

— CITY OF SUMMERSIDE—

HERITAGE CONSERVATION PLAN 2003

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Section 1. INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Plan Title

The title of this plan is the *Summerside Heritage Conservation Plan 2003*, but it may also be referred to as the 'Heritage Conservation Plan 2003,' or simply as the 'Plan' when in context. The Plan contains two schedules:

- Schedule 'A': Plan Text
- Schedule 'B': Map of Heritage District.

1.2 Status

The Heritage Conservation Plan 2003 is a secondary plan within the *Summerside Official Plan 1998* and constitutes an "official plan" as defined under the *Planning Act*, R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. P-8. Section 11 of the Official Plan 1998 which dealt with heritage matters is hereby replaced and implemented by this Plan, which is paramount over all other City plans in respect of heritage conservation. Unless resolved otherwise by Council, this Plan will continue as a secondary plan within any future general official plan for the City.

1.3 Purpose and scope

The Plan lays out Council policies for recognizing, protecting and promoting heritage resources throughout the City of Summerside, both inside and outside a newly-created heritage district. The Plan will be implemented through a heritage conservation bylaw, which will be paramount over the City's building and zoning bylaws on specified heritage matters. The Plan will also be implemented through mandated City programs for heritage support.

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1.4 Interpretation

The full meaning of Council policies shall be interpreted in the context of their introductory text statements.

1.5 Process

This Plan and its companion heritage conservation bylaw were prepared with assistance from a Heritage Advisory Board (HAB). The voting membership of the Board included the three Councillors sitting on the City's Planning Board, another Councillor representing a ward in the new heritage district, and three citizen representatives.

The Board widely circulated their preliminary report, *Heritage Conservation Strategy 2001* to encourage early public debate about their recommendations, before proceeding with preparation of a Plan and bylaw.¹ The seven-part *Strategy* was summarized in a full-page advertisement in the local newspaper to inform any potentially interested persons who had not already been sent a copy of the report. A consultation process followed, including three focus group meetings and an advertised community open house.

Because of the strong community support received for the *Strategy* it was used as a guideline for the final Plan and heritage conservation bylaw. These were approved by Council following another community open-house and a final public meeting, held in accordance with the *Planning Act*. A map of the heritage district was included in all public advertisements throughout the consultation process. Provincial approval was granted by the Minister responsible for administering the *Planning Act*.

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City of Summerside. *Heritage Conservation Strategy 2001*. Prepared by Council's Heritage Advisory Board, May 31, 2001.

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The Plan is subject to minimum five-year periodic reviews. At any other time, Council may undertake a special review on major policy issues in the Plan, or approve specific Plan amendments.

2.0 GOALS AND STRATEGY

2.1 Importance of Heritage Resources

Summerside has a rich and diverse endowment of historic buildings and sites, reflecting its fascinating history as a maritime seaport, major shipbuilding centre, market centre for Prince County, and world centre for the lucrative silver fox industry. Based on the results of partial heritage surveys, there are probably over 150 noteworthy historic buildings in the City. Many of these buildings are clustered in the central historic core of what used to be the Town of Summerside, but there are other fine examples throughout the City, including in the previous community areas of St. Eleanors, Wilmot and Sherbrooke.

The City has a fine collection of older homes and some historically noteworthy commercial and institutional buildings. A broad range of building styles are represented, including Maritime Vernacular, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Georgian, Bracketed, Queen Anne Revival, Four Squares and Romanesque Revival, mostly in wooden construction but some in brick. The City also has historically significant parklands and ornamental gardens, as well as sites associated with the old shipbuilding days. Summerside's rich history and the value of its heritage resources are well documented elsewhere.³

Council policy is to:

- H1. *Recognize the importance of Summerside's rich and diverse endowment of heritage resources from the past.*

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See Robert Allan Rankin (1980) *Down at the Shore. A History of Summerside, Prince Edward Island (1752-1945)* and Faye Pound (2000) *Heritage Walking Tour: Summerside, Prince Edward Island*. For a historical overview, see the *Strategy*, op. cit.

2.2 Need for Heritage Conservation

Summerside has been unusual for a community gifted with so many heritage resources in not having a heritage conservation plan and bylaw, until now. Some of Summerside's historic buildings have been beautifully conserved thanks to the considerable efforts of their owners, but active City support is also needed to ensure the longevity of all our heritage resources and to realize their full values for property owners and the community.

