropriate substitute for maintenance. Covering up deteriorated facades does not solve the problem of regular maintenance and may create more serious problems such as rotting, rusting, cracking and spalling of brick and deterioration of mortar joints, which can cause serious structural issues. It may hide underlying issues.

Policies

- 1) Removal of overcladding on non-contributing buildings is permitted. If historic fabric is not present, replacement cladding may be installed. Replacement cladding will complement the character of the HCD, such as brick, stone, or wood cladding, particularly on the front (street-facing) façade of the building. Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) are to be avoided, as it is not sympathetic to the HCD character.
- 2) Care should be taken during the removal of overcladding to determine the presence of historic materials beneath that may change the course of an alteration permit. If historic fabric is present and Town staff, the Municipal Heritage Committee and Council agree that the building now meets the definition of a contributing property, guidelines for cladding in Section 4.3.1.5 will be applicable.
- 3) Overcladding of the ground floor area on commercial storefronts to cover display style windows or signage areas is not permitted.

Guidelines

- 1) Select materials that are complementary of the character of the HCD when renovating facades of non-contributing buildings. It is recommended to use materials already commonly found in the HCD such as brick or stone as a dominant material that help to transition the non-contributing building into its surroundings. Other historically appropriate materials such as wood or composite “hardie board” style siding may also be appropriate.
- 2) Complement the character of the HCD on side or rear elevations visible from the public realm regarding material type, and proportion of material (e.g., brick/masonry or siding sizes compatible with surrounding buildings), and colour. Contemporary cladding materials are permitted on rear elevations of new construction but should be compatible with the character of the area.



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4.3.2.5 Roofs and Parapets

The roofline of streetscapes in the HCD is not uniform but of similar heights between two to three stories. Roofs and parapets are an important character defining element and they are most important when visible from street level. Roofs and parapets are particularly exposed to the elements more than any other part of the building and their maintenance is critical.

Policies

- 1) Replace roofing materials on an as-needed basis. Contemporary materials (asphalt shingles, metal or composite roofing) are appropriate.
- 2) Maintain flat or low-pitched rooflines to be consistent with the HCD character.
- 3) Protect and maintain rooftop features by ensuring that water is properly drained through gutters, downspouts and roof drains.
- 4) Set rooftop mechanical equipment back from the roofline so that it is not visible from street level.

Guidelines

- 1) Where roofing materials are visible from the street level and are to be replaced, encourage neutral colours (black, brown, grey).

4.3.2.6 Side and Rear Elevations

Typically, HCD policies and guidelines focus on the front façade of buildings as these are most often experienced in the public realm. Within the HCD, some rear and side elevations are visible from side streets and parking areas. These are usually visible on properties situated on large lots that have multiple frontages, on corner lots or adjacent to parking. As such, guidelines have been prepared to address side and rear elevations.

Guidelines

- 1) Where possible, use rear elevations not on corners for delivery access facilities, utility and HVAC services, parking, outbuildings, satellite dishes, required roof vents, skylights, solar panels, and metal chimneys.



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4.3.3 Places of Worship

The HCD contains places of worship, an inclusive term that includes churches or other built places of assembly for religious purposes. The places of worship in the HCD are contributing properties through their architecture and design value, historical associations with the community, and for being landmarks. As such the district policies and guidelines for contributing properties in this HCD Plan are applicable to the places of worship. Section 33 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* contains a streamlined process for alterations for buildings used for religious practices to assist places of worship as they are in general challenged with covering operating, maintenance, and capital costs for their large and ornate buildings. **It must be noted that this process applies only to properties that are individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and is not applicable to properties in an HCD unless they are also designated under Part IV.** Section 5.2.5 provides an overview of this streamlined process. Preventive conservation is recommended for places of worship to reduce large repairs and conserve their heritage value for future generations.

Policies

- 1) Conduct routine condition monitoring including structural materials (i.e. foundations, masonry, roofing), accessibility, safety, and security systems, and exterior property issues (i.e. drainage, signage, and parking)

Guidelines

- 1) Property owners are encouraged to develop a Conservation Plan for their place of worship. This is a practical guide for carrying out routine maintenance and repairs, as well as planning for short- and long-term alterations.
- 2) Property owners are encouraged to engage qualified specialists to assist in alterations and additions, such as a heritage specialist or architect, or a building specialist or engineer.



4.4 Additions

4.4.1 Additions to Contributing Properties

The Smiths Falls HCD supports a commercial area centered around Beckwith Street that presents a unified heritage fabric and a visual representation of the history of trade, commerce and industry in Smiths Falls through the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many of these contributing resources remain, now housing local restaurants, shops, and other program spaces. Sometimes these buildings require additions to incorporate new uses, expand existing uses, or improve accessibility. The following section outlines the high-level policies and guidelines in regard to the considerations for additions to contributing resources within the HCD. Some of these considerations include location, height and massing, architecture and style, windows, doors and entrances, and roof design. In any case, the following key aspects should be considered:

- 1) New additions must not obscure, radically change or have a negative impact on contributing heritage resources, heritage elements, forms, use or exterior configuration. This includes adjacent heritage properties and contributing resources.
- 2) Additions considered must first document the contributing resource(s) affected.
- 3) Additions to contributing resources should be reversible where feasible, meaning that should it be required to be removed in the future, its removal would not impact the integrity of the original heritage structure.

4.4.1.1 Location, Height, and Massing

The most important aspect of adding to a contributing resource involves consideration of the location, height and massing of the addition. New additions must be visually compatible with, yet distinguishable from, the contributing resources.

Policies

- 1) Design additions to contributing resources to an appropriate height to contributing properties, no greater than the height of the existing building frontage. Additional height may be considered through a stepped back design.



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- 2) Rear additions may contain additional storeys only if they are stepped back at least two metres from the front building line.
- 3) Design massing for new additions that is subordinate to the existing building. Additions must not cover or overwhelm the original structure.
- 4) Locate additions to contributing buildings at the back of the building.
- 5) Use shapes and massing that are compatible with the historic building and create a harmonious look with the surrounding buildings.
- 6) Preserve original material when designing additions and minimize the removal of original building structure and materials.
- 7) Mechanical and electrical equipment shall not be located on front façades or visible side façades where possible.

4.4.1.2 Architecture and Style

Architectural style includes many elements of a building and façade, including overall design of fenestration, storefronts as well as proportions, roof line design and details.

Policies

- 1) Additions must consider the architectural style of a building and consider a subtle approach that does not detract from the heritage fabric, using compatible scale, proportions, openings and fenestration, materials and details that acknowledge the original buildings.
- 2) Do not change the existing façade elements by removing and altering architectural elements during additions.
- 3) Do not add balconies on street facing façades of contributing buildings. Balconies and terraces may be considered on stepped back additions to contributing buildings. Where there is documentary evidence of balconies on street facing façades of contributing buildings, the construction of a balcony may be considered.

Guidelines

- 1) Additions should follow the guidelines for setbacks to maintain consistency with the street wall, and consider openings, fenestration, materials, and details that are sympathetic to the original building but also subordinate to it.
- 2) Avoid covering up and building in existing openings to accommodate additions, where feasible.



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4.4.1.3 Cladding Materials

The majority of buildings in the Smiths Falls HCD are constructed with brick. It was used for structural construction, cladding/veneer, and decoration. Stone, concrete block, and wood were also common. New additions can incorporate these materials in a careful and considerate way or use complementary materials.

Policies

- 1) Choose materials on additions that are distinguishable as contemporary design, and do not mimic historic architecture but complement its character. This may include complimentary colour or tone of brick, stone veneer, wood or composite siding, or glass. The addition must be distinguishable from the original building.

Guidelines

- 1) Consider complementary contemporary materials to existing buildings, especially when creating links between buildings, such as glass that can encourage a sense of transparency. This is especially important if the addition is large and creating a pause between new and old would be appropriate.

4.4.1.4 Windows and Entrances

Windows and entrances in the HCD are important elements that contribute to the vertical and horizontal patterns of the district. Their placement on additions to contributing buildings can affect how they compliment the character of the existing building and overall HCD.

Policies

- 1) Align new windows, doors and the overall fenestration on additions so that it is consistent with the contributing resources.
- 2) Consider the design, style and organization of openings so that it is clearly discernable from the original heritage fabric but creates a harmonious relationship with the contributing resource.
- 3) Contributing resources may need updates to meet current Building Code and accessibility requirements depending on the current or planned use. Additions created to provide universal access will make an effort to provide the highest level of



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access with the lowest level of impact on heritage value; for example, introducing a gently sloped walkway instead of a constructed ramp with handrails in front of a contributing resource.

4.4.1.5 Roofs

The roofline of streetscapes in the HCD is not uniform but of similar heights between two to three stories. Roofs and parapets are an important character defining element and they are most important when visible from street level.

Policies

- 1) New additions must consider the rooflines and work to align with existing rooflines. The design of new addition roofline must be complementary without replicating an existing form.
- 2) Set features such as mechanical equipment, penthouses and other rooftop elements back from the façade line so as not to deter from the streetscape, even on new additions.

Guidelines

- 1) Protect and maintain rooftop features by properly draining water through gutters, downspouts and roof drains, and draining away from the original heritage building.

4.4.2 Additions to Non-Contributing Properties

4.4.2.1 Location, Height, and Massing

The most important aspect of additions to existing non-contributing structures in the HCD involves consideration of the location, height and massing of the addition. New additions must be visually compatible with, yet distinguishable from the original building, and must compliment the character of the HCD.

