



## Why designate?

Planning for the future of a strong, vibrant community requires knowledge of the past and an understanding of what we value in the present. Existing buildings, structures and landscapes often define a community's unique identity and give it character and a sense of place. To help guide change, it is important to identify and protect the places in the community that have cultural heritage value.

Designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* is one tool that hundreds of communities across Ontario have used to protect thousands of heritage properties. Properties can be designated individually (under Part IV of the Act) or as part of a larger area or Heritage Conservation District (under Part V).

Heritage designation:

- *RECOGNIZES* the importance of a property to the local community;
- *PROTECTS* the property's cultural heritage value;
- *ENCOURAGES* good stewardship and conservation; and
- *PROMOTES* knowledge and understanding about the property.

For the community, designation of heritage properties provides a process to ensure the heritage attributes of a property are conserved over time. Property owners, the Municipal Heritage Committee and municipal staff work together to ensure that changes to the property respect its value.

For the property owner, designation recognizes the significance of their property and assures them that future owners will respect and appreciate their investment. Designation may also provide property owners with access to grants, loans or tax relief to support the conservation of the property.

For more information on what it means to designate a property, refer to the following Ministry of Culture publications:

- *Designating Heritage Properties: A Guide to Municipal Designation of Individual Properties under the Ontario Heritage Act*, or
- *Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act*.

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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