
Part B

District Policies

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.1 Overview

The Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District has a wealth of heritage resources, and a recognizable heritage character. The heritage character of the District is enhanced by streetscapes, planting, fencing, open spaces, vistas, and natural areas.

The Plan and its Policies anticipate change. Heritage buildings will be restored, reused, and have additions. Other buildings will also be added to or altered. New buildings will be constructed. The purpose of the Plan is to ensure that these activities are complementary to both the individual heritage buildings and the overall heritage environment in the District.

To preserve and enhance the heritage character of the District, policies have been developed concerning the following.

- heritage buildings (Class A);
- other buildings (Class B and C);
- new buildings;
- landscapes.

The Policies are supported by illustrative guidelines, which are found in Section 9.0 of the District Plan.

The Thornhill Heritage Plan document cannot be expected to answer or address every possible scenario or situation. The Plan's policies and guidelines try to address the most common issues. The policies and guidelines reflect the basic principles that the Town wants to achieve for a specific grouping of properties, but cannot always address the unique circumstances related to a specific site or property. Issues that arise over time which are not addressed in the Plan can be considered by staff and/or Heritage Markham (which is Council's advisory committee) and ultimately supported or not by Council.

Council can also deviate from approved policies on a case by case basis if it deems it appropriate.



The old Thornhill Hotel, which burned in 1950. Weaver #290.

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.2 Heritage Buildings (Class A)

Thornhill is well known for its attractive collection of nineteenth and early twentieth century village buildings of varied types and styles. The District consists of a predominantly residential building stock, but there are also a church and rectory, town barns, and commercial buildings. Although some of the buildings are not in their original uses, the distinctiveness of their form and compatibility of their adaptations serve to perpetuate the historical village environment.

Heritage buildings, identified as Class A in this District Plan, are the most important and visible resources found in the District. The retention of these buildings remains essential to the success of the District. Therefore, the intent is to conserve and restore these resources, prevent their demolition and take extraordinary measures to ensure their protection.

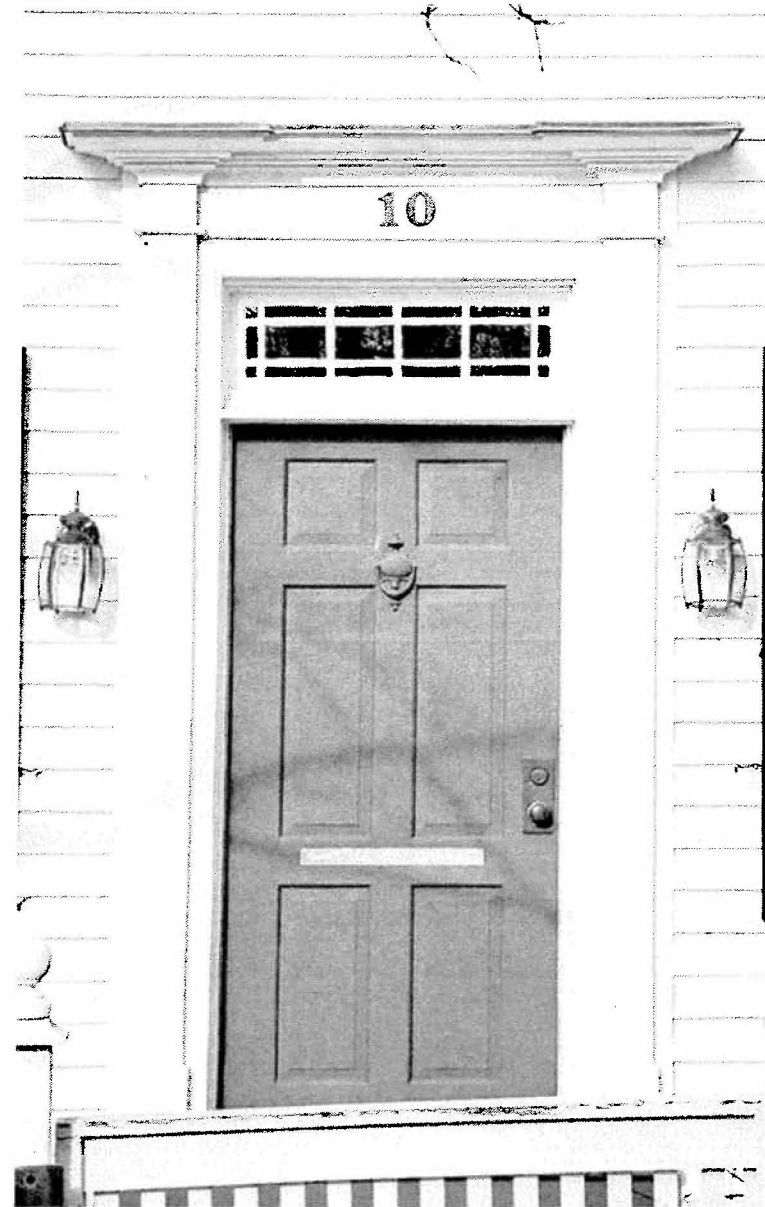
The conservation of heritage buildings involves actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the heritage attributes of the resource so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life. Conservation can involve preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or a combination of these actions. These terms are defined as follows:

- **Preservation:** The action or process of protecting, maintaining, and/or stabilizing the heritage attributes (materials, form, integrity) of the entire heritage resource (or an individual component of the resource) while protecting its heritage value.
- **Rehabilitation:** The action or process of ensuring a continuing use or a compatible contemporary use of a heritage resource (or an individual component) through repair, alterations, or additions, while protecting its heritage value. This can include replacing missing historic features either as an accurate replica of the feature or may be a new design that is compatible with the style, era, and character of the heritage resource.
- **Restoration:** The action or process of accurately revealing, recovering, or representing the state of the heritage resource (or of an individual component), as it appeared at a particular period in its history, while protecting its heritage value. This could include removal of features from other periods in its history and the reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period (based on clear evidence and detailed knowledge).