A large proportion of Summerside's older buildings are clustered within the downtown business district (DBD) and adjoining residential neighbourhoods. These buildings have not been exposed to the same downtown redevelopment pressures that have caused major heritage losses in other communities, e.g. Calgary and, to some extent, Halifax. Over time, however, reduced development activity in the central core will work against the survival of our heritage resources, unless remedial action is taken. Heritage buildings have to be self-sustaining by providing continuing value for their owners, whether as traditional homes, or for unique apartment living, commercial space or other uses. But, without continued investment security and owner satisfaction, the motivation to invest in older, high-maintenance buildings will decline commensurably.

There are already serious warning signs that devitalization of the City's central core is, bit by bit, eroding the sustainability of some of our heritage resources. First, a number of older single-family homes have been broken down for low-rent apartments in a manner not always compatible with their historical character. Second, some older buildings are falling into disrepair because of inadequate maintenance (and are taking down the value of neighbouring properties with them). These trends can hardly be encouraging to property owners who do make a considerable effort to conserve their heritage buildings, or to others contemplating taking on such a challenge.

By comparison, some communities are simultaneously giving their heritage buildings new economic life and promoting them as a vital component of an attractive and competitive urban core, e.g. our sister city, Charlottetown, and Victoria, B.C. Summerside wants to be the type of community where heritage conservation and urban revitalization proceed hand-in-hand and are mutually supportive. Thus, the City will conserve its heritage resources, not just in the traditional regulatory sense of protecting them against harmful developments or neglect, but by also fostering a conducive economic environment for sustaining them into the future.

There are already excellent examples in Summerside of what can be done to sustain our heritage resources. A number of historic buildings have been successfully recycled for new commercial and residential uses, while staying true to their historical character, including the successful conversion

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of some magnificent old homes into tourist homes. The City, itself, has assumed stewardship of the *Wyatt Heritage Properties* and opened them up to the public. The popularity of both the Properties and the *City's Heritage Walking Tour* among visitors is proof that heritage tourism can become a major growth industry for the community. Also, a creative partnership is evolving between the City and the private sector to implement a new "Vision" for revitalizing the downtown business district (DBD), to which heritage conservation can make a large contribution.⁴

Over all, there is growing appreciation within the community that our gifts of fine buildings from the past cannot be taken for granted, and that the City needs to assist with protecting and enhancing their values for present and future generations. Summerside's annual resident surveys consistently show more than 70% support for the City to adopt a heritage conservation bylaw. Section 11 in the *Official Plan 1998* confirmed the importance of heritage conservation and stated Council's intention to advance this important public policy issue with help from a Heritage Advisory Board (HAB) — which ultimately reached fruition in this Plan and the accompanying heritage conservation bylaw.

Council policy is to:

- H2. *Sustain and enhance the full cultural, social, and economic values of Summerside's heritage resources for present and future generations with active support from the City.*

2.3 Heritage Conservation Goals

The City will pursue a balanced mix of cultural, social and economic goals for heritage conservation. No single goal can be pursued in isolation: success will depend on all goals being implemented together. For instance, heritage resources are very well worth conserving for their own intrinsic cultural values, but conservation will also play a vital contemporary role in creating a liveable environment and revitalizing the central core of the City. Indeed, for reasons described

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The partnership process started with *Vision: Summerside Downtown Revitalization Position Paper*. April, 2000.

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above, successful heritage conservation and urban revitalization will need to go hand in hand. Summerside should also realize its full potential for heritage tourism, one of the fastest

growing sectors of the North American tourism industry, and which will help bring visitors into our Downtown. There are also exciting growth opportunities for a heritage renovation industry.

Council policy is to:

H3. *Promote a balanced mix of cultural, social and economic goals for heritage conservation, i.e.:*

- a) ***'Summerside Pride'***: *promote a sense of place and pride in Summerside.*
- b) ***Preservation of cultural artefacts***: *preserve heritage artefacts for their cultural memorialisation of historical ways of life and unique aesthetic values.*
- c) **Liveable urban environment**: *promote a liveable urban environment enriched by a diversity of the old and the new.*
- d) ***Downtown revitalization***: *capitalize on heritage attractions to promote economic revitalization of the downtown business district (DBD).*
- e) ***Strong inner neighbourhoods***: *promote heritage resources as a vital component of strong inner-City neighbourhoods that are attractive places to live for all sectors of home buyers and renters.*
- f) **Tourism and business development**: *promote the amenity values of our heritage resources to attract tourists and new businesses.*
- g) ***Heritage renovation industry***: *promote a local and exportable industry for heritage building restoration.*

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2.4 Heritage Conservation Strategy

Council's heritage goals will be advanced by a strategy based on the following four principles:

Strategy Principle No.1. Comprehensive Heritage Support

Heritage conservation is very important to Summerside for a number of reasons, i.e.

