



Report

Subject: York Street Heritage Conservation District Work Plan and Municipal Heritage Register Review

Department: Infrastructure Services

Division: Planning

Report #: INS-2025-011

Meeting Date: 2025-02-10

Recommendations

That report INS-2025-011, York Street Heritage Conservation District Work Plan and Municipal Heritage Register Review, be received; and

That staff and the Town's external peer review consultants proceed to initiate the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study process for the York Street neighbourhood pursuant to the work plan outlined in this report; and

That staff proceed with retaining a Heritage Planning Student and engaging the Town's consulting team to undertake the Municipal Heritage Register review as described in this report; and

That Council authorize staff to utilize up to \$18,000 of 2025 Planning Operating Budget Consulting Fees towards the cost of the Heritage Planning Student; and

That Council amend the budget for capital project 11826.0000 by increasing the expenditure budget by \$63,000, funded from the General Capital Reserve.

Overview

In response to requests from residents in the York Street area to pursue a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) designation of this neighbourhood, and in receipt of a staff reports in consideration of such, Council directed staff (via Resolution No. 2024-093) to retain a heritage consultant to review the York Street portion of the 2016-2018 Merchants and Prince of Whales HCD proposal to: i) determine if the area meets prescribed HCD criteria; and ii) recommend a preferred approach for designation.

Staff were also directed to hire a Heritage Planning Student to review the Town's Municipal Heritage Register and identify properties that should be pursued for individual designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Staff retained consultants SGL Planning and Design Inc. (SGL) and Stantec Consulting Ltd. (Stantec) to provide planning and heritage consulting support services respectively on an as-needed basis. One of the first assignments for the Consulting team was to evaluate the York Street neighbourhood per Council's resolution.

Stantec has prepared a work plan and cost estimate to prepare the HCD Study and Plan required to designate the York Street neighbourhood as an HCD. The Study phase would occur from February through June 2025 and includes area research, property attribute inventory, analysis and evaluation of significance, with recommendations for developing an HCD Plan. The Plan phase would occur from July through December 2025 and will establish the HCD Plan with a related implementation strategy (i.e. official plan and/or zoning amendments, heritage permit process, etc.) needed to designate the York Street HCD. The total estimated cost for this project is \$70,000.

Staff and the consulting team have prepared a strategy for reviewing the Municipal Heritage Register in order to pursue appropriate properties for individual designation:

- 1) Stantec would conduct an initial overall review and prioritization strategy of properties on the Heritage Register, in consultation with staff and Heritage Orangeville.
- 2) A Heritage Planning Student would be retained for the summer or fall term to conduct further research of prioritized properties and prepare the required materials to support the designation process for such properties.
- 3) Stantec would provide support to staff and the Heritage Planning Student by peer-reviewing any individual property designation materials on an as-needed basis.

The above approach represents an initial phase of the Municipal Heritage Register review, with properties identified and prioritized for individual designation expected to proceed late 2025 and into 2026. The total estimated cost for the 2025 phase of this project (i.e. prioritization strategy and Heritage Planning Student) is \$39,000.

The York Street HCD and Municipal Heritage Register review projects have an estimated total cost of \$109,000. In conjunction with Council's previous directions for funding these projects, staff recommend the following funding approach and are seeking direction from Council to proceed accordingly:

- i) \$28,000 from previously approved capital project 11826.0000;
- ii) \$18,000 from the 2025 Planning Division operating budget allocation for professional consulting support to be allocated towards the cost of the Heritage Planning Student; and
- iii) \$63,000 in additional expenditure approval under project 11826.0000 funded from the General Capital Reserve.

Background

In response to requests from residents in the York Street area to pursue a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) designation of this neighbourhood, Council directed Heritage Orangeville to review the proposed HCD approach, with Planning staff to report back with a recommendation. Following receipt of recommendations from Heritage Orangeville and Planning staff, Council directed staff (via resolution 2024-093) to:

- 1) Retain a heritage expert to review the York Street portion of previous work done in support of a larger HCD area around the downtown, to determine if York Street meets prescribed HCD criteria and recommend a preferred designation approach; and
- 2) Hire a planning student to review the Municipal Heritage Register and recommend specific properties for designation.

Council further directed that the above projects be funded using \$28,000 from former reserves under the Heritage Committee and \$30,000 from the Planning Division annual operating budget as required.

Staff retained SGL Planning and Design Inc. (SGL) and Stantec Consulting Ltd. (Stantec) to provide planning and heritage consulting support services on an as-needed, standing offer basis. Staff met with members of SGL and Stantec in October 2024 to discuss the York Street HCD Request and provide background information to the consultant team. Based on these discussions, SGL and Stantec reviewed the available background information to consider the York Street HCD Study. Staff and Stantec brought forward a report to Council on December 16, 2024, indicating that much of the previous research undertaken for the area can be used as a basis for pursuing an HCD. Stantec also indicated there are conservation benefits and efficiencies with an HCD approach. Staff and Stantec were directed to continue with the York Street HCD process and report back in February 2025 with a work plan and budget for the HCD Study and Plan.