Policies

- 1) Design additions to non-contributing resources to an appropriate height to the HCD character. Additions should be no taller than the existing building or immediately adjacent buildings.



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- 2) Rear additions may contain additional storeys, to a maximum of four storeys if approved by Council, only if they are stepped back at least two metres from the front building line.
- 3) Where space permits, and in compliance with municipal setback requirements, additions may be located at the side of a building but are to be set back from the front façade by at least one metre.
- 4) Do not add projecting balconies to façades that make up the streetwalls along Beckwith Street, Main Street or Russell Street. Balconies and terraces may be considered on stepped back additions to non-contributing buildings.

Guidelines

- 1) Additions are preferred to the rear of existing buildings and not principally visible from the public right of way.

4.4.2.2 Materials

New additions to non-contributing buildings can incorporate complementary contemporary materials in a careful and considerate way to support the character of the HCD.

Guidelines

- 1) Use materials that are complementary to the character of the HCD, especially if materials are visible from street level. These include brick, stone, or wood cladding, particularly on the front (street-facing) façade of the building. Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) should be avoided, as it is not sympathetic to the HCD character. Other contemporary materials that may be used include but are not limited to glass, metal and composite board siding.



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4.5 New Construction and Development

While many lots in the Smiths Falls HCD have been developed, there is the potential for future development and redevelopment (excluding parklands) throughout the HCD. Opportunities for development can occur in the form of infill, new development due to loss of a building through fire, natural disaster, severe structural instability, or approved demolition. In keeping with heritage conservation principles, new development should be recognizable as a product of its own time and not attempt to mimic or directly replicate historical architectural styles. New development can be modern but still sympathetic and compatible to the historic character of the district regarding form, massing, materials, and façade organization. When new development is proposed in the HCD, the following policies and guidelines apply. Once new buildings are constructed, future alterations or additions are to follow the policies and guidelines for Non-Contributing buildings.

4.5.1 Site Plan Control

Section 41 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities to review and regulate the location of buildings, structures, and specified facilities and works through a Site Plan Control by-law. The Site Plan Control process helps ensure appropriate siting, massing, and scale of proposed development and site alteration to address efficiency of land use, servicing, safety, attractiveness and compatibility. Site Plan applications are approved by Town Planning Staff and do not require Council review.

Guidelines

- 1) An application for site plan approval in tandem with a heritage alteration permit application should address all matters relating to the conceptual design and specific location of buildings and structures and all other site considerations usually required by the municipality and be consistent with the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan.



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4.5.2 Height, Massing and Setbacks

When determining the siting of new construction, follow the policies and guidelines in Section 4.2. Additional policies and guidelines for the height, massing and setbacks of new construction are included below so that new development supports the heritage character of the district.

Policies

- 1) Conserve the existing character of the streetscape by limiting the height of new buildings to be consistent with immediately adjacent properties. If adjacent properties are of different heights, the height of the new building can match the taller building.
- 2) Additional height of new buildings, to a maximum of six storeys, may be approved if the additional storeys are stepped back from the façade roofline by at least two metres. Where additional height is approved, further step-backs are encouraged to maintain the experience at the pedestrian realm and avoid the bulk of a solid mass and to transition the taller building form towards adjacent lower height buildings.
- 3) Keep setbacks up to the sidewalk for commercial properties along Beckwith Street, Russell Street, and Main Street to be consistent with adjacent properties and maintain the streetwall effect of the HCD.
- 4) Projecting balconies and terraces must be located above the third storey and stepped back from the façade of the building. Inset balconies and terraces are permissible above the first storey. “Juliet” style balconies are appropriate above the first storey.

4.5.3 Building Materials

The majority of buildings in the Smiths Falls HCD are constructed with or clad with brick. Brick plays an important visual role in contributing to the district’s sense of time and place. Stone, wood and concrete block were also used in building, cladding, and decoration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Over time, other materials including stucco, paint, and siding have been used on more recent buildings and to cover the materials of historic buildings.



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Policies

- 1) Use brick, especially red or buff brick, as a primary cladding material on new construction for first two storeys of street-facing facades. Facades not visible from the public realm or upper storeys may be clad in alternate materials.
- 2) Use secondary cladding materials on the front façade that are compatible with the HCD character, including stone, metal, and wood.
- 3) Contemporary materials to used on new construction to indicate that the building is designed in its own era. Wherever possible, blend contemporary materials (such as glass, concrete, or composite materials) with brick, stone, wood, or historically used materials to allow the building to be compatible with the surrounding environment.

4.5.4 Roofing

The roofline of streetscapes in the HCD is not uniform but of similar heights between two to three stories. Roofs and parapets are an important character defining element and they are most important when visible from street level.

Guidelines

- 1) Consider the use of flat or low pitched roofing along Beckwith Street, Russell Street and Main Street to complement the HCD character.
- 2) Select colour palettes for roofing materials that are neutral (black, brown, grey) with pitched rooflines that are visible from them public realm.
- 3) Allow for and encourage 'green' roof and sustainable design where feasible.

4.5.5 Façade Composition

New construction and development in the HCD is required to complement the adjacent contributing and non-contributing buildings. Much of the character of the HCD is experienced through the public realm and the public's interaction with building façades. The façade composition of new construction is an essential component of the design of new construction. Façade composition includes the vertical and horizontal patterns created by architectural elements in the building elevations, such as windows, doors, roofs, building heights, storefronts and others.



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Policies

- 1) Complement the commercial character of the HCD with similar façade composition on new construction with single storey commercial facades on the ground level, with between 50% and 80% glazing. Avoid blank walls facing any public street.
- 2) Include between 25% and 50% glazing on the upper stories of street-facing facades of new development, utilizing repeated patterns of window openings with clear vertical alignments, reflecting the established historical pattern of contributing buildings in the HCD.
- 3) Require breaks in all exterior building elevations wider than 15 m that are visible from Beckwith Street, Russell Street and Main Street, either through design elements, changes in material, or architectural articulation.
- 4) Maintain consistency of floor to ceiling heights of new design with adjacent buildings including a defined relationship between the ground floor and the upper storeys.

4.5.6 Windows and Entrances

Windows and entrances in the HCD are important elements that contribute to the vertical and horizontal patterns of the district. Similar to the façade composition of new construction, windows and entrances contribute to the overall understanding of the HCD as a whole.

Policies

- 1) Use contemporary metal, vinyl or wood frame windows on new construction.
- 2) Incorporate similar shape and dimensions found in the HCD, such as rectangular, segmental arch or rounded arch windows.
- 3) Position windows on upper storeys in evenly spaced rhythms and vertical alignments in a manner that is compatible with adjacent buildings.
- 4) Include large storefront/display style windows on ground floors of commercial buildings and new construction.

Guidelines

- 1) Include recessed entrances on ground floors, where feasible, to reflect the character of historic commercial buildings.



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- 2) Encourage storefronts with large windows and display windows allowing pedestrian visibility to promote a vibrant downtown core and maintain the existing character of the streetscape.
- 3) Use single or double entrance doors that have full or partial glazing and adhere to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* standards.
- 4) Select doors that are made with traditional materials (wood and glass) or complementary contemporary materials (glass, metal, and fiberglass).

4.5.7 Architectural Style and Details

New construction and development in the HCD is not intended to replicate historic architectural styles, but instead be sympathetic to the character of the HCD.

Sympathetic does not mean new buildings should directly copy or mimic historic buildings by installing historically accurate decorative parapets, brickwork, cornices, window surrounds, etc. However, contemporary interpretations of these features can be an effective way of maintaining the character of the area while allowing for new design.

Guidelines

- 1) Design new buildings using contemporary design that is sympathetic and compatible to the character of the HCD.

4.6 Demolition

4.6.1 Demolition of Contributing Resources

The Town is committed to conserving the heritage attributes of the Smiths Falls HCD. To support the conservation of the HCD's attributes, the demolition of contributing buildings within the HCD is not permitted. Contributing buildings are to be conserved, maintained and restored instead of allowing them to deteriorate. Demolition by neglect (the act of allowing a building to slowly decay through lack of maintenance or vacancy) is not acceptable. It is noted that demolition of contributing buildings may occur in exceptional circumstances. The following policies and guidelines apply to demolition requests for contributing buildings, including municipally owned properties.



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Policies

- 1) Council may permit demolition of contributing buildings within the HCD only under extenuating circumstances such as catastrophic damage from fire, flood or other natural disasters, or structural instability. If a property owner proposes the demolition of a contributing building, Council may consider the application. The application must be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared by a qualified heritage professional and member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals that outlines potential impacts to the heritage resource(s) and heritage attributes of the HCD. The HIA shall contain mitigation measures where adverse impacts are anticipated. Council may also require the submission of an engineer's report prepared by a qualified engineer who is also a member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals. Council has the authority to refuse applications for demolition if they determine demolition does not support the goals and objectives of the HCD Plan, or if the demolition poses adverse impact on the heritage attributes of an individual property or the district heritage attribute.
- 2) If a contributing building is approved for demolition, new development is to adhere to the HCD policies and guidelines for new construction in Section 4.5 if a new building is proposed for the site of the property to be demolished.
- 3) If demolition is approved by Council, buildings must be documented prior to demolition. Documentation can be achieved through written and photographic form for deposition in municipal archives. Consideration must be given to salvaging materials from the building to be demolished, and where possible, reusing the salvaged materials in future construction or site features.