- ✓ the City is fortunate in having a rich and varied endowment of heritage resources;
- ✓ without appropriate support this endowment will be at risk from harmful change and neglect;
- ✓ the City can accrue substantial social, cultural and economic benefits from effective heritage conservation; and
- ✓ there is strong support in the community for heritage conservation.

Accordingly, the City will match the considerable importance of its heritage resources with comprehensive support for: (a) *recognizing* important heritage resources as 'designated heritage properties'; (b) *protecting* heritage resources from undesirable changes which may harm their historic character, while facilitating positive improvements; and (c) *promoting* heritage conservation awareness and support among property owners and the community.

Council policy is to:

- H4. *Provide a comprehensive level of City support for recognizing, protecting, and promoting heritage resources that matches their considerable importance to the community.*

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Strategy Principle No 2. Coordinated Development

The City will take a coordinated approach to enhancing the values of its heritage resources as a whole, rather than just focusing narrowly on individual heritage sites. This will be advanced through creation of a heritage district in the central historic core, while also supporting valuable heritage buildings in other areas. A diversity of land uses and activities will be encouraged in a 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district to make it a vibrant, interesting and sustainable urban environment where people want to live, do business, and visit. Key civic investments into improving the infrastructure and image of the district will enhance local property values for owners of heritage and non-heritage properties alike, and will help attract tourists.

Council policy is to:

- H5. *Take a coordinated approach to enhancing Summerside's heritage resources as an integrated whole, including setting up a heritage district in the central historic core of the City.*

Strategy Principle No.3. Adaptation to New Needs

Heritage resources not only have considerable intrinsic value as cultural artefacts, but are also vital parts of the community to be used for everyday living, working and recreation. There would not be broad support in Summerside for freezing all heritage properties like 'museum pieces' and, indeed, their economic sustainability over the long-term partly depends on them being able to provide continuing value to their owners. Accordingly, the City will facilitate renovations or "adaptive re-use" of heritage buildings to meet contemporary needs that are compatible with their historical character. Not all buildings in the heritage district have historic value and the City will encourage appropriate redevelopment of these other 'supporting district properties,' when they reach the end of their useful life-cycles.

Council policy is to:

- H6. *Facilitate renovations or adapt heritage buildings to meet contemporary needs that are compatible with their historical character.*
- H7. *Encourage appropriate redevelopments of 'supporting district properties' to*

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enhance the heritage district's overall appearance and aid in its revitalization.

Strategy Principle No.4. "Community Buy-In"

The City will promote "community buy-in" by continuing to engage interested citizens in heritage conservation (as it did in preparing this Plan). Support among heritage building owners will be encouraged by enabling them to adapt to contemporary needs (see above). The City will also offer financial benefits and other incentives to heritage property owners, invest in heritage district improvements, and foster broad community support through public relations initiatives.

Council policy is to:

- H8. *Encourage "community buy-in" by continuing to engage interested citizens in heritage conservation, offering incentives to heritage property owners, investing in heritage district improvements and, generally, promoting community awareness of the importance of heritage conservation.*

3.0 HERITAGE DISTRICT

3.1 Heritage District Concept

Three broad options were considered in the *Strategy* for officially designating heritage properties, which would then be eligible for special City protection and promotional support:

- Option 1:* designate individual heritage properties throughout the City;
- Option 2:* only designate properties within a heritage district; or
- Option 3:* use a combined approach of designating properties both inside and outside a heritage district.

Option 3 of a *combined approach* to designating heritage properties is best suited for Summerside. The creation of a heritage district in the central core of the City will offer considerable benefits, as described below, and many historic properties worthy of designation are clustered in this area. But, there are noteworthy historic properties in other parts of the City which should also be designated. Under a combined approach, Summerside can both realize the benefits of having a heritage district and be able to support valuable heritage properties throughout the City. Heritage designation of individual properties will proceed once the district is in place.

