

Heritage Matters... in Markham

Heritage Conservation Districts

Under Part V of the [Ontario Heritage Act](#), Markham has protected four areas as a heritage conservation districts: Thornhill, Markham Village, Buttonville and Unionville. A heritage conservation district is:

- A collection or grouping of buildings, streets and open spaces that together are of cultural heritage value to our community.
- An area with a special character with an integrity of its own that distinguishes it from other areas of the community
- A defined boundary where all properties are protected from inappropriate changes through the use of policies and design guidelines.

Heritage conservation district maps are available on the City website at www.markham.ca/heritage. Or search the **Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value** of Interest to see if your property is in a heritage conservation district.

What is the purpose of the district?

Changes will occur in heritage conservation districts. They are living parts of our community, not museum sites. The purpose of district designation is to guide change so that it contributes to the area's unique character. The key objectives are:

- To preserve heritage buildings- these features are fragile gifts from past generations. They are not a renewable resource. Once lost, they are gone forever.
- To preserve original features - it is important to retain original or early building fabric such as windows, wall claddings and architectural elements.
 - It is better to maintain than to repair
 - It is better to repair than to restore
 - It is better to restore than replace
- To ensure new construction is complementary and respectful - this can range from an addition to a heritage building to a new building in the district.
- To protect features in the public realm that make the area unique - this includes streetscapes, lot patterns and vegetation.

What type of new construction is appropriate?

There are many examples of excellent additions and new infill construction in our heritage districts. Generally, new construction should be compatible with the existing heritage building stock in terms of scale, massing height, setbacks and materials.

Heritage Section staff and the Heritage Markham Committee can assist property owners in achieving appropriate new development in these areas.

Where can I learn more about district requirements and how to alter my property?

Each district has its own Heritage District Plan. If you want to alter your property in any way, review the Plan's policies, design guidelines and other useful information.

How do I get a copy of a Heritage District Plan?

All Markham heritage conservation district plans are available in paper versions from the Development Services Commission (Planning Department) at the Markham Civic Centre for a small fee. These plans can also be downloaded in a PDF format from the City's website at no charge.

What types of approvals are required?

Owners of all properties in a heritage conservation district must obtain approval for exterior alterations to property, new construction or demolition. Heritage Staff has been delegated authority to approve alterations and new construction which complies with approved policies and guidelines. Demolition requests must be considered by Markham Council.

What financial assistance is available?

Markham has created a variety of financial programs (loans, grants, tax rebates) to help designated properties. See the website or contact Heritage Section staff.

Does designation affect property values?

The word is in on whether heritage designation has an impact on the value of your property. The answer is this- if designation has any affect on real estate prices, it's probably a good one. Find out more. Check out the Property Values (Heritage Designation) section of the website.

What special features are found in heritage conservation districts?

Markham has installed heritage district public signage to acknowledge the special nature of our heritage areas. These include heritage street name signage and heritage district entry signage. Streetscapes have been enhanced with special lighting, street furniture and sidewalk improvements. Property owners in heritage conservation districts are kept abreast of district news and useful information through Heritage District News.

**Heritage Matters...in Markham"
is a series of information brochures
on heritage planning topics.**

**For further information, contact:
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