

Part 1 - The Study

properties
and
structures



landscapes
and natural
features

districts



1.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1 Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study

What is Heritage?

The Ontario Heritage Policy Review (1990) defines heritage as “All that society values and that survives as the living context – both natural and human – from which we derive our sustenance, coherence and meaning in our individual and collective lives.”

From the broad context of what constitutes heritage, this Heritage Conservation District Plan focuses mostly on the elements of built heritage (e.g. buildings and structures) and cultural heritage landscapes (e.g. parks and open spaces), that have a significance relative to their history, design and context, and that contribute to a district heritage character.

This HCD Plan is based on the idea that heritage includes a broad range of building types, structures, uses and time periods, and that it includes landscapes, streetscapes, neighbourhoods and urban areas.

Why Does Heritage Matter?

Heritage conservation is not only about saving old buildings, it is also fundamentally about enhancing the meaning and quality of life, by maintaining a unique sense of place, as well as supporting the cultural and economic vitality that accompanies areas with strong conservation.

Areas of a city that have embraced heritage as part of contemporary urban life thrive, becoming cherished places for residents to live and work, and are rewarding destinations for

visitors. Vaughan can benefit from conservation in many ways: from the sense of identity and character, from the memory and sense of history, and well as from quality environments.

What is a Heritage Conservation District?

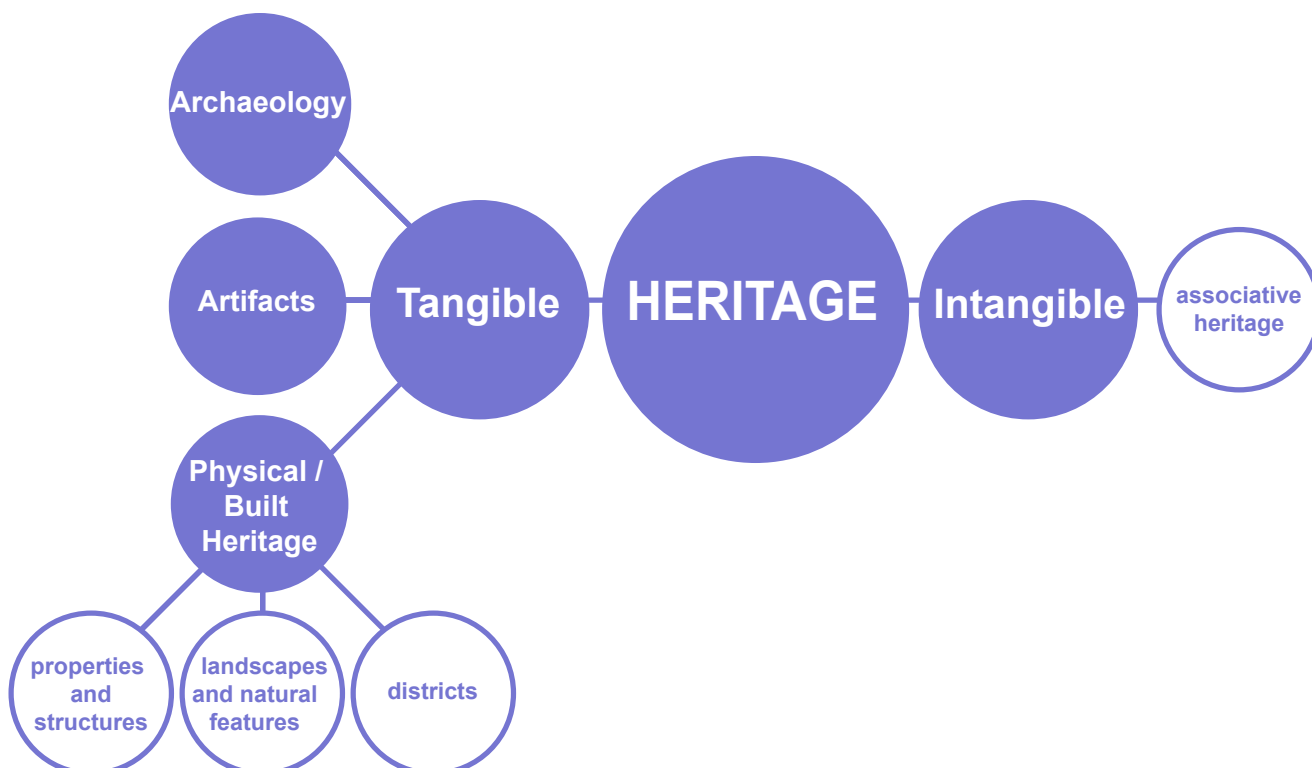
A Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is a policy instrument, enabled by the Province of Ontario, through the Ontario Heritage Act.