Council policy is to:

- H9. *Designate worthy heritage properties both inside and outside the heritage district.*

3.2 Benefits of a Heritage District

A heritage district will realize a number of benefits for Summerside:

- (a) ***Integrated development:***
A heritage district is a useful tool for integrating the aesthetic values of groups of buildings, streetscapes and open spaces, as all seen together.

(b) ***Better heritage protection:***

Heritage resources in a heritage district can be protected on an area-wide basis from proposed developments on nearby designated properties, or on other 'supporting district properties' (i.e. properties awaiting designation, or with modern buildings or older buildings lacking significant heritage value).

(c) ***Land-use diversification:***

Council will consider 'zoning exception' applications in the heritage district for residential-commercial uses that are not allowable under normal zoning. This will provide incentives for property owners and help to create a more vibrant, mixed-use central core.

(d) ***Economic development:***

Summerside's heritage district will serve the dual purposes of heritage conservation and economic revitalization. Based on experience elsewhere, a heritage district will be a major economic booster for the City. A heritage district will:

- ✓ create an 'enterprise zone effect' by attracting new businesses with zoning and financial incentives;
- ✓ induce more property improvements due to incentives and increased investment security;
- ✓ create a more desirable place to live and do business;
- ✓ "show case" the work of local heritage restoration companies;
- ✓ expand the all important tourist industry; and
- ✓ increase property values and expand the City's tax base.

(e) ***Increased public engagement:***

Creation of a heritage district will promote public engagement in heritage issues and, hence, more "community buy-in."

Council policy is to:

H10. *Promote the various benefits of a heritage district for integrated development, better heritage protection, more diverse land-uses, economic revitalization and increased public engagement.*

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3.3 Heritage District Boundaries

Council selected the boundaries of the City's heritage district with consideration of the following criteria:

- a) The district should cover a high concentration of City heritage resources;
- b) The district should encompass a diversity of historic commercial, residential, institutional and park areas;
- c) The district should be large enough to surround tourists in an unique total environment and provide sufficient attractions for extended visitations;
- d) The residential parts of the district should be large enough to provide a sense of neighbourhood identity;
- e) Summerside's rich diversity of housing styles should be adequately represented, including a cross-section of both 'grand homes' and traditional working class homes;
- f) Connections should be promoted between central heritage areas and the City's West End, which is poised to becoming a major tourist attraction with the recent completion of new waterfront developments, and
- g) Finally, on a cautionary note, the City should not overreach its organizational capabilities (it is always possible to extend the district later).

The boundaries of the heritage district are shown in Schedule 'B' at the end of this section. The heritage district takes in a large part of the downtown business district (DBD), together with adjoining residential neighbourhoods. It encompasses 450 properties, most of which are built on, except for parklands. The district covers a major concentration of valuable heritage buildings in the City, including all 37 properties on the City's *Heritage Walking Tour*. Some valuable heritage properties lie just outside the district, but these can be individually designated.

Council policy is to:

- H11. *Designate Summerside's heritage district as shown on Schedule 'B' of this Plan, and consider any future enlargements of the district as may be required in the future.*

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Council will designate a heritage district overlay (HDO) zone under its new heritage conservation bylaw, which will take in all of the heritage district. Some special measures for heritage protection and promotion will apply in the new zone, over and above the level of City support for heritage properties outside the district.

- H12. *Designate a heritage district overlay (HDO) zone to facilitate special protection and promotion of heritage resources in the district.*

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[insert Schedule 'B,' map of heritage district]

4.0 RECOGNITION OF HERITAGE PROPERTIES

4.1 Application for Heritage Designation

Council will recognize important heritage resources by designating them as heritage properties. This will confer upon their owners both obligations to comply with special development requirements and eligibility for compensating incentives. Any properties containing pre-1940 buildings and/or historically significant sites are eligible to be considered for designation. The largest proportion of eligible properties are in the heritage district, but there are many in other areas of the City.

It is commonplace for municipalities to take the initiative in nominating privately-owned properties for designation (subject, of course, to notifying owners and inviting their responses). By comparison, Summerside will encourage property owners themselves to apply for designation, in keeping with the principle of promoting “community buy-in” for heritage conservation (see policy H6). The City, itself, is the owner of some fine historic buildings and will set a good example by quickly advancing them for designation.

