

REVIEW OF THE AURORA REGISTER

Final Report

TOWN OF AURORA
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Prepared for:
The Corporation of the Town of Aurora

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Glossary of Abbreviations

CHVI	<i>Cultural Heritage Value or Interest</i>
HCD	<i>Heritage Conservation District</i>
MHBC	<i>MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited</i>
MHSTCI	<i>Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries</i>
OHA	<i>Ontario Heritage Act</i>
OHTK	<i>Ontario Heritage Toolkit</i>
O-REG 9/06	<i>Ontario Regulation 9/06 for determining cultural heritage significance</i>
Register	<i>Aurora Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest</i>
SOS	<i>Statement of Significance</i>

Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territory

This report acknowledges that the Town of Aurora is situated in the territory of the Huron-Wendat, Mississaugas, Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinabewaki peoples (Native Land Digital). These lands are acknowledged as being associated with the Toronto Purchase Treaty 13 (1805), the Johnson-Butler Purchase (1788), and the Williams Treaty (1923) (Native Land Digital). It is also recognized that the southern edge of the Town is subject to the Rouge Tract Claim (2015) (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, 2015).

Acknowledgement of Organizations/Institutions

MHBC would like to thank the following individuals, committees, and institutions for their contributions to this project:

- Town of Aurora Building and Planning & Development staff;
- The Town of Aurora Review of the Aurora Register Steering Committee, and members of the Aurora Evaluation Sub-Committee;
- Town of Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee;
- Town of Aurora Archives; and
- Jacqueline Stuart (Aurora Historical Society and Historian).

Executive Summary

The review of the Aurora Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest Project (also referred to in this document as the “Register”) was conducted between November 2020 and March 2022. The objective of this review has been to consolidate the Register by evaluating the Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (also referred to as “CHVI”) of the 374 listed (non-designated) properties, as per *Ontario Regulation 9/06*. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide recommendations regarding which properties should be considered for removal from the Register, which should remain listed, and which should be designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (also referred to as the “OHA”).

The Town of Aurora determined that this project was needed given that many of the properties on the Register were “blanket listed” based on their general date of construction and added without specific information related to what about the property was of particular interest. The majority of the information available to Town staff regarding these listed properties prior to undertaking this project included outdated information. As a result, Heritage Planning staff is not able to make informed decisions regarding the wise management of cultural heritage resources.

To ensure an efficient and organized approach to the review of the Register, the tasks of the project have been divided into four phases, as follows:

- **Phase 1:** Evaluation Criteria & Data Collection, Inventory & Research;
- **Phase 2:** Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) Preparation;
- **Phase 3:** Consultation with the Heritage Advisory Committee and Council; and
- **Phase 4:** Heritage Designation, Delisting and Update to the Register.

Information collected during site visits and research collected in order to complete evaluations of the resources included in the scope of this project have been inputted into a Geographic Information System (GIS) Inventory Application with georeferenced data points for each property. The inventory work and site visits was conducted in order to photograph and document the subject properties. It also allowed for an on-site evaluation of condition and heritage integrity of physical attributes. The subsequent research undertaken for both neighbourhoods and individual properties allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of CHVI (Cultural Heritage Value or Interest). The subject properties have been evaluated in accordance with the criteria and direction provided in the *OHA, O. Reg. 9/06*, and the guidance provided in the Ontario Heritage Toolkit regarding research and evaluation of potential cultural heritage resources.

The results of the evaluation determined whether or not a property should remain on the register, or be removed from the register. Properties which were determined to meet none, or minimal criteria under *O. Reg 9/06* and have lost their heritage integrity were recommended for removal

from the Register. Properties which were determined to meet some criteria under *Ontario Regulation 9/06* and have retained a level of their heritage integrity were recommended to remain on the Register. Properties which met multiple criteria under *O. Reg 9/06* and have retained their heritage integrity and/or were considered to be at risk were recommended for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The evaluations of these 374 properties are provided in **Appendix H** of this report. The main conclusions of the study are as follows:

- That 57 properties should be considered for removal from the Register;
- That 30 properties should be considered for Part IV designation under the *OHA*; and
- That 287 properties should remain listed on the Register.

The recommendation of the Review of the Aurora Register project are summarized as follows:

Immediate Actions (0-12 months):

Immediate action items may be initiated within 0-12 months, with the understanding that some tasks may be completed beyond the 12 months.

- That the Town proceed with removal from the Register of the 57 properties identified in Appendix 1 consistent with the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- That the Town proceed with designation of 30 priority properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* identified in **Appendix J**, consistent with the legislated requirements;
- That the Town adopt the evaluation tool used in this study for consideration of future additions to the Heritage Register (provided in **Appendix E**); and
- That the Town integrate the GIS based Inventory tool and the completed property evaluation sheets into its records and systems as appropriate. The Town can add properties to the Inventory which are designated under Part IV, and Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It is recommended that the Town consider making information included in the Heritage Register available electronically.

Medium Term Actions (1-3 years):

Medium Term action items may be initiated within 1-3 years, with the understanding that some tasks may be completed beyond the 3 years.

- That the Heritage Advisory Committee develop a workplan to advance listed properties from Register for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* over time. Suggestions regarding properties which could be designated under Part IV as part of the Medium Term Actions are provided in **Appendix I**.

Long Term Actions (3 years and beyond):

Long term action items may be *initiated* within 3 years, with the understanding that some tasks may be completed beyond the 3 years.

- That the 287 properties identified in **Appendix H** remain on the Heritage Register, and be up-dated on an as-needed basis;
- That the evaluation tool (**Appendix E**) be updated as necessary based on changes to provincial legislation and guidelines;
- That existing policies regarding the cultural heritage evaluation methodology in the Town of Aurora Official Plan be updated to reflect the evaluation methodology provided in this report; and
- That the Town consider options for conserving properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest which are located within clusters or neighbourhood groups using tools available under either the *Ontario Heritage Act* (i.e. Part V Designation and Heritage Conservation Districts) or the *Planning Act* (i.e. Secondary Plans, Character Areas, Cultural Heritage Landscapes, etc.).

1.0 Introduction & Project Background

1.1 Purpose of the Project

In November 2020, the Town of Aurora retained MHBC to undertake a review of the Aurora Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The purpose of the review is to assess all the properties that are currently listed (non-designated under Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*). The intended outcome is that each of the 374 properties will be placed into one of three categories as follows:

- 1) Properties which have zero/minimal CHVI and are recommended for removal from the Register;
- 2) Properties which are of moderate CHVI and are recommended to remain on the Register; and
- 3) Properties which are of major CHVI and/or at risk, and are recommended for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

This evaluations conducted under the scope of this project have been conducted as per *O. Reg. 9/06* of the *Ontarion Heritage Act* which is the legislated criteria for determining CHVI. The review of the listed properties has enabled the project team to update information for each property in order to assist the Town of Aurora in processes under the *OHA* and the *Planning Act*. At present, many properties included on the Register are not accompanied with an explanation of why the property was identified as being of potential CHVI and much of the information available to staff is outdated.

1.2 Description of the Study Area

The study area includes the entirety of the Town of Aurora. The study area includes clusters of cultural heritage resources, primarily in the urban area with outliers in the rural community. There are concentrations of heritage resouces within the Town, which are primarily located along, or within the context of, the historic intersection of Yonge Street and Wellington Street.

