



## REPORT

### Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: February 3, 2025

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**FROM:** Planning and Development Department

**DATE:** January 13, 2025

**SUBJECT:** **Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District – Statutory Public Meeting**

**LOCATION:** Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District

**WARD:** Ward 3 Page 1

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That comments from the public with respect to Appendix A - Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District, Plan and Guidelines, DRAFT – December 2024 be received.
2. That staff considers such comments as may be provided by Council.

#### KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District has been in place since it received Council and OMB approval in 1982.
- The Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines that serves to manage change in Old Oakville has not been updated since that time.
- The planning process to update the District Plan and Guidelines was started in 2021 and consists of two major components – the District Study and a new District Plan and Guidelines.
- In February 2024, Council approved the District Study component that describes and evaluates the cultural heritage value of the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District.
- The purpose of this report is to present the draft Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan attached as Appendix A.

- The report also identifies the requirements for this planning process under the *Ontario Heritage Act* as well as the update process undertaken by the town featuring an extensive and responsive public engagement program.
- Highlights of the draft Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines are presented along with next steps in this planning process.
- This purpose of this public meeting is to present the draft District Plan and Guidelines and to receive feedback from Council and the public on this matter.
- A recommendation for a new Heritage Conservation District By-law and adopting the update Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines will come before Council in Q1, 2025.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Established in 1981, the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District (the District) is Oakville's first designated district, and one of the first in Ontario. This historically significant area extends south of Robinson Street to the lakefront from the Sixteen Mile Creek in the west to Allan Street in the east. The intimate atmosphere of the District provides two picturesque waterfront parks, Dingle Park and Lakeside Park, as well as Oakville Museum at Erchless Estate.

The District features early vernacular homes, nineteenth-century lakeside cottages, turn-of-the-century luxury houses and churches. Architectural styles are diverse and include 19th-century Georgian, Neo-Classical, Victorian and Classical Revival, many of which are a vernacular interpretation of the style. “Vernacular” architecture is a style of regional or local building that uses conventional supplies and resources from the region in which the building is situated.

The Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan (District Plan) has served the community well for 40 years and has been instrumental in protecting the character of the area. With changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* (the Act) in 2005 and 2021, the District Plan requires updating to meet the requirements of current legislation.

The Act does not prescribe a process for an update to an existing heritage conservation district plan. It does however prescribe a process for the creation of a new heritage conservation district. This is the process undertaken by the town to provide for the District Plan Update.

As part of this process, Part V, Section 41 of the Act requires that two components be completed prior to passing a by-law to designate a heritage conservation district.

The first component is a study, as defined under Part V, Section 40 of the Act. The Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Study was completed in accordance with this provision and approved by Council at the [Planning and Development Council meeting of February 5, 2024](#).

At the meeting, Council also directed staff to continue the work on the District Plan Update and to create a revised District Plan and Guidelines. This second component would further satisfy the stated requirements of the Act.

**COMMENTS:**

The following sections identify the statutory requirements for the District Plan Update as well as the update process undertaken by the town including extensive public engagement. Highlights of the draft Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines are presented along with next steps in this planning process.

The document titled *Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines, DRAFT - December 2024* is attached in Appendix A.

**Statutory Requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act**

Part V, Section 41.1 (6) - (11) of the Act sets out the steps that must be observed before final adoption of a heritage conservation district plan. The full text of these sections in the Act are in Appendix B and include requirements for:

- Consultation – timely release of information to the public, hosting a statutory public meeting and consulting municipal heritage committee
- Providing notice and timing of the statutory public meeting
- Receiving and representations and submissions

In accordance with these provisions, 20 days' notice was provided by mail to all property owners within the District. In addition, notice was provided on the town's website, emailed to participants that requested to be on the study mailing list and shared with stakeholder groups including the Oakville Lakeside Residents Association and the Oakville Historical Society.

The Act also requires engagement with the municipal heritage committee as per Section 41.1 (6) (c). Staff intends to present the draft District Plan and Guidelines to the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee following the statutory public meeting.

Feedback received at the Heritage Oakville meeting will be used to inform the recommended District Plan and Guideline presented to Council with an adopting by-law at an upcoming meeting of Planning and Development Council.

The draft District Plan and Guidelines retains many of the principles of heritage conservation that were embodied in the original plan. The draft District Plan and Guidelines also aims to be user friendly, clear and consistent, while also adhering to

the heritage conservation standards adopted by the town from the national [Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places](#).

Section 41.1 (5) of the Act describes the required contents for a district plan attached as Appendix B.