It may sometimes be in the public interest for the City to nominate privately-owned properties for designation, such as when a historic building is at risk or when an owner in a block of valuable historic buildings is holding out, though they enjoy all the benefits of heritage improvements and increased property values along with their neighbours (i.e. a so-called “free-rider”). Where any historic property is under imminent threat, such as from a building demolition, Council may also issue a ‘temporary heritage property designation’ to freeze any changes until it has the opportunity to consider whether the property should be permanently designated, but without imposing an unnecessarily long waiting period on the owner.

Council policy is to:

- H13. *Encourage owners of historic properties to volunteer for heritage designation.*
- H14. *Set a good example by the City advancing its own historic properties for designation as quickly as possible.*
- H15. *Consider City nominations for designating privately-owned properties when in the public interest, including issuing a ‘temporary heritage property*

designation' when there is an imminent threat from development.

4.2 Advancing Properties for Designation

The City will proactively survey potential properties for heritage designation. A prioritized survey schedule will be approved by the City's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to ensure fairness and the best use of City resources. A high priority will be awarded to property owners who have started an application for designation, or who have expressed an interest in applying.

A 'heritage profile' will be prepared for each surveyed property, following a standard format approved by the CAO to ensure fairness and comparability. Historic buildings will be profiled in terms of their age, overall style and special features, historical associations, and remaining integrity; digital photos of all building elevations will also be included. Property owners will be invited to participate in profiling, both to obtain their personal knowledge about the property and to encourage volunteers for designation. Owners will be provided with a copy of their completed profile, together with promotional information about applying for designation.

Applications for designation will be evaluated taking into consideration the heritage profile for the property, and applying a numerical scoring system approved by the CAO. Heritage profiles will also be used as 'baseline records' for measuring potential impacts on valuable heritage resources from proposed developments (see section 5).

Council policy is to:

H16. *Undertake a City survey program of historic resources to lay the groundwork for heritage designations, including advancing volunteer applications by private property owners.*

4.3 Approval of Heritage Designation

Applications for heritage property designations will be treated as zoning amendments because, if approved, the properties would then be subject to some special development rules, including rigorous heritage protection requirements (see section 5), and 'zoning exceptions' for certain businesses in residences which are not allowable under normal zoning (see section 6).

Section 4. RECOGNITION OF HERITAGE PROPERTIES

As with all zoning amendments, applications for heritage designation will require notification of neighbours, an advertised public meeting, recommendations from the 'Planning Board' (see section 4.4 below), and final disposition of the application by Council. All designated properties will be registered, GIS mapped, and referenced in the City's LGO development control system. Like any other zoning amendments, heritage property designations will be appealable to the Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission (IRAC).

Council policy is to:

H17. *Process applications for heritage property designations as zoning amendments, subject to full public review and accountability.*

4.4 Heritage Planning Board (HPB)

Summerside will create a special Heritage Planning Board to fulfill the functions of a 'Planning Board' under the *Planning Act*, when dealing with heritage conservation issues. The Board's functions will include recommending on heritage property designations (see above), as well as reviewing land-use applications which may impact on heritage resources (see section 5), and applications for 'zoning exceptions' in the heritage district (see section 6).

Many municipalities have a separate citizen heritage advisory board which covers a broad range of heritage issues (with perhaps one Councillor included). However, under the *P.E.I. Planning Act*, our Council has to consider the prior recommendations of its 'planning board' when reviewing proposed amendments to official plans or "municipal planning bylaws." It would be very time-consuming for applicants to go through two separate meetings of a heritage advisory board and a planning board. Accordingly, Summerside will take a different approach by appointing a Heritage Planning Board (HAB) as a committee of Council. When the HAB meets, the three sitting Planning Board Councillors will be joined by three citizen representatives appointed for their knowledge of heritage conservation issues.

The device of a joint heritage/planning board will save time for applicants and, very importantly, will expedite responses to any emergency situations where heritage resources are under threat. The previous Heritage Advisory Board (HAB) has completed its mandate and is discontinued.

Section 4. RECOGNITION OF HERITAGE PROPERTIES

Council policy is to:

H18. *Appoint a joint Councillor-citizen Heritage Planning Board (HPB) with powers of a 'Planning Board' under the Planning Act, to recommend to Council on heritage conservation issues.*

5.0 HERITAGE PROTECTION

5.1 Scope of Heritage Protection

Summerside will effectively protect the historic character of its heritage resources from incompatible building or land use changes, but without imposing unnecessary burdens on development applicants.