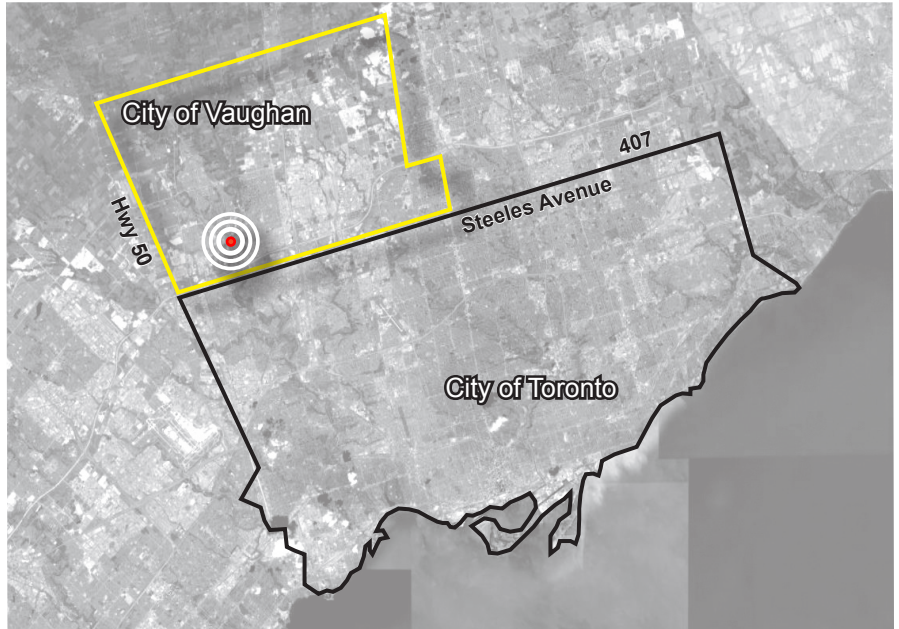
An HCD is based on the premise that “it is important to understand that the value of the district as a whole is always greater than the sum of its parts” (Ontario Heritage Toolkit, 2006).

When an individual property is identified as having cultural heritage value, it is listed or designated on the Heritage Inventory. With an HCD, there is a recognition that sometimes there is a cultural heritage value that emerges from the collection of buildings, structures, landscapes and natural features, that form a district, and that on their own would not be necessarily designated. It is as a collection, within their context, that they gain significance.

What is Included in an HCD?

- An Inventory of heritage resources within the Study Area
- A Heritage Character Statement
- A clearly defined District boundary
- A list of heritage attributes
- Guidelines for interventions
- A list of contributing and non-contributing properties





Study Area within City of Vaughan Context

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.2 HCD Study

What Does the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study Entail?