Guidelines

- 1) Where appropriate, encourage commemorative or interpretive features, such as plaques or panels at the site where contributing buildings are demolished, particularly if the HIA identifies a significant person, event, group, organization, or theme associated with the property.
- 2) Supplementary documentation of buildings proposed for demolition may include interior and exterior photogrammetry or 3-D scanning.

4.6.2 Demolition of Non-Contributing Resources

Non-contributing resources may not contribute the same historic architectural styles or materials to the HCD Streetscape as contributing building. They may be newer



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construction, or older buildings that have been irreparably altered. While demolition of these properties may not result directly in the loss of heritage attributes of a particular building, their loss can impact the broader HCD character and street wall by creating gaps or vacant areas inconsistent with the look and feel of the HCD. Therefore, Council will adhere to the following guidance on the demolition of non-contributing properties.

Policies

- 1) Council may permit the demolition of non-contributing buildings in the HCD following approval of a heritage alteration permit (see Section 5.2.2). Applications for the demolition of non-contributing building shall be accompanied by a complete development application for the property, unless demolition is required from the result of fire, flood, or natural disaster.
- 2) Where new development is proposed, it must follow the policies for new construction outlined in Section 4.5 of this Plan.

4.7 Lighting

Lighting within an HCD is a means of illuminating the built form of the HCD. Proper lighting in a heritage conservation district plays a vital role in maintaining the character and functionality of the area. Appropriate lighting enhances the visibility and appreciation of historic buildings, allowing their architectural features and heritage details to be showcased during evening hours. This not only improves the aesthetic appeal of the district but also helps to foster a sense of pride and connection within the community. Well-designed lighting can highlight key heritage elements without causing damage or detracting from their historic value.

Policies

- 1) Rehabilitate historic light fixtures on contributing buildings as needed to adapt to current lighting requirements and code requirements before opting for replacement, where feasible.
- 2) If replacing historic light fixtures, procure lights similar in style and character to the contributing heritage resources, or that compliment the historic character of the



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HCD. This may include styles of lighting such as gooseneck fixtures, exterior wall sconces, or contemporary downlighting that is dark sky compliant.

- 3) Lighting on existing buildings, new additions, and new development must be complementary not only to the new building, but also to the broader HCD and be dark sky compliant, and task focused and oriented to avoid unnecessary spill-off.

Guidelines

- 1) Provide external lighting that is compatible with the character of the area, the contributing resources, and that have low-profile fixtures that do not overwhelm the building façade.
- 2) Select lighting that is appropriate for illuminating commercial signage (e.g., 'gooseneck' lighting, sconces, architectural strip lighting), address numbers, or entrances.
- 3) Encourage use of energy efficient L.E.D. lights of an appropriate brightness to avoid excess light pollution. New lighting on additions should not cause light pollution, or detract from the original heritage elements, fabric and facades; backlighting should be avoided.

4.8 Signage

Signage in a downtown commercial HCD is a crucial aspect of the urban fabric. It has an impact on the atmosphere of the street, and it is very important for the well-being of businesses. Policies and Guidelines related to signage apply to both contributing and non-contributing properties.

Policies

- 1) Adhere to the Town of Smiths Falls Sign By-law. Where the By-law and this HCD Plan conflict, the HCD Plan shall prevail.
- 2) Install signage in a manner that does not cover windows or important elements of the building façade and is conducive to HCD properties.
- 3) Do not use 'pylon' style signage.
- 4) Do not use internally lit signage when installing new signage on contributing properties.



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Guidelines

- 1) Retain signs that are pre-existing and that are sympathetic and compatible with the character of the building, such as wood signage, awning signage, externally lit signage, and small-scale projecting signs.
- 2) Avoid the use of opaque window film that covers entire window openings. Consider the use of partial window films or translucent window films to maintain the visually cohesive streetscape and character throughout the HCD.
- 3) Incorporate signage in the valence of awnings, above storefronts, on canopies, sandwich boards, small-scale projecting or hanging items and temporary window decals.
- 4) Use signage that is an appropriate size to be read from across the street.
- 5) Develop new signage that meets the existing Downtown Core Design Guidelines requirements.



Plate 13 Examples of signage within the commercial streetscape of the HCD that support the historic character.

4.9 Streetscaping, Landscaping and Park Land

Cultural and natural landscapes are a living heritage resource and are in a continuous cycle of growth, decline and regeneration. Unlike most built structures, vegetation such as trees and shrubs have finite lifespans. The cultural landscape that is found within the Smiths Falls HCD reflects the evolution of the community and past and present values of the area's residents: the open parkland situated within Centennial Park and Veterans' Memorial Park, landscaped with mature trees and directly connected to the Rideau Canal. Landscape elements can provide an opportunity to unite a streetscape and harmonize fragmented or insensitive built elements.



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The cultural landscape is an aggregate of elements that are both public and private. Often it is the public space that is thought of as the streetscape, however, many of the elements found within the private realm can make powerful contributions to the streetscape. The character of the landscape is often defined within the public realm by elements such as the street trees, boulevards and parks and open spaces, as well as lighting and street furniture. Features of the private realm also contribute significantly to the overall character of a streetscape. Within the Smiths Falls HCD, the massing and setbacks of buildings, both residential and commercial, as well as trees and gardens, all contribute to the streetscape. It is this combination of public and private that form the streetscape as a whole.

Many aspects of both our public and private spaces will have to transform in response to over-arching issues, such as climate change, that will affect not only how we use our landscapes, but their very composition and make-up. The intent of the heritage designation with respect to the landscape is to encourage preservation of the core elements that make up the landscape, such as mature street tree canopy, setback, size, form and massing, to protect the unified character of the neighbourhood.

The following conservation and design guidelines are intended to provide both the Municipality and private landowners with policies and guidelines for both the public and private cultural landscape within the HCD. The HCD Plan is intended to accommodate continual improvements to public park spaces as identified in the Town's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, including upgrades to playgrounds, pathways, seating, and lighting. Heritage considerations from this HCD Plan will be integrated with AODA, public safety requirements, climate risk mitigation, and other operational requirements such as snow clearing, event logistics, or equipment access. Changes to streetscaping, landscaping and park land are intended to consist of durable, compatible and readily replaceable materials.



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4.9.1 Streetscape and Public Realm

4.9.1.1 Gateways and Approaches

Beckwith Street is the most prominent and travelled gateway and entry point into the HCD and is an excellent candidate for the incorporation of gateway features or treatments. This would enhance the sense of arrival into the district and reinforce the streetscape character of the neighbourhood. Secondary gateways along side streets, such as Main Street, should also be given consideration to enhance and unify the character of the HCD.

Guidelines

- 1) Gateways to the HCD at Beckwith Street should be marked with defining elements that are sensitive to the heritage character of the district and help communicate district boundaries.
- 2) Banners utilizing the same style and poles that are already in use can be created and placed at the secondary entrances into the heritage conservation district.
- 3) Elements such as public art, signage, and landscaping could also be considered for inclusion in these areas.

4.9.1.2 Streets, Sidewalks and Boulevards

Streets and lanes tie the landscape together, linking people and places with one another. Beckwith Street is both the physical and commercial centre of the district. The street serves as an important pedestrian and vehicular linkage, but also functions as a destination, providing the community with shops, services, and institutional facilities. In the HCD, boulevards can play an important role in contributing to the character of the streetscape by emphasizing the width of the streets.

Policies

- 1) Maintain landscaped gathering nodes along Beckwith Street to create visual character and vibrancy along the street.
- 2) Maintain the width of Beckwith Street and Main Street as it relates to building setbacks and their relationship with the sidewalks and roadways.



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- 3) Maintain and enhance the establishment of a pedestrian realm through the use of unified paving materials that are sensitive to the heritage character of the streetscape.
- 4) Maintain and conserve existing boulevards in the HCD with regard to their location, and capacity for turf (where applicable), vegetation and street trees.
- 5) Where feasible, maintain or improve original soils and/or topsoil depths to support the longevity of the street trees in the boulevards.

Guidelines

- 1) When road reconstruction occurs, and where health and safety issues are not of concern, boulevards should be maintained as green space or modified to support wider sidewalks or bike lanes, serving as an important buffer between vehicular and pedestrian space within the streetscape.

4.9.1.3 Street Trees and Vegetation

Town departments contemplating tree removal must consider the policies of the HCD Plan and Guidelines and receive Council approval prior to removal. Staff responsible for tree removal shall adopt the policies and guidelines and where possible, communicate with planning staff regarding additions and replacements of vegetation over the future. Tree replacement should be done in accordance with the Town's Tree Canopy and Vegetation Enhancement Policy. Over the longer term, the overall management of the urban forest which includes boulevard trees and vegetation located in parks and public open space would best be addressed by developing an urban forest management plan to ensure the long-term retention of the tree canopy.

A multitude of changing and evolving environmental conditions such as Asian Long Horn Beetle, global warming/droughts, rusts and blights, puts particular tree species at risk. Species selections for new and replacement of dead or damaged trees within the HCD shall be at the discretion of qualified staff or consultants.

Most municipalities or regional/county governments have standards governing the installation of plant material and trees; these standards and details for boulevard street



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tree planting should be considered the minimum requirements for trees planted within the district.