Any vagueness about City requirements concerning heritage protection can cause unnecessary delays and frustrations for property owners and developers, inconsistent treatment from one case to the next, and erosion of support for heritage conservation generally. To avoid these not uncommon pitfalls, Summerside's heritage conservation bylaw will carefully limit the scope of City intervention and staff discretion for heritage protection to only what is needed, and will avoid "red tape." Summerside will carefully define the scope of development applications under the City's building and zoning bylaws which will be subject to special heritage review and potential control under the heritage conservation bylaw, i.e. so-called "reviewable developments" (and for increased certainty, non-reviewable developments will also be clearly identified). Zoning exception applications under the heritage conservation bylaw itself will also be treated as reviewable developments. City staff will prepare a 'heritage impact assessment' on each reviewable development application.

A somewhat higher level of protection will be provided for designated heritage buildings lying within the heritage district overlay (HDO) zone, than for those outside. All designated properties will be protected against any "on-site" impacts from developments on the properties themselves. But, designated district properties will also be protected on an area-wide basis against any "off-site" impacts from developments on other designated properties or on supporting district properties.

Council policy is to:

- H19. *Effectively protect heritage resources from incompatible developments that may negatively impact on their historic character, overall appearance and distinctive ambience, but without imposing unnecessary burdens on development applicants.*

5.2 'Adaptive Management'

Two of Council's policies are to facilitate renovations and adaption of heritage buildings to meet contemporary needs (policy H.6), and to encourage appropriate redevelopments of supporting district properties (policy H.7). In such situations, the City will employ 'adaptive management' to facilitate new developments which add economic values, while retaining or improving heritage values. Each proposed development will be reviewed taking into consideration the following cost and benefits:

Costs/benefits of proposed development =

1. Gains accruing to the property owner by improving the long-term economic sustainability of their building + where applicable, any economic revitalization benefits for the heritage district generally.

and

2. Any changes (positive or negative) to the historic character of heritage resources.

In cases where the costs of initial development proposals outweigh the benefits, the City will attempt to negotiate win-win solutions for applicants and the community alike, e.g. by revising building appearance, scaling back on project size, etc. The City will also examine the potential for using mitigation techniques to resolve differences with developers.

Council policy is to:

- H20. *Employ 'adaptive management' to encourage developments which contribute both economic and heritage values for developers and the community.*

Section 5. HERITAGE PROTECTION

5.3 'One-stop' Customer Services

Many municipalities impose a lengthy heritage review process on developers by routing applications through a separate heritage department and then onto a special 'heritage board,' which has to issue prior heritage approval before any development permit can be granted. By comparison, Summerside will continue to provide 'one-stop' customer services for all development applicants, including when heritage resources are involved. Summerside's use of a joint heritage/planning board (HPB) will also save considerable time when processing zoning bylaw applications which are subject to heritage review (see policy H.17).

Council policy is to:

H21. *Continue to provide efficient 'one-stop' customer services to all development applicants, including those subject to special heritage reviews.*

5.4 Building Bylaw Changes

Whereas zoning bylaw applications have to go to the HPB and then on to Council, building permit applications subject to heritage review can be processed directly by the Building Inspector. However, some minor amendments will be needed to the City's building bylaw to adequately protect designated heritage buildings. Specifically, building permits will be required for some formerly excluded exterior works, such as new siding, to ensure that they are properly reviewed for their heritage compatibility.

Council policy is to:

H22. *Make minor amendments to the City's building bylaw to ensure that exterior building changes are properly reviewed for their heritage compatibility.*

6.0 HERITAGE PROMOTION

6.1 Financial Incentives

The City will offer financial benefits and other incentives to owners of designated heritage properties, in order to:

- a) generally encourage “buy-in” for heritage conservation;
- b) promote private owners of historic properties to volunteer for heritage designation;
- c) promote appropriate maintenance, restoration and improvement of heritage properties;
- d) compensate property owners for having to meet more stringent heritage building standards; and
- e) where applicable, promote economic revitalization of the City’s central historic core.

A package of financial incentives was proposed in the *Strategy*, including a property tax rebate program for heritage improvements, a revolving loan fund, and a waiver on building permit fees for designated heritage buildings. The City will quickly make up such investments into heritage conservation from an enlarged tax base, increased tourism and business spin-offs. Where applicable, heritage owners in the heritage district will also be eligible for overlapping downtown revitalization incentives offered by the City. It is also anticipated that City heritage designation will enhance some owners’ eligibility for support under future federal heritage programs.