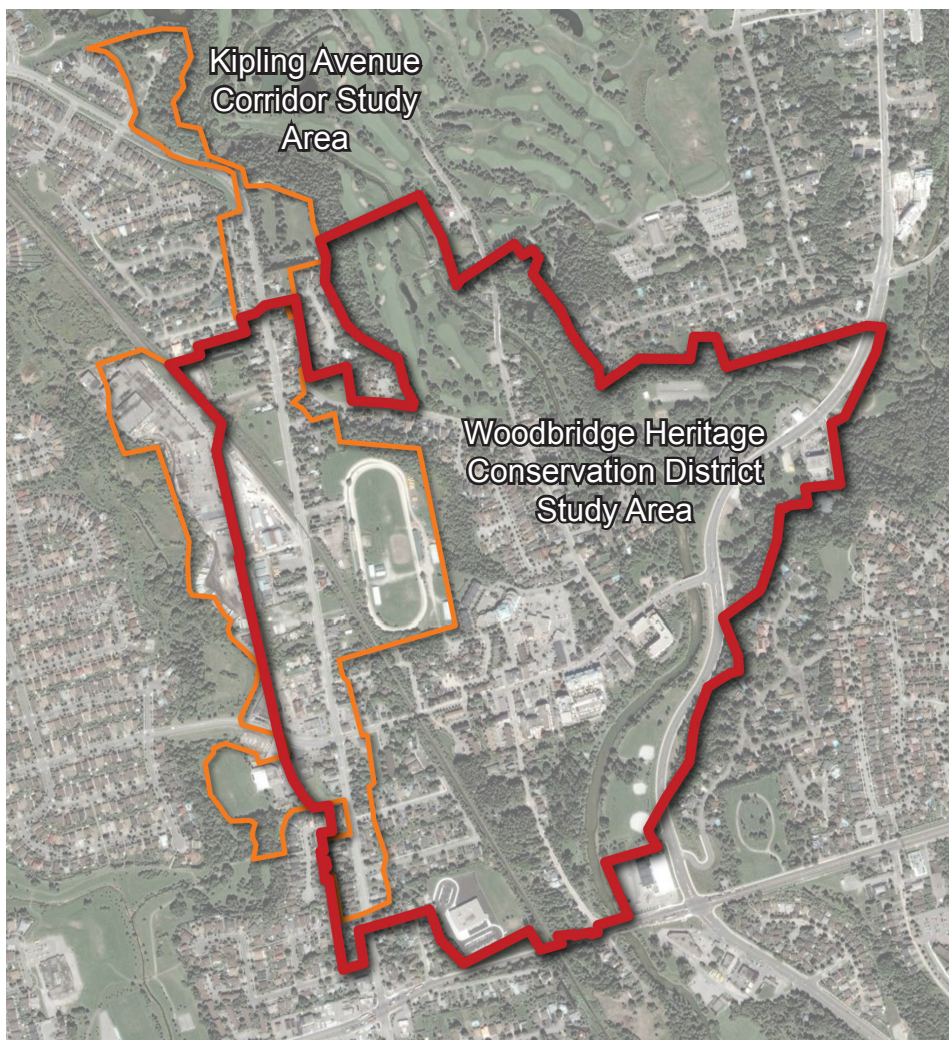
The City of Vaughan and a Study Team led by the consulting firm Office for Urbanism in association with Goldsmith Borgal and Company Architects undertook a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study for the Woodbridge Area. The HCD Study determines the appropriate boundaries of a Heritage Conservation District, identifies the Heritage Character and contributing heritage attributes, and develops a Plan and guidelines for future development within the HCD area. The HCD Study took place concurrently with the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study, which was also undertaken by the same Study Team.

It is important to note that the “Study Area” did not necessarily constitute the final boundaries of the Heritage Conservation District and its associated “Plan”. It is through the study process that the HCD was identified and implemented through a Plan.

1.3 HCD Study Area

What Area Does the Woodbridge HCD Study Area Encompass?

The HCD Study Area, (see Schedule 1, page 19), included most of the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study Area and was bounded by: Gordon Drive, Mounsey Street and Doctors Maclean Park to the north; and Rainbow Drive, Burwick Avenue and Highway #7 to the south. The Study Area extends eastward to encompass the Woodbridge Core and part of Islington Avenue and includes the Humber River Corridor. The Woodbridge HCD Study and Kipling Avenue Corridor Study boundaries are delineated in red and orange respectively on the map below.