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.2.1 Conservation of Heritage Buildings

- a) Conserve and protect the heritage value of each heritage resource. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable heritage attributes.
- b) Conserve changes to a heritage resource which, over time, have become heritage attributes in their own right.
- c) Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach involving minimal intervention.
- d) Evaluate the existing condition of heritage attributes to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention.
- e) Maintain heritage attributes on an ongoing basis to avoid major conservation projects and high costs.
- f) Repair rather than replace heritage attributes using recognized conservation methods. Respect historical materials and finishes by repairing with like materials.
- g) Replace using like material any extensively deteriorated or missing parts of heritage attributes.
- h) Correct inappropriate interventions to heritage attributes.
- i) Make any intervention needed to preserve heritage attributes physically and visually compatible with the heritage resource, and identifiable upon close inspection.
- j) Respect documentary evidence. Conservation work should be based on a thorough examination of physical and archival evidence. Where there is insufficient evidence, it may be appropriate to make the design, form, material, and detailing of the new feature or element compatible with the character of the heritage resource as commonly found in the District.



4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.2.2 Alterations and Additions to Heritage Buildings

- a) Conserve the heritage value and heritage attributes of a heritage resource when creating any new addition or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to, and distinguishable from the heritage resource.
- b) Ensure that any new addition, alteration, or related new construction will not detrimentally impact the heritage resource if the new work is removed in future.
- c) Alterations and additions to the heritage resource shall conform to the guidelines found in Section 9.2.

4.2.3 Relocation of Heritage Buildings

- a) Relocation or dismantling of a heritage building will be employed only as a last resort.
- b) Buildings of cultural heritage value shall be retained in their original locations whenever possible. Before such a building can be approved for relocation to any other site, all options for on-site retention will be investigated. The following alternatives, in order of priority, will be examined prior to any approval of relocation for a heritage building:
 - Retention of the building on site in its original use.
 - Retention of the building on site in an adaptive re-use.
 - Relocation of the building to another part of the original site.
 - Relocation of the building to another site in the District
 - Relocation of the building to a sympathetic site within the Town of Markham.
- c) A threatened heritage building relocated to the District from another site will generally be compatible in style

and type to the existing development patterns in the District.

4.2.4 Demolition of Heritage Buildings

- a) The demolition of heritage buildings within the District is not supported.
- b) The Town, under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, may refuse a demolition permit for either an individually designated building or a heritage building located within the District.

4.2.5 Salvage of Historic Building Materials and Features

- a) In the rare case where a heritage building is permitted to be demolished, the building will be documented and the proponents of the demolition will be required to advertise in the local press, the availability of the building for relocation or salvage of architectural features, as a condition of the demolition permit. Prior to advertising, the building will first be offered to the Markham Museum.



Moving to 148 John Street. Weaver #42.

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

- b) The Town may require the demolition of a building to be undertaken in such a manner as to expose the construction techniques used for documentation and educational purposes.

4.2.6 Use of a Heritage Building

- a) The uses permitted for a heritage building will be governed by the zoning by-law.
- b) Uses that require minimal or no changes to heritage attributes are supported.

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.3 Other Buildings (Class B and C)

4.3.1 Additions and Alterations

The majority of the properties in the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District are non-heritage buildings. Many of these properties are good neighbours to the heritage buildings in scale, massing, and design. Examples include buildings from the early 20th Century which are identified as Class B. Some Class C buildings are also complementary such as, the many Cape Cod cottages, some of the veterans' housing, which were inspired by the same New England precedents that the United Empire Loyalists brought to Upper Canada. There are also newer buildings that have been consciously designed to complement the heritage buildings in the village.

The 1986 Heritage District Plan provided very little guidance on alterations and additions to non-heritage buildings. This proved to be confusing for both property owners and members of the municipal heritage advisory committee. In general, property owners seemed to fall into one of two camps: those that desired to introduce changes to their properties that further reflected the historic architectural styles and features of the area so as to better fit into the area's historic character and those that preferred changes that represented the existing style of their building. Both approaches are considered acceptable.

4.3.2 Design Approach

When undertaking additions and alterations to Class B buildings, the design approach is to conserve and where appropriate, alter in a complementary manner. Guidelines are provided in Section 9.3.1.

Alterations and additions to Class C buildings in the District will be consistent with one of two design approaches: historical conversion or contemporary alteration as described in the Guidelines in Section 9.3.2.

4.3.3 Demolition of Other Buildings

Generally, the demolition of Class B buildings is not supported, as these buildings are supportive of the overall heritage character of the District.

Demolition of Class C buildings will be considered on a case by case basis.

4.4 New Residential Buildings

New residential buildings on local streets (i.e., single detached dwellings) will have respect for and be compatible with the heritage character of the District. Designs for new residential buildings will be based on the patterns and proportions of 19th-century and early 20th-century building stock that currently exist or once existed in the village. Architectural elements, features, and decorations should be in sympathy with those found on heritage buildings.

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.4.1 Design Approach

- a) The design of new residential buildings will be products of their own time, but will reflect one of the historic architectural styles traditionally found in the District.
- b) New residential buildings will complement the immediate physical context and streetscape by: being generally the same height, width, and orientation of adjacent buildings; being of similar setback; being of like materials and colours; and using similarly proportioned windows, doors, and roof shapes.
- c) New residential building construction will respect natural landforms, drainage, and existing mature vegetation.
- d) Larger new residential buildings will have varied massing, to reflect the small and varied scale of the historical village.
- e) The height of new single detached residential buildings should not be less than 80% and not more than 120% of the average height of residential buildings on immediate adjacent properties. Historically appropriate heights for new residential buildings are considered to be 1-1/2 or 2 storeys, subject to an actual height in metres compatible with immediately adjacent buildings and complying with zoning provisions.
- f) Attached garages will be recessed behind the front elevation of the dwelling or preferably detached and to the rear of the property.
- g) New residential building construction in the District will conform to the guidelines found in Section 9.4.2.
- h) On a lot that includes land that is not permissible for development (i.e. valleylands), only the developable portion will be used to calculate lot coverage and Net Lot Ratio (which is used to determine the Floor Area Ratio of a building) to ensure that the size of the dwelling corresponds to the developable portion of the lot.