Policies

- 1) When planting or replacing street trees, and in accordance with the Tree Canopy and Vegetation Enhancement Policy, select a species that will approximate the same visual character of the streetscape, where the historical streetscape form persists, to retain the consistency of the pattern and canopy structure. Tree species native to Eastern Ontario are preferred, and in all cases, tree species that spread in an invasive manner will not be planted.
- 2) Select street trees that are hardy, drought, disease and salt spray tolerant, such as:
 - a) species of smaller maples trees (*Acer* spp) than Silver maple (medium sized)
 - b) newer cultivars of hybrid Asian elms resistant to Dutch elm disease such as Accolade™; Cathedral; Discovery; Triumph™; Commendation™; Danada Charm™
 - c) American elm hybrids, such as Princeton, Prairie Expedition, New Harmony, and St. Croix. Note that these species tend to be larger than the Asian species so larger growing areas are recommended
- 3) Consider infill trees that are either the same species as the trees adjacent to the infill location or of a similar form and size at maturity where appropriate (as determined by qualified personnel, Town staff, or consultants). Where infill or replacements are to be located amongst species that are deemed undesirable replacement species shall be at the discretion of Town staff or consultants with an understanding of maintaining the visual character of the streetscape.

Guidelines

- 1) Fill gaps in the continuity of tree plantings as soon as possible given scheduling and budgets.
- 2) Prepare an approved Tree Management Plan developed by a Certified Arborist or Registered Professional Forester where road-works or general construction, including infrastructure improvements have the potential to seriously affect the health, growth and survival of the street trees or their root zones. Engineering drawings, inclusive of road works, lighting, underground services must be reviewed and approved by Town staff.



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- 3) Communicate when construction will commence to confirm tree protection/root zone measures are in place. Trees should be inspected during and after construction to ensure tree protection measures are in place and maintained in working condition, and that post construction conditions within the root protection zone have been restored to equal or better conditions.
- 4) Include tree inventories and recommendations for replacements in construction package/tender and include suitable tree preservation/mitigation measures and specifications.
- 5) Where construction and/or construction activities on private property may impact publicly owned trees, submissions for site plan approvals/permits shall be accompanied by a tree preservation plan clearly indicating measures to preserve the municipally owned tree and approved by the Forestry Group. The tree preservation plan shall be prepared by a Certified Arborist or Registered Professional Forester.

4.9.1.4 Lighting

The way a street is lit can be a defining feature within a streetscape, not only because our night environment can be significantly enhanced by the quality of light provided, but also because the character of a street during the day can be significantly affected by the form of the light standard. Although in most cases it is not feasible to duplicate original light features, installing standards that complement the historic fabric of the area is an issue of sensitivity to existing heritage character, much the same as an adaptive reuse of the built form.

The following policies with respect to street lighting are made with the understanding that they will be followed as part of the natural course of street lighting repairs and upgrades:

Policies

- 1) Maintain and expand the existing street lighting of historically themed lighting fixtures (e.g. “gooseneck” or similar styles) throughout the HCD to enhance consistency with the character of the heritage district.
- 2) Implement new or replacement lighting that is ‘dark-sky friendly’ with a full cut-off to eliminate upward light spillage.



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- 3) Consider new or replacement lighting that is energy efficient and implement LED or equivalent technology.

4.9.1.5 Street Signage

Street signage is often referred to as a wayfinding tool; however, it can also serve as an identifying element within a streetscape. Given that street signs are common elements throughout a neighbourhood, they can be employed as tools to define areas of unique or special status.

Guidelines

- 1) Continue the current practice of street signage in consistency with Town standards.
- 2) Separate road and traffic signage from interpretive/commemorative and wayfinding signage from traffic signage so the two do not distract from each other.
- 3) Consider establishing signage (e.g., street name signage) with unique colour and logo identifying the area as an HCD or distinct area. New street signs shall comply with Town standards.
- 4) Encourage the continued use of decorative banners throughout the HCD, particularly along Beckwith Street. Decorative banners affixed to light poles are an effective means of strengthening sense of place within a district.
- 5) Coordinate banners with other elements within the district, such as the street signage, and install along important thoroughfares that bound the area, or at the gateways into the area.



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Plate 14 Light standards in the HCD should be of a unified design, with a continued approach to using 'historically themed' light standards



Plate 15 Banners and street signage can be a unifying element in the HCD when effectively coordinated

4.9.1.6 Street Furniture

Street furniture can have a strongly unifying effect upon a streetscape if it is well coordinated. Placed in strategic areas, coordinated street furniture can be used to identify a space, set it apart from other neighbouring areas, and draw visitors into particular spaces.

Guidelines

- 1) Maintain and enhance the current street furniture character that consists of painted metal to maintain the sense of place within the HCD. Changes to planters, planting and street furniture to accommodate seasonal programming are encouraged if the changes are reversible and in keeping with the character of the HCD.
- 2) Where possible, install decorative trash receptacles, bike racks and benches rather than standard utilitarian ones.
- 3) Prioritize gateway locations, the commercial core, and public parks for enhanced street furniture.



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Plate 16 Street furniture consists painted metal furniture. This pattern should continue, with a coordinated approach when street furniture is replaced.

4.9.1.7 Commemorative and Interpretive Elements, Public Art, and Murals

Commemorative and interpretive features such as plaques, signs, monuments, murals and public art, play an important role in creating a district community space and highlighting important events, groups, or themes in a community. While many of these features may not in themselves be historic, they add to the experience and sense of character in the HCD.

Policies

- 1) Support the continued installation of commemorative character elements within the HCD. Retain, maintain, and enhance commemorative character elements within the HCD, including historically themed murals, banners, commemorative or interpretive signs, and plaques.
- 2) Use façades of buildings that do not contain historic masonry to avoid damaging or obscuring historic building materials when adding new painted murals. If masonry façades are considered, use tactics to minimize damage to historic materials by applying removable covers or consulting with a building condition specialist prior to conducting work.



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Guidelines

- 1) Engage in consultation with the community when updating existing or establishing new commemorative features and public art to reflect a more diverse historical narrative.
- 2) Consider other methods such as QRS (Quick Response Systems – Bar Codes) for new or additions to commemorative, interpretive or public art installments, or to link to existing or future walking tours.
- 3) Consider the placement and composition of interpretive and commemorative elements to avoid creating areas that are over-crowded when adding additional commemorative character elements.

4.9.1.8 Parking

Policies

- 1) Locate surface parking lots at the rear of buildings.
- 2) Include vegetative elements to soften the appearance of visible parking areas, such as hedge or vegetated screening, and/or the inclusion of planted ‘islands’ or trees, where feasible.
- 3) Design above-ground parking lots, if considered, in accordance with the policies and guidelines for New Construction within this plan such that they are compatible with the character of the HCD.

4.9.2 Parks and Open Space

The most prominent greenspace within the HCD can be found on the grounds of Centennial Park and Veteran’s Memorial Park. Following the decline of industrial uses in these areas, the park’s open lawns populated by mature trees have offered the neighbourhood residents a village green. Residents continue to use and enjoy these green spaces in much the same way, with the grounds providing an open space for both active and passive recreational activities. Park land is an evolving community asset that must balance heritage preservation with active community use. Parks and Open Space must also follow the previously outlined policies for Lighting (Section 4.7), Signage (Section 4.8) and Streetscaping and Public Realm (Section 4.9.1).



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Policies

- 1) Maintain the existing stock of mature trees within existing parks and replace with the same species wherever possible, or an appropriate species when replacement is required due to damage or dieback.
- 2) Manage mature vegetation within public parks by adhering to current International Society for Arboriculture standards and practices for tree preservation and care.
- 3) Avoid the use of synthetic materials such as artificial turf or plastics in traditional green spaces in favour of maintained lawn, plantings or groundcovers. Explore the use of synthetic materials for use in playgrounds or in the installation of accessibility features in parks.
- 4) Retain the spatial organization and the organization of elements, pathway and site circulation, views and topography in parks, or make new improvements in a way that is compatible with the character of the HCD and open space area.
- 5) Retain and repair the existing historical features such as monuments and commemorative elements, where necessary.

Guidelines

- 1) When designing new park components (playground equipment, event utilities, seating, etc.), consideration should be given to selecting colours, shapes and forms that contribute to the historic character of the HCD but are legible as contemporary structures. This may include using the colours identified in Section 4.3.1.8 or by incorporating historical information as adapted for younger audiences.

4.10 Accessibility

Accessibility is an important consideration in an HCD. Historically buildings were not often designed with accessibility in mind. Alterations and additions to existing structures and new construction must be AODA compliant. When considering accessibility upgrades, it is important to find solutions that are compatible with the exterior form of the historic building without radically altering the building's exterior form. Consulting accessibility and conservation specialists will help with determining appropriate solutions. Accessibility upgrades can be introduced and integrated into the HCD by adhering to the following policies and guidelines:



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Policies

- 1) Include barrier-free design in all new construction. This includes commercial, residential, and institutional building types.
- 2) Include barrier-free design for all new streetscape, open space, and park design to remove barriers for people with disabilities. This may include accessible options for street furniture and light standards.
- 3) Include barrier-free design on existing buildings when making alterations to entrances or other building features wherever possible, while avoiding damage or adverse impacts to original historic materials or heritage attributes.
- 4) Adhere to AODA guidelines for wayfinding materials and signage so they are visible and legible.