### **Contents of the Updated Draft District Plan and Guidelines**

The draft District Plan and Guidelines satisfy the requirements of the Act as stated:

- **Section 1 – Introduction** provides a background and introduction to the document and information on how to use the Plan and Guidelines.
- **Section 2 – Cultural Heritage Value of the District** is the statement of cultural heritage value or interest and the description of heritage attributes.
- **Section 3 – Objectives of the Heritage Conservation District** provides the objectives to be achieved in the heritage conservation district.
- **Section 4 - Municipal Policy Framework** provides the policy framework, including provincial legislation and municipal policies that direct and assist change within the area.
- **Section 5 – Guidelines for Managing Change** is the guidelines for contributing and non-contributing properties and is the section of the Plan that will be most important for users of the document.
- **Section 6 – Exempt Alterations and Classes of Alterations** is the description of alterations that are exempt from heritage permits.
- **Section 7 – Heritage Conservation District Review Process** sets out the process for periodic review of the District Plan and Guidelines which is recommended for 5-8 years. This review will involve public engagement and an appraisal of how the Plan has functioned.
- **Sections 8 and 9 – Glossary, Terms, Bibliography and Sources.**

### **Highlights of the Draft District Plan and Guidelines**

*Section 5 – Guidelines for Managing Change* will be the most utilized part of the document. The formulation of this section has benefitted from a high degree of engagement, review and recommendations by key stakeholders and staff.

Section 5 features a series of five Character Areas that were identified in the Heritage Conservation District Study. These areas provide a framework that

acknowledges distinct features through the historic, streetscape and landscape analysis of Old Oakville's evolving urban fabric. Specific guidance is provided for each Area:

- Area 1 - Waterfront Open Space
- Area 2 - Old Oakville Settlement Pattern
- Area 3 - Gully Landscape
- Area 4 - Mixed Residential Development Pattern
- Area 5 – St. Andrew's Traditional

The balance of Section 5 provides direction for managing change based on a classification of properties within the District as contributing or non-contributing. Within the District, ninety properties (70% of all properties) have been identified as contributing properties.

Contributing properties exhibit physical heritage attributes which directly contribute to the cultural heritage value or interest of the District. They support the identified cultural heritage values from the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and they have met more than two criteria as identified as per the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the criteria outlined in O. Reg. 9/06.

Non-contributing properties do not exhibit that threshold amount of cultural heritage value as per the criteria in O. Reg. 9/06. Non-contributing properties are included in the guidelines to provide appropriate consideration of proposed changes to the entire district, especially surrounding properties.

Section 5 continues with guidelines regarding property level changes as well as direction for classes of alterations, use of specific materials and additions to buildings and properties and landscape guidelines.

#### ***Classes of Alterations and use of Specific Materials***

The guidelines for classes of alterations in each category are concerned with the protection of the existing heritage fabric and character of the District. The preferred conservation goal is to repair, where possible, instead of replace. Where replacement material is required, the guidelines call for similar materials and designs to be used.

#### ***Additions to Buildings and Properties***

Guidelines for additions to buildings within the District provide direction on the most suitable location, proportion, height and composition for new massing. Sympathetic and complementary materials are required, but to avoid a sense of false historical development, replication of historic features that never existed is not permitted.

The draft District Plan and Guidelines also provide direction on entirely new structures within the District. This category has been broken into two sections to differentiate between new primary structures and new detached additional residential units, in accordance with new provincial legislation. No matter the type of structure, infill needs to respect the height, proportion, width and composition of surrounding heritage buildings, Character Areas and the District.

The draft District Plan and Guidelines states that demolition of buildings identified as contributing (heritage) will not be permitted, except in extenuating circumstances (for example, natural disasters). Demolition of non-contributing (non-heritage) structures may be permitted, with the approval of plans for the new structure and the collection of securities to prevent gaps in the streetscape for lengthy periods of time.

### ***Landscape Guidelines***

The landscape guidelines provided in the draft District Plan and Guidelines acknowledge the importance of trees, views, sidewalks, the Sixteen Mile Creek and Lake Ontario to the overall character of the area. Guidance provided includes general principles to protect the landscape that should be considered when changes are made in the future, rather than providing specific materials or designs.

### **Personnel, Participants and Public Engagement for the District Plan Update**

In addition to town staff from Planning and Development and key departments, personnel on the project providing research, writing and support included a consulting team from Archaeological Research Associates Ltd., Dillon Consulting Limited and G. Douglas Vallee Limited.