For the municipal heritage register review, with Council's direction to hire a planning student to review the Register and recommend properties to pursue for designation, staff have worked with Stantec to develop an approach that best utilizes the resources of heritage planning student and Stantec's expertise in this type of assignment.

Analysis/Current Situation

Proposed York Street HCD Work Plan

Key Issues

Stantec has direct experience working in communities with similar histories to that of Orangeville, albeit in a different context. We have worked on developing HCDs in

communities that include residential neighbourhoods adjacent to historic downtowns or village commercial cores.

Our team believes that there are likely to be three key focuses for this project:

Identifying the specific heritage character and attributes of the York Street neighbourhood and preparing policies and guidelines that conserve the attributes and character of the HCD

Navigating the balance between conservation of York Street's heritage resources and making space for compatible new development that fits the character of the neighbourhood, and

Engaging the public and stakeholders, particularly local residents, to develop their understanding of what an HCD is, how it functions, and how it can suit the needs of the community

It must be noted that HCDs should not be considered a means of stopping development or 'freezing' an area in a specific time period. Areas that become HCDs are expected to evolve over time. The role of an HCD is to manage change -- such that alterations, additions, new development, demolition, or public infrastructure projects are compatible with the character of an HCD.

The following work plan outlines the methodology and deliverables to undertake an HCD Study and Plan for the York Street area.

1. HCD Study Phase

Background Review, Research, and Inventory (February to April 2025)

This task will consist of a review of historical research contained in existing reports. This task will also include additional research to supplement previously completed material, specifically to put the York Street neighbourhood into context with the broader Town history. Research will be completed using the previously completed HCD Study documents, local archival sources, Town resources, print material, and online sources. Our research will trace the historical development of the Town to identify key historical themes, time periods, and groups or individuals that have shaped the community. This will help us to identify the associated tangible resources.

Our team will compile an inventory of properties in the HCD Study Area using the Collector platform. The inventory will include data needed to analyze HCD character and potential boundaries as well as individual properties according to O. Reg. 9/06. The collector form will include the information described in Section 1.6 and will also include the HCD evaluation criteria from O. Reg. 9/06 of the OHA.

The following sub-tasks will be conducted as part of this work:

Historical Research

- o Review and update historical and documentary research
- o Compile a history, evolution, and development of the Study Area, illustrated with photographs, mapping and comprehensive timeline
- o Analysis of the historical themes and design typologies that characterize the built form, public realm, landscape, and streetscape features of the HCD Study Area
- o Determine a Period (or Periods) of Significance that inform the cultural heritage values and visible character of the HCD Study Area

Planning Review

- o Review previous HCD Studies, background materials, existing policies, tools, and by-laws in the Town of Orangeville
- o Identify approved or pending plans or policies that would affect the Study Area
- o Determine existing land use patterns in the Study Area

Site Visit and Inventory

- o Identify and inventory built features, structures, and landscapes within the Study Area
- o Identify the visual environment including distinctive spaces, roadways, views, and topographical features
- o Identify vehicular and pedestrian movement patterns, laneways, landscaped areas, vistas, nodes, vegetation, and open space features, topographical features or structures that contribute to the character of the area
- o Identify vacant or undeveloped land that may be significant in securing the heritage character and distinction of the proposed district
- o Compile a comprehensive inventory database (by municipal address) of individual sites, groups, and concentrations of architectural, historical, visual, and cultural importance

Analysis and Reporting (February to May 2025)

This task will consist of the development of the HCD Study, building on the data and information gathered from the early stages of the Project. Our team will review data collected from inventory, historical research, planning review, and PIC #1 to determine

defensible boundary and or character areas of the Study Area. Our reporting will include recommendations for HCD designation, including a Statement of Significance and Heritage Attributes, if applicable. We will prepare a narrative and graphic report with accompanying mapping, inventory, and photographs for Draft Study Report #1 submission to staff.

The following sub-tasks will be conducted as part of this work:

Analysis

- o Describe the current movement (trails, internal roadways, etc.)
- o Describe the broad architectural, historical, cultural, social, economic, and political factors which shaped the development of the study area
- o Analyze and synthesize the inventory data and provide the findings in the draft HCD Study

Evaluation of Significance

- o Provide an evaluation of cultural heritage value of the HCD Study Area, as well as features, elements and/or properties within the Study Area identified as having cultural heritage value or significance in the inventory
- o The evaluation will be completed according to the HCD criteria in O. Reg. 9/06

Heritage Conservation District Recommendations

- o Make recommendations, and provide supporting analysis from planning documents, towards decision for conservation within one or more heritage conservation districts
- o Draft a Statement of Significance outlining the attributes and heritage value of the HCD Study Area
- o Draft a Statement of Objectives making recommendations as to the objectives of the designation of an HCD, consistent with the standards of the OHA, the *Ontario Heritage Toolkit*, and the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*

Boundary Delineation

- o Propose HCD Study boundaries and provide supporting mapping.

