

City of  
*Summerside*  
Prince Edward Island



## Heritage Conservation Plan 2022

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This document is an office consolidation of the **Heritage Conservation Plan 2022**.

**Current to October 17, 2022**

It is intended for information and reference purposes only.

This document is not the official version of the Plan.

We have tried to ensure the version of the Plan is as accurate as possible; however, where accuracy is critical, please consult official sources.

If you find any errors or omissions in this consolidation, please contact the Department of Human Resources and Legal Affairs.

**Adopted by Council, October 17, 2022**



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## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 TITLE

The title of this plan is the *Summerside Heritage Conservation Plan 2022*, but it may also be referred to as the 'Heritage Plan' when in context. The Heritage Plan contains two schedules:

Schedule 'A': Heritage Plan text

Schedule 'B': Heritage District (HD) map.

### 1.2 AUTHORITY

The Heritage Conservation Plan is enacted under the authority of the *PEI Heritage Places Protection Act, R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap.H-3.1.* and the *PEI Municipal Government Act (MGA) R.S.P.E.I 1988, Cap. M-12.1.*

### 1.3 ADOPTION

The *Summerside Heritage Conservation Plan 2022* is adopted on its approval by Council and the Minister responsible for administering the *Heritage Places Protection Act*.

### 1.4 EFFECTIVE DATE

The effective date of this Heritage Conservation Plan is December 2022. The Heritage Conservation Plan 2003 shall be repealed upon the effective date of this Plan.

### 1.5 STATUS

The first *Summerside Heritage Conservation Plan* was completed in 2003 and *Heritage Conservation Bylaw* in 2004. Council appointed five-member Heritage Review Task Force in 2021 to review the Plan and Bylaw. The Task Force made a number of recommendations which are incorporated into this Plan, Bylaw and Heritage Programs document.

### 1.6 PURPOSE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Plan lays out Council policies for recognizing, protecting and promoting heritage resources throughout the City of Summerside, both inside and outside a heritage district identified in Schedule 'B'. The Plan will be implemented through a Heritage Conservation Bylaw CS-37 which will be paramount over the City's building and zoning bylaws on specified heritage matters. The Plan and Bylaw will also be implemented through City programs for heritage support. This Plan adopts *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (SG) second edition, 2010.

### 1.7 INTERPRETATION

The full meaning of Council policies shall be interpreted in the context of their introductory text statements.

### 1.8 PROCESS

The Plan and implementing Bylaw shall be subject to minimum five-year periodic reviews. At any other time, Council may undertake a special review on major policy issues in the Plan, Bylaw and/or Programs and may approve specific amendments.

### 1.9 HERITAGE BOARD (HB)

Summerside will appoint a Heritage Board when dealing with heritage conservation issues. The Board's functions will include:

- recommending on heritage property designations, temporary designations and revocations;
- reviewing land-use applications which may impact on heritage resources (see section 5);
- review and approval of heritage permit applications, including heritage incentive and grant programs;
- review and approval of heritage permit demolition applications in the heritage district, for designated and supporting district properties that are undesignated and more than 50 years old from current calendar date.

Council policy is to:

- HP1.** Appoint a Council-Citizen Heritage Board (HB) with its powers under the *Heritage Places Protection Act* to recommend to Council on heritage conservation matters.

## SECTION 2 GOALS AND STRATEGY

### 2.1 Importance of Heritage Resources

Summerside has a rich and diverse endowment of historic buildings and sites and is home to an armed forces base of 50 years duration that had a profound impact upon the community and province. Thus, reflecting its history as a maritime seaport, shipbuilding centre, market centre, for Prince County, military base and world centre for the silver fox industry. There are over 150 noteworthy historic buildings in the City. Many of these buildings are clustered in the central historic core.

