

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Tuesday, October 13, 2020
Subject	Recommended Cultural Heritage Action Plan

Recommendation

1. That the Cultural Heritage Action Plan dated October 13, 2020 be approved.
 2. That a heritage conservation district study be initiated for the Ward West candidate cultural heritage landscape (CCHL-23).
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

To seek Council approval for the Cultural Heritage Action Plan. The Action Plan provides the implementation framework to achieve the Official Plan vision, objectives and policies that support and enable the City's heritage planning efforts to conserve cultural heritage resources.

Key Findings

Policy Planning and Urban Design has developed a Cultural Heritage Action Plan (CHAP) that identifies cultural heritage landscapes (CHLs) within the city and prioritizes actions related to conservation, cultural heritage promotion and incentives to help ensure that cultural heritage resources are conserved. The CHAP provides advice to help direct staff efforts and contains information to assist Guelph City Council as they make decisions that relate to cultural heritage conservation.

The final version of the action plan has been revised to address comments and feedback from Heritage Guelph and from the community consultation period from January 2018 to April 2019.

The CHAP provides direction for the long-term workplan for the City to fulfill its Official Plan objectives. The priority for initiation of a heritage conservation district study is the Ward West CHL; one of the three high-priority candidate cultural heritage landscapes identified by the CHAP for future study.

The CHAP also provides recommendations for communications and outreach, financial incentives, and the protection of extant farm barns.

Financial Implications

The implementation of the Cultural Heritage Action Plan will be funded through the capital budget, Capital Account PL0024. Funding for the initiation of the short-term priority actions of the CHAP, which includes the Ward West heritage conservation district study, was approved through the 2019 Capital Budget. The 10-year capital

forecast includes funding in 2026 for implementation of a subsequent heritage conservation district study. Actions that will require future funding (i.e., financial incentives program described in this report) will be subject to their respective budget processes in the years they are identified.

Background

The City's Official Plan commits to maintaining and celebrating the heritage character of the city by promoting and fostering preservation, rehabilitation/adaptive re-use or restoration of built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes so that they remain in active use. The Official Plan objectives are to identify and conserve built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes in accordance with Part IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act and to enhance the culture of conservation city-wide by promoting cultural heritage initiatives as part of a comprehensive environmental, economic and social strategy where cultural heritage resources contribute to achieving a sustainable, healthy and prosperous city.

On September 6, 2016 Council approved the project charter for the Cultural Heritage Action Plan through report IDE 16-62. As described in the project charter, the scope of the CHAP is to establish a prioritized list of candidate cultural heritage landscapes with potential for listing on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties and possible designation through Part IV or Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The CHAP also provides options for municipal financial incentives that promote heritage conservation and guidance on promoting public awareness of heritage conservation in the community.

Phase 1 of the CHAP commenced with community engagement that included a Stakeholders Focus Group meeting in January 2018 and consultation with Heritage Guelph committee in February 2018. Phase 1 of the Cultural Heritage Action Plan project was completed with the presentation of the CHAP Background Report to Council within Information Report IDE-2018-127 on August 31, 2018.

Phase 2 involved the preparation of the draft CHAP. The draft CHAP document was presented for Council's consideration and input ([report IDE-2019-41](#)) on April 8, 2019 followed by two community consultation sessions held on April 24 of that year and a workshop with Heritage Guelph on May 27, 2019. An online feedback form was made available to the public on the City's website following the sessions until May 12, 2019 through the City's "Have Your Say" online forum. Feedback received from Heritage Guelph, Council and the community on the draft CHAP has informed the final recommended CHAP document included as Attachment 1 to this report.

Report

The Cultural Heritage Action Plan (CHAP) identifies cultural heritage landscapes (CHLs) within the city and prioritizes actions related to conservation, cultural heritage promotion and incentives to help ensure that cultural heritage resources are conserved.

Cultural Heritage Landscape Priorities

The CHAP identifies the following three candidate cultural heritage landscapes for study: Exhibition Park (CCHL-10), St. George's Park (CCHL-15), and The Ward – West (CCHL-23). These areas all contain a high number of listed properties, as well as a number of designated properties. All three neighbourhoods have also seen

relatively high levels of activity related to building permits and demolition permits in recent years, suggesting a high interest for potential development, major alterations to buildings and infill construction. Bringing these areas forward for consideration for future study will help to ensure that the historic character of the areas is conserved as continued investment is made in the areas by property owners.

It is recommended that the Ward West candidate CHL be initiated first as this would implement Policy 11.1.5.4.2 of the [Downtown Secondary Plan](#) which directs staff to investigate the potential for St. Patrick's Ward to be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act as a heritage conservation district. The Ward West portion of the St. Patrick's Ward is included in the Downtown Secondary Plan area, it is a neighbourhood that is under increasing development pressure, and it is one of Guelph's oldest residential neighbourhoods.

Designation of Individual Built Heritage Resources

The scope of the Cultural Heritage Action Plan does not involve the evaluation of the cultural heritage value of individual built heritage resources. The City of Guelph maintains a municipal register of individually designated and listed heritage properties in accordance with section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Staff continue to work on reviewing the 1970s era Couling Architectural Inventory to provide a recommendation to Council as to which of the properties on the Couling Architectural Inventory should be listed on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties.

Research and recommendations relating to potential designations of individual properties under the Act is an ongoing task for heritage planning staff in consultation with Heritage Guelph. Each year, three to four properties are researched and considered for potential designation.

Community Feedback on the draft Cultural Heritage Action Plan

Two community engagement sessions were held in April 2018, with a total of 28 people attending. The online survey resulted in 177 responses. Attachment 2 provides a summary of the community engagement comments along with staff response.