Study Area Aerial



The Humber River



Heritage Building - Woodbridge Avenue



Memorial Hill Park



The Fairgrounds - Heritage Barn Structure



Humber Valley Trails



Heritage Building - James Street



Memorial Hill and Meeting House Road

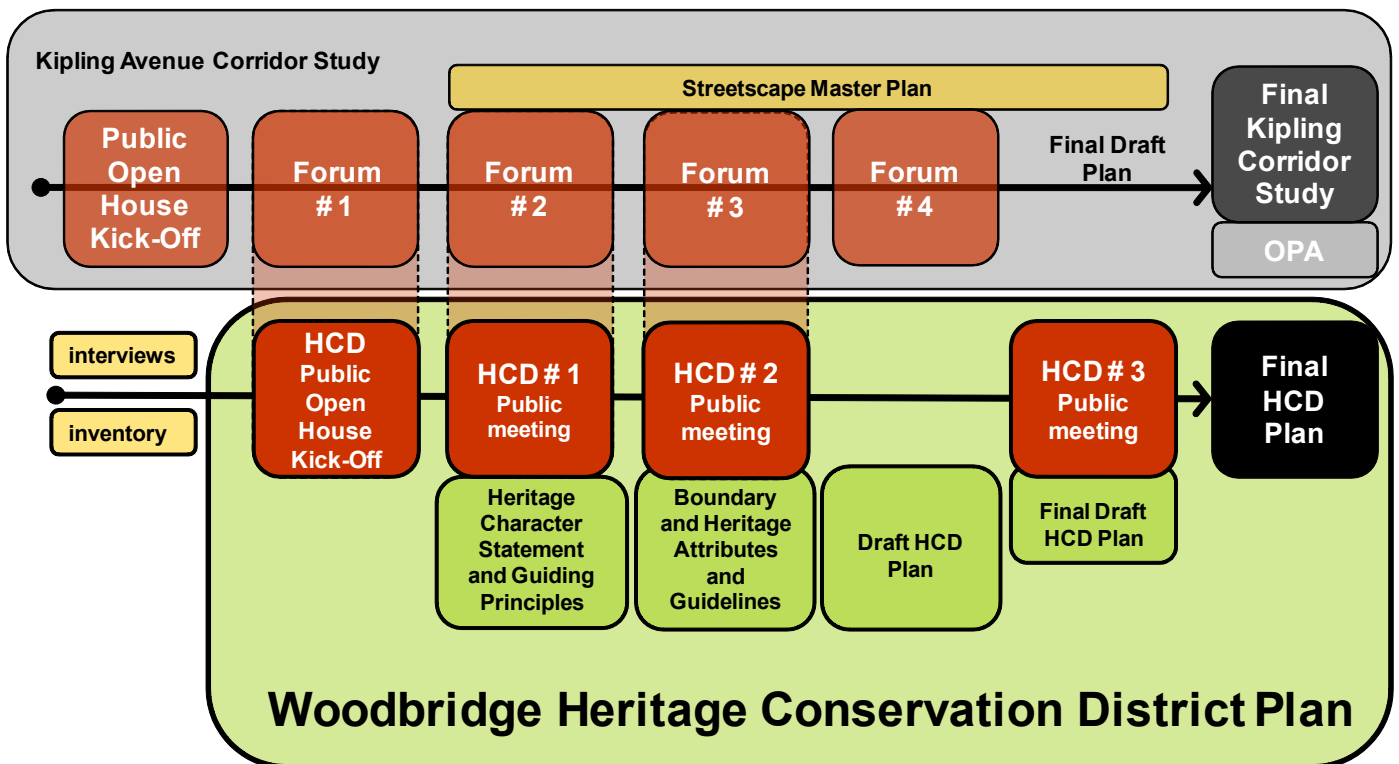


Heritage Building - Woodbridge Avenue

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Schedule 1: Study Area Boundary



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1.4 HCD Study Process

Initiation of the Process

The Woodbridge HCD Study was initiated by the City of Vaughan as a result of community encouragement during the introductory Kipling Avenue Corridor Study public event. Participants voiced their own aspirations and concerns for the preservation of Woodbridge's unique heritage. It became obvious that an HCD Study for the area was a priority considering the current development within Woodbridge and the effects of change on the existing heritage fabric.

Stakeholder Interviews

A number of stakeholders were identified throughout the process. Residents, businesses, property owners and other interested people were interviewed individually during the first phase of the study. Stakeholder interviews continued throughout the process as additional interests and points of view emerged. These interviews were documented and served as a basis for understanding Woodbridge's unique character, and to test different options for guidelines.