- i) In order to ensure that proposed new development is compatible, all proposals or applications will include a detailed and scaled streetscape elevation, illustrating the new building and adjoining structures and features. If necessary, scaled photographs can be used.

4.5 Landscape Features

Often landscape features surrounding a building, such as gardens and fences, can help express the character of both the specific building and the heritage environment.



Landscaping is a significant element in the District character

4.5.1 Landscape Treatment

Existing historical landscapes will be conserved. The introduction of complementary landscapes to the heritage environment will be encouraged. Landscape Guidelines are provided in Section 9.6.

4.5.2 Trees and Shrubs

- a) Mature trees will be preserved except where removal is necessary due to disease or damage, or to ensure public health and safety, as certified by an arborist. The replacement of lost trees will be strongly encouraged.
- b) New trees and shrubs will be native, historical, non-invasive species, as listed in Section 9.6.
- c) Planting will not obscure heritage buildings. Planting can be used to screen less attractive sites and prospects in the District.

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.5.3 Fences

- a) Fences will be regulated by the municipal fence by-law.
- b) Existing picket fences will be preserved. The erection of new picket fences is encouraged.
- c) Front yard and backyard fences will conform to the Guidelines in Sections 9.7.4 and 9.7.5.

4.5.4 Driveways (Residential)

- a) Driveways are to be kept to a narrow width in order to preserve the expanse of the front yard.
- b) Circular driveways are not permitted.
- c) Driveway entrances will not be gated.
- d) Residential driveways will conform to the Guidelines in Section 9.6.6.

4.5.5 Decks

- a) Commercial or residential rooftop decks or patios are not permitted.
- b) Residential front yard decks are not permitted.

4.6 Yonge Street Commercial Area

In order to help retain and enhance the heritage character of the District, specific guidance is needed to address both new and existing commercial buildings on Yonge Street. Commercial features impacting the exterior of buildings such as signage, awnings, restaurant patios, and parking lots are also important.

The Town of Markham has endorsed the Thornhill Yonge Street Study (2005), which is a framework for renewal, reinvestment, and community building in this area. All of the commercial properties on Yonge Street in the District are within the boundaries of the above study. The Framework for Renewal provides urban design guidelines to establish a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly main street environment and

promotes new mixed used development that is appropriate to the transit corridor and existing heritage resources.

4.6.1 Design Approach

- a) The design of new commercial buildings will be products of their own time, but should reflect an historic architectural style either traditionally found in the District or reflective of traditional commercial architecture in a typical historic Ontario downtown setting.
- b) A design approach that reduces the actual and perceived scale of large developments will be pursued.
- c) Height will be reduced as new buildings transition to heights of adjacent buildings of cultural heritage value or interest as well as heights of adjacent low density residential properties.
- d) New mixed use or commercial building construction in the District will conform to the guidelines found in Section 9.4.3.
- e) Existing buildings will be encouraged to take advantage of façade and signage improvement programs offered by the Town.

4.6.2 Commercial Signage

- a) Commercial signage will be regulated by the municipal Sign By-law.
- b) Commercial signage in the District will be consistent with the guidelines found in Section 9.5
- c) Artistic and commercial murals will be regulated by the municipal Sign By-law.

4.0 District Policies – Buildings and Sites

4.6.3 Commercial Awnings

Awnings on commercial buildings will be consistent with the guidelines found in Section 9.4.3.

4.6.4 Commercial Patios

- a) Restaurant or commercial patios will be regulated by the municipal Commercial Patio By-law.
- b) Restaurant or commercial patios will be consistent with the guidelines found in Section 9.5.4.

4.6.5 Commercial Parking Lots

- a) Attractive, well-designed parking lots that complement the special character of the District are supported. Parking will not be located in front of buildings.
- b) Parking lots will be appropriately screened. Features such as lighting, signage, and amenities used in parking lots will be consistent in design terms with those selected for use throughout the District.
- c) The integration of commercial parking lots is supported due to the collaborative nature and interdependence of the various commercial enterprises on Yonge Street, and to improve the efficiency and appearance of the parking facilities. However, the creation of a continuous parking lot lane from Colborne Street to Thornhill Summit Drive is not supported.
- d) The development of underground parking facilities, appropriately located and sited, is supported.

5.0 District Policies – Streetscape and Infrastructure

5.1 Overview

The following policies address those components of the District located primarily in the public realm. These features include roads, curbs, municipal services, parking facilities, sidewalks, boulevards, street furniture, pedestrian amenities, lighting, utility wires, public signage, vegetation, parkettes, and open space. The proper treatment of these features can enhance the heritage character of the District.

5.2 Roads, Curbs, and Municipal Services

The provision of adequate roads, curbs, storm and sanitary sewers, and water supply are essential components for a living Heritage District.

Policies:

- a) Road, curb, and servicing improvements will be undertaken in a manner that preserves and enhances the heritage character of the District.
- b) Existing informal road edges such as grassed verges and ditches, and the absence of curbs and gutters, are traditional village features and will be retained. Boulevards will remain grassed and sidewalks will be kept in good repair, including the repair of those that have sunken lower than the surrounding ground. The permeable surface of Charles Lane will be retained.
- c) If a curb treatment must be introduced on residential streets, a low rolled curb will be used rather than a full urban curb.
- d) Existing pavement widths and road right-of-ways on residential streets are a major contributor to the character of the District and shall not be increased. Council policy supports widening at intersections, if required by the Town.
- e) The widening of John Street is not supported. Options to reduce traffic on John Street and improvements for pedestrians and cyclists will be explored.

- f) The retention of Eliza Street as a cul de sac is supported to prevent traffic infiltration into the residential neighbourhood.