A workshop was held with Heritage Guelph to obtain members feedback on May 27, 2019 and a follow up discussion was held with the consulting team and Heritage Guelph on September 9, 2019. Minutes of these Heritage Guelph meetings are included as Attachment 3 to this report.

The most often cited comments from the engagement exercises were:

- That the use of risk as the primary determining factor when rating the priority cultural heritage landscapes not be weighted more than a cultural heritage landscape's cultural heritage value;
- That the priority for designation and protection should be the Catholic Hill cultural heritage landscape; and
- That the history section of the CHAP did not include an in-depth study of pre-settlement Guelph and that Indigenous history and cultural heritage value should have been addressed by the CHAP.

Overall the feedback received on the draft CHAP has been supportive of the City moving forward with approval and implementation of the plan. Community input

has supported the development of the CHAP by informing the project's identification of candidate cultural heritage landscapes and helping explore the community support for initiatives that would enhance the City's conservation of cultural heritage resources.

Revisions to the Draft Cultural Heritage Action Plan

Revisions to the draft CHAP were made by the consulting team and City staff to address the comments received and to provide clarification where required.

The CHAP has been revised to clarify why risk to the integrity of cultural heritage resources was used as the most important factor when setting priorities for cultural heritage landscapes. It has also been clarified that those CHLs that are identified as being the most significant CHLs (such as Catholic Hill and the University of Guelph campus) already have plans in place for conservation.

Staff acknowledge that the history outlined in the Cultural Heritage Action Plan is limited to post-1827 settlement and does not include the history of Indigenous people in this area. The City is committed to continuing to learn about local Indigenous history and associated cultural heritage landscapes, and to continue to build partnerships with local communities to collaboratively identify significant cultural heritage landscapes.

Recommendation for a Financial Incentives Program

The CHAP provides recommendations for a suite of financial tools to assist designated cultural heritage resource owners in making critical investments toward the conservation, restoration, or stabilization of buildings and landscapes. Of these tools, the CHAP advises that a municipal grants program for eligible costs to repair or restore heritage attributes of protected (designated) heritage properties is generally recognized as the most effective and most transparent means of encouraging property owners to achieve heritage conservation. Grant programs deliver funds (normally allocated through the annual operating budget planning process) to property owners that meet specific eligibility criteria to participate. Some of the recommendations will be considered through other processes and the consideration of funding through existing Tax Increment Based Grant programs.

The proposed grants program would provide support to designated property owners. Currently, there are 110 properties designated under Part IV and 160 properties designated within the Brooklyn and College Hill Heritage Conservation District. Upon completion of another heritage conservation district plan, there could be a further 100 to 200 (depending on the outcomes of the study) properties that could be eligible for support with conservation efforts.

Of the suite of tools outlined in the CHAP, staff recommend that the establishment of a grants program for designated heritage properties be considered in the next 3-5 years. Based on the findings of the CHAP's review of municipal practices, it is recommended that a grant program with total funding of \$150,000 per year be established and used to provide individual matching grants for up to \$15,000 maximum per designated property. The program is proposed to be brought forward to Council for consideration with a budget request for 2025. Staff would bring forward a grant program proposal with details including eligibility criteria and how this grant could be used to achieve other objectives for designated heritage properties such as attaining net zero. This timing is proposed due to current

circumstances and to coincide with the anticipated completion of the City's second heritage conservation district.

Recommendation for Extant Farm Barns

All fourteen of the extant farm barns within the City of Guelph (Attachment 4) have been listed on the City's Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties and three are now protected under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. A listing on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties signals the importance of the cultural heritage resource to the City of Guelph and also requires notice should a building be proposed for demolition so that the property can be evaluated further for potential designation. Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act is the strongest means by which a municipality in Ontario can protect cultural heritage properties.

Of the fourteen extant farm barns, the following three are seen to be at the greatest risk and therefore are recommended as priorities for individual designation under the Ontario Heritage Act:

- 2167 Gordon Street – James Kidd Barn
- 284 Arkell Road – Walsh Barn
- 1858 Gordon Street – Robinson/Mulvaney Barn

Financial Implications

The implementation of the Cultural Heritage Action Plan including the initiation of a heritage conservation district study will be funded through the capital budget, Capital Account PL0024. Funding was previously approved for implementation of the CHAP in the 2019 Capital Budget. This funding will be used to initiate the priority heritage conservation district study, Ward West. The 10-year capital forecast includes funding in 2026 for implementation of a subsequent heritage conservation district study as these studies typically take 2-3 years to complete. All other recommended actions are proposed to be incorporated into work plans of existing staff and our summer contract staff. Where funds may be required to support actions (e.g., communications/outreach), the Planning Services operating budget includes funding for heritage initiatives such as advertising, printing, and consulting. Further program incentives will be brought forward through the budget process for 2025.

Consultations

The project's internal stakeholder team provided further input and feedback into revisions and enhancements to the document. This included the service areas of Planning, Engineering, Finance as well as Culture, Tourism and Community Investment.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Priority

Sustaining our future

Direction

Plan and design an increasingly sustainable city as Guelph grows

Alignment

The Official Plan's vision is to plan and design an increasingly sustainable city as Guelph grows which includes the conservation of natural and cultural heritage resources. The recommendations in this report support the conservation of cultural heritage resources, including the identification of significant cultural heritage landscapes and setting priorities and actions for implementation of the Official Plan's cultural heritage policies. These actions support Guelph's planning for an increasingly sustainable City.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Recommended Cultural Heritage Action Plan – October 13, 2020

Attachment-2 Summary of Community Feedback on the Draft CHAP

Attachment-3 Heritage Guelph Meeting Minutes (May 27 and September 9, 2019)

Attachment-4 Extant Farm Barns within the City of Guelph

Attachment-5 Staff Presentation – Cultural Heritage Action Plan

Departmental Approval

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