Public Open Houses

Open House # 1

The first Public Open House Kick-off event for the HCD was held jointly with the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study. At this event, the consultant team was introduced to more of the community interested in protecting the heritage fabric of Woodbridge, including property owners, local residents, and business owners. The consultant team provided attendees with information on Heritage Conservation Districts, their purpose, and their impacts on 'designated' areas.

Once participants understood the general principles behind HCDs, they were introduced to this project in particular and the process for establishing an HCD for the Woodbridge Study Area. The consultant team then identified the existing study area, took the attendees through the study process and provided an overview of the area history. As well, the team introduced the building inventory for the study area, the draft objectives, the eight identified heritage character areas and the emerging heritage character statement.

Attendees were invited to review the emerging HCD Plan on informative display panels and provide input on the key components through a Question and Answer Period, and through comment sheets. The information was also available to the public via the City's web site before and after the open house events.

Open House # 2

The second Public Open House event gave an overview of the process, objectives, and a refinement of the heritage character statement. The approach to the heritage conservation of the Woodbridge Study Area was introduced which defined the measure of assessing contributing versus non contributing heritage resources. This was followed by a thorough description and illustrative representation of the architectural guidelines as well as the heritage attributes, district guidelines and heritage building styles.

All of the above information was available on illustrative display panels for discussion with the consultant team.

Open House # 3


In the final Public Meeting, the draft final HCD Plan was presented to participants. The community had an opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of the plan, the objective being to ensure that the final plan accurately reflected the interests of the public.

Developing a Heritage Character Statement

The Heritage Character Statement was developed through the research and analysis phase of this project. It was further informed by the public participation process in which oral and living histories were brought to bear on the subject of Woodbridge's Heritage Character, especially during several walking tours throughout the study area hosted by volunteer community members. This "on-site" process allowed a first hand experience and a measure of understanding through the eyes of the community, of the many important historic attributes and characteristics, both tangible and intangible, that define Woodbridge today.

The HCD identifies elements that contribute to the distinct Heritage Character of the district. These include micro features, such as repetitive decorative elements and paving materials to macro elements like architectural styles, site placement, landscaping, and urban design elements. The HCD Plan also identifies elements or areas that are either beneficial (Assets) or detrimental (Problems) to the coherence of the district. Assets can be tangibles such as open spaces or compatible building styles and scale. They can be intangibles such as a vibrant and safe street life, and character and feel of place. In the same way, problems can be tangible or intangible and may include poor maintenance of both built form and landscapes, modified building style, complete loss of heritage structures, etcetera. By identifying these categories, the Design Guidelines can be tailored to either enhance the assets or to correct the problems over time. It is also an easy way for the public to understand issues that might otherwise seem unrelated and obscure.



 Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study Area Boundary

 New Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study Area Boundary

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Defining District Boundaries

Once the inventory of buildings was conducted, and the Heritage Character Statement drafted, a new heritage boundary was defined to represent the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District. The final boundary was derived using the research and analysis and the public input that was received throughout the Study. The definition of the boundary of the HCD is included in section 5.2 (page 63) of this report.

Defining a Heritage Character Statement

The Heritage Character Statement (with boundaries) provides the basis of the Rationale for Designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Generating HCD Guidelines

The HCD Design Guidelines establish the parameters and standards for managing change within the Heritage Conservation District as it relates to built form and landscapes. The guidelines were developed and edited through public consultation.