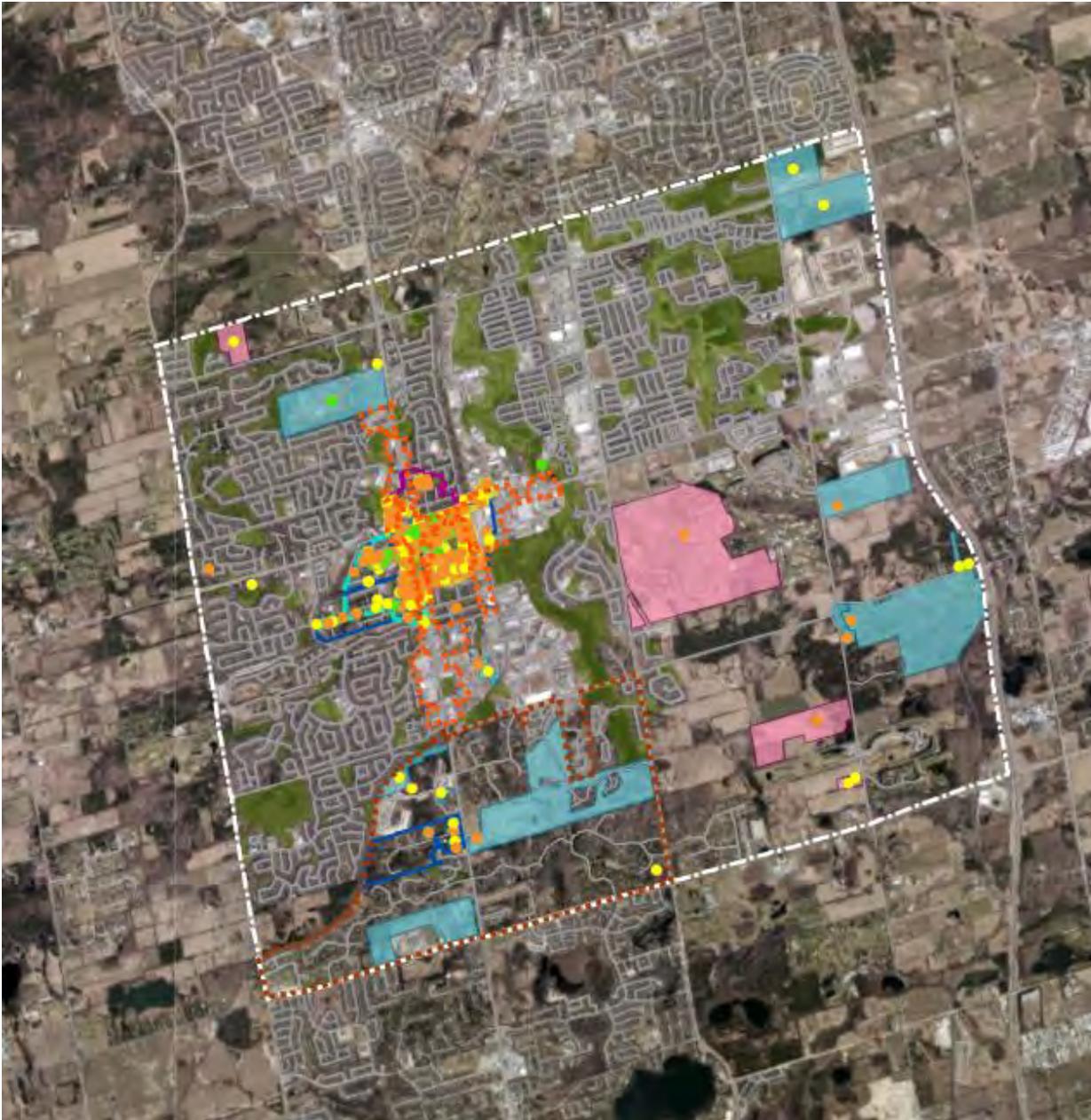


Figure 1: Overview of Study Area (Source: MHBC 2022). Note: Properties shaded in blue are listed under the Ontario Heritage Act. Properties shaded in pink are “pending” listed. Dots indicate properties which have been evaluated and been given a final recommendation. Yellow dots indicate properties recommended for removal from the Register, orange indicates properties to remain on the Register. Green indicates properties which are recommended for Part IV designation.

1.3 Current Status of the Aurora Heritage Register

The Ontario Heritage Toolkit (OHTK) explains that a municipal heritage register is “...a planning

document that can be consulted by municipal decision makers when development proposals or permits are being considered." The purpose of the Register is to maintain a document which clearly identifies properties which the Council believes to be of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest.

When the *OHA* was first enacted in 1974, municipal councils appointed Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees (also known as "LACACs") to assist in cultural heritage matters. Work conducted by LACACs generally included research and inventories. At this time, the definition of what was considered a potential heritage resources was primarily related to buildings and structures which were of design or architectural merit.

The existing Aurora Register is based on an inventory that was the result of research completed by LACAC volunteers beginning in 1976. The level of detail in the original inventory varies, although the primary focus for identifying potential cultural heritage resources was on buildings constructed prior to the mid. 20th century. Following the 2005 amendments to the *OHA*, the Town of Aurora transferred all the properties on the Aurora "Inventory" to the Municipal Heritage Register as per Section 27 of the *OHA*. Additional properties have been added to the Register since 2005.

Prior to undertaking this project, the Town of Aurora evaluated properties of potential CHVI through a classification system that numerically scored properties based on their historical, architectural, and contextual value. This system was known as the "Evaluation of Heritage Resources in the Town of Aurora" document (2010) (attached as **Appendix B**). An overview of the Town's evaluation methods at the on-set of this project was undertaken and further information is provided in Section 2.6 of this report.

The Town of Aurora Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest includes over 600 properties in total. Of these, fifty-five properties are designated under Part IV of the *OHA*. Designation under Part IV of the *OHA* is for *individual* properties, each having a designating by-law registered on the title. The Register also includes 120 properties which are designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and are part of the Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District ("HCD"). The remaining properties on the Register are "listed" and have not been designated under Part IV or Part V. It is these remaining listed properties that are the subject of this project.

2.0 Regulatory & Policy Framework

2.1 *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18, as amended*

The *OHA* provides the legislative framework which enables municipalities to maintain a heritage register. The purpose of a register is to identify properties which are of CHVI within the subject municipality.

A register must include all properties in the municipality that are designated under Part IV of the *OHA*. Section 29(1) provides that a council of a municipality may, by by-law, designate a property to be of CHVI if the property meets the following requirements:

- a) where criteria for determining whether property is of cultural heritage value or interest have been prescribed, the property meets the prescribed criteria; and*
- b) the designation is made in accordance with the process set out in this section.*

Subsection Section 29 provides the processes for designating a property. This process includes (but is not limited to), various notices, consultation with the municipal heritage committee (where appointed), methods of objection and appeal, and registration of the by-law.

Pertaining to maintaining a register, Section 27(2) states that the following information for Part IV designated properties is required:

- a) a legal description of the property;*
- b) the name and address of the owner; and*
- c) a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property.*

Section 27 (3) states that in addition to designated properties, the municipality shall include the following as it relates to listed properties:

- In addition to the property listed in the register under subsection (2), the register may include property that has not been designated under this Part but that the council of the municipality believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest and shall contain, with respect to such*

property, a description of the property that is sufficient to readily ascertain the property.

The OHA requires that the Council of a municipality consult with its Municipal Heritage Committee before adding or removing properties from its register, as indicated in Section 27(4). The amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2021 have resulted in additional requirements for adding properties to a municipal register.

2.2 Ontario Regulation 9/06

O. Reg. 9/06 was issued under the OHA to provide the criteria for determining whether or not a property is of CHVI. As per Section 1(2) of *O. Reg. 9/06*, a property may be designated under Section 29 of the OHA. The regulation includes categories, each having 3 criteria (see **Table 1** below). A property is only required to satisfy one criteria to be considered to have cultural heritage value.

Table 1. Corresponding Sub-criteria for Determining CHVI as per *O. Reg. 9/06*.

Criteria	Sub-criteria
Design/ Physical Value	<p><i>The property has design value or physical value because it,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method, ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
Historical/ Associative Value	<p><i>The property has historical value or associative value because it,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community, ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
Contextual Value	<p><i>The property has contextual value because it,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area, ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its

surroundings, or

iii. is a landmark. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

2.3 Ontario Heritage Toolkit

The OHTK includes guides for municipal councils, staff, heritage committees, planners, and property owners to understand legislation provided under the OHA.

The *Heritage Property Evaluation: A Guide to Listing Researching and Evaluating Cultural Heritage Property in Ontario Communities* document is one of the explanatory guides to the OHA released as part of the OHTK (2006). This publication outlines several guiding principles and best practices for evaluating cultural heritage resources in Ontario.

According to the OHTK, listing a property is a valuable tool in the municipal process. This document provides the following:

Listing a property of cultural heritage value or interest is the first step a municipality should take in the identification and evaluation of a property that may warrant some form of heritage conservation, recognition and/or long-term protection such as designation.

In many cases, listed (non-designated) properties are candidates for protection under section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. These require further research and an assessment using a more comprehensive evaluation that is consistent with Ontario Regulation 9/06 prescribing criteria for determining property of cultural heritage value or interest.

The OHTK also provides guidance on the following best practices:

- The use of classification systems;
- The definition of, and evaluation of integrity and condition of historical resources;
- The qualification of criteria under O. Reg. 9/06; and
- The use of research and inventories.

Further information on best practices is provided in the following sub-sections of this report.

2.3.1 Classification Systems

Chapter 3 of the Heritage Property Evaluation document of the OHTK provides guidance on the use of classification systems and the completion of inventories and evaluations (2006). Classification systems result in assigning a value (either numerical or otherwise) to cultural heritage resources in order to provide guidance on their management. The Evaluation of Heritage Resources in the Town of Aurora document (2010) directs the application of a numerical score and rank to properties to assess CHVI.

Chapter 3 of the OHTK provides the following guidance on the creation and use of different types of classification systems:

- *Some evaluation criteria have a numeric rating system; for example, #1 has no cultural heritage value or interest, while #10 warrants long-term protection.*
- *An alphabetical rating system may assist to categorize; for example, an A has protection and conservation priority; B is conserved in some manner, but not designated; C should be documented before demolition or has minimal cultural heritage value or interest.*
- *A checklist of questions about the design/physical, historical/associative and contextual values of the property can generate discussion that concludes with a Yes/No. The discussion response and explanatory notes form the argument for or against heritage conservation. No numeric or alphabetical rating is used.*

The use of classification systems are valuable in undertaking evaluations and inventories; however, the overly complex and/or arbitrary assignment of some criteria as having more value in ranking or scoring systems may result in the improper application of *O. Reg. 9/06*. The third type of classification systems described above is generally preferred due to the consistency of its application.

2.3.2 Evaluation of Integrity and Condition

Evaluating the heritage integrity and condition of a building is an important aspect of completing an inventory. Condition and integrity are at times interrelated, but are defined differently.

Condition refers to the physical state of a built feature or attribute which may have deteriorated or degraded due to a variety of reasons, including neglect and exposure to the elements. According to the OHTK, physical condition is described as follows:

Some cultural heritage properties are found in a deteriorated state but may still maintain all or part of their cultural heritage value or interest. The ability of the structure to exist for

the long term, and determining at what point repair and reconstruction erode the integrity of the heritage attributes, must be weighed against the cultural heritage value or interest held by the property.