5.3 Sidewalks and Boulevards

The existing sidewalk and boulevard treatment in the District, outside of the Yonge Street core, is predominantly informal in nature and helps differentiate the area from the surrounding newer development. Grassed boulevards with or without a curb treatment or sidewalk create a rural, village-like atmosphere.

Policies

- a) The absence of sidewalks on Colborne (south side) and Eliza Streets, Church, Sumner and Charles Lanes, and Leahill Drive is supported as it contributes to the village character. Sidewalks, where required, will be constructed of poured concrete rather than modern materials that often take on an overly tailored appearance.
- b) Boulevards will remain grassed.

5.4 Street Furniture and Pedestrian Amenities

Street furniture and related pedestrian amenities should be part of a co-ordinated design approach, to help define the District as a distinctive and special area.

Policies:

- a) Street furniture and related pedestrian amenities such as benches, trash and recycling receptacles, bicycle racks, telephone booths, transit shelters, and newspaper box enclosures will be provided as required, and will be consistent through the District.
- b) Street furniture and related pedestrian amenities will be coordinated for the Vaughan and Markham heritage districts.

5.0 District Policies – Streetscape and Infrastructure

5.5 Street Lights and Utility Wires

Street lights and utility wires are necessary in all communities. A distinct street light and absence of overhead wires can be a cohesive element that ties the District together and defines it as a special area.

Policies:

- a) A consistent street light will be used throughout the District to enhance its identity as a heritage area. The selected street light fixture will reflect the village-like, heritage character of the District. The City of Vaughan will be consulted in the development of a lighting approach to assess the feasibility of using the same fixture throughout both communities' components of the heritage district.
- b) Street and other outdoor lighting will be appropriate in light intensity to the function of the street. Consideration will be given to the height, spacing, and minimization of uplighting in the neighbourhood.
- c) Any lighting fixtures introduced in parking lots (public or commercial) will reflect the heritage character of the District and be consistent with the design chosen to be used throughout the District. Consideration will be given to the height, spacing, and minimization of uplighting in the neighbourhood.

5.6 Public Signage

Typical public signage includes directional, regulatory, identity, and public information signs. If properly developed, these signs can promote a co-ordinated identity supported of the heritage area.

- a) Regulatory signs will be the same type of sign used elsewhere in the municipality.

- b) Heritage District street name signs help promote the identification of the heritage conservation district by being a distinct shape, and include a district logo and reference to the District. See Section 9.5.5 of the guidelines for the specific features.
- c) Heritage District entry signs have been introduced to identify the boundaries of the heritage conservation district and will be maintained at the following locations: John Street at the bridge, north and south of John Street on Henderson, and south of John on Yonge Street.
- d) The design, colour, and materials of street name signs, entry signs, and other public information signage will be consistent and complementary to the District character.
- e) A village notice board will be erected at an appropriate location. Inclusion of a map identifying the heritage conservation district will be considered.
- f) Special consideration will be given to improving the gateways into the District along John Street and Yonge Street to be more compatible with the character of the District.
- g) The introduction of complementary signs advising of the location of parking areas will be considered.
- h) The installation of a sign marking the Don River's crossing at Yonge Street and at John Street is supported.

5.0 District Policies – Streetscape and Infrastructure

5.7 Vegetation

The vegetative cover in the public realm of the District significantly contributes to the area's human-scale, village-like character. Street trees, flowers in baskets, shrubs, and vegetation found in the valley environment all contribute to the area's distinctiveness. In addition to their scenic beauty, trees and other vegetation are equally important for controlling the effects of climate by reducing wind velocity, providing shelter from sun, rain, and snow, and creating a moderated microclimate.

Policies:

- a) Plant material introduced to the public realm will be indigenous and/or historically appropriate.
- b) Existing mature trees and other vegetative amenities in the public realm will be retained and preserved except where removal is necessary due to disease or damage, or to ensure public health and safety.
- c) The shaping of street tree canopies for utility wires will be undertaken in a sensitive manner so as not to disfigure the tree. The impact of this process on existing trees may be a factor when burial of utility wires is being considered.
- d) An appraisal of the health of tree cover in the public realm will be undertaken with the result being a replanting policy or plan to replace unhealthy trees and coordinate new plantings.
- e) The placement of new tree-plantings will avoid screening buildings of cultural heritage value or interest.
- f) Plantings will contribute to screening less attractive sites in the District, including above-ground utilities, where practical from an operation and maintenance perspective.
- g) Guidelines for appropriate vegetation are located in Section 9.7.

5.8 John Street Bridge

The John Street bridge is located at the eastern entrance to the heritage conservation district, and is a gateway feature. It is likely that the bridge will have to be replaced in the near future.

Policies:

- a) If the John Street bridge requires removal, it will be replaced with another bridge and not a culvert that tends to disguise the crossing.
- b) The form of a new bridge on John Street will be designed to reflect a gateway feature into the heritage conservation district and will use material that is complementary to the heritage character of the District.
- c) The bridge design and construction will minimize, as much as possible, the impact on the adjacent natural environment.
- d) An archaeological assessment of lands affected by future bridge reconstruction will be undertaken prior to any demolition or construction/grading work.

5.0 District Policies – Streetscape and Infrastructure

5.9 Yonge Street Streetscape

The streetscape policies in this section reflect the vision for Yonge Street as depicted in the *Thornhill Yonge Street Study, 2005 – A Framework for Renewal, Reinvestment and Community Building* that was endorsed and amended by Council in April 2006.

The Thornhill Yonge Street Corridor Area is intended to become a vibrant, mixed use area. It is to be developed as a higher order transit corridor. Intensification and redevelopment will be promoted, at key locations within the corridor, in order to bring vitality to the area, to promote residential, commercial and employment growth, support transit use and enhance the urban design quality of the corridor by using redevelopment opportunities to repair existing gaps in the street wall and provide for rear yard, rather than front yard parking

An attractive, high quality pedestrian friendly, transit supportive streetscape is proposed. Also proposed are new public parks and plazas and enhanced connections to the surrounding open space system.