The City has a fine collection of older homes and some historically noteworthy commercial and institutional buildings. A broad range of building styles are represented, including Maritime Vernacular, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Georgian, Bracketed, Queen Anne Revival, Four Squares and Romanesque Revival, mostly in wooden construction but some in brick. The City also has historical parklands and ornamental gardens, as well as sites

associated with the old shipbuilding days. Summerside's rich history and the value of its heritage resources are well documented elsewhere.<sup>1 2</sup>

Council policy is to:

**HP2.** Recognize the importance of Summerside's rich and diverse endowment of heritage resources from the past.

## **2.2 NEED FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION**

Some of Summerside's historic buildings have been beautifully conserved thanks to the considerable efforts of their owners, but active City support is also needed to ensure the longevity of all our heritage resources and to realize their full values for property owners and the community.

A large proportion of Summerside's older buildings are clustered within the downtown business improvement area (BIA) and adjoining residential neighbourhoods. These buildings have not been exposed to the same downtown redevelopment pressures that have caused major heritage losses in other communities, e.g. Calgary and, to some extent, Halifax. Over time, however, reduced development activity in the central core will work against the survival of our heritage resources, unless remedial action is taken. Heritage buildings have to be self-sustaining by providing continuing value for their owners, whether as traditional homes, or for unique apartment living, commercial space or other uses. But, without continued investment security and owner satisfaction, the motivation to invest in older, high-maintenance buildings will decline commensurably.

There are already serious warning signs that devitalization of the City's central core is, bit by bit, eroding the sustainability of some of our heritage resources. First, a number of older single-family homes have been broken down for duplex and rental apartments in a manner not always compatible with their historical character. Second, some older buildings are falling into disrepair because of inadequate owner maintenance (and are taking down the value of neighbouring properties with them).

By comparison, some communities are simultaneously giving their heritage buildings new economic life and promoting them as a vital component of an attractive and competitive urban core, e.g. Charlottetown, and Victoria, B.C. Summerside wants to be the type of community where heritage conservation and urban revitalization proceed hand-in-hand and are mutually supportive. Thus, the City will conserve its heritage resources, not just in the traditional regulatory sense of protecting them against harmful developments or neglect, but by also fostering a conducive economic environment for sustaining them into

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<sup>1</sup> See Robert Allan Rankin (1980) *Down at the Shore. A History of Summerside, Prince Edward Island (1752-1945)* and Faye Pound (2000) *Heritage Walking Tour: Summerside, Prince Edward Island*. For a historical overview, see the *Strategy*, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> See "Heritage Sites and Property Inventory Analysis Final Report" by D. Allan Savidant FCGA, August 2000

the future.

There are already excellent examples in Summerside of what can be done to sustain our heritage resources. A number of historic buildings have been successfully recycled for new commercial and residential uses, while staying true to their historical character, including the successful conversion of some magnificent old homes into tourist homes. The City, through the Culture Summerside department, has assumed stewardship of the *Wyatt Heritage Properties* and opened them up to the public. The popularity of both the Properties and the *City's Heritage Walking Tour* among visitors is proof that heritage tourism can become a major growth industry for the community. Also, a creative partnership is evolving between the City and the private sector to implement a new 'Vision' and an Urban Core Plan for revitalizing the downtown business improvement area (BIA), to which heritage conservation can make a large contribution.<sup>3</sup>

Overall, there is growing appreciation within the community that our fine buildings from the past cannot be taken for granted, and that the City needs to assist with protecting and enhancing their values for present and future generations. Council policy is to:

- HP3.** Sustain and enhance the full cultural, social, and economic values of Summerside's heritage resources for present and future generations with active support from the City.

### **2.3 HERITAGE CONSERVATION GOALS**

The City will pursue a balanced mix of cultural, social and economic goals for heritage conservation. No single goal can be pursued in isolation: success will depend on all goals being implemented together. For instance, heritage resources are very well worth conserving for their own intrinsic cultural values, but conservation will also play a vital contemporary role in creating a livable environment and revitalizing the central core of the City. Indeed, for reasons described above, successful heritage conservation and urban revitalization will need to go hand in hand. Summerside should also realize its full potential for heritage tourism, a growing sector of the North American tourism industry, and which will help bring visitors into our Downtown. There are also growth opportunities for a local heritage renovation industry.

