

HERITAGE PERMIT APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDELINES



WHAT IS A DESIGNATED HERITAGE PROPERTY?

A designated heritage property is a property that has been identified as historically or architecturally significant and is protected under the Ontario Heritage Act. Properties may be designated individually (under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act) or as part of a Heritage Conservation District (under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act). The City of Waterloo has over 170 designated properties, with 135 of these properties located within the MacGregor/Albert Heritage Conservation District.

An owner of a designated property must seek permission prior to making alterations to the property that could affect its heritage features. Permission is granted through the approval of a Heritage Permit, which is administered by City staff in consultation with the Municipal Heritage Committee.

WHEN IS A HERITAGE PERMIT REQUIRED?

The need for a Heritage Permit for individually designated (Part IV) properties is determined by its specific designating by-law. For example, many individually designated properties refer to the conservation of certain building facades. Alteration of these facades, from repointing masonry to window replacement to porch restoration may require a Heritage Permit.

In the MacGregor/Albert Heritage Conservation District, [the district plan](#) identifies the following types of projects as requiring a Heritage Permit:

- Demolition of a building
- Removal of a front porch, verandah, porch stoop, enclosed porch or balcony
- Structural intervention that affects the external appearance of a building
- Addition to an existing building, taking the form of a new room or other increase in floor space, an attached garage or carport, a porch, verandah, porch stoop, enclosed porch, balcony or deck, or dormer window
- Erection of a new building or a detached garage
- Laying out a new driveway or parking space
- Repointing masonry, cleaning masonry of paint or grime, or painting unpainted masonry
- Installation of a new wall material to replace or cover an existing wall material on any building façade visible from the street
- Alteration of doors and windows and their surrounds and cutting of new door and window openings on any building façade visible from the street
- Alteration of roof shape, pitch, rooflines or chimney design on any existing building
- Removal or addition of architectural detail, such as brackets, bargeboard, eaves returns, finials and so on
- Erection of a sign

General maintenance and repairs may not require a Heritage Permit. To verify whether or not your project will require a Heritage Permit, a pre-consultation with Heritage staff is required prior to submission.

Phone: 519-886-1550 ex. 78747

Email: heritage@waterloo.ca

There is **no fee** for submitting a Heritage Permit Application.

THE HERITAGE PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Review these Heritage Permit Guidelines and contact heritage staff to discuss the proposed work and to confirm whether it requires a permit. A pre-consultation with staff, either in-person or via email or phone, is required prior to submitting a Heritage Permit Application.
2. If you need a heritage permit, complete the [Heritage Permit Application form](#) and collect all supporting materials, as determined at the pre-consultation with staff.
3. Submit the form (and supporting materials) to heritage@waterloo.ca or in person at the IPPW counter on the second floor of [city hall](#). There is **no fee** for the Heritage Permit Application.
4. Heritage staff and the Chair of the Municipal Heritage Committee often approve minor and compliant alterations (as defined in By-law 2023-068) within 5 to 10 business days of submission.
5. The Municipal Heritage Committee will review all other alterations. The application is due 2 weeks before the committee meeting, which takes place on the fourth Thursday of every month at noon. A schedule of upcoming meetings can be found on the [City of Waterloo website](#). We recommend the applicant or their agent/contractor attend the meeting to answer any questions.
6. If heritage staff or the committee does not recommend approval, Council will make a decision on the application. The applicant may appeal the decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal within 30 days of receiving Council's decision.

COMPLETE APPLICATIONS

A Heritage Permit Application must include enough information to enable Heritage staff and the Municipal Heritage Committee to fully understand the scope of the work and its effect on the property's heritage features.

To support your description of the proposed work, include labeled photographs and/or scaled drawings or plans. Submitted drawings should make clear what is existing and what is proposed. If new construction is proposed, provide detailed elevation



drawings showing the impact of the proposed work on all designated elevations. For major alterations, a [Heritage Impact Assessment](#) may be required at staff's discretion.

Should the information provided be insufficient for a full understanding of the work proposed, the applicant will be notified that their application is incomplete, and the review of the application will be deferred until such time as the missing information is provided. Applications must reflect the final plans for the proposed work.

Under the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act, applications must receive a decision within 90 days after receiving notice of a complete application. However, as noted, minor and compliant alterations are often approved within 5 to 10 business days of submission.

CONSERVATION IS THE PREFERRED APPROACH



Heritage Permit Applications are evaluated in the context of the Ontario Heritage Act, the designating by-law and/or the Heritage Conservation District Plan, and other documents that outline good conservation practices, such as the [Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada](#).