The OHTK describes the integrity of a heritage resource as follows:

Integrity is a question of whether the surviving physical features (heritage attributes) continue to represent or support the cultural heritage value or interest of the property.

O. Reg. 9/06 does not consider the integrity of the resource or its physical condition in the evaluation of its CHVI. However, the OHTK recognizes that it is important to understand condition and integrity when determining whether or not conservation is warranted. The MHSTCI advises on integrity and the physical condition of properties in Section 4 of the Heritage Property Evaluation document of the OHTK (2006).

The OHTK notes the following on integrity (bolded sections for emphasis):

*A cultural heritage property does not need to be in original condition. Few survive without alterations on the long journey between their date of origin and today. **Integrity is a question of whether the surviving physical features (heritage attributes) continue to represent or support the cultural heritage value or interest of the property.***

For example, a building that is identified as being important because it is the work of a local architect, but has been irreversibly altered without consideration for design, may not be worthy of long-term protection for its physical quality. The surviving features no longer represent the design; the integrity has been lost. If this same building had a prominent owner, or if a celebrated event took place there, it may hold cultural heritage value or interest for these reasons, but not for its association with the architect.

Cultural heritage value or interest may be intertwined with location or an association with another structure or environment. If these have been removed, the integrity of the property may be seriously diminished. Similarly, removal of historically significant materials, or extensive reworking of the original craftsmanship, would warrant an assessment of the integrity.

There can be value or interest found in the evolution of a cultural heritage property. Much can be learned about social, economic, technological and other trends over time. The challenge is being able to differentiate between alterations that are part of an historic evolution, and those that are expedient and offer no informational value.

The principles of condition and integrity were taken into consideration throughout the evaluation

process under this project.

2.3.3 Qualification of O-Reg. 9/06 Criteria

Properties are evaluated under the legislated criteria of *O. Reg. 9/06* to determine CHVI; however, not all properties which meet this criteria are suitable for long-term conservation. The OHTK provides the following guidance on this issue (bolding added for emphasis):

Individual properties being considered for protection under section 29 must undergo a more rigorous evaluation than is required for listing. *The evaluation criteria set out in Regulation 9/06 essentially form a test against which properties must be assessed. The better the characteristics of the property when the criteria are applied to it, the greater the property's cultural heritage value or interest, and the stronger the argument for its long-term protection.*

The better the characteristics of the property when the criteria are applied to it, the greater the property's cultural heritage value or interest, and the stronger the argument for its long-term protection.

This does not mean that the property is only evaluated within "one" category or must meet a criterion in each category in order to allow for protection. When more categories are applied, more is learned about the property and its relative cultural heritage value or interest. As a result, a more valid decision regarding heritage conservation measures can be made.

A property may not be considered a good candidate for long-term conservation for reasons including (but not limited to) condition and heritage integrity. The project team has applied these principles and considerations into the formation of its recommendations.

2.3.4 Research

Research is required in order to evaluate whether or not a property is of CHVI as per the criteria of *O. Reg. 9/06*. Research primarily aids in determining the historical/associative value of a property, but can be valuable in determining certain sub-criteria of design/physical and contextual value. It has not been the objective of this project to conduct comprehensive research for every property which is part of the scope of this project; instead, research has been conducted to make a justifiable determination as to whether or not a property should be removed from the Register, remain on the Register, or be considered for designation under Part IV of the *OHA* by the Municipal Heritage Committee and Council. The research methodology undertaken for this project is described in Section 3.2 of this report.

2.3.5 Inventory

Undertaking inventories of cultural heritage resources is valuable in order to make effective decisions in the planning process. In order to update the existing Register, this review has involved undertaking an inventory of all of the existing properties. The inventory process included undertaking a site visit for each property from the public right-of-way and taking a photograph of the main features for which the property was of potential CHVI. Additional information was collected during site visits, including (but not limited to), architectural style, materials, height, integrity and condition.

The OHTK recommends that research and inventories be conducted with an understanding of patterns, themes, similarities, and differences of each community's heritage. The use of patterns and themes enables a study to identify any specific activities, people, and circumstances which are significant to the specific community. The review of the Register has included the completion of historical summaries for distinctly identifiable neighbourhoods which include concentrations of cultural heritage resources. The historical summaries of each neighbourhood which included a distinct cluster of listed cultural heritage resources is provided in **Appendix F**.

2.4 York Region Official Plan

The York Region Official Plan was adopted by the York Region Council in 2009 and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2010. York Region includes 9 municipalities, including the Town of Aurora.

Section 3.4 of the Official Plan recognizes that York Region has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that enhances the quality of life of residents and makes the Region unique. The overall objective of their cultural heritage policies in Section 3.4 is:

To recognize, conserve and promote cultural heritage and its value and benefit to the community.

Section 3.4 of the York Region Official Plan provides various policies that are intended to protect heritage resources and promote heritage awareness. Section 3.4.1 states that it is the policy of Council:

To encourage local municipalities to compile and maintain a register of significant cultural heritage resources, and other significant heritage resources, in consultation with heritage experts, local heritage committees, and other levels of government.

The subsequent policies of Section 3.4 require local municipalities to provide for the protection of cultural heritage resources in their official plans, promote heritage awareness, establish heritage

conservation districts, and conserve heritage attributes of protected properties.

2.5 Town of Aurora Official Plan

The Town of Aurora Official Plan was approved by York Region in 2010 and consolidated in 2021. The Official Plan serves to provide the vision, principles, and policies to guide change and development within the Town to the year 2031.

Section 13 of the Town of Aurora Official Plan provides objectives and policies related to the conservation of cultural heritage resources. The Town's Official Plan states the following as it relates to maintaining the Register in Section 13.3 (bolding is for emphasis):

That the Town will maintain a Register of Cultural Heritage Resources that are considered significant and have been identified by one or more of the following means:

- i. designated under the Ontario Heritage Act;*
- ii. protected by an easement entered into under the Ontario Heritage Act;*
- iii. designated by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board as a National Historic Site;*
- iv. identified by the Province of Ontario;*
- v. endorsed by the Council as having significant cultural heritage value, including built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes, areas with cultural heritage character and heritage cemeteries.**

The properties identified under subsection "v", as above, are the listed properties on the Register.

Section 13.3 of the Aurora Official Plan includes the following policy, which acknowledges that whether or not a property is of CHVI is determined by a set of criteria which aligns with *O. Reg. 9/06*:

d) Evaluation Criteria for assessing the cultural heritage value of the cultural heritage resources have been developed by the Town in consultation with its Municipal Heritage Committee. The identification and evaluation of cultural heritage resources must be based on the following core values:

- i. Aesthetic, design, or physical value;*
- ii. Historical or associative value; and/or*
- iii. Contextual value.*

Therefore, the properties subject to this review have been evaluated in conformity with Section 13.3 of the Town's Official Plan.

2.6 Aurora Evaluation Document

The Evaluation of Heritage Resources in the Town of Aurora document that has, for many years, served to provide a classification system to score and rank properties based on their CHVI. A copy of the former evaluation system used by the Town of Aurora is provided in **Appendix B**.

This document was based on the criteria under *O. Reg. 9/06*. The document directs that Aurora's heritage buildings are to be evaluated based on historical, architectural, and environmental/contextual criteria. A scoresheet was provided based upon these criteria and weighed the criteria as follows: 40% for historical criteria, 40% for architectural criteria, and 20% for contextual criteria. This resulted in a numerical score for a property out of 100. The numerical score was applied as follows:

- **Group 1 (score 70-100):** Those buildings of major significance or importance to the Town and are worth designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- **Group 2 (score 45-69):** Those buildings of heritage significance and worthy of preservation.
- **Group 3 (score 0 – 45):** Those buildings considered to be of modest significance and worthy of documentation or preservation of a particular contextual value.

Section 13.3 (d) of the Town of Aurora Official Plan acknowledges this classification system and sets forth the direction to prioritize the designation of all properties ranked "Group 1". This form of scoring system is problematic given that *O. Reg. 9/06* states that a property may be designated under Section 29 of the *OHA* if it meets one or more criteria for determining CHVI. While there is value in evaluating properties and quantifying their value, it was recommended to Council that the evaluation document is outdated and results in the non-uniform application of weight on select evaluation criteria – such as age of the building. In November 2021, Council endorsed the recommendation that the current evaluation document be replaced with an evaluation method based on *Ontario Regulation 9/06*.

3.0 Methodology and Approach

3.1 Introduction

This project is divided into four phases. The first phase involved determining an appropriate evaluation method, reviewing the Town's current evaluation method, conducting field work and subsequent inventorying, historical research, and consulting with the Town Staff and Steering Committee. The second phase involved generating the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports for 374 properties. Phases 3 and 4 involve consultation with Town Staff and the Steering Committee, finalizing the review materials, a Municipal Heritage Committee meeting to discuss recommendations, recommendations to Council and updating the Register.

The following sections will outline the approaches undertaken for the fieldwork, evaluations, and public engagement in further detail. The Evaluation Methodology report presented to the Steering Committee on February 26, 2021 is attached to this report as **Appendix E**.

3.2 Research

Research was conducted in order to evaluate all of the listed properties on the Register. The research assisted in establishing the historical/associative value of the property, whereas the site visits were utilized to determine the design/physical and contextual value of each property.