Developing Implementation Tools

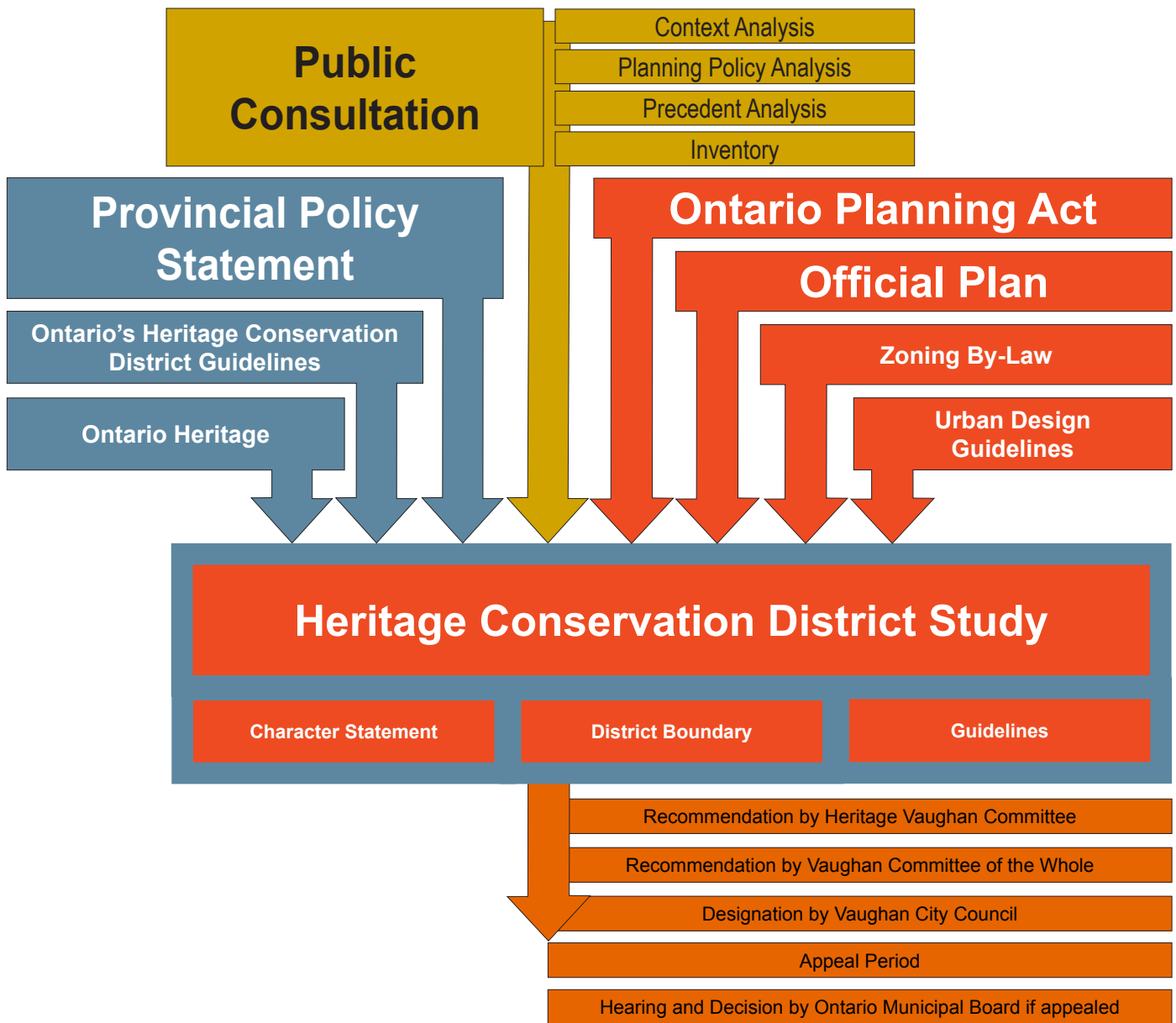
The HCD Plan is rooted in implementation guidelines and presents methods in which the objectives of the HCD can be disseminated and understood in the public realm. Key recommendations of the Plan and Guidelines have been defined with consideration for their implementation, including the approval process.

Notifications

Prior to each large public event the City conducted a mail-out to all property owners within the study area. Additionally, a variety of techniques were employed to notify the public several weeks prior to each event. These included:

- mailed-out announcements to all tenants within the study area;
- contacting community and resident organizations in the neighbouring area to notify their respective memberships and networks;
- announcing each event during the preceding event;
- contacting individuals who signed-in during earlier events directly;
- contacting stakeholders that were identified by other participants through the process;
- posting the meeting information on the City website two weeks prior to each meeting date; and,
- placing ads in the local papers for each meeting event.

