Main Streets: City Planning’s Approach and Tools for Identifying Heritage

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Where are Toronto’s Main Streets?
Conserving Main Streets...
In the Beginning…

Toronto Historical Board HQ
Stanley Barracks,
Exhibition Place (1960-1993)

- 1949  Toronto Civic Historical Committee
- 1960’s – THB identifying heritage properties
- 1973 - City’s first inventory (400 properties)
- 1975 – designation + review of planning applications for heritage inventory properties
- 1977 - Owner notification / listing process
- 1987- Bill PR57 (interim demolition control)
- 2005 – Ontario Heritage Act amendments
Inaugural Heritage Inventory: Property Typologies
Historical Research

North York Hamlets and Villages
Toronto’s Main Street Buildings

Since 1834...

Heritage Legend
- Heritage Register
  - Listed Properties
  - Not Yet Properties
- Heritage Conservation Districts
  - Designated
  - Under Study
  - Practised
- Archaeology
  - Archaeological Potential

Toronto Study Area
Green Space
Since 2006
Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest.

While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Register of Heritage Properties.
Official Plan: Urban Structure
Avenues & Character Areas, SASP 305
Tools to identify heritage

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment

The Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment identifies properties and areas of cultural heritage value or interest in the Hincks-Dundas West Area. This study provides a list of heritage resources and guidelines for Midtown and provides data and analysis to support the inclusion of potential cultural heritage resources on the City’s Heritage Register.

WHAT IS ON THE HERITAGE REGISTER TODAY?

1. Property that is included in the Heritage Register
2. Property designated under Part XI of the Ontario Heritage Act
3. Property that is the subject of Ontario Heritage Act, Designated under Part VII of the Ontario Heritage Act

Next Steps

This study continues to inform the new built form policy and guidelines. The new City Planning Act will, in turn, enhance the planning approach to further evaluate cultural heritage resources, and will provide for draft staff reports for their inclusion on the City’s Heritage Register.

Avenue Studies
Midtown in Focus
Urban Design Guidelines: College Street Listing on the City’s Heritage Register
Planning Policy & Heritage Potential
HCD Studies with Main Streets
Bloor West Village HCD Study

- Study Area is approximately **2.7 kilometres** in length - Includes **302 properties** that front onto Bloor Street
- Extends from **Keele Street to the Humber River** /Bounded by **High Park and the Humber River**
- **4 TTC Stations** (Jane, Runnymede, High Park, Keele)
Character Analysis

- **Dates of Construction**
  - All buildings in the study area were constructed in the 20th century

- **Building Heights**
  - The majority (96%) of buildings are four storeys or less

- **Land Use**
  - Defined by commercial land use along Bloor Street West with residential land use located at the east and west ends and along side streets

- **Architectural Types**
  - Edwardian (1900-1930s) → 22%
  - 20th Century Vernacular (1900s-1930s) → 23%
  - Contemporary (1980-Present) → 23%
Property Grain

Total Buildings
- 60% Fine Grain
- 30% Intermediate Grain
- 10% Coarse Grain
Village Main Street – Period of Significance

- Bloor Street West opened between Dundas Street and Humber River in the 1860s
- West Toronto Junction annexed to City of Toronto in 1909
- 1919-1929 Bloor Street improvements and construction of the streetcar line
- Central section annexed to the City of Toronto as part of the Village of Swansea in 1920
- Southwest section annexed to the City of Toronto in 1967
Village Main Street – Built Form

Dates of Construction
- 1900-1939: 85%
- 1940-1979: 10%
- Post 1980: 5%

Building Heights
- 1 Storeys: 8%
- 2 Storeys: 74%
- 3 Storeys: 16%
- 4 Storeys: 1%
- 10+ Storeys: 1%

Land Use
- Commercial: 54%
- Residential: 14%
- Mixed Use: 32%
Commercial Typologies

- Three commercial typologies were identified for the Bloor West Village Study Area:
  - Typology 1: Two Storey Storefront → 81%
  - Typology 2: Three Storey Mixed Use → 15%
  - Typology 3: One Storey Commercial → 4%
What’s Next? … Modernizing the City’s Heritage Register
Citywide Heritage Survey Proposal
Avenue Study Pilot Project: Context Statement

Prioritizes an understanding of the historic context of an area, and how properties relate to and support that context.
Heritage Property Tax Rebate Program

Eligible Properties (Tax Class) Commercial or Industrial (Heritage Status) Designated individually + Heritage Easement Agreement OR Designated within a Heritage Conservation District / Contributing Property) + Maintenance and Conservation Agreement

Value of Incentive (Eligible Annually):
50% of authorized costs (maintenance / conservation work) up to 40% of taxes paid

Maximum amount: $500,000 (Part IV) and $50,000 (Part V)
Thank You

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