This project has built upon the previously conducted research by the Town that was collected from the 1970s to the present. This research has included information available at the Town of Aurora and the Aurora Museum/Archives.

Libraries and Archives Consulted:

- Archives of Ontario;
- Aurora Public Library;
- Library and Archives Canada;
- Aurora Archives (property files, FIPs);
- Toronto Reference Library; and
- University of Toronto Map and Data.

Land Databases:

- Onland (land title registry database);
and
- York Region Land Registry.

Historic Materials Consulted:

- Directories;
- LACAC Files;
- Fire Insurance Plans;
- Aerial photos;
- Historic Maps; and
- York Region maps (online).

Studies and reports:

- Northeast HCD Plan;
- Southeast HCD Study;
- Archaeological Master Plan (York Region);
- Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports;
and
- Heritage Impact Assessments.

Data received from the Town:

- GIS database;
- Planning information;
- LACAC files;
- Register Pages & inventory; and
- Previous Evaluations.

3.3 Inventory & Field Work

Field work was completed in the spring and summer of 2021. The field work enabled the project team to collect information such as (but not limited to) presence of mature trees, architectural style, materials, scale, general physical attributes, physical condition and integrity. The field work involved photographing and assessing properties from the public realm.

The project team utilized a GIS Inventory Application to input photographs and information on the existing character of the subject properties. The GIS Inventory Application allowed the project team to input data in a geographically referenced and standardized manner.

This inventory was established by:

- Undertaking a site visit for each property from the public right-of-way and documenting the site with a photograph;
 - Collecting information on the characteristics of the property, including what existing feature was of potential CHVI, such as a dwelling, barn, commercial or civic building, etc.;
 - Details regarding architectural style, materials of construction, context, etc.;
 - Assessment of heritage integrity and condition;
- Inputting this information to the Geographic Information System (GIS) Inventory Application which will form part of the new Register.

The database has been supplemented by information collected during site visits (as above) as well as background and historical research collected throughout the project. The sample Property Recording Form of the OHTK is provided in **Appendix D** of this report; a similar method has been used for the inventory of the subject properties.

The GIS Inventory Application was also utilized to differentiate between the themes of development in Aurora as per the OHTK recommendation to conduct research and inventories with an understanding of patterns, themes, similarities, and differences of each neighbourhood which included a dense cluster of cultural heritage resources. The identification of themes specific to each neighbourhood enabled the project team to identify whether or not an individual property could be identified as meeting criteria of historical/associative value. A brief historic summary of each of these neighbourhoods is provided in Section 4.4 of this report and more comprehensive summaries are attached as **Appendix F**.

3.4 Evaluation Methodology

3.4.1 Criteria for Evaluations

The method of evaluation is based on the provincial and municipal policy framework described in Section 2.0 of this report. In particular, the evaluation uses *O. Reg 9/06* of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and follows the guidance provided in the Ontario Heritage Toolkit. Table 1 in Section 2.2 of this report describes the criteria for evaluating CHVI under the *O. Reg. 9/06*.

Once the fieldwork was complete and the data on each property was contained within the GIS based inventory, each property was evaluated using the following three step approach:

Step 1: Assessment of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Each property was given a “yes” or “no” response to each criteria of *O Reg. 9/06*. A qualitative grade of “minor”, “moderate”, or “major” was then applied to indicate the extent of the properties compliance with the criteria.

Step 2: Assessment of Integrity

The integrity of each property was determined and given a score of either poor, fair, or excellent. Assessment of integrity was based on observations from the field as well as available historic property information that provided information on how the property had changed over time. Integrity is based on the extent to which original features have been retained (regardless of their condition), and whether or not there is an opportunity that they could be repaired and conserved.

Step 3: Risk Assessment

Each property was assessed to determine the relative development pressure and whether or not there was a low or high likelihood that the property may be redeveloped in the future. The assignment of risk was based on the properties location and current planned land use based on the Town’s Official Plan and zoning By-law. Properties located in areas that are identified for a range and mix of uses and are planned to accommodate higher densities were considered to be at more risk for redevelopment than those properties located areas planned for little change – such as low density residential neighbourhoods. More detail on the risk assessment is provided in Section 5.0.

3.4.2 Classification of Properties

Once the evaluation of each property was completed, every property was placed into one of three categories. Determination of the category was based on the cultural heritage value of each property (see Table 2).

Table 2. Classification of CHVI

Classification	Recommendation
Zero to Minimal Value	Property to be removed from the Register
Moderate Value	Property to remain on the Register
Major Value and/or at Risk	Property to be considered for Part IV Designation

A property with zero or minimal value may meet one of the sub-criteria of *O. Reg. 9/06* but may do so in a minimal, or moderate way, as opposed to major. Properties with zero or minimal value may have been compromised in terms of heritage integrity, and therefore do not provide a strong argument for long-term conservation of its physical attributes.

Properties with moderate heritage value generally meet some of the criteria/sub-criteria under *O. Reg. 9/06*. These properties generally have maintained a degree of heritage integrity. Some properties which have been recommended to remain on the register may warrant designation at the appropriate time in the future. However, it is recommended that those properties of major value or are at risk be given primary consideration for designation in the short term.

Properties classified as having major value meet most of the criteria under *O. Reg. 9/06*. These properties include those which have retained their heritage integrity and/or are at risk. These properties have been prioritized for designation under Part IV of the *OHA* in the short term given that they provide a strong argument for long-term conservation.

3.5 Consultation

The project was undertaken in consultation with Town of Aurora Staff and Aurora Museum and Archives Staff. The project team also met with the Steering Committee to provide updates on the project's progress and consult on methodologies. The Steering Committee consisted of Town Staff from the Building Division and Planning and Development Services, members of the Municipal

Heritage Committee, and members of Council. A member of the Aurora Historical Society was also consulted as per the recommendation by the Steering Committee.

Meetings with the Steering Committee occurred on the following dates:

- January 15, 2021;
- February 26, 2021;
- April 30, 2021;
- June 25, 2021;
- October 1, 2021;
- January 28, 2022;
- March 4, 2022; and
- March 11, 2022.

Discussions which were specifically related to project methodology occurred on September 13, 2021. A subsequent meeting was held with the Municipal Heritage Committee on November 1, 2021 in order to review the Town's current evaluation methods.

Additional consultation on the draft recommendations of the project were made to the Heritage Advisory Committee on May 2, 2022 in order to elicit constructive feedback. Recommendations made by the Heritage Advisory Committee are forwarded to Council for consideration and final approval.

4.0 Historical Context

4.1 Introduction

The following sub-sections of this report provide a summary of the historical context of the Town of Aurora. The purpose of the following is to provide historical information based on a review of both primary and secondary sources to understand the settlement patterns and evolution of the study area and various neighbourhoods which include clusters of cultural heritage resources. This overview is intended to provide sufficient background information and context for the evaluation of properties currently on the Register.

The Town of Aurora includes thematic clusters of properties of CHVI which have been identified by the Town; these clusters are identified Section 4.4 of this report and are accompanied by historical summaries to understand their evolution.

Appendix F to this report includes a more comprehensive historical overview of these clusters. **Appendix G** provides historical imagery pertaining to the Town.

4.2 Indigenous History

A summary of Indigenous settlement history within York Region is provided in the Planning for the Conservation of Archaeological Resources in York Region document (ASI, 2014). The human habitation history is broken-down into temporal stages within this document which includes those of the Paleo, Archaic, Woodland, and Contact/Colonial periods. The settlement patterns are different for each of these periods, where humans evolved from distinctly hunter-gatherer societies to sedentary ones based on agriculture. The location of settlements (both temporary, semi-permanent, and permanent) was based on a variety of factors including (but not limited to) soil conditions, proximity to water, topography and natural resources (ASI, 2014). Information collected by archaeologists on each of these periods of time is based on archaeological studies which collect spatial and cultural data.

According to the Planning for the Conservation of Archaeological Resources in York Region document, York Region was inhabited by humans approximately 11,000 years B.P. (before present) (ASI, 2014). Information on the settlement patterns of the Paleo and Archaic periods is less readily available in the historic record. The Five Nations Iroquois, including the Seneca, inhabited the north shore of Lake Ontario by the late 1600s. Settlements were located near the mouths of the Humber

River and the Rouge River of the Toronto Carrying Place, a route which linked Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe. The early contact period between Europeans and Indigenous peoples between 1600 and 1650 and the later contact period between 1650 and 1700 includes interactions between European explorers and members of the Iroquois, Huron, Neutral, and Algonquian peoples. The historic period (1700 to present) represents the period of interaction between Euro-Canadian settlers and Indigenous peoples as well as the settlement of Euro-Canadians in Upper and Lower Canada (ASI, 2014).

The Town of Aurora is recognized as being within an area which is related to the Williams Treaties of 1923 and the Toronto Purchase (Treaty 13) of 1805 (native-land.ca). The Williams Treaties were signed in 1923 between the Crown and seven Chippewa and Mississauga First Nations. The Williams Treaties Settlement Agreement was ratified in 2018 to provide compensation for the loss of harvesting rights (Chippewas and Mississaugas Williams Treaties First Nations). The Toronto Purchase (Treaty 13) of 1805 was signed between the Mississaugas and the Crown in response to the legality issues associated with the former Toronto Purchase Treaty of 1788. The Toronto Purchase Treaty of 1805 delineated the boundary for a tract of land which included 250,830 acres of land in the cities of Etobicoke, Toronto, North York, York and Vaughn (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation).