How a Heritage Conservation District becomes a reality



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1.5 Policy Context

Provincial Policy Statement (2005)

The *Provincial Policy Statement*, 2005 (PPS) is the document that outlines the Province's current policy on planning and municipal land use that relates to provincial interests. The conservation of heritage resources, including Heritage Conservation Districts, is supported in the PPS. The PPS states that 'Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved'. More specific language is included in actual legislation: the *Ontario Planning Act* and the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The Woodbridge Heritage District Conservation Plan has identified heritage features in the study area and proposed guidelines to protect, use, and manage these cultural resources to preserve their heritage value. (See Part 2 - The Heritage Conservation District)

Ontario Planning Act

The *Ontario Planning Act* states that all planning decisions by municipalities 'shall be consistent with' the *Provincial Policy Statement*. The conservation of heritage resources is thereby required of municipalities. The Act permits municipalities to include more comprehensive conservation policies, that apply to local cultural landscapes, into the *Official Plans* and other policies regulating land use or development within the municipality.

The Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan is an expression of municipal interest in a local cultural landscape. Its purpose is to create the framework for the Heritage Conservation District Plan as permitted by the Ontario Heritage Act and required by the PPS.

Ontario Heritage Act

The *Ontario Heritage Act* is the legislation that regulates heritage preservation in the province. Individual properties that are recognized as possessing heritage value can be 'designated' by Municipal Council. Similarly, entire streetscapes or neighbourhoods can be 'designated' for their heritage value. Under Part IV and V of the Act, the Province charges municipalities with the responsibility of identifying individual heritage properties or broader Heritage Conservation Districts.

Possessing jurisdiction over heritage preservation, the City of Vaughan has commissioned this Heritage Conservation District Study.

Ontario's Heritage Conservation District Guidelines

The Heritage Conservation District Guidelines is a document produced by the Ministry of Culture that provides clear instructions for development, implementation and management of Heritage Conservation Districts.

The Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan was completed according to the process presented in the HCD Guidelines document. The Study exceeded the Guidelines' requirements for consultation when it was seen that emerging guidelines would benefit from further input from local stakeholders and residents.

York Region Official Plan

The York Regional Official Plan contains a number of Cultural Heritage policies that support heritage preservation which were designed to promote cultural heritage activities and conserve cultural heritage resources within the Region. Section 4.2.4. in the Official Plan document encourages area municipalities to document significant heritage resources and to promote heritage awareness.

The Woodbridge Heritage District Conservation Plan further supports and reinforces the objectives and policies set out in the Region of York Official Plan for Cultural Heritage.

Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)

The TRCA policies regulates within the flood plain and conservation lands. The Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District includes parts of the Humber River and adjacent lands, which lie within the flood plain and also includes conservation lands.

Under Ontario Regulation 166/06 (Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines) TRCA regulates development proposals adjacent to natural areas and floodplain areas and issues permits, if appropriate. Additionally, TRCA has the Valley and Stream Corridor Management Program that also provides direction on defining valley and stream corridors.

City of Vaughan Official Plan Amendments

One of the major goals of the The City of Vaughan's Official Plan Amendments #240, #356, and #440 for Woodbridge, is to "Create a distinctive residential community of a scale and character which will relate well to the existing village quality of Woodbridge, and possess a strong sense of community identity". OPA #440 specifically seeks to preserve the heritage resources within the Woodbridge Heritage Commercial Centre, which



Public Consultation



Woodbridge Heritage Study - Area of Influence

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includes the Woodbridge Core, the majority of Kipling Avenue, the neighbourhoods, and the river corridor, and protects and defines the role of its heritage resources in the future urban context of the City of Vaughan. There are policies which speak to:

- preservation of the “Village” character of Woodbridge
- preservation of buildings with architectural or historical interest
- preservation of the characteristic 2-3 storey existing building heights
- preservation of significant landscapes, trees and woodlot areas
- designation of a Special Policy Area for the protection and management of the flood plain
- protection and maintenance of the Humber River Corridor

The Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan includes a comprehensive set of design guidelines to steer future development and protect the unique character of the study area. The guidelines for the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study were developed in accordance to the guidelines of this study. A complete inventory of all buildings in the study area has been undertaken and is included as a separate appendix to this document.