Below:

Conceptual illustrations of potential streetscape treatments from the Thornhill Yonge Street Study 2005 as prepared by Urban Strategies Inc.



Interim Landscape Improvements

Interface with parking lot



Over the long term, the Yonge Street Base Case Streetscape, together with Mandatory Private Streetscape Contributions secured through the redevelopment process, will create a distinct public realm for the study area.

Interface with built form

5.0 District Policies – Streetscape and Infrastructure

5.9 Yonge Street Streetscape (continued)

Policies

- a) The Yonge Streetscape will reflect a minimum 7 metre public realm between the curb edge and the building front, and will include enhanced intersection treatments, a landscape centre median with a dedicated rapid bus transitway, special paving and streetscape details and furnishings.
- b) The overall vision for the streetscape is predicated on the burial or relocation of existing hydro lines which is supported.
- c) A number of high quality small urban street parks will be developed as part of the redevelopment of properties and dedicated rapid bus transitway improvements. Careful consideration will be given to their context, use of hard surface materials, vegetation selection and street furniture to ensure compatibility with the Heritage District.
- d) Pedestrian and vehicular laneways and parking courts will be enhanced through the introduction of special paving materials, lighting and landscaping as part of the redevelopment process. Key areas for improvement consideration include the Library Mews, the John Street transit node and the Yonge Street/Thornhill Summit Drive laneway.
- e) The design of the transitway median will be complementary to the heritage character of the area.
- f) Enhanced intersection and pedestrian crosswalk treatments are supported.
- g) The general concept of a Heritage Art Walk on Yonge Street right-of-way (south from the southeast corner of John Street) to highlight art and historical aspects of the District is supported in principle. It will be important to retain existing trees and some permeable ground cover.
- h) All loose streetscape furnishings and fixed street furniture and lighting (including transit/bus shelters and kiosks) will be reflective of and complementary to the heritage character of the area.
- i) Streetscape and infrastructure improvements in the Yonge Street corridor will be generally consistent with the *Thornhill Yonge Street Study, 2005 – A Framework for Renewal, Reinvestment and Community*

6.0 District Policies – Special Areas and Projects

6.1 Overview

Most of the District consists of single-family dwellings. However, there are some special areas in the District, including the institutional uses of St. Volodymyr's Church and its cemetery, and the Thornhill Cemetery; the open spaces of the river valley, Pomona Park, and the Meadow (behind the church); and the commercial uses on Yonge Street. There are also some special projects that could address the further understanding and promotion of the heritage conservation district.

6.2 St. Volodymyr's Church and the Cemeteries

St. Volodymyr's (formerly St. Luke's) is the only historic church in the Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District. The churchyard, which includes the parish cemetery, is about one hectare in extent. Together with the adjacent Thornhill Cemetery, which is slightly larger, the lands form what might be called a ceremonial precinct.

Policies:

- a) The church lands and cemeteries will be preserved, and the historical features will be protected.
- b) The maintenance and protection of grave markers will involve the use of proper techniques so as to not damage the monuments.