4.3 Historical Development of the Town of Aurora

The surveying of Yonge Street is important in understanding the historical development of what is now the Town of Aurora. Yonge Street was originally a rough path and military road cut through forests between Lake Ontario (York) and Lake Simcoe as John Graves Simcoe ordered the construction of Yonge Street from York (Toronto) to Holland Landing in 1793 (History of Toronto and County of York Ontario, 1885).

Divided by Yonge Street, the west half of Aurora is located in the former Township of King. The east half is located within the former Township of Whitchurch (History of Toronto and County of York Ontario, 1885). The Townships of King and Whitchurch were divided into farming lots, approximately 200 acres each (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985). Yonge Street and Wellington Street serve as the dividing line between the main lots and concessions (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985).

Settlement began in the late 18th century and early 19th century; the first Crown patents and titles to land in Aurora were issued by the Crown in the late 18th century (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985).

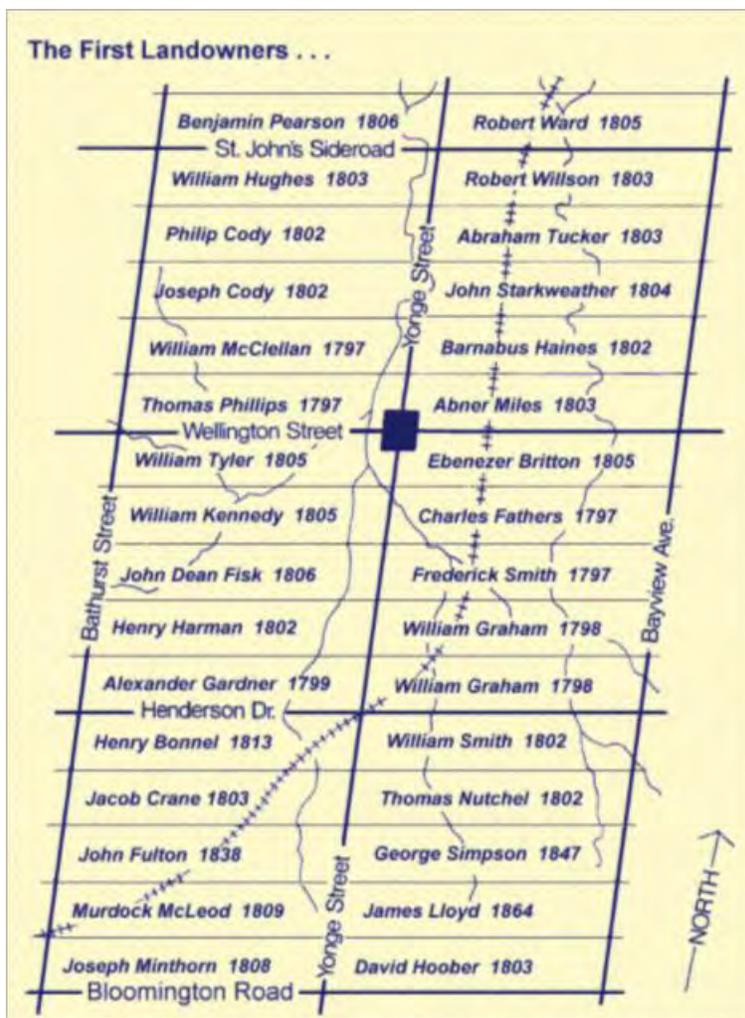


Figure 2: Excerpt from *Aurora, A Place in Time* (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985).

The settlement of the area began at the intersection of Yonge Street (an early military route) and Wellington Street. By the early 19th century, at least five acres of this area had been cleared and fenced (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985). The community was originally known as Machell's Corners (also Match-Ville) after Richard Machell (a merchant) settled there in approximately 1830 (McEvoy & Co., 1870).

The first Aurora Post Office was established in 1840 (McEvoy & Co., 1870). This area was inhabited by approximately 100 people by 1851 (History of Toronto and County of York Ontario, 1885). At this time, important land-owners and merchants of the settlement included Charles Doan, Richard Machell, and John Mosley. Settlement in Aurora grew as a result to a combination of factors, including the early surveying of Yonge Street, the availability of creeks (and millponds), and the railway.

The Ontario, Simcoe and Huron railroad arrived in Aurora in 1853, which led to increased population, transportation and industrialization (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985). The first subdivision was registered in 1853 by John Mosley in order to provide housing for the growing population. This became what is now Southeast Old Aurora. Aurora was incorporated as a Village on January 1, 1863.

By the mid. 19th century, Aurora was a thriving cross-roads settlement supported by a railroad and an agricultural and industrial base. The four quadrants of the cross-roads slowly began to fill-in with residential developments in a piece-meal and sporadic nature. The settlement also had a thriving social-cultural base with its schools, churches and gathering places. The Town of Aurora had a population of 1,200 people by 1871 (History of Toronto and County of York Ontario, 1885).

Aurora—A post office and incorporated village on the town-line in the townships of King and Whitechurch. The village was originally called Machell's Corners, after Richard Machell, who settled here about the year 1830, and is situated on the Northern Railway, thirty miles from Toronto, but, by Yonge street, only twenty-four miles. It was laid out by Messrs. Machell and Mosely, and the post office first established about 1840, Richard Machell receiving the appointment of postmaster. There are three churches, viz.:—Church of England, brick, Rev. J. H. McCollum, M.A., pastor; the Wesleyan Methodist, of frame, capable of seating about five hundred, Rev. David Cattanaeh, pastor; and the Methodist New Connexion, of brick, seating four hundred. There is also one common school. The Masons have a lodge, viz.:—Rising Sun, lodge No. 129, meeting on the first Friday on or after full moon; R. W. Hillary, W. M.; Horace D. Lundy, Secretary. The Orange

organization also hold meetings here; and the Sons of Temperance, division No. 106, meet every Monday evening. The Mechanics' Institute is at the store of Mr. Charles Doan. Several manufacturing establishments are carried on here, among which are Joseph Fleury's foundry and machine shop, the Aurora Flouring Mills, and the tanning establishment carried on by Edward Pease. Daily mail. Money order office and savings bank. Village officers—M. Lepper, reeve; J. E. McNally, treasurer and clerk. Population, 1,200.

Figure 3: Excerpt of the 1870-1871 Gazetteer and Directory of the County of York (McEvoy & Co., 1870; courtesy of National Archives Canada).

By the late 19th century, Aurora included several mills and factories, five churches, and two weekly newspapers (History of Toronto and County of York Ontario, 1885). Development in Aurora continued well into the 20th century with the establishment of additional industries, such as the Sissman Shoe Factory formerly located at Berczy Street and Mosley Street. Commercial activity continued near the historic crossroads of Wellington and Yonge Street. Residential infill occurred in the four quadrants of the intersection. Into the mid. 20th century (between approximately the 1950s

and 1960s), residential subdivisions were constructed west of Wellington Street. According to a review of the 1954 aerial photograph and the 1960 Fire Insurance Plans, these residential subdivisions were located north of Wellington Street West, west of Yonge Street and West of Yonge Street, south of Murray Drive. The 1970 aerial photo identifies that this pattern of development continued into the later half of the 20th century. Industrial development was located along Berczy Street and Industrial Parkway South and within the south-west quadrant of Aurora, along Kennedy Street, Tyler Street and Temperance Street (see historic images in **Appendix H**). Many of these historically-based industries stagnated in the mid. to late 20th century.

Into the late 20th century and early 21st century, Aurora experienced additional residential and commercial growth. According to a review of available aerial photographs dating to the late 20th century, residential subdivisions were expanded further in the north-west and south-west quadrants of the historic crossroads. Additional subdivisions were constructed north of Southeast Old Aurora, west of Yonge Street. New industrial developments were constructed east of Yonge Street, along Industrial Parkway South and Industrial Parkway North. Towards the late 20th century, additional commercial developments were constructed along Wellington Street East, including the Town facility at John West Way between 1988 and 1995. Commercial and residential growth continued into the 21st century, focusing on the edges of Town limits, along streets such as St. John's Sideroad, Bayview Avenue and Leslie Street.

The current settlement patterns of Aurora continue to reflect the historic crossroads settlement at Wellington Street and Yonge Street with the four quadrants of development in this area. The 19th century settlement patterns changed in the mid. 20th century with the introduction of residential subdivisions which strayed from the military grid system. Development continued to focus at the edges of the Town towards the end of the 20th century; as a result, the majority of the 19th century building stock is located along Yonge and Wellington and the four quadrants. Some 19th century agricultural settlements remain, but have largely been removed.

4.4 Building Age & Construction Date

Through the inventory and evaluation process, a specific construction date of individual buildings was identified, where possible. In cases where a specific date could not be determined, a date range was assigned. The date ranges of construction were determined using a variety of sources, including (but not limited to) LACAC records, aerial photographs, fire insurance plans, land title records, local histories and files from the Aurora Museum and Archives.

The identification of building construction date ranges has assisted the project team in identifying "early" buildings (pre-confederation), clusters of 19th century buildings and defining the boundaries

of historic neighbourhoods. This information has also been used to inform the evaluations of properties in accordance with *O. Reg. 9/06* (i.e. whether or not a building was constructed early in the context of the Town of Aurora).

