

Heritage Conservation District Feasibility Assessment

Terms of Reference

Updated: May 2024

Overview:

This Terms of Reference provides City of Ottawa Heritage Planning staff with the requirements for undertaking a Heritage Conservation District Feasibility Assessment. The purpose of a Feasibility Assessment is to determine whether the City of Ottawa should complete a full Heritage Conservation District Study for a specific area. The outcomes of Feasibility Assessments are reported to the City of Ottawa's Built Heritage Committee and Council and used to update and direct staff's workplan.

In general, a Feasibility Assessment will:

- Clarify boundaries of potential HCD study area.
- Estimate an area's potential for meeting the designation criteria set out by Ontario Regulation 9/06.
 - Identify character defining elements at a high level.
 - Identify relevant themes and historical associations at high level.
 - Identify the number of properties in the potential study area
- Assess community interest in designation.
- Assess potential challenges/opportunities (e.g. coordination with other on-going studies, engagement with other levels of government etc.
- Assess the contribution of a potential HCD to the City's designation program.
- Scope a full HCD study for the area, considering:
 - What are a study's financial implications?
 - Can a study be completed by City staff?
 - What is the estimated cost of a consultant if required?
 - What relevant resources exist (surveys, neighbourhood studies etc.)?
 - What public engagement and consultation approach is necessary?
 - What fieldwork or survey work is required?
 - What geospatial resources are required?

Feasibility Assessment Contents:

The Terms of Reference are intended to be prescriptive and universally applicable; therefore, they represent the minimum standard of research, analysis, and evaluation for HCD Feasibility Assessments undertaken in Ottawa. Feasibility Assessments may consider additional factors or include additional sections on a case-by-case basis depending on the subject area.

1. Historical Overview

- a. Provide a brief overview of the area's historical development and significant historical associations (Themes, communities, events associated with the area etc.)
2. Character Overview
 - a. Identify and briefly describe the area's character defining elements.
 - b. Identify and briefly describe the area's dominant building typologies and architectural styles.
3. Planning Policy Context
 - a. Provide an overview of the area's existing and planned policy context, noting the following:
 - i. Current and future zoning
 - ii. Official Plan designations and relevant policies
 - iii. Secondary Plans and relevant policies
 - iv. Design guidelines and other policy documents (CDPs, Corridor Studies, Public Realm Plans etc.)
 - b. Identify any ongoing studies or other policy initiatives that may impact the assessment area.
4. Preliminary Evaluation of Area's Potential Cultural Heritage Value
 - a. Windshield Survey
 - i. Identify groupings of properties that support character defining elements described in Section 2. For example:
 - A row of detached houses clad in red brick, where red brick cladding is identified as a character defining element.
 - A grouping of traditional commercial buildings, where commercial buildings are a predominant building typology.
 - ii. Identify all current and former listings on the City's Municipal Heritage Register within the feasibility assessment area.
 - b. Preliminary Regulation 9/06 Evaluation
 - i. Total the number of clustered properties identified in 4 (a)(i) with the number of existing and former register listings identified in 4 (a)(ii).
 - ii. Compare the total in 4 (b)(i) with the total number of properties in feasibility assessment area to determine approximate percentage of properties meeting two or more criteria for designation.
5. Community Outreach and Engagement:
 - a. The scope of public engagement and outreach will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the specific needs and interests of the area in question. The scope of public engagement at this stage of the process is intended to be high level, but at minimum, staff will provide a briefing to the local Ward Councillor and any interested community

organizations including community associations and historical societies.

Other outreach and engagement activities may include:

- i. Stakeholder Meetings:
 - ii. Open House
 - iii. Online Survey
- b. The results of all outreach and engagement activities completed as part of the feasibility assessment will be detailed in reports to Built Heritage Committee and Council upon completion of the feasibility assessment.

6. Existing Resources:

- a. Identify any existing resources that could support the completion of an HCD Study. These resources can include:
 - i. Existing surveys or fieldwork
 - ii. Existing Geospatial data and mapping
 - iii. Existing studies completed internally or externally.

7. Comparison to City of Ottawa Designation Program

- a. Consider how a new HCD for the subject area would contribute to the City of Ottawa's heritage designation program:
 - i. How does the study area compare to existing HCDs?
 - Are the area's significant historical associations recognized within an existing HCD?
 - Are similar character-defining elements recognized within an existing HCD?
 - Would an HCD in this area contribute to recognizing a diversity of communities, cultures, or geographies through the City's designation program?

8. Final Recommendations

- a. If the assessment recommends that the City of Ottawa proceed with a full HCD Study, the following details are required:
 - i. Recommended HCD Study Area Boundary
 - ii. HCD Study Scope
 - Public Consultation Requirements
 - Fieldwork and Data Requirements
 - Financial Implications:
 - a. Complete internally or with consultant?
 - b. Estimated budget for HCD study
- b. A feasibility assessment may recommend that the City not proceed with an HCD study. If no HCD study is recommended, staff will provide a rationale for this recommendation. Alternatives, such as pursuing designations under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act or establishing a Cultural Heritage Character Area, may be recommended.