Council policy is to:

- HP4.** Promote a balanced mix of cultural, social and economic goals for heritage conservation, i.e.:
- **'Summerside Pride':** promote a sense of place and pride in

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<sup>3</sup> The partnership process started with *Vision: Summerside Downtown Revitalization Position Paper*. April, 2000. And more recently the Summerside Urban Core Plan, Ekistics Planning & Design, 2016

Summerside.

- **Preservation of cultural artefacts:** preserve heritage artefacts for their cultural memorialization of historical ways of life and unique aesthetic values.
- **Livable urban environment:** promote a livable urban environment enriched by a diversity of the old and the new.
- **Downtown revitalization:** capitalize on heritage attractions to promote economic revitalization of the downtown business improvement area (BIA).
- **Strong inner neighbourhoods:** promote heritage resources as a vital component of strong inner-City neighbourhoods that are attractive places to live for all sectors of home buyers and renters.
- **Tourism and business development:** promote the amenity values of our heritage resources to attract tourists and new businesses.
- **Heritage renovation industry:** promote a local and exportable industry for heritage building restoration.

## 2.4 HERITAGE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Council's heritage goals will be advanced by a strategy based on the following four principles:

### 2.4.1 Strategy Principle No.1. Comprehensive Heritage Support

Heritage conservation is very important to Summerside for a number of reasons, i.e.

- the City is fortunate in having a rich and varied endowment of heritage resources;
- without appropriate support this endowment will be at risk from harmful change and neglect;
- the City can accrue substantial social, cultural and economic benefits from effective heritage conservation; and
- there is strong support in the community for heritage conservation.

Accordingly, the City will match the considerable importance of its heritage resources with comprehensive support for: (a) *recognizing* important heritage resources as "designated heritage properties", (b) *protecting* heritage resources from undesirable changes which may harm their historic character, while facilitating positive improvements; and (c) *promoting* heritage conservation awareness and support among property owners and the community.

Council policy is to:

- HP5.** Provide a comprehensive level of City support for recognizing, protecting, and promoting heritage resources that matches their considerable importance to the community.

#### **2.4.2 Strategy Principle No 2. Coordinated Development**

The City will take a coordinated approach to enhancing the values of its heritage resources as a whole, rather than just focusing narrowly on individual heritage sites. This will be advanced through a heritage district in the central historic core, while also supporting valuable heritage buildings in other areas. A diversity of land uses and activities will be encouraged in a 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district to make it a vibrant, interesting and sustainable urban environment where people want to live, do business, and visit.

Council policy is to:

- HP6.** Take a coordinated approach to enhancing Summerside's heritage resources as an integrated whole, including a heritage district in the central historic core of the City. Additional smaller neighbourhood heritage districts may be created in any area of the City.

#### **2.4.3 Strategy Principle No.3. Adaptation to New Needs**

Heritage resources not only have considerable intrinsic value as cultural artefacts they are also vital living parts of the community to be used respectfully for everyday living, working and recreation. Their economic sustainability over the long term partly depends on them being able to provide continuing value to their owners. Accordingly, the city will facilitate "rehabilitation" or "adaptive re-use" of Heritage Buildings to meet contemporary needs that are compatible with their historical character. Not all buildings in the heritage district have historic value and the City will encourage appropriate redevelopment of these other 'supporting district properties,' when they reach the end of their useful life-cycles.

Council policy is to:

- HP7.** Facilitate rehabilitations or adaptive re-use of heritage buildings to meet contemporary needs that are compatible with their historical character.
- HP8.** Encourage appropriate redevelopments of 'supporting district properties' to enhance the heritage district's overall appearance and aid in its revitalization.
- HP9.** The City adopt *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (SG) second edition, 2010 as a resource guide for determining appropriate heritage conservation tools and techniques.

#### **2.4.4 Strategy Principle No.4. Community Buy-In**

The City will promote "community buy-in" by continuing to engage interested citizens in heritage conservation. Support among heritage building owners will be encouraged by enabling them to adapt to contemporary needs (see above). The City will also offer financial benefits and other incentives to heritage property owners, invest in heritage district improvements, and foster broad community support through public relations and educational initiatives.