Guidelines

- 1) Allow for temporary or transportable ramps to access commercial properties to improve access for people with disabilities even when alterations to entrances are not being proposed.
- 2) Allow for the use of markers, grip-tape or finishes or similar devices on entry surfaces such as steps, landings, or ramps.
- 3) Allow the use of accessible door handles and railings at entrances on contributing and non-contributing properties.
- 4) Public spaces within the HCD should remain adaptable to support programming for all ages and abilities, including the installation of inclusive recreation equipment.

4.11 Sustainability and Alternative Energy

Research and new technologies continue to uncover more ways to improve the sustainability of new and existing buildings. Consideration should be given to improving the sustainability of HCD resources and allowing for appropriate means of alternative energy. Council should consider the following guidelines related to sustainability and alternative energy:

- 1) Allow for the installation of solar panels on roofs
- 2) Install solar panels, related infrastructure or other alternative energy sources set back from the roofline or parapet to be inconspicuous from the street level.



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- 3) Avoid removing or damaging historic materials when installing solar panels or related infrastructure.
- 4) Encourage property owners to conduct an energy audit prior to replacing original historic windows or doors to determine the greatest sources of heat loss. In some cases, minor repairs can provide as much improvement as full replacement.
- 5) Allow for the use of 'green' building materials and techniques on new construction where the designs are compatible with the HCD character and consistent with guidelines in Section 4.5 for new construction.
- 6) Encourage property owners to source materials from local suppliers and manufacturers, where possible. Encourage the use of recycled or salvaged materials in new construction.
- 7) Consider the use of metal or composite roofing materials on new construction.

4.12 Part IV Designations

The policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan apply to all properties within the district currently designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Interior and exterior elements of the building/property protected under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* continue to remain protected in the same way prior to their designation under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Property owners and the Town are to adhere to the requirements of Part IV designations within the HCD, unless otherwise repealed by Council. Where there are any conflicts between the Part IV and Part V Statements of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, decisions should be made with regard to the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan. If a Part IV property includes interior heritage attributes, decisions regarding alteration of interior attributes is governed by the process outlined in Part IV of the OHA, and not Part V

4.13 Adjacent Properties

Development or alterations outside of the HCD boundary are not subject to the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan, nor are they required to obtain heritage alteration permits. However, site alteration and development adjacent to the HCD is required to



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conform to the PPS. In accordance with Policy 4.6.3, proposed development or site alteration adjacent to the Smiths Falls HCD must demonstrate that the heritage attributes of the adjacent HCD and/or heritage property will be conserved. To achieve this, the Town may require the preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) carried out by a qualified professional for development adjacent to the HCD. The HIA should be conducted by a member in good standing of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP). The Town, the Municipal Heritage Committee and Council may require that a proponent implement mitigative measures where impacts on the HCD attributes are identified, as outlined in the HIA.



5 Implementation

5.1 Introduction

The Town's Official Plan contains the framework for establishing Heritage Conservation Districts. To implement the HCD, the Town will adopt a by-law designating the area as a Heritage Conservation District, requiring alterations and development to follow a heritage alteration permit process. The Town will serve a notice of intention to adopt the by-law to all property owners within the district boundary. Individuals who object to the by-law may appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Objections must be filed with the Tribunal and Town Clerk within 30 days after the notice of intention to designate is published. The Tribunal may dismiss the appeal, amend the by-law, direct Council to repeal the by-law, or direct Council to amend the by-law.

When the by-law is adopted, it will be registered on title with all property owners. The registration will remain on title for the property in perpetuity. The Town will file a notice with the Ontario Heritage Trust that the by-law establishing the HCD has been adopted.

The HCD Plan is intended to be read in conjunction with the Town's OP and Zoning by-law where they are in force and effect. Where required, the Town will make changes to the Official Plan or by-laws to support the enforcement of the HCD Plan, its objectives, and policies.

The following sections provide an overview of the heritage alteration permit process, as well as other tools that are useful in implementing the HCD.



5.2 Heritage Alteration Process

HCDs are managed by Town Planning staff, the Municipal Heritage Committee, and Town Council in cooperation with property owners. Each group has their own roles and responsibilities to play in maintaining a successful HCD, as outlined below and as shown in Plate 5.1. Property owners are always encouraged to consult with Town Staff prior to the preparation of a Heritage Alteration Permit.



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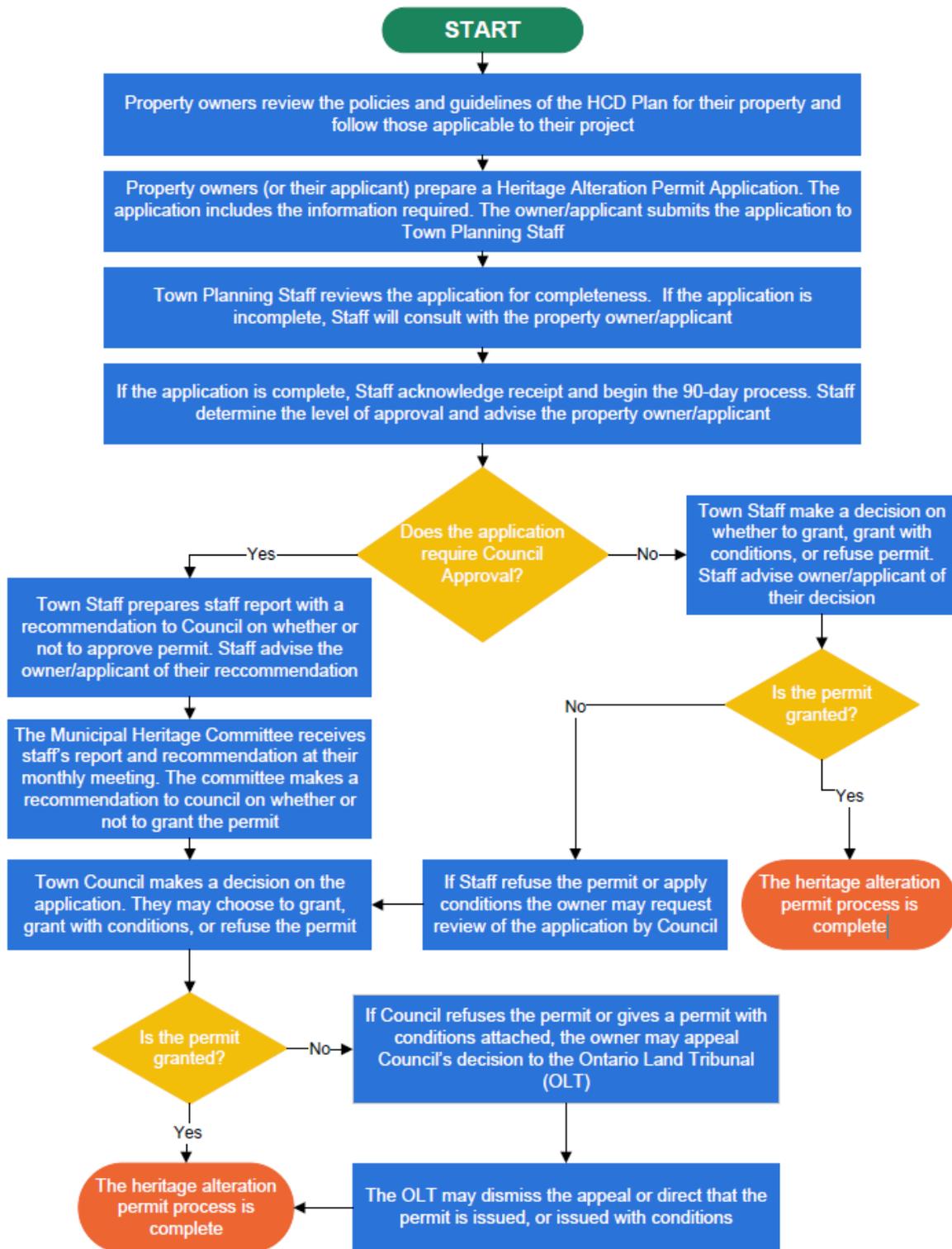


Plate 5.1

Heritage Alteration Permit Process



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5.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

5.2.1.1 Town Planning Staff

- Advise property owners when heritage alteration permits are required
- Determine if Part IV by-laws also apply, and follow the process outlined in Section 4.12 where applicable
- Receive and review heritage alteration permits for completion
- Determine if alteration is delegated to staff approval (if applicable)
- Acknowledge receipt of application and begin 90-day process to grant (with or without conditions), if permit is delegated to staff authority
- Forward alteration permit application and any supporting information to the Municipal Heritage Committee for discussion and review at next available meeting, where applicable
- Work with property owner to modify application/plans, if required
- Grant or refuse permit

5.2.1.2 Municipal Heritage Committee

- Include staff reports and heritage permit applications during regularly scheduled meetings
- Receive delegations at committee meetings to speak on behalf of their applications
- Review heritage alteration permit applications and their adherence to the HCD policies and guidelines
- Provide constructive comments or feedback where applications may need revision to meet the HCD policies and guidelines
- Make recommendation on granting, granting with conditions, or refusing heritage permits

5.2.1.3 Town Council

- Acknowledge receipt of application and begin 90-day process to grant or refuse permit
- Include the Municipal Heritage Committee resolutions, staff reports, and heritage alteration permit applications during regularly scheduled meetings



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- Receive supporting staff reports, applications, or other documentation regarding heritage alteration permit applications
- Receive delegations at Council meetings to speak on behalf of their applications, if applicable
- Make decision on granting, granting with conditions, or refusing heritage alteration permits within 90 days of receiving the application
- Revise decisions regarding Ontario Land Tribunal regarding application permits, if applicable

