

# Heritage Designation

## Fact Sheet and FAQ

In 1975, the Province of Ontario passed the Ontario Heritage Act, which provides municipalities with the tools to identify, evaluate and conserve the heritage assets that are important in their communities. Designation of a heritage property is a way to publicly acknowledge its heritage value to community. At the same time, designation helps to ensure the conservation of these important places for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.



Our historic villages, neighbourhoods, and rural landscapes tell the story of Kawartha Lakes. They are an essential part of our identity, and contribute to community pride, character and economic vitality. Heritage designation is aimed at protecting those important historic assets to help preserve and celebrate our communities and the stories and places that make them special.

### What is heritage designation?

Properties can be designated individually under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. This means that they are protected from demolition and change to the property is managed through a heritage permitting process. The goal of heritage designation is to manage change to historic properties, and does not restrict an owner's use of the property. Designation recognizes and celebrates historic places and also ensures that they are protected.

### How are properties designated?

The Ontario Heritage Act sets out criteria for determining the cultural heritage value of a property. There are nine criteria which measure architectural, historical and contextual value and, in order to be designated, a property must fulfil at least one of the criteria. Most designated properties fulfil more than one criteria. Anyone can nominate a property for designation, although, in Kawartha Lakes, most designations are requested by the owner of the property.

Properties are researched and a report is written about their architectural, historical and contextual merit. The Municipal Heritage Committee reviews the property and makes a recommendation to Council as to whether a property should be designated. Council will then approve the designation and there is a 30-day objection and commenting period. If there are no objections, a by-law will be passed by Council. This by-law, which identifies the property's heritage features and importance, designates the property.



## What are the benefits of designation?

Designation recognizes the historic value of a property and celebrates its importance in the community.

Designated properties are also shown to hold their value as well or better than non-designated properties.

There are financial incentive programs available through the municipality to help with conservation and restoration projects.

A bronze plaque is created for each property to celebrate its significance.

## Can owners make changes to designated properties?

Yes, changes can be made to designated properties but owners are required to apply for a heritage permit when making certain types of changes to their properties, such as constructing additions, replacing or changing porches or making changes to decorative elements. The goal of the permitting process is to ensure that any changes that are made are compatible with a property's heritage character. Heritage property owners are not expected to live in a museum and are welcome to undertake renovations and upgrades. Staff work with property owners to ensure that alterations both suit their needs and complement the historic character of their building. Property owners can make improvements and the adaptive reuse of commercial and institutional properties ensure that heritage buildings are well-used community assets.

Maintenance, such as basis repairs, painting woodwork or repointing brick, does not require a permit.

## Does designation affect how a property can be used?

Designation only regulates physical changes to a property. Any changes to the use of the property, such as changing a residential property to a commercial property, go through the regular city planning process.

## Does designation affect property values?

Designation has been shown not to have a negative effect on property values. Numerous studies have found that designation actually has a positive or neutral effect on property values when compared with similar, non-designated properties. Designated properties have also been shown to hold their value during downturns in the market.

## Can designated properties get insurance?

Yes, designated properties can get insurance and the Insurance Bureau of Canada has confirmed that designation should not result in an insurance premium increase. Owners are encouraged to shop around to find an insurance provider that best suits their needs.



For more information about heritage designation in Kawartha Lakes, contact:

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