Council policy is to:

**HP10.** Encourage "community buy-in" by continuing to engage interested citizens in heritage conservation, offering incentives to heritage property owners, investing in heritage district improvements and, generally, promoting community awareness of the importance of heritage conservation.

### **SECTION 3 HERITAGE DISTRICT**

#### **3.1 HERITAGE DISTRICT**

Summerside will designate properties both inside and outside a heritage district. One heritage district in the central core of the City is currently in place and will offer considerable benefits, as described below, and many historic properties worthy of designation are clustered in this area. There are noteworthy historic properties in other parts of the City which should also be designated. Summerside can both realize the benefits of having one or more heritage districts and be able to support valuable heritage properties throughout the City.

Council policy is to:

**HP11.** Designate worthy heritage properties both inside and outside a central heritage district.

**HP12.** Additional smaller neighbourhood heritage districts may be created as needed.

#### **3.2 BENEFITS OF A CENTRAL HERITAGE DISTRICT**

A central heritage district will realize a number of benefits for Summerside:

**a. Integrated development:**

A heritage district is a useful tool for integrating the aesthetic values of groups of buildings, streetscapes and open spaces, as all seen together.

**b. Better heritage protection:**

Heritage resources in a heritage district can be protected on an area-wide basis

from proposed developments on nearby designated properties, or on other 'supporting district properties' (i.e. properties awaiting designation, or with modern buildings or older buildings lacking significant heritage value).

**c. Economic development:**

Summerside's heritage district will serve the dual purposes of heritage conservation and economic revitalization. Based on experience elsewhere, a heritage district will be an economic booster for the City. A central heritage district will:

- create an 'enterprise zone effect' by attracting new businesses with zoning and financial incentives;
- induce more property improvements due to incentives and increased investment security;
- create a more desirable place to live and do business;
- "show case" the work of local heritage restoration companies;
- support the all-important tourist industry; and
- increase property values and expand the City's tax base.

**d. Increased public engagement:**

A heritage district will promote public engagement in heritage issues and, hence, more "community buy-in."

Council policy is to:

**HP13.** Promote the various benefits of a central heritage district for integrated development, better heritage protection, more diverse land-uses, economic revitalization and increased public engagement.

### **3.3 Central HERITAGE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**

The boundaries of the City's heritage district map were determined using the following criteria:

- a. The district should cover a high concentration of City heritage resources;
- b. The district should encompass a diversity of historic commercial, residential, institutional and park areas;
- c. The district should be large enough to surround tourists in an unique total environment and provide sufficient attractions for extended visitations;
- d. The residential parts of the district should be large enough to provide a sense of neighbourhood identity;
- e. Summerside's rich diversity of housing styles should be adequately represented, including a cross-section of both 'grand homes' and traditional working class homes;
- f. Connections should be promoted between central heritage areas and the City's

- West End and downtown, with our waterfront boardwalk;
- g. A pedestrian walkable district; and
- h. Finally, on a cautionary note, the City should not overreach its organizational capabilities (it is always possible to expand or create new districts later).

The boundaries of the heritage district are shown in Schedule 'B' of this document. The heritage district takes in a large part of the downtown business improvement area (BIA), together with adjoining residential neighbourhoods. It encompasses approximately 450 properties, most of which are built on, except for parklands. The district covers a major concentration of valuable heritage buildings in the City, including all 37 properties on the City's *Heritage Walking Tour*. Some valuable heritage properties lie just outside the district, but these can be individually designated.

Council policy is to:

**HP14.** Designate Summerside's Heritage District as shown on Schedule 'B' of this Plan and consider any future expansion of the district as may be required in the future.

Some special measures for heritage protection and promotion will apply in the district, over and above the level of City support for heritage properties outside the district.

**HP15.** Designate a Heritage District to facilitate special protection and promotion of heritage resources in the district.

**HP16.** All proposed demolition applications within the heritage district shall be reviewed by Heritage Board, whether designated or non-designated, except for buildings that are less than 50 years old from the current calendar date. Council revocation process is required with designated heritage resources.