The data collected through this process has identified that the majority of properties which are listed on the Register were constructed between the mid. 19th and early 20th centuries. Few buildings survive which are dated to 1867 or earlier, and even fewer of these have retained their heritage integrity.

4.5 Historical Development of Specified Neighbourhood Groups (Clusters)

The following provides a summary of identified neighbourhood groups. Neighbourhood groups are identified in order to assist the understanding of the context of buildings listed on the Register and determine whether or not individual properties meet certain sub-criteria under *Ontario Regulation 9/06*. The identification of neighbourhood groups is not necessarily associated with finite boundaries and this report acknowledges that their boundaries are flexible. The neighbourhood groups are not used to identify potential Cultural Heritage Landscapes given that the evaluation of whether or not a particular area constitutes a Cultural Heritage Landscape is not part of the scope of this project.

These groups were identified through primary and secondary sources including (but not limited to):

- Historic maps and plans;
- Township lots and concessions;
- Fire insurance plans;
- Aerial photographs;
- Historical summaries; and
- Site visits.

A description of the historical development of each of the identified neighbourhood groups is provided in **Appendix F** of this report. The following sub-sections provide a brief summary of the historical development of each of these neighbourhood groups.

4.5.1 Machell/Irwin Neighbourhood

The Machell/Irwin neighbourhood is located north of Wellington Street and west of Yonge Street, along Machell Avenue and Irwin Street. This neighbourhood group is part of Lot 81, Concession 1 West of Yonge Street (WYS). Irwin Street and Machell Avenue were surveyed and subdivided

between 1861 and 1878. The 1878 map of the Illustrated County Atlas of York clearly identifies Holland Creek, Machell Avenue and Irwin Avenue. The majority of this section of the Town is part of Plan 36. According to land title records, Plan 36 was registered in approximately the late 1870s/early 1880s by Richard Wells (former member of Council, hotel keeper and farmer). The development of the area over time (between the mid. 19th century and present) has resulted in a range of architectural styles and housing types indicative of their period of construction. The neighbourhood has remained primarily residential throughout these periods and was influenced by the presence of local industry at the intersection of Holland Creek and Wellington Street. The local industries have been removed into the 20th century and the residential land use patterns largely remain.

4.5.2 Spruce Street Neighbourhood

The Spruce Street neighbourhood is located along Spruce Street, which is situated south of Mark Street and north of Maple Street. This neighbourhood is historically part of Lot 81, Concession 1, Whitchurch Township and is excluded from the Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District. Spruce Street was surveyed and subdivided into residential lots between 1865 and 1891 by Charles Doan. The first to be surveyed was the west side of Spruce Street, when Charles Doan registered a Plan of Subdivision in 1865. This Plan illustrates five lots on the west side of Spruce Street, north of Maple Street. Years later in 1891, Doan filed another Plan of Subdivision for the east side of Spruce Street. This Plan illustrates an additional five lots across from the existing lots created in his 1865 Plan. Due to the 26 year separation in development, there are a variety of architectural styles, including Edwardian and Craftsman. The neighbourhood has remained residential with single detached houses.

4.5.3 Centre Street Neighbourhood

The Centre Street neighbourhood is located along the east stretch of Centre Street, bounded by Industrial Parkway North to the east. This neighbourhood is located outside of the boundary of the Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District. The Centre Street neighbourhood group is part of Lot 80, Concession 1 Whitchurch Township. Centre Street is primarily residential in use, but includes some commercial and industrial uses. The neighbourhood formed with the arrival of the railroad, which contributed to the Town's increase in population. As a result of the increased population, several Plans of Subdivision were registered to provide housing. The first Plan came from Richard Machell in 1853, who registered Plan 107 (Town of Aurora, 2006). Shortly after Machell registered Plan 107, John Mosley registered Plan 68 which was substantially larger than Machell's subdivision, extending from Yonge Street to the railway. Plan 68 would become the heart of downtown Aurora. Additional lands located east of the railway within the Centre Street neighbourhood were purchased by Michael Shulman in 1912, where he constructed modest houses for the working class. Available maps and fire insurance plans suggest that the eastern edge of Centre Street was subdivided in the later half of the 19th century and included a mix of residential

and industrial related uses as a result of the proximity to the railway. The slow development of the area results in a range of architectural styles from the late 19th century to the mid. 20th century, including workers housing (vernacular) and victory housing.

4.5.4 Wellington Street Neighbourhood

The Wellington Street neighbourhood is located along Wellington Street East, between Mill Street to the west and Industrial Parkway North to the east. Properties fronting onto Wellington Street East are not included in the Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District. The Wellington Street Neighbourhood forms part of Lot 80, Concession 1 Whitchurch, as well as Lot 81, Concession 1. The neighbourhood includes a mix of commercial and residential uses. Wellington Street formed part of Richard Machell's Plan 107 ('Matchville') which later became part of John Mosley's Plan 68. Following the Towns incorporation in 1862, Wellington Street became the heart of Aurora. It was updated to have sidewalks connecting Yonge Street to the railway with various landscaped features (Town of Aurora, 2014). As public improvements were made along Wellington Street, the wealthier citizens of Aurora began constructing grand homes along this corridor. Wellington Street is comprised of a variety of structures, including both modest and grand buildings, predominantly one and a half to two storeys in height. The buildings are constructed of a variety of materials including a mix of brick, brick veneer and wood frame. As a result of the historic crossroads and the early development of Wellington Street, building construction dates range primarily from the mid. 19th century to the mid. 20th century.

4.5.6 Southeast Old Aurora Neighbourhood

The Southeast Old Aurora Neighbourhood is primarily comprised of part of Lot 80, Concession 1 East of Yonge Street (EYS). The area was developed in the mid. 19th century when John Mosley created the 1854 Subdivision which resulted in the creation of a grid-plan. Individual blocks were divided into narrow, deep lots fronting onto the street. The block located south of Mosley Street, east of Wells Street became Town Park. The intent of the subdivision was to provide lots for future residential development after the railway was constructed. The increased industrial base resulted in the need for housing for workers. As a result of the slow development of the area and the need for workers in nearby factories, the neighbourhood includes a range of architectural styles from the mid. 19th to the 20th century and is primarily a working-class neighbourhood. The residential development supported the growth of Downtown Aurora located near the intersection of Yonge Street and Wellington Street. The development of this area over time has resulted in the creation of an area that acts as a socio-cultural hub of activity with distinct heritage character. The area continues to change and includes infill developments from the mid. 20th century to present.

4.5.5 Downtown Aurora (Yonge Street) Neighbourhood

The Downtown Aurora neighbourhood is primarily part of Lot 80, East of Yonge Street and Lot 80,

West of Yonge Street. The east half of Aurora was located in the Township of Whitchurch, the west half was located in the Township of King; Yonge Street served as the dividing line between these two Townships. Yonge Street was established in the late 18th century when Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe established a military road between York and Holland Landing (McIntyre, 1988). Yonge Street was a major transportation route and Aurora became one of the settlements along this historic transportation route. The intersection of Yonge Street and Wellington Street in Aurora plays a key role in the development of the cross-roads settlement, first known as Machell's Corners. According to the 1854 Plan of Aurora, Yonge Street was developed on both the east and west sides of the street, south of Wellington Street. This became the centre for commercial development for the Town. Details regarding settlement patterns and buildings are provided on the 1880 Fire Insurance Plan of Aurora. The majority of buildings forming part of what is now Downtown Aurora are between 1 and 2 storeys of frame construction. The buildings have no front yard setbacks and are located on narrow lots.

The character of Downtown Aurora remains largely unchanged between 1890 and 1927 as per a review of the 1913 and 1927 Fire Insurance Plans. While the specific use of buildings changed over this period of time with the transition of businesses, the overall settlement patterns remained the same. By 1960, some of the historic uses of downtown Aurora were beginning to change and the landscape was changing as people became more reliant on the automobile. The Toronto & York Radial Way was constructed at the end of the 19th century and was removed by 1930. The historic concentration of commercial activity remained north of Church Street, and by the mid. 20th century, more buildings were constructed south of Church Street. Some important historical buildings located in Downtown Aurora were removed in the first half of the 20th century, including the original Town Hall. Other historic buildings, such as the Methodist Church, were removed due to a fire in 2014. The construction of Yonge Street is important to the development of the Town of Aurora and continues to be the historical focal point of Aurora's historic commercial downtown. Due to the significance of Yonge Street, it has been recognized under the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* as an important transportation route.

4.5.7 Industrial Parkway South Neighbourhood

The Industrial Parkway South neighbourhood has evolved over time to become an industrial area central to the existing railway which was constructed in the mid. 19th century. The early Plans of Aurora (dated 1854 and 1878) divided the lands on the east and west sides of the railway to accommodate both industrial and residential development. The earliest plans divided the lots using a military-grid system typical of the 19th century and were likely intended for residential lots to support railway and industrial related uses along the rail corridor. Industrial uses continued to expand in the subdivided area, with newer and larger format industrial uses occupying the east side of the railway. The late 19th and early 20th century industrial developments of the Southeast Old Aurora neighbourhood have largely been removed and the residential buildings remain. The

former streets part of the 1854 and 1878 plans have largely been removed, including Thomas Street, Roy Street, and Seal Street. The only street part of the 1878 Plan of Aurora that remains in this area is Mary Street which includes some of the original lot patterns and residential developments of the early to mid. 20th century. This pattern of development has continued into the late 20th and early 21st century with the GO transit train line and additional commercial developments.