Participants in the program, in addition to the public, included key supporters and contributors from the Oakville Historical Society, Oakville Lakeside Residents Association, Oakville Museum, Oakville Public Library, Oakville Club, St. Jude's Anglican Church and St. Andrews Catholic Church.

The public engagement program for the District Plan Update was extensive and responsive, featuring:

- More than thirty stakeholder meetings, walking tours and site visits
- Two online Storymaps for participants to convey local information
- Two online surveys
- Four Public Information Meetings
- Regular updates to the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee
- Two appearances before Planning and Development Council

***Engagement on the draft District Plan and Guidelines***

There was substantial engagement undertaken to produce the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines, DRAFT - December 2024 attached in Appendix A.

The first draft of the District Plan and Guidelines was released to the public on February 21, 2024. A public information meeting to review the contents of the new plan and receive feedback from stakeholders was held on March 21, 2024, at Knox Presbyterian Church. Additional engagement was undertaken with stakeholders, including the Oakville Lakeside Residents Association.

At the [Planning and Development Council meeting of May 21, 2024](#), Council received a staff report outlining the process to move forward with the District Plan Update. Direction was also given to provide for additional review time for stakeholders in advance of a statutory public meeting.

The second draft of the draft District Plan and Guidelines, revised to address feedback from stakeholders, was released to the public on May 27, 2024.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2024, staff collaborated directly with stakeholders, including the Oakville Lakeside Residents Association, to make significant revisions to the draft District Plan and Guidelines to improve readability, consistency and clarity. Feedback received from both the first and second drafts was considered and incorporated into the revisions.

The third draft of the District Plan and Guidelines was released to the public on December 18, 2024.

In addition to the notice required for the statutory public meeting, staff has contacted the key supporters and contributors listed previously as well as representatives from the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation and Six Nations of the Grand River.

Staff has also circulated the draft District Plan and Guidelines internally to partner departments including Building Services, Parks and Open Space, Forestry Services, Roads and Works, Transportation and Engineering, and Legal.

Discussions with these departments are ongoing and it should be noted that the intent of the District Plan and Guidelines is not to supersede or override existing process and agreements between the town and public agencies or to require permits for operational, maintenance or engineering requirements (i.e. traffic signs and safety improvements). Where new infrastructure is required in the municipal right-of-way, staff will co-ordinate to determine opportunities to work with public utilities to ensure the character of the District is maintained.

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### **Next steps in the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Update**

The Next steps in the District Plan Update include:

- Continuing internal discussions with town departments
- Engaging with the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee
- Receiving and reviewing public submissions
- Undertaking revisions to the draft Plan and Guidelines as appropriate

Staff will present the final District Plan and Guidelines along with an adopting by-law to Council in the coming months. Prior to that, further refinements to the draft Plan and Guidelines may be necessary as consultation is completed with town departments, public agencies and the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee.

To ensure the highest utilisation of the District Plan and Guidelines, staff will be creating an education program for the benefit of town departments, public agencies and utilities regarding expectations for infrastructure development within the District. This program may be adapted to other potential user groups.

### **CONCLUSION**

The draft District Plan and Guidelines presented to Council in this report is the result of considerable effort and input from the community, the consultant team, the Town's Heritage Committee, and town staff. Feedback received at this public meeting will be considered for revisions to a final draft that will be shared with the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee in the coming months before returning to Council with a recommendation for the new District Plan and Guidelines along with a new Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District By-law.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### **(A) PUBLIC**

The public and stakeholders for the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District have been notified of the statutory public meeting following town policies and the statutory requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

#### **(B) FINANCIAL**

There are no financial considerations associated with this item.

#### **(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

The draft District Plan and Guidelines has been circulated for review and comment to town departments that may be impacted, including Building Services, Parks and Open Space, Forestry Services, Roads and Works, Transportation and Engineering, and Legal.



Discussions with these town departments are ongoing and the input received will inform revisions to the draft District Plan and Guidelines prior to bringing forward a recommendation and adopting by-law to Town Council.

**(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

This report addresses Council’s strategic priorities of Accountable Government, Community Belonging and Environmental Sustainability.

**(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019 for the purpose of strengthening Oakville’s community commitment to reduce carbon footprints. This update to the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines supports the conservation of Oakville’s cultural heritage resources, including built heritage. The greenest and most sustainable building is the one that already exists.

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines,  
DRAFT - December 2024

Appendix B – Excerpts from the *Ontario Heritage Act*

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