## SECTION 4 HERITAGE RECOGNITION

### 4.1 APPLICATION FOR HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Council will recognize important heritage resources by designating them as heritage resources. This will confer upon their owners both obligations to comply with special development requirements and eligibility for compensating incentives. Any properties containing buildings and/or historically significant sites are eligible to be considered for designation. The largest proportion of eligible properties are in the heritage district, but there are many in other areas of the City.

It is commonplace for municipalities to take the initiative in nominating privately-owned properties for designation (subject, of course, to notifying owners and inviting their responses). By comparison, Summerside will encourage property owners themselves to

apply for designation, in keeping with the principle of promoting "community buy-in" for heritage conservation (see policy HP10). The City, itself, is the owner of some fine historic buildings and will set a good example by advancing them for designation.

It may sometimes be in the public interest for the City or a third-party to nominate privately-owned properties for designation, such as when a historic building is at risk or when an owner in a block of valuable historic buildings is holding out, though they enjoy all the benefits of heritage improvements and increased property values along with their neighbours. Where any historic resource is under imminent threat, such as from a building demolition, Council may also issue a 'temporary heritage property designation' to freeze any changes until it has the opportunity to consider whether the property should be permanently designated.

Council policy is to:

**HP17.** Encourage owners of historic resources to volunteer for heritage designation.

**HP18.** The City advancing the Armouries Building and other City owned properties for designation.

**HP19.** Consider City nominations for designating privately-owned properties when in the public interest, including but not limited to issuing a 'temporary heritage property designation' when there is an imminent threat from development.

**HP20.** Allow third-party designation nominations, provided the property owner grants their consent to an application.

#### **4.2 ADVANCING PROPERTIES FOR DESIGNATION**

The City will survey potential properties for heritage designation. A 'heritage profile' referred to as a statement of significance (SoS) will be prepared for each surveyed property, following a standard format to ensure fairness and comparability. Historic buildings will be profiled in terms of their age, overall style and special features, historical associations, value to the streetscape and remaining integrity. Digital photos of all building elevations will also be included. Property owners will be invited to participate in profiling, both to obtain their personal knowledge about the property and to encourage volunteers for designation. Owners will be provided with a copy of their completed profile, together with promotional information about applying for designation. It should be noted, a completed and registered historic profile provides no legal protection. Designation itself provides a higher level of legal protection, (see section 5).

Applications for designation will be evaluated taking into consideration the heritage profile for the property and applying a numerical scoring system. Heritage profiles will also be used as 'baseline records' for measuring potential impacts on valuable heritage

resources from proposed developments (see section 5).

Council policy is to:

**HP21.** Use a City survey program of historic resources to lay the groundwork for heritage designations, including advancing volunteer applications by private property owners.

**HP22.** Register all historic profiles (statements of significance) on Canada's Historic Places [www.historicplaces.ca](http://www.historicplaces.ca) and the Province of PEI Register of Historic Places websites, which are an on-line resource of information of appropriate conservation tools.

#### **4.3 HERITAGE DESIGNATION PROCESS**

Applications for heritage designation will require notification by written letter, advertisement in a local newspaper, recommendations to Council from the 'Heritage Board', and approval or denial of the application by Council. All designated properties will be registered as per HP22 above, and at the PEI Registry of Deeds. All designations will GIS mapped and referenced in the City's permit tracking software. Heritage property designations and revocations of a designation will be appealable to the Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission (IRAC) by the property owner.

Council policy is to:

**HP23.** Process applications for heritage property designations, subject to public notification and Council approval in accordance with the process in the heritage bylaw.

## **SECTION 5 HERITAGE PROTECTION**

### **5.1 SCOPE OF HERITAGE PROTECTION**

Summerside will effectively protect the historic character of its heritage resources from incompatible building or land use changes.

Summerside will carefully define the scope of applications under the City's heritage bylaw, which will be subject to heritage board review and Council approval under the heritage conservation bylaw, i.e. "heritage permits" (and for increased certainty, reviewable land-use developments in other City bylaws will also be clearly identified). City staff will prepare a 'heritage assessment report' on each heritage permit and reviewable development application.