4.5.8 Tyler Street Neighbourhood

The Tyler Street neighbourhood includes portions of Tyler Street, George Street and Temperance Street. Tyler Street is named after one of Aurora's first land owners, William Tyler (Johnston, 1972). In 1805, Tyler acquired Lot 80 on the west side of Yonge Street, directly south of Wellington Street (Johnston, 1972). Tyler Street horizontally bisects the Tyler property. Tyler's property was among the original 'farming lots' of Aurora, which were approximately 200 acres in size and intended to be agriculturally used (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985). Between 1825 and 1852, the subdivision of Tyler's property and Lot 80 east of Yonge Street occurred (Anderson et al., 1985). In the 19th century, Tyler Street was developed with residential lots within close proximity to industrial activity, including a grist mill, foundry, implement factory, and 'rope walk' (Miles & Company, 1878). The early 20th century brought industry directly to Tyler Street with the establishment of the Collins Leather Company tannery on 45 Tyler Street in 1912 (McIntyre, 1951). By 1878, Temperance Street had been extended south to present-day Ruben Street. According to the 1954 air photo, Temperance Street had been extended again to Kennedy Street West at some point between 1878 and 1954. By 1963, Temperance Street was connected to Ransom Street in its present configuration. The Temperance Street neighbourhood group represents a combination of industrial activity and residential development. While the industrial elements have largely been removed, some of the 19th century workers housing remain.

The Tyler Street neighbourhood also includes the residential Sub-division known as Alexandra Park. This land was purchased by A. A. Conover in 1912, and soon offered vacant lots for sale. Given that the lots were sold as vacant, buildings were constructed over time in a variety of architectural styles.

4.5.9 Kennedy Street Neighbourhood

The Kennedy Street neighbourhood group includes Kennedy Street West, Reuben Street, and part of George Street and Temperance Street. Kennedy Street is named after one of Aurora's first landowners, William Kennedy (Johnston, 1972). In 1803 William Kennedy acquired all of Lot 79, west of Yonge Street (Johnston, 1972). Reuben Street was named after one of William Kennedy's sons (Johnston, 1972). Reuben Kennedy's late 19th century home, also known as the Elmwood Lodge, stands on the corner of Kennedy Street West and Yonge Street (Canada's Historic Places, 2008). Reuben Kennedy, along with other local landowners, subdivided land to accommodate the 'booming' housing needs of Aurora in the 1870's-1880's (Anderson, Kobayashi, & McInerney, 1985). The north side of Kennedy Street West was lined with 7 'Park Lots' from the end of present-day

Rueben Street to the previously existing mill pond (Miles & Company, 1878). These Park Lots accommodated larger buildings and gardens for the wealthier citizens of Aurora (Johnston, 1972).

Kennedy Street is situated along the former property of William Kennedy, which in 1854, ran along the north property line and was identified as the Aurora Driving Range which was not surveyed at the time. Edward Stevenson's Tannery is noted to have existed on the creek, south of Kennedy Street West (Anderson et al., 1985). The Aurora Driving Park, which held horse races, occupied much of the lands south of Kennedy Street in the late 19th century (Johnston, 1972; Miles & Company, 1878).

Smaller residential lots were surveyed on the north side to the east of the street beyond Mill Street, however, large park lots were surveyed to the west. Development in the 19th and early 20th century were concentrated to the east side of Kennedy Street West whereas the remainder of the street was characterized by large, open lots. By the mid. 20th century, the western side of the street gradually developed. The western end of Kennedy Street has more recently become dominated by large new builds on large lots which contrast with that of their smaller, older counterparts of late Victorian, Ontario Cottage Edwardian and American Four Square architectural styles to the east built primarily between the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

5.0 Risk Assessment

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section of the report is to identify areas of the Town of Aurora which can reasonably be anticipated to be subject to development pressure as a result of planning policy. These development pressures are considered a potential risk to cultural heritage resources as these lands may be more likely to be subject to proposals for alteration or demolition. In an effort to conserve properties identified as being at risk with significant CHVI, recommendations have been made for priority designation under Part IV of the *OHA*.

The following documents have been reviewed to determine the relative level of risk associated with the subject properties as a result of planning policy:

- Town of Aurora Official Plan (2010);
- Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan (2010);
- Yonge Street South Secondary Plan (OPA 34); and
- Bayview Southeast Area 2A Secondary Plan (OPA 20).

The boundaries of the policy areas which include properties of moderate to major CHVI have been considered in this risk assessment. The Bayview Northeast Area 2B Secondary Plan (OPA 30), the Aurora Northwest Secondary Plan (OPA 37), and the Aurora Northeast Secondary Plan (OPA 73) were excluded from this assessment given that there are no subject properties within these boundaries with moderate or major CHVI. The Oak Ridges Moraine Area (OPA 48) was likewise excluded from this review given its intent to guide development in an environmentally sound manner. The majority of the subject properties are located within the Aurora Promenade Community Improvement Plan Area and the Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan Area.

To evaluate potential development pressure as a result of the above-noted planning documents, the following was considered:

- The number of listed and designated properties located within the identified policy areas;
- The nature and intent of each secondary plan; and
- Whether or not the planning document considers conservation of cultural heritage resources.

5.2 Review of Planning Policy

5.2.1 Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan

The Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan is an identified policy area of the Town of Aurora Official Plan (2010). The purpose of the Promenade Secondary Plan is to guide future development within the identified boundary that encompasses the majority of Yonge Street and Wellington Street within the historic core of Aurora. Among other objectives, Section 11.1 a) of the Official Plan indicates that the Secondary Plan intends to define the heritage resources in the subject area and provide guidance on methods to conserve, protect and reinforce the neighbourhoods, streetscapes and significant neighbourhoods.

The Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan area is divided into sub-areas based on the character and intended land use as shown in Schedule 'B1' of the Official Plan (2010). Generally, stronger heritage conservation measures are applied to the Downtown designations through carefully considered regulations while the General designations are intended to accommodate greater levels of intensification. The intentions of the designations within this Secondary Plan are provided below.

Downtown, Upper Downtown and Downtown Shoulder

The majority of the subject properties within the Promenade Secondary Plan Area are concentrated within the Downtown, Upper Downtown, and Downtown Shoulder areas. Section 11.3 a) of the Official Plan states:

The 'Downtown' is the core and symbolic centre of the Town of Aurora. The purpose of the 'Downtown' designation is to guide development, while protecting and reinforcing a heritage 'main street' character and identity. Careful regulation of land uses and control over the scale and placement of infill structures is required in order to enhance the pedestrian experience. Retail, entertainment and cultural venues are encouraged, as well as the introduction of more residential uses.

The Upper Downtown and Downtown Shoulder designations are intended to support the character of the Downtown while carefully considering commercial and residential development where appropriate. The Secondary Plan provides regulations regarding land uses, building height, lot coverages, parking, design criteria, and considerations for compatibility with adjacent properties to preserve the character of these areas.

Promenade General, Promenade General Site Specific Area and Promenade Focus Area Designation

The Promenade General designation encompasses several properties subject to this review towards the outskirts of the historic core on Wellington Street East, Yonge Street, and in the Berczy Street area. Section 11.6 a) of the Official Plan indicates that the Promenade General area has the greatest re-development potential due to its auto-oriented and sprawling nature. Section 11.6 a) further states that the purpose of the Promenade General designation is as follows:

The purpose of the 'Promenade General' designation is to promote transformation into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use area. Change will primarily occur through the introduction of higher densities in high quality mid-rise forms placed close to the street, while providing appropriate transitions to adjacent neighbourhoods.

The Promenade General Site Specific Policy Area designation recognizes an industrial area that is encouraged to be transformed into a higher-density mixed-use area. The Promenade Focus Area designation is recognized to provide a more unique opportunity for development associated with its entryway locations, transit infrastructure, and major community amenities and services.

5.2.2 Yonge Street South Secondary Plan – OPA 34

According to the Town of Aurora Yonge Street South Secondary Plan (OPA 34), the purpose of this Plan is to guide development for the use of the area as a low-intensity, environmentally sensitive, primarily residential locality. It is recognized that the area is primarily occupied by estate forms of housing, cluster housing, and open space uses.

The majority of subject properties within the Yonge Street South Secondary Plan area are located along Yonge Street. Section 2.1.3 of the Plan recognizes the portion of Yonge Street within its boundary to be a historic arterial road that will continue to serve as a low density gateway to Aurora. Moreover, Section 8.2.5 provides:

A number of properties along Yonge Street have been identified for their architectural or historic significance. Future development of the Yonge Street corridor shall occur in consultation with the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee and shall investigate means of maintaining as many of these structures as is considered advisable and feasible.

Section 8.2 of the Plan recognizes the natural and anthropological heritage features that are contained within the area and provides that these heritage features shall be preserved and enhanced and that related properties will implement compatibility measures to recognize their visual and contextual relationships with these heritage resources.

5.2.4 Bayview Southeast Secondary Plan – OPA 20

The Bayview Southeast Secondary Plan area contains one subject property which is recommended to remain listed (14897 Leslie Street). Alike the Yonge Street Secondary Plan area, the intent of the Bayview Southeast Secondary Plan is to guide development associated with the expansion of the urban area in a low-density manner. This Plan does not include policy pertaining to heritage conservation; however, based on principles of orderly development and the intent to maintain a low-density form, the property of 14897 Leslie Street is not anticipated to be imminently at risk of redevelopment.

