

Ontario Launches Heritage Tool Kit

Want to better understand Ontario's heritage conservation process?

Help has arrived. The Ontario Heritage Tool Kit, a series of five guides explaining the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Planning Act, the Historic Places Initiative and other related programs, was unveiled during Ontario Heritage Week, February 20-26, 2006.

The guides are designed for municipal councils, staff and municipal heritage committees (MHCs), land-use planners, heritage professionals and organizations, property owners, and others.

"The Ontario Heritage Tool Kit could not have been realized without the invaluable collaboration of dedicated heritage stakeholders across Ontario," said then-Minister of Culture Madeleine Meilleur last February. "I would like to commend the many local heritage organizations and the hundreds of volunteers across the province who gave their time and energy to help preserve and protect Ontario's heritage."



"Heritage matters to Ontarians and contributes to our prosperity and quality of life," declared the minister. "The passage of the new *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) places our provincial heritage resources in the hands of Ontarians. The Ontario Heritage Tool Kit supports both the implementation of the new Act and the greater empowerment of stakeholders and communities across the province."

The five guides, available on CD and on the ministry's website, include:

- *Heritage Property Evaluation: A Guide to Listing, Researching and Evaluating Cultural Heritage Property in Ontario Communities.* *Designating Heritage Properties: A Guide to Municipal Designation of Individual Properties Under the Ontario Heritage Act.* *Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act.* *Your Community, Your Heritage, Your Committee: A Guide to Establishing and Sustaining an Effective Municipal Heritage Committee.*
- *Heritage Resources in the Land Use Planning Process: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Policies of the Ontario Provincial Policy Statement, 2005.*

Heritage Property Evaluation helps identify and evaluate the "cultural heritage value or interest" of properties in Ontario communities. It explains the provisions for protecting "natural features, cultural heritage landscapes" and "archaeological resources" and includes a checklist from survey to protection for these properties. It also lists the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the basics for compiling a register of cultural heritage properties as well as a how-to guide for undertaking historical research and examining the physical evidence of a property.

Designating Heritage Properties explains designation and how it works to protect cultural heritage properties. A step-by-step description of the designation process is provided, including the role of the municipality, municipal heritage committee and the property owner. It explains the different written requirements for a designation, provides advice on how these should be prepared and describes how designation can work to conserve the heritage value of a property. Part of the guide covers how to deal with a request for demolition, how demolition can be prevented and how a designation bylaw should be amended. It includes an appendix with detailed flowcharts for easy reference.

Heritage Conservation Districts gives an overview of heritage conservation districts (HCDs), describing their benefits and characteristics including recent legislative changes. It lists what is required in designating a district from consulting with the MHC through to delineating its boundaries and consulting with the public. Information on preparing an HCD plan and guidelines, ensuring the passage of a designation bylaw and the process for implementing the district plan are provided. Details for managing the district are discussed, from reviewing easements and covenants to expropriation. Three appendices are included: a summary of key changes to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 – definitions, and a list of supporting tools.

Your Community, Your Heritage, Your Committee describes the role of municipal heritage committees, how to establish one, create terms of reference, build membership and establish a budget. Information explains the role of city council in heritage conservation, the MHC's reporting relationship to council and how to identify municipal staff to support the MHC's activities. Tools for building and sustaining an MHC are identified including how to develop a vision and mission and how to evaluate its effectiveness. The guide also discusses the benefits of establishing and sustaining a Municipal Heritage Council.

Heritage Resources in the Land Use Planning Process deals with identifying and protecting cultural heritage and archaeology resources and introduces the new Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005. PPS, 2005 supports the principles of strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and economic growth for the long term in Ontario. The Act now requires that all decisions affecting land-use planning matters “shall be consistent with” the PPS rather than the former “shall have regard to.”

This guide's support material covers:

- Built heritage resources.Cultural heritage landscapes.Archaeological resources and areas of archaeological potential.Adjacent lands and protected heritage property.
- Heritage impact assessments and conservation plans.

Details on the kits can be found at

<http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/culdiv/heritage/Toolkit/toolkit.htm>.

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