5.2.1.4 Property Owners

- Before doing the work, review the HCD Plan to determine if a heritage alteration permit is required for the proposed work
- Consult with Town Planning Staff to discuss the nature of the proposed alteration or development and confirm requirements of the heritage alteration permit
- Review the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan
- Apply for heritage alteration permit with required supporting documentation
- Undertake alterations and development in accordance with the principles, policies, and guidelines outlined in the HCD Plan

5.2.2 Heritage Alteration Permits

The Town is currently developing a heritage alteration permit system to manage applications for properties designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Council is the ultimate decision maker in the heritage alteration permit process, unless there is an appeal process (see Section 5.2.7). It is recommended that a similar process be employed when the HCD is implemented and that the Town update their heritage alteration permit application to include applications for the HCD. Typically, this includes, but is not limited to:

- Current contact information of the property owner or representative
- Site plan or sketch, to scale, detailing the proposed location of alteration or development on the property
- Clear description of the proposed alteration or development



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- Drawings of the proposed alteration or development, where applicable, detailing materials, dimensions and written specifications
- Photographs of the current condition of the property
- Supporting documentation such as historic photographs, plans or similar buildings/alterations/developments
- Signature of authorization by the property owner
- A Heritage Impact Assessment, where applicable (Section 5.2.3)

Applications for a heritage alteration permit will be directed to Planning Staff. Municipal staff will review the application and prepare a report that recommends approval, approval with conditions, or refusal of the permit. The Municipal Heritage Committee will receive the application and staff report for review and advise Council of their recommendation. Council will then approve, approve with conditions, or refuse the heritage alteration permit within 90 days of submission.

Once the HCD is in effect, if property owners conduct alterations or additions to their properties without applying for a heritage alteration permit, they will be required by municipal by-law officers to cease work and apply for a heritage alteration permit. Work may need to be revised if it does not conform to the policies of the HCD Plan. Failure to comply with the policies may result in a fine for violating municipal by-law. Heritage alteration permits are required for alterations to properties within the HCD, with the exception of the exemptions identified in Section 5.2.4. Where a heritage alteration permit is submitted for an application that does not align with the policies identified in Section 4 of the HCD Plan, a Heritage Impact Assessment will be required.

5.2.3 Heritage Impact Assessments

Some heritage permit applications may require supplementary consideration in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). This is the case where an alteration has potential to impact the identified cultural heritage value or interest or heritage attributes of a property or HCD and/or is not in line with the policies of the HCD Plan.

Subject to discussions with the Town, the HIA may include:



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- Historical research of the subject property to identify property ownership history and association with historic, events, themes, individuals, groups and organizations (where applicable)
- Site description of the property and surrounding context
- Evaluation of the property according to O. Reg. 9/06 of the OHA, or
- Identification of the significance and heritage attributes of the cultural heritage resource if previously designated/recognized
- Description of the proposed development or site alteration
- Assessment of impacts
- Identification of alternatives and mitigation measures
- Implementation and monitoring requirements
- Summary and conservation recommendations

An HIA must be developed by qualified heritage professionals in good standing with the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP).

5.2.4 Heritage Permit Exemptions

The *Ontario Heritage Act* requires a list of alterations or classes of alterations that are minor in nature and do not require a heritage alteration permit. The following provides a list of alterations that are exempt from permits:

- Interior work (unless otherwise specified from a Part IV designation)
- Alterations to rear façades that are not visible from the public realm of the HCD
- Minor repairs (e.g., patching holes, re-affixing existing features) and cleaning
- Painting trim, window frames and entrance doors
- Painting brick or cladding surfaces that have **already been painted using the same colour for maintenance purposes**
- Painting non-painted cladding surfaces, other than cladding consisting of red brick, buff brick, clay brick, or stone on **non-contributing buildings**
- Replacing existing windows or doors of non-contributing buildings with new features of the **same materials, styles, and dimensions within existing openings**



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- Replacing roofing material with the **same materials** (e.g., asphalt to asphalt, metal to metal, slate to slate, cedar shingles to cedar shingles)
- Replacing existing gutters, downspouts and soffits with the **same materials**
- Changes to existing exterior lighting on residential properties
- Vegetative landscaping (softscaping) e.g., planting flower gardens, shrubs, laying or removing sod, adding or modifying garden beds or planters

All other activities not included on the list above require a heritage alteration permit. It is recommended that property owners consult Town planning staff if they have any questions about whether a particular activity may or may not require a permit.

The Town is also required to follow the requirements of the HCD Plan when undertaking municipal works. As outlined in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Council of a municipality may not carry out any public work in a heritage conservation district that is contrary to the objectives of the Plan. As such, the Municipal Heritage Committee review and Council approval is required for municipal infrastructure, streetscaping, major park landscaping projects, or the installation of public art/murals, to ensure they are consistent with the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan. The following Municipal actions are exempt from requiring the Municipal Heritage Committee and Council approval:

- Changes to road signage
- Replacing existing light standards in-kind
- Replacing existing street furniture in-kind
- Routine maintenance at parks (mowing lawn, trimming vegetation, cleaning/repairing park furniture)

5.2.5 Places of Worship

Subsections 33(18) to (26) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* set out a streamlined alterations approvals process that applies to a narrow set of proposed alterations to buildings used primarily for religious practices. **It must be noted that this process applies only to properties that are individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage***



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Act, and is not applicable to properties in an HCD unless they are also designated under Part IV. Under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, Town Council must consent, without terms or conditions, to proposed alterations to buildings used primarily for religious practices, where all the following conditions (under Section 33(18) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and Section 6.1 of O. Reg. 385/21), are met:

- the alteration is required for one of the following:
 - i. An Indigenous community or Indigenous organization
 - ii. A religious organization that is not an Indigenous organization if the organization is registered
- the building, or part of the building, to be altered is primarily use for religious practices
- the heritage attributes identified in the application are connected to or required for religious practices
- the alteration is not for the purposes of an addition to a building
- the applicant provides council with an affidavit or sworn declaration that the application meets the above conditions
- the affidavit or sworn declaration must be sworn or affirmed by an individual with authority to represent the religious organization, Indigenous community or Indigenous organization for whom the alteration is required

(Government of Ontario 2025)

5.2.6 Delegated Authority

The *Municipal Act* and the *Ontario Heritage Act* provide municipal councils with the ability to delegate their authority in granting heritage alteration permits to municipal staff. This means that certain classes of alteration permits would be approved by Planning staff without requiring review and recommendation from the Municipal Heritage



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Committee and approval by Council. Prior to establishing a delegated authority by-law, Council should consult with the Municipal Heritage Committee on the matter.

Delegated authority can be useful to streamline the heritage alteration permit process and can reduce wait times for permits for works that are minor or less broadly impactful to a property or the HCD. Municipalities may implement delegated authority by-laws when the volume of permits becomes too high for a committee to reasonably manage in addition to their other items, however the by-law can also be implemented at the outset of the HCD as well. In a process with delegated authority, the Municipal Heritage Committee and Council may be consulted based on the nature of the application or may be notified of Staff's decisions as a courtesy.

It is recommended that delegated authority be considered when applications for alterations are minor in nature and follow the policies of the HCD Plan. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Alterations to roofing materials or changing of roofing colours to other neutral colours
- Replacement of an exterior heritage feature in kind
- Alterations or removal of exterior lighting
- Alteration, removal, or replacement of non-heritage features on contributing heritage buildings
- Temporary alterations or actions in an emergency where a building is at risk

Applications that would not be subject to a delegating bylaw and should be reviewed by the Municipal Heritage Committee and Council typically include the following types of alterations:

- Applications involving demolition of contributing properties
- Applications for lot severance or consolidation
- A large-scale or complex development application
- Applications that are of a sensitive or controversial nature
- Applications for heritage permits that are retroactive in nature



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- Applications that have been refused by the Municipality through delegated authority, or appealed terms and conditions of a permit as issued by planning staff

5.2.7 Appeals Process

As per the *Ontario Heritage Act*, property owners have the right to appeal the decision of Council to refuse a heritage alteration permit or the terms and conditions applied to the granting of a heritage alteration permit. Appeals will be directed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. A property owner must appeal the decision of Council to refuse or apply terms and conditions to the permit with 30 days of receiving notice of Council's decision.

The Tribunal shall hear the appeal and may take one of the following actions:

- Dismiss the appeal
- Direct that the permit be issued without terms and conditions or with such terms and conditions as ordered by the Tribunal

5.3 Education and Promotion

Education and promotion can be a valuable part of successfully managing an HCD. Providing property owners, the heritage committee and Council with tools to understand the HCD process and tools at their disposal helps to get all parties on the same page with proposing or reviewing applications for alterations or new development.

It is recommended that the Town establish a page on its website dedicated to the HCD, with copies of the Study and Plan available for download. This page may also include an overview of the heritage alteration permit process, the requirements for submitting a heritage alteration permit, a copy of the heritage alteration permit application, and links to helpful resources. Such resources may include:

- *The Ontario Heritage Act*
- The Ontario Heritage Tool Kit
- The Ontario Heritage Trust
- *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*



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- Other websites or documents that provide guidance on maintaining, repairing or enhancing historic buildings and places

It can also be beneficial for municipalities to provide tools to educate property owners and business owners on other aspects outside of the implementation details. This might include providing an overview of how property owner's investments in their properties can be protected by the HCD process, links to groups or organizations that can provide support or resources for property owners (see Appendix C), information on financial incentives available for property owners, and answers to frequently asked questions about HCDs. Links to these tools in a dedicated place can be valuable resources when an HCD is newly implemented. Over the long term, as properties change hands, these tools can continue to be useful resources for new property owners.

