

Heritage Matters in MARKHAM

Conservation Principles - Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (Heritage Policy and Program Division)

Markham strives to implement the following policy in our heritage conservation work.

The following guiding principles are ministry statements in the conservation of built heritage properties and are based on international charters which have been established over the century. These principles provide the basis for all decisions concerning good practice in heritage conservation around the world. Principles explain the "why" of every conservation activity and apply to all heritage properties and their surroundings.

1. RESPECT FOR DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE:

Do not base restoration on conjecture.

Conservation work should be based on historic documentation such as historic photographs, drawings and physical evidence.

2. RESPECT FOR THE ORIGINAL LOCATION:

Do not move buildings unless there is no other means to save them.

Site is an integral component of a building or structure. Change in site diminishes cultural heritage value considerably.

3. RESPECT FOR HISTORIC MATERIAL:

Repair/conserve - rather than replace building materials and finishes, except where absolutely necessary.

Minimal intervention maintains the heritage content of the built resource.

4. RESPECT FOR ORIGINAL FABRIC:

Repair with like materials.

Repair to return the resource to its prior condition, without altering its integrity.

5. RESPECT FOR THE BUILDING'S HISTORY:

Do not restore to one period at the expense of another period.

Do not destroy later additions to a building or structure solely to restore to a single time period.

Heritage Matters in

6. REVERSIBILITY:

Alterations should be able to be returned to original conditions. This conserves earlier building design and technique.

e.g. When a new door opening is put into a stone wall, the original stones are numbered, removed and stored, allowing for future restoration.

7. LEGIBILITY:

New work should be distinguishable from old.

Buildings or structures should be recognized as products of their own time, and new additions should not blur the distinction between old and new.

8. MAINTENANCE:

With continuous care, future restoration will not be necessary.

With regular upkeep, major conservation projects and their high costs can be avoided.

If you have additional questions concerning a specific property, please contact our Heritage Section.

“Heritage Matters...in Markham”
is a series of information brochures
on heritage planning topics.

For further information, contact:
City of Markham, Heritage Section
Heritage@markham.ca

April 2008
Revised June 2025