Council policy is to:

- H23. *Offer a tax rebate to owners of designated heritage buildings whose property assessments increase after making eligible improvements.*
- H24. *Not assess application fees for heritage designation, and waive building permit fees for all work on designated heritage properties.*
- H25. *Examine the feasibility of setting up a revolving heritage loan fund with senior government participation to assist with financing major building renovations and emergency repairs, and review any further financial incentive options as may be needed.*

6.2 'Zoning Exceptions'

Council will enable qualified owners of designated heritage properties in the heritage district overlay (HDO) zone to apply for uses not allowable under normal zoning. Such 'zoning exceptions' will be offered for certain businesses in single-family residences, including in combinations if the building is large enough. Examples are an artist gallery, art gallery, tourist-orientated retail shop (e.g. a gift or antique shop), tea room, licensed restaurant and, in combination with any of the foregoing uses, a tourist home or a home occupation.

Promoting a mix of commercial-residential uses in heritage district residences will have the following benefits:

- ✓ assist "adaptive re-use" of heritage buildings and, hence, improve their economic sustainability;
- ✓ compensate some property owners in the heritage district for having to conform with a higher level of heritage protection;
- ✓ cluster similar business to create a critical mass for attracting tourists;
- ✓ promote a vibrant, mix-use central core in the City;
- ✓ give a much needed boost to the downtown;
- ✓ complement the City's *Heritage Walking Tour*; and
- ✓ promote "park and walk," i.e. tourist attractions in the 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district will be within walking distance of downtown parking lots.

The above zoning exemptions would be subject to strict safeguards. The same two-step application procedure will be applied from our zoning bylaw that has been successfully used to manage many commercial-residential uses i.e.:

- step 1.* Council **discretionary use approval** will take into consideration the land-use suitability of the proposed business location and the heritage compatibility of any proposed building alterations for accommodating the business, including any feedback received from a prior public meeting.
- step 2.* A **conditional use permit** from the Development Officer will regulate ongoing operation of the approved use, and will be subject to Council revocation for any violations.

Council policy is to:

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- H26. *Facilitate more business uses in designated single-family heritage buildings within the heritage district, subject to proper land use and heritage safeguards.*
- H27. *Consider any other opportunities for promoting a vibrant, mixed-use urban environment in the heritage district.*

6.3 Civic Improvements

The City will promote an attractive, 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district through civic improvements, such as tree-planting along heritage avenues, heritage-theme street signage and lighting, special interpretative signs for heritage places, and plaquing of individual heritage buildings. As part of the City's support for its *Downtown Vision*, it is already assisting businesses there to make facade improvements and install decorative signage, including of a heritage nature. New federal government support for heritage conservation may also materialize in the near future.

Civic investments in the heritage district will have the following benefits:

- ✓ complement improvements made by home owners and businesses to their properties;
- ✓ attract more tourists; and
- ✓ revitalize the heritage district (which will benefit both owners of heritage properties and supporting district properties alike).

Council policy is to:

- H28. *Promote an attractive, 'pedestrian-friendly' heritage district through civic improvements.*

6.4 Public Relations

There are numerous, public relations opportunities for promoting heritage conservation: examples include awards for fine renovations of heritage buildings, design competitions for redeveloping supporting district properties, newsletters on heritage achievements in the City, pamphlets on important heritage buildings, lecture series, and school programs on heritage awareness. PR packages can also be made available to sell prospective new residents on the advantages of purchasing and renovating a heritage building in Summerside.

Section 6. HERITAGE PROMOTION

Council policy is to:

H29. *Promote public relations initiatives and partnerships to increase awareness of our heritage resources and support for heritage conservation.*

6.5 Reviewing Progress

The City's annual business planning cycle will identify staff responsibilities, resource allocations and performance targets for heritage conservation. Implementation of this Plan will be reviewed annually, using such performance indicators as:

- ✓ number of completed heritage profiles;
- ✓ number of heritage property designations;
- ✓ number and value of building permits for heritage improvements;
- ✓ processing times for heritage "reviewable development" applications;
- ✓ heritage-related business starts;
- ✓ value and nature of heritage civic investments; and
- ✓ PR achievements.

Council policy is to:

H30. *Review annual reports from the City Administration on the progress made in implementing this Plan and any needs for improving City support for heritage conservation.*