Promoting the HCD within and outside of the community is in line with the municipality's direction in promoting Smiths Falls as a tourist destination. Encouraging community engagement in the HCD through festivals, events, guided and self-guided tours and "Doors Open" events can draw interest and benefit the downtown revitalization. It is recommended that the Municipality engage with downtown business owners, residents, and organizations to establish appropriate promotional materials and events.

Other means of promoting the HCD may come through recognizing the efforts of property owners by establishing local awards programs, such as urban design awards or heritage focused awards. Annual awards created by the municipality or local heritage organizations may highlight examples of restoration, façade improvements or new development that comply with HCD policies and heritage best practices.



5.4 Monitoring Programs

Policies and best practices change and evolve over time. It is recommended that the HCD plan be reviewed and updated intermittently so that it remains reflective of the appropriate planning and heritage frameworks. Review should typically occur within a five-to-ten-year period of its publication, or as applicable based on municipal requirements and budgetary considerations.

5.5 Incentive Programs

Under the *Municipal Act*, municipalities also have the authority to provide tax relief to heritage property owners by passing by-laws to create a property tax incentive program for heritage properties. Tax relief can be between ten and 40 percent of the owner's property taxes. Relief may come in the following forms, as outlined in *Getting Started: Heritage Property Tax Relief, a Guide for Municipalities* (Government of Ontario 2005):

- Reduction of taxes by applying a credit against the owner's property tax account to reduce the total balance owed in the current year (owners would see a credit adjustment posted on their property tax bill)
- Refunding taxes by issuing a cheque
- Crediting all or part of the tax reduction against the owner's outstanding property tax liability from the current year and/or previous years, if applicable

The Town of Smiths Falls currently has a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP was created to help improve accessibility, create attainable (affordable) rental units, create opportunities to redevelop possibly contaminated properties and improve the commercial building stock in the Downtown. The CIP helps eligible property owners, business owners and tenants by providing funding that may reduce the cost constraints for certain eligible works.



5.6 Heritage Register

The *Ontario Heritage Act* requires the Clerk of a municipality to maintain a register of heritage properties within the municipality, including heritage conservation districts. The Town shall update their existing heritage register to include a map and description of the HCD. It is further recommended that the Municipality update the register to include the addresses of each contributing and non-contributing property within the HCD (potentially in a separate section of the register noting that the properties are designated under Part V). It is recommended that the Town maintain an up-to-date copy of the Register on their website for ease of public access.



6 Conclusions

The contents of this Plan are intended to guide the Town, Municipal Heritage Committee, Town Council, and property owners in working together to conserve the cultural heritage value of the Downtown Smiths Falls HCD. Through managing the changes in the HCD, the community has a stake in how the HCD continues to evolve over time. This HCD Plan provides the roadmap to decision-making for the most common types of change an HCD is likely to encounter, including the alteration of a variety of building types, additions to existing buildings, and new development. The HCD Plan also provides guidance on streetscaping and landscaping throughout the HCD.

As communities continue to evolve and grow, and policy frameworks inevitably change, the HCD Plan cannot imagine all the possibilities of change that may occur or be proposed within the HCD. Where specific scenarios are not present within this plan, the overall objective of the HCD Plan and Principles should be consulted for guidance on decision-making, as these relate to the core values identified for the HCD, and long-standing heritage best practices. Through this approach, the cultural heritage values of the HCD can be retained for future generations and managed in such a way that reflects the continually evolving nature of human society.



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7 References

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7 References

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Appendices



**Appendix A Contributing and Non-Contributing
Properties**



Downtown Smiths Falls Heritage Conservation District Plan

Appendix A Contributing and Non-Contributing Properties

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Address Number	Street Address	Contributing/Non-Contributing
1-5	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
2	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
6-8	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
10	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
12	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
14	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
15	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
16	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
18	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
20	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
17-23	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
23-27	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
24	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
27-29	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
28	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
30-48	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
31	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
39	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
43	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
45	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
51	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
54	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
55-59	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
69-71	Beckwith Street North	Non-Contributing
73	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
77	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
81	Beckwith Street North	Contributing
1	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
2-6	Beckwith Street South	Contributing



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Appendix A Contributing and Non-Contributing Properties

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Address Number	Street Address	Contributing/Non-Contributing
8-12	Beckwith Street South	Non-Contributing
11	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
14	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
16	Beckwith Street South	Non-Contributing
18-22	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
24-26	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
25	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
28-32	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
34	Beckwith Street South	Contributing
6-8	Chambers Street East	Contributing
10	Chambers Street East	Non-Contributing
12	Chambers Street East	Non-Contributing
1-15	Chambers Street East	Contributing
22	Chambers Street East	Non-Contributing
5	Church Street East	Non-Contributing
17	Church Street East	Contributing
11	Church Street West	Contributing
4-6	Main Street East	Contributing
7	Main Street East	Contributing
8-12	Main Street East	Contributing
14-16	Main Street East	Contributing
15	Main Street East	Non-Contributing
17	Main Street East	Non-Contributing
18-22	Main Street East	Contributing
32	Main Street East	Contributing
2-4	Main Street West	Contributing
8-12	Main Street West	Contributing
11-15	Main Street West	Non-Contributing
14	Main Street West	Contributing



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Appendix A Contributing and Non-Contributing Properties
 January 8, 2026

Address Number	Street Address	Contributing/Non-Contributing
16	Main Street West	Contributing
20	Main Street West	Non-Contributing
21	Main Street West	Non-Contributing
24-26	Main Street West	Non-Contributing
25-27	Main Street West	Contributing
29-31	Main Street West	Non-Contributing
8-10	Market Street North	Non-Contributing
12	Market Street North	Non-Contributing
14	Market Street North	Non-Contributing
18	Market Street North	Contributing
22-24	Market Street North	Non-Contributing
22-24	Market Street North (Vacant parcel behind 26 Market Street North)	Non-Contributing
26	Market Street North	Non-Contributing
28-34	Market Street North	Contributing
41	Market Street North	Contributing
4-6	Market Street South	Non-Contributing
n/a	Old Mill Road (Smiths Falls Water Tower and Parking Lot)	Contributing
13	Old Mill Road	Non-Contributing
25	Old Mill Road	Contributing
2	Russell Street East	Contributing
4-6	Russell Street East	Contributing
7-11	Russell Street East	Non-Contributing
8	Rusell Street East	Contributing
10	Russell Street East	Contributing
12	Russell Street East	Non-Contributing
14-18	Russell Street East	Contributing
15	Russell Street East	Contributing
20	Russell Street East	Contributing



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Appendix A Contributing and Non-Contributing Properties

January 8, 2026

Address Number	Street Address	Contributing/Non-Contributing
21	Russell Street East	Non-Contributing
22	Russell Street East	Contributing
23-25	Russell Street East	Non-Contributing
24	Russell Street East	Contributing
30	Russell Street East	Contributing
3	Russell Street West	Contributing
7	Russell Street West	Contributing
n/a	Williams Street East (parking lot west of 1 Williams Street East)	Non-Contributing
1-3	William Street East	Non-Contributing
4-8	William Street East	Contributing
5	William Street East	Non-Contributing
7	William Street East	Non-Contributing
11	William Street East	Non-Contributing
13	William Street East	Non-Contributing
14-16	William Street East	Non-Contributing
15 ½ -15	William Street East	Non-Contributing
18	William Street East	Non-Contributing
22	William Street East	Non-Contributing
5	William Street West	Non-Contributing
7	William Street West	Contributing
n/a	Centennial Park	Contributing
n/a	Veteran's Memorial Park	Contributing



Appendix B Glossary



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Appendix B Glossary

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The following terms contained within the HCD Plan report have been derived from the *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit*, the *Standards for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, the *Provincial Planning Statement* and architectural reference books listed in the HCD Study Report. Where terms are referenced in the glossary, the reference is contained within the body of the report. Many of the terms have been paraphrased and are combinations of definitions found in multiple sources, particularly those related to architectural styles and features.

Term	Definition
Adjacent	Real properties or sites that are contiguous or separated by a laneway, easement, right-of-way or roadway.
Alteration	To change in any manner.
Cladding	The external, non-structural material that protects the structural wall or frame from the weather.
Compatible	The ability of new development or interventions to coexist harmoniously with existing historic structures or cultural landscapes, without causing significant damage or loss to their essential character and integrity.
Contemporary	Refers to modern structures built after 1980 or building materials used after 1980.
Conservation	All actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the heritage attributes of a place so that it retains its heritage value and extends its physical life. This may involve preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, or a combination of these actions or processes.
Contributing Resource or Property	Those properties that directly support the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Heritage Attributes of the HCD and meet two or more criteria of <i>Ontario Regulation 9/06</i> as evaluated in the Smiths Falls HCD Study. These properties were designed or constructed in the late 19 th to early 20 th century as part of the commercial streetscape and retain historic building fabric or heritage features that distinguish them as older buildings of a particular era, type, or place.
Edwardian	An architectural style popular between 1900 and 1930 with understated classical detailing and modern proportions. Typical features include stone lintels and sills, pilasters and columns, and hipped roofs.