Zoning By-Laws

Woodbridge is zoned as mixed-use consisting of primarily residential land use, ranging from single family housing to mixed use condominiums, with commercial, industrial, open space and open space conservation areas intermixed. The study area is governed by the City’s Zoning By-law.

Guidelines in the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan are generally in conformity with the Zoning By-law. Proposed changes to the Zoning By-law are outlined at the end of this document.

Urban Design Study (1994)

The *Woodbridge Historic Commercial Centre Urban Design Study* is a document of urban, architectural and landscape design guidelines established to implement the goals and objectives of Amendment #440 to the Vaughan Official Plan (Woodbridge Historic Commercial Centre Official Plan). The intent is to preserve and enhance existing historical and architecturally significant buildings and ensure that new development is harmonious with the historical-architectural character, and that the heritage resources are accessible to the public.

The Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study guidelines are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Urban Design Study and particularly emphasize the goal of creating an accessible, walkable heritage environment for the community and a unique destination for all to enjoy.

Public Consultation

The *Ontario Heritage Act* requires one public meeting to be held prior to the passing of the Heritage Conservation District designating by-law. The Heritage Conservation District Guideline document recommends that a Heritage Conservation District Study include 3 or more public meetings before the draft HCD Plan and by-law are submitted for comment at the statutory public meeting.

The Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study undertook a varied program of public consultation including; community public open house sessions, one-on-one stakeholder meetings, residents group meetings, and informative guided tours throughout the study area and adjacent “areas of influence”. The goal of the public consultation was not only to receive meaningful input from all stakeholders, and to garner wide-spread support for the final Heritage Conservation District Plan, but also to educate and inform landowners of the process, outcomes and the benefits of heritage conservation. Public Meetings were well publicized and influenced by involved citizens. At each meeting, participants were given an update on the HCD Study process, were consulted on the emerging options for HCD guidelines, and were given the opportunity to provide feedback on key issues.

Contributing Policy Research

Heritage Conservation District Plans require a Heritage Character Statement, a Description of Heritage Attributes, and Policy Statements and Guidelines.

Heritage professionals, planners and urban designers contributed to the exhaustive context analysis, planning policy analysis, precedent study, and inventory, all of which were essential to the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan.

Approval Phase

The final Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan will be presented to the Heritage Vaughan Committee to review. The plan is then presented at a Public Hearing for feedback and then subsequently presented back to the Heritage Committee as a Final Draft Plan. The Plan is then brought before Vaughan Committee of the Whole for approval. If approved, a by-law will be passed by Council establishing the boundaries of a Heritage Conservation District and giving effect to the District Plan including the guidelines. Any person has the right to appeal this by-law to the OMB.

Timeline

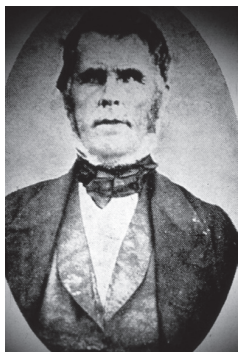
Timeline image references are located on page 34



1799 Empire Loyalists begin to acquire property and settle in Vaughan

1801 Records show earliest land acquisitions in the area

1830 The first school house is built around present day 8000 Kipling Avenue



1837 Rowland Burr arrives and obtains land and water mill rights. Builds a mill at present day Woodbridge and Kipling by the Humber. The settlement becomes known as "Burwick".

1855 Name of Village changed at request of Post Office to avoid confusion with "Berwick" Woodbridge is chosen partly due to large number of bridges in the settlement

1856 New Wesleyan Church constructed of brick adjacent to first log church on Meeting House Lane

1600's Etienne Brule explores the Humber River Valley with the Hurons



1785 Humber Holland Survey. Route North from Toronto along the Humber also known as "Toronto Carrying Place"

1797 Governor Simcoe completes first part of Yonge Street - Humber Holland Portage abandoned



1840's Burwick has an agricultural fair and includes a Methodist and an Anglican Church

1845 John Abell arrives in Burwick. Sets up first factory to manufacture mill irons and similar articles.