5.3 Conclusions and Summary

The level of risk that a property is subject to is largely dependent on the applicable planning framework. The review of secondary plans provides insight into which areas are intended to accommodate large shares of intensification and redevelopment and which will be conserved.

Generally, properties at the heart of the Downtown area of Aurora have been afforded protection by the policies of the Promenade Secondary Plan. In recognition of the need for intensification in Aurora, infill development is more readily encouraged in the remainder of this Secondary Planning Area. This need for intensification is further amplified by the Aurora Promenade CIP which has identified the Downtown and surrounding supporting area as a priority for intensification. Subject properties that surround the area designated Downtown in the Promenade Secondary Plan are recognized to be at higher risk of redevelopment due to the applicable development policies and the incentives for development contained in the Promenade CIP.

The subject properties with moderate and major CHVI contained within the Yonge Street South Secondary Plan area and the Bayview Southeast Secondary Plan area are not anticipated to notably be at risk. These areas are not intended to be subject to large infill developments or be focuses of intensification. Yonge Street has a cluster of properties included on the Register; however, Yonge Street is provided special protection as per the aforementioned policies of the Yonge Street South Secondary Plan.

The relative level of risk associated with applicable planning frameworks has been used to inform the recommendations for the subject properties. Subject properties with significant CHVI that are at greater risk of redevelopment due to intensification pressures and less stringent conservation policies are recommended for priority designation under Part IV of the *OHA*.

6.0 Recommendations

The purpose of the Review of the Aurora Register project is to evaluate all of the “listed” properties on the Town’s Municipal Heritage Register and provide recommendations to the Town regarding any changes to the Register. A total of 374 properties were evaluated and categorized as follows:

- 1) 57 properties are recommended for removal from the Register;
- 2) 287 properties are recommended to remain on the Register; and
- 3) 30 properties are recommended for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (also referred to as the “OHA”).

An overview of these recommendations are provided in the following sub-sections and the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) pages have been included in this report as **Appendix H**.

6.1 Properties Recommended for Removal from the Register

The Aurora Register currently includes a considerable volume of listed properties. This is likely a result of what is commonly referred to as “blanket listing”, whereby any properties which include structures constructed prior to 1940 are listed on the Register without providing clear information regarding the reasons the property has CHVI. This includes properties which may have originally been identified by LACAC in the 1970s and 1980s. This has resulted in a considerable amount of time for properties to change, some of which may have lost their heritage integrity since the time they were first identified. Several properties have degraded or have been subject to alterations which renders the previously identified CHVI obsolete.

A property with zero or minimal overall value as it pertains to the criteria of design/physical value, historical/associative value, or contextual value does not provide an argument for having significant CHVI. These properties have therefore been recommended for removal from the Register. The review of the Register has concluded that 58 properties should be considered for removal.

The *OHA* requires that the Council of a municipality consult with its Municipal Heritage Committee before removing properties from its register. It is also anticipated that there would be a consultation process with members of the Steering Committee, the Municipal Heritage Committee, Town Staff, and members of the public to flag any of these properties which should not be removed if information is brought forward which was not part of the historic record, but nonetheless demonstrates that the property is of CHVI.

6.2 Properties Recommended to Remain on the Register

A total of 287 properties have been recommended to remain listed on the Register given that they have met some of the criteria of *O. Reg. 9/06*. These properties are generally have maintained their overall heritage integrity. Properties with moderate value are generally not at risk, as further discussed in Section 5 of this report. While these properties may meet the criteria for designation under Part IV of the OHA, they are recommended to remain on the Register in the short-term.

It is important that these properties remain on the Register since this gives protection against future demolition. Should demolition or redevelopment of the property be proposed, the Town of Aurora has the ability to request a Heritage Impact Assessment in order to be conclusive on the heritage value of the property. Should the property demonstrate significant CHVI, the Town of Aurora has the ability to designate the property as part of the redevelopment in process. The property evaluation sheets completed as part of this project provide the Town with updated information and enable Staff to determine whether or not a demolition application should be granted, or if additional information is required to determine whether or not designation should be pursued.

Once the initial properties have been designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, it is recommended that the Heritage Advisory Committee advance other listed properties towards designation under Part IV.

Through this project, clusters of listed properties have been identified. These are described as neighbourhood groups in Section 4.5 of this report. The majority of listed properties which can be considered for designation are located within these clusters. Therefore, it is recommended that the Town consider the option of processing designations of clusters of properties under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as part of a Heritage Conservation District. This would require further study under the legislated processes for undertaking Heritage Conservation District studies under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The Town should consider other tools for managing cultural heritage resources under the Planning Act. This includes the consideration of heritage resources in Secondary Plans and the identification of Heritage Character Areas, Urban Design studies, By-law regulations, etc.

6.3 Properties Recommended for Part IV Designation

A total of 30 properties have been recommended for priority designation under Part IV of the OHA. These properties demonstrate CHVI and provide a defensible argument for their long-term conservation. These properties may also be at risk and should be considered for designation in order to provide a level of protection against alteration or demolition.

The Town of Aurora recognizes these circumstances may arise and provides the following policy in

Section 13.3 of the Official Plan as follows:

f) The Town will give immediate consideration to the designation of any heritage resource under the Ontario Heritage Act if that resource is threatened with demolition, significant alterations or other potentially adverse impacts.

These properties are to remain on the Register until the Council is able to initiate a By-law on title and, ideally, work with property owners through the legislated process of Section 29 of the OHA. Section 29(1) of the OHA provides that the council of a municipality, by by-law, may designate a property within the municipality to be of CHVI under the following circumstances:

(a) where criteria for determining whether property is of cultural heritage value or interest have been prescribed, the property meets the prescribed criteria; and

(b) the designation is made in accordance with the process set out in this section.

Subsections of Section 29 of the OHA regulate the process of designation, which includes various notices, consultation, objection, withdrawal, appeals, and by-law regulations. The property owner also has the right to submit a formal objection to the designation by Council.

As per the Terms of Reference for this project, Attachment J provides Statements of Significance for each of the 30 properties recommended for Designation. These Statements of Significance were provided to the Heritage Advisory Committee for review and comment on May 2, 2002 and were also provided to the members of the Project Steering Committee for review via email on May 4, 2022. Comments received by stakeholders were incorporated into the final set of Statements of Significance. It is recommended that the Town of Aurora consider the information included in Appendix J should Council wish to proceed with designation of any of these properties.

6.4 Future Additions to the Municipal Heritage Register

The purpose of this project was to review the properties on the existing Municipal Heritage Register, or included on the “pending” list. Adding previously unidentified properties of potential CHVI to the Register was beyond the scope of the project. It is anticipated that the Town will continue to add properties to the Register over time, as necessary. It is recommended that future additions to the Register be evaluated using the same method and evaluation tools utilized throughout this project.

As described in Section 3.0 of this report the method used for this project is based on O. Reg. 9/06 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and is consistent with the guidance of the province as described in the Ontario Heritage Toolkit. In the autumn of 2021, the Town of Aurora adopted this method as the formal evaluation method replacing the Aurora Evaluation Document that has been in use since 2010.

In addition, the GIS based inventory tool that was developed as part of this project should continue to be used by the Town. It provides an easy and standardized method for collecting data and evaluating properties for potential cultural heritage value.

6.4 Summary of Recommendations

The recommendation of the Review of the Aurora Register project are summarized as follows:

Immediate Actions (0-12 months):

Immediate action items may be initiated within 0-12 months, with the understanding that some tasks may be completed beyond the 12 months.

- That the Town proceed with removal from the Register of the 57 properties identified in Appendix 1 consistent with the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- That the Town proceed with designation of 30 priority properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* identified in **Appendix J**, consistent with the legislated requirements;
- That the Town adopt the evaluation tool used in this study for consideration of future additions to the Heritage Register (provided in **Appendix E**); and
- That the Town integrate the GIS based Inventory tool and the completed property evaluation sheets into its records and systems, as appropriate. The Town can add properties to the GIS Inventory system, including those which are designated under Part IV, and Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It is recommended that the Town consider making the Heritage Register available to the public electronically.

Medium Term Actions (1-3 years):

Medium Term action items may be initiated within 1-3 years, with the understanding that some tasks may be completed beyond the 3 years.

- That the Heritage Advisory Committee develop a workplan to advance listed properties from Register for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* over time. Suggestions regarding properties which could be designated under Part IV as part of the Medium Term Actions are provided in **Appendix I**.

Long Term Actions (3 years and beyond):

Long term action items may be *initiated* within 3 years, with the understanding that some tasks may be completed beyond the 3 years.

- That the 287 properties identified in **Appendix H** remain on the Heritage Register, and be up-dated on an as-needed basis;
- That the evaluation tool (**Appendix E**) be updated as necessary based on changes to provincial legislation and guidelines;
- That existing policies regarding the cultural heritage evaluation methodology in the Town of Aurora Official Plan be updated to reflect the evaluation methodology provided in this report; and
- That the Town consider options for conserving properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest which are located within clusters or neighbourhood groups using tools available under either the *Ontario Heritage Act* (i.e. Part V Designation and Heritage Conservation Districts) or the *Planning Act* (i.e. Secondary Plans, Character Areas, Cultural Heritage Landscapes, etc.).

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