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Term	Definition
Gateway	A significant vantage point defined by a key feature or features framing or marking the entry to an area.
Guideline	A recommended action that may be taken in a given situation. A guideline arises from a policy and is facilitated by a procedure.
Heritage Attribute	The physical characteristics of a property or resource that contribute to its cultural heritage value or interest.
Heritage Conservation District (HCD)	An area or grouping of properties collectively designated pursuant to Part V, Section 41, of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> .
Italianate	An architectural style popular between 1850 and 1900. Typical features include round arched or segmental arch window openings, window hood moulds, dichromatic brick, decorative cornices, and brackets.
Landmark	A prominent structure because of architectural elements, historical importance to community, or contextual position.
Maintenance	The routine cyclical, non-destructive actions necessary for the long-term conservation of a protected heritage resource and its heritage attributes.
Modernist	An architectural style popular between 1940s and 1970s. Typical features include modern materials (steel, glass, and concrete), simple and minimalistic exteriors, and clean lines with a horizontal or vertical emphasis.
Municipal Heritage Committee	A municipal heritage committee is an advisory committee. A municipal heritage committee can help a community participate more directly in a municipality's decision-making process by broadening the scope of information that informs the decision-making process.
Non-Contributing Resource or Property	Those properties that do not directly support the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Heritage Attributes of the HCD and meet one or zero criteria of <i>Ontario Regulation 9/06</i> as evaluated in the Smiths Falls HCD Study. These properties may have been constructed more recently or may be older properties that have been modified to such an extent that historic building fabric or detailing has been substantially altered, removed, or obscured.



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Term	Definition
Part IV Designation	In reference to real property designated under Part IV of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> by municipal by-law. The designation by-law for an individual designation should include a description of the property, a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest, and a description of the heritage attributes.
Policy	A statement or position that is adopted that provides the framework for a course of action.
Preservation	The action or process of protecting, maintaining, and/or stabilizing the existing materials form, and integrity of an historic place, or of an individual component, while protecting its heritage value.
Procedure	A course of action developed to implement and support a policy. Example: Heritage Alteration Permit Application.
Protected Heritage Property	Real property protected under the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (including Part II – Section 22; Part IV- Section 27, 29, 34.5, 37; Part V, or Part VI).
Rehabilitation	The actions or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of an historic place, or an individual component while protecting its heritage value.
Renaissance Revival	A style of architecture popular from about 1870 to 1910 and was a revival of Italian renaissance era structures. Typical characteristics include flat roofs, segmental arch windows, columns, cornices, and pilasters. Commonly used in Ontario for commercial architecture.
Restoration	The action or process of accurately revealing, recovering, or representing the state of a historic place, or of an individual component, as it appeared at a particular period in its history, while protecting its heritage value.
Second Empire	An architectural style popular between 1865 and 1880. Typical features include mansard roofs, dormer windows, hood moulds, decorative cornices, and brackets.
Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest	As outlined in the <i>Ontario Heritage Tool Kit</i> , this is a statement that describes the heritage values of the HCD, or why the area is considered to have merit as an HCD and includes a list of heritage attributes.



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Term	Definition
Sympathetic	Having a positive and understanding attitude towards heritage resources. Appreciating and valuing the historical, cultural, or natural significance of a place or object, and a desire to preserve it.
Vernacular	Built form that reflects local or regional materials, influences, patterns or themes. Vernacular properties typically have less ornamentation or different characteristics than buildings of an architectural style.

The following photo glossary is intended to supplement the content of the HCD Plan and of Plate 4.1. Definitions from OntarioArchitecture.com

(<http://ontarioarchitecture.com/Terms.html>)

Architectural Feature	Representative Photo
Bracket – an ornamental projection which provides visual (or structural) support for a cornice (balcony, statue, or window)	
Columns – A freestanding vertical structure that supports a roof or porch	
Corbelling – A feature used to support a cornice, turret, bracket, rib, or oriel window	



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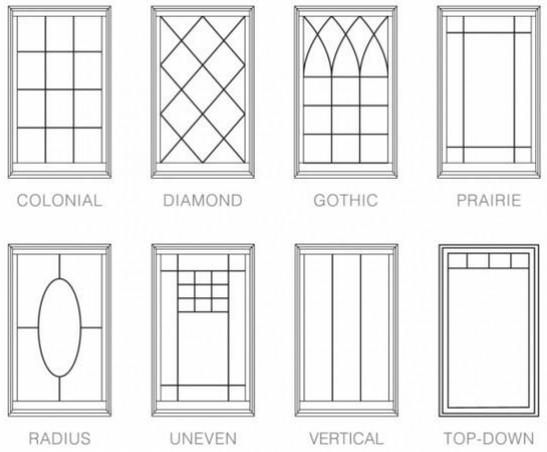
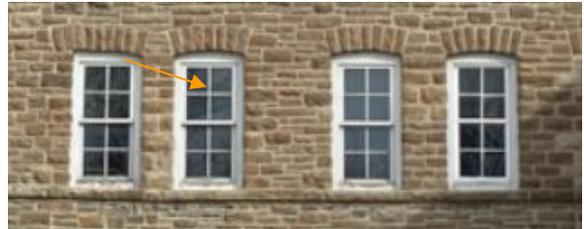
Architectural Feature	Representative Photo
<p>Cornice – originally the wooden overhang of the roof and now considered to be any projecting shelf at the top of a roof or pediment</p>	
<p>Dentils – A series of rectangles used as ornamentation for cornices</p>	
<p>Dormer windows – a gable window that pierces through a sloping roof</p>	
<p>Fascia – the horizontal board that runs along the edge of a roofline</p>	
<p>Frieze – a continuous horizontal band of carved or painted decoration, typically lying below the cornice</p>	



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Architectural Feature	Representative Photo
<p>Grilles – Decorative grating (metal, wood, stone) used to provide a screen or barrier</p>	 <p>(Jeld-Wen 2025)</p>
<p>Hood Mould – a projecting hood or moulding over a window</p>	
<p>Keystones – a central stone in an arch or voussoir above a window or door</p>	
<p>Lintels – the horizontal material – typical stone, wood, or metal – that spans the opening of a door or window to support the weight above</p>	
<p>Muntins – The vertical pieces of wood that separate panes of glass</p>	



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Architectural Feature	Representative Photo
Pilasters – A squared column or pillar that helps support the weight of a structure	
Quoins – decorative stone around the corner of a wall or around a window	
Sills – the horizontal material that spans the bottom of a window	
Soffits – the underside of a roof overhang	
Soldier Course – A row of bricks commonly used above windows to provide structural support	



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Architectural Feature	Representative Photo
Voussoirs – an arch above a window or door	



**Appendix C Resources for Property Owners and
Community Members**



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The principles at the core of an HCD Plan are drawn from heritage best practices established at the provincial, federal and international level through guiding documents and charters. The principles outlined in this report are derived from the 2007 *Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties* and the 2010 *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. These documents provide overarching guidance on how to approach conservation, restoration or rehabilitation projects on historic buildings and can help property owners and community members understand the bigger picture of heritage conservation:

- <http://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>
- http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/InfoSheet_8%20Guiding_Principles.pdf

The policies and guidelines in this HCD Plan require and suggest maintenance and repair of heritage materials and features of the buildings in the HCD. Some policies and guidelines refer to specific materials or techniques that may be new to property owners not familiar with caring for heritage buildings. The National Parks Service at the United States Department of the Interior offers a series of Technical Preservation Briefs that provide useful guidance on preserving, rehabilitating and restoring historic buildings:

- <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>

Several specific briefs may be useful to property owners in Smiths Falls, such as:

- Repointing mortar joints (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/2-repoint-mortar-joints.htm>)
- Cleaning masonry buildings (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/1-cleaning-water-repellent.htm>)
- Improving energy efficiency (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/3-improve-energy-efficiency.htm>)
- Dangers of abrasive cleaning (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/6-dangers-abrasive-cleaning.htm>)
- Rehabilitating historic storefronts (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/11-storefronts.htm>)



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- Applying alternative siding (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/8-aluminum-vinyl-siding.htm>)
- Making historic properties accessible (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/32-accessibility.htm>)

Paint colours that fall within a compatible historic colour palette can be found at:

- Benjamin Moore's *Historical Colour Collection* (<https://www.benjaminmoore.com/en-ca/paint-colours/historical-collection>)
- Sherwin Williams' *Exterior Home Style Color Palettes* (<https://www.sherwin-williams.com/en-us/color/color-collections/architectural-paint-colors>)

Maintaining, repairing and restoring historic buildings can require special approaches, tools, and methods. It is important to understand the nature of your building, its materials, and its needs before you begin your work. Seeking the advice of qualified professionals is advisable, particularly those with experience working with older buildings.

To find professionals with experience working with historic buildings and structures, you can search the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP) directory to find architects, consultants, tradespeople, historians and other specialists:

- <https://cahp-acecp.ca/professionals/>

Regeneration Works, a project of the National Trust for Canada, provides tools for communities, organizations and property owners who are working to renew and protect heritage places. Regeneration Works provides learning opportunities (webinars and in-person events) on topics geared towards raising funds, increasing revenue in heritage places, and revitalizing heritage places or downtown main streets. Regeneration Works also offers a program called Launch Pad, which provides grants to community organizations to help them pay for professional expertise to help them renew historic places. Browse the Regeneration Works website to see what tools might be useful to your community heritage projects:

- <https://regenerationworks.ca/>