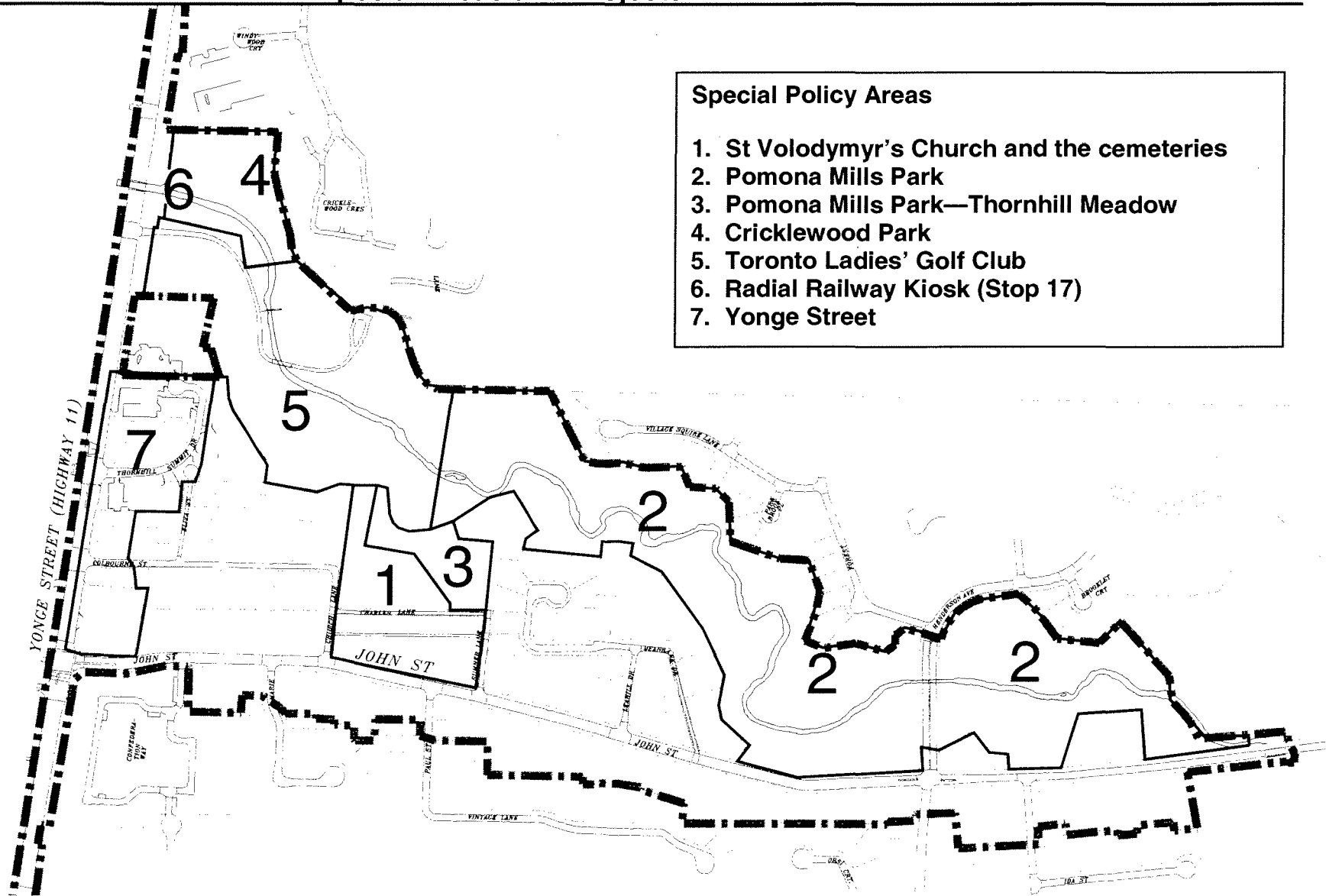
6.3 Pomona Mills Park

Part of Pomona Mills Park forms the northern boundary of the heritage conservation district. The western part of the park within the District is a natural, unspoiled area that preserves the valley of the Don River—East Branch, and helps maintain the memory of Thornhill's origin as a mill village. The portion of the park east of Henderson Avenue offers opportunities for more active recreational pursuits.

Policies:

- a) The continuation of the portion of Pomona Mills Park west of Henderson Avenue as a natural, unspoiled area accessed by simple paths is supported.
- b) The absence of lighted paths in the park is supported.
- c) Park fixtures, including benches, trash receptacles, and signs will be of a design which is complementary to the District's heritage character and will be consistent with those used elsewhere in the District.
- d) The development of interpretive features providing visual and textual information on the historical significance of the former mill sites will be investigated.
- e) If possible, any new paths will be constructed of permeable material.
- f) The introduction of native planting materials such as wildflowers, trees and shrubs is supported.

6.0 District Policies – Special Areas and Projects



6.0 District Policies – Special Areas and Projects

6.4 Pomona Mills Park—Thornhill Meadow

The Town of Markham recently acquired the parcel of land to the north and east of the St. Volodymyr's property. The property is a meadow and has been added to the Pomona Mills Park holdings. A stairwell connects the meadow to the river valley.

Policies:

- a) The retention of this portion of Pomona Mills Park as a natural, unspoiled meadow is supported
- b) The introduction of native planting materials such as wildflowers and shrubs is supported.
- c) The absence of lighted paths in the meadow is supported.
- d) The introduction of any park fixtures, including benches, trash receptacles, and signs will be of a design which is complementary to the District's heritage character and will be consistent with that used elsewhere in the District.

6.5 Cricklewood Park

Cricklewood Park is located north of the Toronto Ladies' Golf Club lands and fronts onto Yonge Street.

Policies:

- a) The continuation of Cricklewood Park as a natural, unspoiled area accessed by simple paths is supported.
- b) The introduction of appropriate lighting along the paths in the park is supported.
- c) Park fixtures, including benches, trash receptacles, and signs will be of a design which is complementary to the District's heritage character and will be consistent with those used elsewhere in the District.

- d) The development of interpretive features providing visual and textual information on the historical significance of the Cricklewood Estate will be investigated.
- e) If possible, any new paths will be constructed of permeable material.

6.6 Toronto Ladies' Golf Club

The Toronto Ladies' Golf Club, with its historic clubhouse, is a valuable heritage resource.

Policies:

- a) The retention of these lands in a rural, pastoral condition is supported.
- b) The introduction of small structures of simple and sympathetic design associated with the present use as a golf course will generally be supported, subject to heritage review.

6.7 Radial Railway Kiosk (Stop 17)

The ticket booth from the Yonge Street Radial Rail Line has been refurbished by the Society for the Preservation of Historic Thornhill and the Lions Club. Part of the restoration included a new roof and painting in original colours. It is located on the south side of the path in Cricklewood Park, near Yonge Street.

Policies:

- a) Further commemoration and interpretation of this cultural heritage resource will be explored.
- b) Options to deter vandalism such as security lighting, motion sensors, or alarms will be explored.

6.0 District Policies – Special Areas and Projects

6.8 Interpreting Yonge Street

The history of Yonge Street in the heritage conservation district could be interpreted using archival photographs and interpretive panels. The wall along the streetscape adjacent to the Confederation Townhouses also may offer opportunities for heritage and artistic interpretation.

- a) The feasibility of introducing interpretive features providing visual and textual information on the historical significance of Yonge Street will be explored.
- b) The design of any interpretive features will be complementary to the District character and be co-ordinated with other District elements such as street furniture, entry signage, street name signs, etc.

6.9 Commemorative and Interpretive Signs

At present, properties in the District that have been individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* possess a round, bronze plaque indicating the first owner's name and the date of the building's construction. Some of the older buildings in the Heritage District possess wooden wall plaques installed in 1967 which detail the first owner, the occupation, and date of construction. Buildings that have been identified as being of cultural heritage value or interest should be recognized in a consistent manner.

Policies:

- a) A program of commemorating and interpreting buildings and properties of cultural heritage value or interest in the District will be pursued.
- b) The design of interpretive signs will be complementary to the District character and be co-ordinated with other District elements such as street furniture, entry signage, street name signs, etc.

- c) Where appropriate, the use of the "Markham Remembered" interpretive plaque program will be supported.
- d) A listing of all commemorative and interpretive plaques will be maintained.

6.10 Yonge Street Redevelopment

The Yonge Street commercial section in the District features a concentration of older commercial plaza developments, often with parking located in front of the property, that do not contribute to the heritage character of the area. Many of the commercial signs are internally illuminated and not complementary to the District.