A somewhat higher level of protection will be provided for designated heritage buildings

inside the heritage district, than for those outside. All designated properties will be protected against any "on-site" impacts from developments on the properties themselves. Designated district properties will also be protected on an area-wide basis against any "off-site" impacts from developments on other designated properties or on supporting district properties.

Council policy is to:

**HP24.** Effectively protect heritage resources from incompatible developments that may negatively impact on their historic character, overall appearance and distinctive ambience.

## **5.2 HERITAGE PERMITS**

Specifically, heritage permits will be required for designated heritage resources for some formerly excluded exterior work, such as new siding, roofing and windows, to ensure that they are properly reviewed for their heritage compatibility.

Council policy is to:

**HP25.** Ensure that exterior building changes are properly reviewed for their heritage compatibility through review and issuance of heritage permits as necessary.

# **SECTION 6 HERITAGE PROMOTION**

## **6.1 INCENTIVES**

The City will offer financial benefits and other incentives to owners of designated heritage properties, in order to:

- a. generally encourage "buy-in" for heritage conservation;
- b. promote private owners of historic properties to volunteer for heritage designation;
- c. promote appropriate maintenance, restoration and improvement of heritage resources;
- d. compensate property owners for having to meet more stringent heritage building standards; and
- e. where applicable, promote economic revitalization of the City's central historic core.

The City will quickly make up such investments into heritage conservation from an increased property tax assessment base, increased tourism and business spin-offs. Heritage owners in the heritage district may also be eligible for overlapping downtown

revitalization incentives that may be available from the City or other levels of government. Implementation of such programs will be outside the scope of this plan and bylaw.

Council policy is to:

- HP26.** Offer a temporary tax freeze in the form of a rebate to owners of designated heritage buildings whose property assessments increase after making eligible exterior improvements.
- HP27.** Not assess application fees for heritage designation and waive heritage permit and building permit fees for all exterior work on designated heritage properties.
- HP28.** Offer heritage maintenance cash grants to property owners for eligible exterior work;
- HP29.** Offer an incentive for property owners to designate their heritage properties;

## **6.2 CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS**

The City will encourage an attractive, 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district through civic improvements, such as tree-planting along heritage streets, heritage-theme street signage and lighting, special interpretative signs for heritage places, and plaquing of individual heritage buildings. City support for its *Downtown Urban Core Plan Vision*, may include facade improvements and informative way-finding signage, of a heritage nature.

Civic investments in the heritage district will have the following benefits:

- complement improvements made by home owners and businesses to their properties;
- attract more tourists; and
- revitalize the heritage district (which will benefit both owners of heritage properties and supporting district properties alike).

Council policy is to:

- HP30.** Encourage an attractive, 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district through various civic improvements.

## **6.3 RECOGNITION**

There are numerous, recognition and public relations opportunities for promoting heritage conservation, examples include:

- an annual Heritage Week awards for renovations of heritage buildings;
- plaquing of designated heritage buildings;

- newsletters on heritage achievements in the City;
- pamphlets on important heritage buildings, heritage walking tour, initiating a lecture series, and school programs on heritage awareness.

Council policy is to:

**HP31.** Promote Heritage recognition and public relations initiatives and seek partnerships to increase awareness of our heritage resources and support for heritage conservation.

**HP32.** A City Heritage Plaque Program will be available to owners of all designated properties.

#### **6.4 REVIEWING PROGRESS**

The City's annual business planning cycle will identify staff responsibilities, resource allocations and performance targets for heritage conservation. Implementation of this Plan will be reviewed annually, using such performance indicators as:

- number of completed heritage profiles;
- number of heritage property designations;
- number and value of permits for heritage improvements;
- PR achievements; and
- Heritage Board meetings.

Council policy is to:

**HP33.** Review annual reports from Heritage Board on the progress made in implementing this Plan and any needs for improving City support for heritage conservation.

## SCHEDULE B - HERITAGE DISTRICT (HD) MAP BOUNDARIES