General guidelines for common projects are provided in **Appendix A** attached.

Property owners in the McGregor/Albert Heritage Conservation District may obtain a copy of the *Heritage Conservation District Plan for the MacGregor/Albert Neighbourhood* online through the [City of Waterloo website](#) or from heritage staff. Applicants of individually designated properties may contact heritage staff for a copy of the designating by-law.

Applications that are in keeping with good conservation practices and propose to maintain or restore a property's heritage attributes are more likely to be recommended for approval.

OTHER PERMITS AND APPROVALS

In addition to requiring a Heritage Permit Application, projects affecting designated heritage properties may also require other permits and approvals. Properties in the MacGregor/Albert Heritage Conservation District may require a Building Permit in addition to a Heritage Permit for exterior alterations. Should a Building Permit be required, the Heritage Permit application documents must be submitted at the time of Building Permit application. Building Standards staff inspect completed work for compliance to Building Permit and Heritage Permit approvals.



Applicants should also note that complete removal and reconstruction of certain building features (e.g. a porch) may result in the requirement of the property owner to rebuild the structure under stricter requirements of the current Building Codes.

It is the applicant's responsibility to check with Development Planning staff (Zoning@waterloo.ca) to determine whether the project requires additional permits or approvals. Whenever possible, City staff will strive to co-ordinate the review of Heritage Permit Applications with other applications and expedite approvals.

SOMETHING CAME UP, MY PROJECT HAS CHANGED – WHAT DO I DO?

It is not uncommon to begin a project on a heritage building and then find out that the scope of the project will need to change. Please notify Heritage staff immediately to determine if a new heritage permit application is required or revisions to the existing heritage permit can be made.

APPENDIX A. GUIDELINES FOR COMMON PROJECTS THAT REQUIRE A HERITAGE PERMIT

Windows and Doors

Historic Windows are an important character-defining element of designated properties.

Guideline: Wholesale replacement of original wooden window units and doors should be avoided. When properly maintained, weather stripped, and fitted with a storm window, old wooden windows are comparable to new windows in terms of energy efficiency. Cracked sills may be filled using a wood or liquid epoxy patching compound. Small areas of decayed wood may be treated with a non-toxic fungicide to halt the decay and waterproofed with boiled linseed oil. Larger sections of decay may be replaced with new matching pieces wood that can withstand exterior conditions. For information on local contractors who carry out window and door repair, contact the Heritage staff.



For windows in new construction in the MacGregor/Albert Heritage Conservation, flat-headed windows that are taller than wide are preferred for most properties.

Where replacement of windows or doors is required,

- Describe the condition of existing windows and doors
- Describe reason why restoration is not possible
- Provide accurate details about proposed new window and door dimensions, materials, style and components
- Describe how windows and doors will match the original historic materials, profiles, dimensions and divisions of frame, sash, muntin bars and surrounds.

Masonry

Inappropriate repair, cleaning and coating treatments can lead to damage or deterioration of masonry on historic buildings.

Guideline: Masonry repair should use mortar mixes appropriate for the age of the house. The repaired brick and mortar should match the existing in terms of texture, size, material composition and strength. Abrasive cleaning methods such as sand blasting should be avoided when cleaning masonry or removing existing paint. Previously unpainted masonry should not be painted.

- Describe the condition of existing masonry
- Provide rationale for the treatment chosen
- Describe proposed work, materials (type, style of brick, type of mortar mix, etc.) and methods of repair or application

Additions and New Construction

Additions and new construction should not dominate the appearance of a designated building, or obscure or damage the heritage features of a designated property.

Guideline: Locate additions and new construction on non-designated facades. In the MacGregor/Albert Heritage Conservation District, additions should be located at or towards the back of the house and should use complementary roof pitches, window styles and wall materials.

- Describe the proposed work, including building materials to be used
- Provide scaled drawings or plans showing the location and dimensions of the proposed construction.
- Describe any existing building elements to be altered or replaced – make note if they vary in dimension or material from the original
- Provide information about building details (trim, moldings, siding, windows, signs, awnings)

Applicants are encouraged to bring samples of construction materials (e.g. window, brick, siding, roofing material or manufacturer's brochures) to be presented at the Municipal Heritage Committee meeting at which the Heritage Permit Application will be discussed.

More information on best practices in heritage conservation can be found here:

- [Region of Waterloo conservation guide](#) – local guide on conserving and maintaining heritage properties
- [Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada](#)

Contact Information:

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