- a) The redevelopment of older commercial strip plaza development, such as that found at 7681–7689 and 7710–7725 Yonge Street, will present a design approach compatible with the heritage character of the District.
- b) All redevelopment proposals will ensure that the architectural design enhances and protects buildings of cultural heritage value or interest.
- c) The Thornhill Yonge Street Study (2005), a framework for renewal, reinvestment, and community building, will be used to help guide redevelopment in this area.
- d) New building construction on Yonge Street will conform to the policies found in Section 4.6.1 and the guidelines found in Section 9.4.3.

6.11 Communication and Education

It is extremely important to ensure that all property owners and residents in a heritage conservation district are aware of, and have an understanding of, the policies, processes, and procedures which apply in the District. Education opportunities and a comprehensive communication strategy are essential.

6.0 District Policies – Special Areas and Projects

6.11.1 Communications

It is important to remind those who live and work in the District of its existence on a regular basis. This audience includes property owners and tenants both in the residential and commercial areas, Town staff and other public bodies who undertake projects in the area, as well as those in the legal and real estate fields who undertake property transactions in the Heritage District.

Policies:

- a) Information concerning the District and the District Plan, as well as related matters, will be made available to property owners, residents, and commercial tenants.
 - b) Town Staff and other public agencies involved in work that could potentially impact the District will be informed of the policies of the District.
 - c) The Thornhill Village Library will be requested to act as a repository for reference copies of the District Plan and Heritage Permit application forms.
 - d) A regular heritage conservation district newsletter to improve communication and information dissemination to local property owners will be continued.
 - e) An information package will be sent on a regular basis to local real estate companies regarding the Heritage District to ensure their familiarity with the implications of selling or buying a property within the District, and to request that this information be communicated to new property owners.
 - f) The heritage conservation district by-law has been registered on title to every property in the district, as per provincial requirements.
 - g) The heritage section of the Town's website will ensure easy access to a Thornhill Heritage Conservation District section which will include information such as:
 - historical information on the District;
 - a map of the District;
- the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan, downloadable in sections as PDF files;
 - links to other Town heritage policies and related material such as studies on heritage property values, maintenance, energy improvement strategies for historic buildings, etc.;
 - links to application forms such as the Heritage Permit.
- h) The Town will utilize local groups and associations such as the Ward 1 (South) Thornhill Residents Inc. Ratepayers and the Society for the Preservation of Historic Thornhill to remind property owners about the requirements in the District.
 - i) Additional opportunities and mechanisms to inform new homeowners and commercial tenants about the Heritage District and associated requirements through existing Town department and operational requirements will be pursued.

6.11.2 Education

Education is one of the most effective tools for helping to conserve our heritage besides the legislative tools available. It is important to offer heritage conservation educational opportunities for both property owners and residents, as well as for members of Heritage Markham, Council's municipal heritage committee.

Policies:

- a) The creation and promotion of learning opportunities for property owners in the District will be pursued. This may include special workshops or presentations, as well as the provision of written materials.

6.0 District Policies – Special Areas and Projects

6.11.2 Education cont'd

- b) The promotion of periodic learning opportunities for members of Heritage Markham to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the heritage conservation principles and policies as well as the specific policies of the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan is supported.
- c) A user-friendly information handout will be prepared to explain the heritage conservation easement concept and the associated agreement. A better understanding of this concept may encourage property owners to participate in the Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program.
- d) All property owners will be informed as to where a copy of the District Plan can be reviewed or purchased. The use of the Heritage Permit will be explained.
- e) Residents will be encouraged to nominate those who have undertaken outstanding restoration works on heritage buildings, or good examples of complementary new infill construction as candidates for a Heritage Markham Award of Excellence.

7.0 Municipal Policies

7.1 Overview

Municipal planning and development policies may have a greater impact on the heritage character of a District than do explicit heritage policies. It is important to integrate all policies that have a heritage impact in order to maximize the protection of the special character of the District.

7.2 Recognizing the Heritage District Plan

The purpose of the Town of Markham Official Plan is to set out policies and programs to govern the nature, extent, pattern, and scheduling of development and redevelopment and other matters within a framework of general goals and objectives. One of the overall general goals of the Official Plan is to foster an understanding of and to endeavour to protect the heritage of the Town.

Section 2.5 of the Official Plan specifically addresses the Town's heritage conservation policies. Thornhill Markham is defined as a Heritage Conservation District.

Policies:

- a) Any Official Plan references to the Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District Plan 1986 should be amended to refer to the Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District Plan 2007.

7.3 Land Use in the District

The general use of land in the District is identified in the Official Plan and its amendments, and is further refined in specific zoning by-laws for the area. Prominent land uses in the District include residential, commercial, and open space, and a deviation from these uses is not recommended. The Thornhill Secondary Plan includes land use policy that affects both the residential and commercial areas of the Heritage District.

In 2006, the Secondary Plan was amended to incorporate the recommendations for new land use policies and urban design guidelines for Yonge Street as set out in the Thornhill Yonge Street Study 2005.

Some of the existing development standards associated with zoning by-laws do not reflect the traditional built form and streetscape character found in the District. If not altered, this will result in applicants having to make application to the Committee of Adjustment for variances in order to implement the design guidelines presented in the District Plan.

Policies:

- a) Existing District land uses, designated in the Official Plan and the amendments and the prevailing zoning classifications are supported.
- b) The conversion of dwelling units to professional offices in residential areas is not supported.
- c) The use of the Infill By-law with its cap on size of dwellings in the older core area of the Heritage District and the use of Floor Area Ratio in the remainder of the District is supported.
- d) Zoning By-law 2237, as amended, will be reviewed and amended as necessary to address the following:
 - the need for revised development standards in the District, such as reduced front yard setbacks and maximum height, to permit development that reflects the built form of neighbouring construction;
 - the need for a revision to prohibit garages from projecting from the front of a house.
 - the need to delete any lands below top-of-bank from coverage calculations to ensure that the size of the dwelling corresponds to the usable portion of the lot.

