



## Heritage Conservation Principles for Landuse Planning

The Province of Ontario has developed a new policy statement pursuant to section 3 of the Planning Act - (the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005) which municipal land use planning decisions are to be consistent with. The Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 includes specific policies on the conservation of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources (PPS 2005 - Policy Section 2.6). Increasingly, Municipal Heritage Committees may be requested to advise planning departments and municipal councils on land use planning issues as these affect local heritage resources that have cultural heritage value or interest. The following core principles were developed to provide guidance to Municipal Heritage Committees.

For more information, please call the Ministry of Culture at (416) 212-0644 or Toll Free at 1-866-454-0049 or refer to the website at [www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca).

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### Timeliness

It is important to identify heritage conservation issues at the beginning of the planning process and to make continuous reference to heritage conservation issues throughout the decision making process.

### Value/Significance

Respect for the significance of the resource must be taken into consideration at every step in the planning and decision-making process.

Respect the cultural values of the community for whom the resource has significance. Evaluation of significance should reflect consensus among community members with an interest in the preservation, use and development of cultural heritage.

Evaluation must be based on proper research. Evaluation clarifies where significance or value lies in cultural heritage and how that significance is expressed.

### Inclusiveness

Look at the community as a whole before you look at individual parts. Consider both tangible heritage resources such as structures and artifacts and intangible heritage resources such as cultural expressions, stories, songs etc.

In a community, a heritage resource is part of a whole system which includes the natural environment and human activities. The activities of one part may affect the other parts. Have concern for maintaining the integrity of the whole system.

Encourage approaches to planning that are sustainable, that minimize negative long-term impacts on the social, cultural, economic and physical aspects of cultural heritage resources.

### Respect for Context

The surroundings or setting of a cultural heritage resource often contribute to its significance and vice versa. Where significance is linked to the *contextual* value of the resource, try to preserve the context.

Try to maintain the same use for a heritage resource, or if this is not possible, find a compatible new use that does not demand too much change to the resource's physical fabric.

**Retention**

The decision making process should always presume in favour of retaining the heritage resource. The only exception to this rule is when there is a demonstrated public benefit of greater importance than the protection of the heritage resource.

The significance, type, use and condition of a resource should be considered as part of the decision making process. Only allow changes that will offer the least harm to the resource or will provide the greatest potential to enhance its significance and appreciation.

Where negative impacts are unavoidable, effective mitigation must be applied including reusing and making sympathetic alterations, reconstruction, moving to an appropriate setting, commemoration on site or elsewhere, or recording the resource before any negative changes are made.

**Caution**

Avoid decisions that will damage or harm the fabric of cultural heritage resources and their settings. Use approaches that offer the least risk to the fabric of the resource. Consider sympathetic alterations or reversible changes to it.

Give priority to measures that improve conditions for long-term conservation: focus on maintenance of parts, setting, function or use.

Ensure that approaches proposed for conservation have been proved reliable and effective and that they constitute good practice.

**Public Benefit**

To understand and appreciate cultural resources, the public should be provided with accurate interpretation of the resource, through information that effectively communicates the importance and value of the resource.

The information contained in this InfoSheet should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialized legal or professional advice in connection with any particular matter.

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