Policy Recommendations

- o Provide recommendations for changes to the Official Plan and/or Zoning By-Law, as appropriate

Public Information Centre #1 and Heritage Committee Outreach (May 2025)

Public consultation with York Street residents has already occurred to introduce the concept of an HCD and provide information on the HCD process. Stantec will facilitate an additional Public Information Centre (PIC) to present the draft findings and recommendations of the HCD Study to the public and gather input on the HCD boundary, HCD Plan objectives, and input on potential policies and guidelines for an HCD Plan. The Draft Study report will also be presented to the Heritage Committee for review and comment.

Final Study Reporting (June 2025)

The Project Team will revise the report based on public and Heritage Committee comments and feedback. Following these updates, a final HCD Study Report and recommendations will be presented to Council.

2. HCD Plan Phase

Phase 2 of the project, the HCD Plan, is provisional based on the recommendations of Phase 1 and direction of Council to proceed with an HCD Plan. If required, the HCD Plan will entail completion of the following broad tasks:

Plan Development (July 2025 to October 2025)

This task will build on the Final HCD Study Report towards the preparation of a HCD Plan. The plan will refine the goals and objectives for the proposed HCD, as well as outline the relevant Town planning policies, guidelines, and other concepts or procedures aimed at conserving and enhancing the Plan area. The HCD Plan will provide guidance and recommendations for future development that supports conservation in accordance with the Town's Official Plan. A particular focus will be on the conservation of the identified cultural heritage resources in future development applications, including guidelines as to when a Heritage Impact Assessment is required.

Implementation Strategy (July to October 2025)

During this task, the Project Team will recommend a process for implementation of the HCD Plan. We will provide a strategy for meeting overall goals and objectives of the Plan and will identify official policy amendments, approvals, or heritage reviews that may be required as part of the implementation process. The team will also recommend a monitoring system for policy and procedure implementation and will identify potential sources of funding or other incentives for the District. The following sub-task will be conducted as part of this work:

- o Provide an outline of the implementation process and approvals required for the HCD Plan to take effect

Policy Framework (July to October 2025)

During this task, the Project Team will provide policies and illustrated guidelines for the HCD Plan to assist in supporting the alternation and conservation of the contributing properties and resources within the Plan area, and to address design and conservation approaches for cultural heritage landscape elements, streetscapes, and the public realm.

The following sub-tasks will be conducted as part of this work:

- o Provide a summary of required changes to the Official Plan, zoning provisions, or other Town by-laws or policies in effect in the HCD (the recommendations will be consistent with concurrent planning studies)
- o Provide policies and guidelines for alterations, additions, demolition, streetscaping, landscaping, views, public works, gateways, parks, trails, and open spaces
- o Provide policies and guidelines for new construction within the HCD to encourage compatible and sympathetic development, based on heritage best practices, relevant planning and policy document and the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*
- o Provide a list of works or actions that require staff and/or heritage committee review, and actions that are exempt from a heritage alteration permit

Presentation of Draft Plan (October 2025)

This task will consist of presenting the findings of the Draft Plan Report to stakeholders and the community. Stantec will prepare presentation materials to summarize project updates and seek feedback. Stantec will present to the Town's Heritage Committee, where they will also discuss the recommendations of the draft report.

Final Plan Reporting (December 2025)

Following the second round of consultation, the Project Team will revise the report based on comments and feedback. Following these updates, a final HCD Plan will be presented in a Statutory Public Meeting of Town Council.

Additional Study Area Considerations: Bythia Street and John Street

At the December 16, 2024, Council Meeting, Council directed Staff to identify the additional costs and tasks required with expanding the Study Area from York Street to include Bythia Street between Broadway and Hillside Drive, and Church Street, as well

as the municipal park known as Kay Cee Gardens south of York Street. Inclusion of these additional areas would require inventory and evaluation of each property within the expanded Study Area. Historical research would also need to be reviewed and updated for the expanded area. Public Consultation initiatives already proposed for the York Street Study Area would be expanded to include property owners from the expanded Study Area.

Should council direct Staff to expand the Study Area, it would be most efficient to complete the evaluation, research, and consultation concurrently with the York Street Study Area, rather than at separate timeframes, or there would likely be additional cost and schedule implications if the additional areas were added later in the process.