7.0 Municipal Policies

7.4 Land Severance and Minor Variances

In addition to the matters to be addressed under the Planning Act, the Committee of Adjustment, in determining whether a consent (land severance) is to be granted, consults with appropriate Town departments and agencies and has regard for adjacent use (i.e., compatibility of the size, shape, and proposed use of the new lot with the adjacent uses), access considerations, and availability of services.

In commenting to the Committee of Adjustment on applications for severance or minor variance in the District, the Town should only support such applications if the proposal is compatible with the objectives and policies of the District Plan.

Policies:

- a) Each land division proposal and variance will be evaluated on its own merits and as to its compatibility with the objectives and policies of the District Plan.
- b) The retention of the variety of different lot sizes and frontages in the district is important and is supported, as this is part of the unique character of the heritage district.

7.5 Site Plan Control

All of the land within the boundaries of the Town of Markham has been designated as a Site Plan Control Area under By-law 262-94. This designation allows Council to approve plans and drawings as provided for in section 41 of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990.

Normally, single detached and semi-detached dwellings are not subject to site plan control. However, the Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District has been identified as one of the areas where the Town is able to require drawings to be submitted for approval showing plan, elevation, and cross-

section views for any new single detached or semi-detached dwelling or alteration/additions to these structures. Site plan control should continue to apply to the District.

Policies:

- a) Site plan control will apply to all property in the District.
- b) Site plan applications for low density residential development (new construction and additions) should be fast-tracked through the approval system and administrative costs should be kept minimal so as not to disadvantage or delay residential applicants within the District.

7.6 Signage By-law

The Town regulates signs and other advertising devices in the municipality through its Sign By-law. A section of the by-law is entitled "Special Sign Districts" and indicates that these special districts correspond to the heritage areas in the Town and that all applications must be forwarded to Heritage Markham or staff for review. The policies also address sign placement (not to obscure heritage features), size (slightly smaller than permitted elsewhere in the Town), and sign illumination (external only). Every new or replacement sign in a heritage conservation district requires a sign permit application.

The District should continue to be designated a Special Sign District.

Policies:

- a) Signage in the District will be regulated by the Town's Sign By-law.
- b) Signage will conform to the guidelines found in Section 9.5.1.

7.0 Municipal Policies

7.7 Demolition Control

Recent amendments to the *Ontario Heritage Act* allow Council to prohibit the demolition of a structure designated under the Act. All properties within a heritage conservation district are considered to be designated.

Policy:

- a) Council will prevent the demolition of buildings of cultural heritage value or interest within the District.

7.8 Heritage Easements

A Heritage Conservation Easement is a legal agreement that allows a municipality to ensure the preservation of a heritage property while the owner retains possession and use of the property. An easement agreement provides a public body such as a municipality, a legal interest in the property and is registered on title to the property. The *Ontario Heritage Act* permits municipalities to enter into heritage easements.

When compared with heritage designation, a heritage conservation easement provides much stronger protection. Property owners can enter into the easement voluntarily if they want to ensure their property is preserved for future generations or the easement can be a condition of development approval. Easements can also be a requirement in exchange for various forms of financial incentives such as a heritage property tax rebate or a grant of some form.

A Heritage Conservation Easement Agreement requires the property owner to secure municipal approvals for any changes or alterations to the property affecting the heritage attributes, to reasonably maintain the structure in as good and as sound a state of repair as a prudent owner would normally do so that no deterioration in the building's condition and appearance shall take place, and to maintain insurance on the building in

an appropriate amount (replacement value of the building or a modified waiver if the building is vacant).

The Town of Markham has adopted a Heritage Conservation Easement Policy in which easements may be secured in a number of situations including: major site plan and development applications (commercial, higher density residential), heritage building relocations, change of use, severance, variances, and financial assistance programs. Contact the Town for further details.

Policies:

- a) Property owners are encouraged to consider a heritage conservation easement on their property to ensure that it is protected and preserved for the benefit of future generations.
- b) The use of heritage conservation easements will be regulated by the Town's Heritage Conservation Easement Policy.

7.9 Tree Preservation

The preservation of mature vegetation is a major objective of the District Plan. Municipal by-law 68-92 authorizes and regulates the planting, trimming, and removal of trees on any road or right-of-way under the jurisdiction of the Town, but does not affect the treatment of trees on private property.

The Town of Markham has been undertaking a comprehensive examination of a tree preservation by-law for Markham, including special provisions for trees in heritage conservation districts. In February 2006, Council endorsed, in principle, a preferred approach for a tree preservation by-law for the Town and the development of a "Tree Preservation Education Program" which would support and accompany the tree preservation by-law. Details concerning administration and enforcement are under study. The *Ontario Heritage Act* also provides authority to prevent tree removal.

7.0 Municipal Policies

7.9 Tree Preservation cont'd

Policies:

- a) The implementation of a municipal tree preservation by-law allowing the Town to identify a specific tree, treeline, or grouping for protection on private property within the heritage conservation district is supported.
- b) Pending approval of a tree preservation by-law, removal of trees of greater than 200mm calliper will require a heritage permit.
- c) Application for such a removal shall include an arborist's report, including recommendations for trees to replace those removed.

7.10 Community Improvement Area

According to the Official Plan, one of the actions that the Town may undertake to improve the community's visual appearance is to periodically review heritage conservation districts and other areas to ascertain what improvements may be made to enhance their appearance and implement such improvements as feasible.

Policy:

- a) The designation of the Yonge Street area as a Community Improvement Area to facilitate revitalization and streetscape improvements is supported.

7.11 Property Maintenance Standards

Where a municipality has passed a by-law under Section 15.1 of the Building Code Act, setting out the standards for maintenance of property in the municipality, it can pass a by-law that sets out additional minimum standards for the maintenance of heritage property within a Heritage Conservation District.

The municipality can then require property owners to maintain their properties to these standards.

Policy:

- a) An amendment to the Town's Property Standards By-law to address additional minimum standards for the maintenance of heritage property within the District is supported.