Heritage Register Review

Council directed staff to hire a Heritage Planning Student to review the Municipal Non-Designated Registry properties to identify priority properties for Part IV designation under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). Staff will prepare a job description and posting for retention of a student between mid-May and end-of-August, 2025, and will manage the application review, interview, and hiring process. It is anticipated that the Heritage Planning Student would work approximately 560 hours over the 16-week period (approximately 35 hours per week).

To assist Staff and the Heritage Planning Student, Stantec will prepare a prioritization strategy in consultation with Staff and Heritage Orangeville in Q1 and Q2 2025 to provide a framework for and timeline for designation prioritization. This strategy may be based on the following, in consultation with Staff and the Heritage Committee:

- Potential risk of property with respect to anticipated or potential future development.
- Potential for Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (CHVI) based on review of previous research and identification of “contributing” properties.
- High level review of heritage integrity, based on existing photographs and extent of physical modifications to the property, where available.
- Property type and visibility from the public realm.

The identification of a prioritization strategy will guide the Heritage Planning Student in determining which properties to assess during their term, and which properties will be assessed in 2026. It will help the student and Heritage Orangeville prioritize properties to be pursued for designation, where the student would conduct further property research and prepare supporting designation materials (i.e. designation by-law, description of heritage values, statement of cultural heritage significance) for such properties.

Stantec will remain available to provide support and strategic advisory guidance to the Heritage Planning Student and Staff by providing review of the first draft designation

reports at a peer review level for quality control, and by providing monthly touchpoints to support the Heritage Planning Student in their research and analysis.

Stantec will also provide ongoing support to the Town for candidate designation properties that may be subject to appeal to the OLT, by providing a peer review of the designation by-law, statement of significance and heritage attributes, defensiveness of supporting information, and areas of potential discrepancy or improvement, if applicable.

Corporate Implications

Based on the work plan outlined above, the estimated cost to complete the York Street HCD (Study and Plan) and Municipal Heritage Register review (2025 phase) is outlined as follows:

Project Task	Estimate
York Street HCD:	
Review work and reporting to-date (October 2024-January 2025)	\$ 4,000
HCD Study for York Street (February to June 2025)	\$ 34,000
HCD Plan for York Street (July to December 2025)	\$ 24,000
Additional Study Area: Inventory, Evaluation, and research for additional Properties on Bythia Street and John Street as part of an expanded HCD Study Area. Note that this cost may be greater if not pursued with the early evaluation stage but added later in the process.	\$ 8,000
Total Cost for York Street HCD	\$ 70,000
Heritage Register Review:	
Summer-term Heritage Planning Student, assuming approximately 560 hours of work during a 16-week period	\$ 18,000
Stantec to prepare the Register Prioritization Strategy and support the Heritage Planning Student during their term	\$ 21,000
Total Cost for the Heritage Register Review for 2025	\$ 39,000
Total cost for York Street HCD and 2025 Heritage Register Review	\$109,000
Budget capacity:	
Planning consulting budget to cover student wages	\$18,000
Previously approved capital project budget	\$28,000
Subtotal budget capacity	\$46,000
Budget shortfall	\$63,000

Although previously, funds allocated to these projects per Council Resolution 2024-093 totalled \$58,000 (\$28,000 from former reserves under the Heritage Committee and

\$30,000 from the Planning Division annual operating budget), staff recommend retaining \$12,000 from the \$30,000 operating budget amount for potential consulting support needed for other assignments as required. The remaining \$18,000 of the operating budget provision is available to cover the operating costs related to the Heritage Planning Student. On this basis, the total funds available would be **\$46,000**, leaving a **shortfall of \$63,000 for capital cost associated with these projects**.

Staff propose to amend the 2025 expenditure budget for project 11826.0000 by \$63,000 and fund the increase from the General Capital Reserve. Note that in addition to the table above, Stantec estimates an approximate cost to provide a peer review of designation by-laws that may result in appeal to the OLT is \$2,500 per property (excluding applicable taxes). Heritage Orangeville has assigned \$7,500 from their committee budget to support individual property designations as part of the Committee work plan. These peer review costs (where required) can be covered by this Committee budget item.

Conclusion

Staff and the consulting team have reported back with a work plan, schedule, and budget for preparation of the York Street HCD, and a specific cost estimate to expand the Study Area based on Council's request for consideration of adjacent streets. Staff and the consulting team have also prepared a recommended approach to conduct the heritage register review and utilize the resources of a Heritage Planning Student and Stantec's advisory support. Staff request Council's direction on proceeding with the York Street HCD with the additional Study Area and the heritage register review, with corresponding budget allocation recommendations.

Strategic Alignment

Strategic Plan

Strategic Goal: Future-Readiness

Objective: Confirm applicable governance and policy regimes

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

Theme: Economic Development and Culture

Strategy: Further establish Orangeville's identity through the preservation and expansion of tourism, culture and heritage.

Notice Provisions

There are no public notification provisions applicable to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s): None.