Downtown St. Catharines Heritage Conservation District Study

DRAFT REPORT

March 2025

Prepared for:
City of St. Catharines
50 Church Street
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7C2

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160623198

Stantec

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Executive Summary

Project Description

In 2022, the Ontario government passed the *More Homes Built Faster Act* which, among other things, changed the way that municipalities protect heritage properties. There are three primary tools in the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) that municipalities use to conserve the cultural heritage of their communities; listing on a register, Part IV designation, and Part V designation. Listing is considered a screening tool used to identify potential heritage value, while Part IV and V address individual and multiple properties or districts, respectively. Prior to the changes in 2022, municipalities used registers of listed properties to identify potential heritage properties and determine where an evaluation of heritage significance may be required before a demolition permit was issued.

The change to the OHA requires municipalities to review their registers to identify properties that should be considered either for Part IV or V designation or removal from the register. In the City of St. Catharines (the City), this means a review of the *Heritage Register of Non-Designated Properties* (the Register) which includes 163 properties that must either be designated or removed from the Register by January 1, 2027. Where a property is removed from the Register, it cannot be re-listed for a period of five years.

At the direction of Council, the City released a Request for Proposals in September 2023 to retain a consulting firm to prepare the *Downtown St. Catharines Heritage Conservation District Study* (the Study) to consider Part V designation for a high concentration of its listed properties. The City defined the Study Area to span the bulk of historic downtown St. Catharines including 452 properties, of which 341 were determined to represent potential heritage resources, 97 are currently listed on the Register, and 14 are individually designated under Part IV of the OHA. Following a public bid process, Stantec Consulting Ltd. (Stantec) was selected as the project team to determine whether the Study Area merits consideration for designation as an HCD, in whole or in part. Stantec's experience in HCD Studies and Plans spans the province with expertise in commercial and residential districts alongside HCD Plan updates.

HCD designations are policy-based tools that can help manage change in a community by providing a district planning framework for conserving the heritage character of a specific place. This allows for compatible new designs that coexist with the historic fabric of a community, rather than freezing a place in time. As of 2020, Ontario contains 134 HCDs which range from pre-confederation landscapes to mid-century modern buildings, and even active historic industries. Many contain typical types of resources, such as commercial or residential properties. Others contain a mixture of many different property types like active oil fields. At present, 56 of these HCDs are categorized by the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) as "commercial", "commercial-residential", or "commercial-institutional".

District designation remains one of the strongest tools to protect heritage character while allowing for a community's ongoing evolution into the future. Often referred to as a change management tool, HCDs are rooted in how a community sees and experiences a place both now and in the future. This requires review of the historical development of a place and preparation of a detailed inventory of buildings, landscapes, streetscapes, views, and other elements that contribute to the character of a study area. An

HCD Study also includes a detailed review of planning policies which apply to a study area alongside a program of public consultation. This allows the HCD Study to be grounded in a modern planning context while providing an understanding of how the community views itself. Finally, an HCD Study closes with an evaluation of the study area against provincial criteria under the OHA and preparation of recommendations to guide Staff and Council in their decision making. The results of these steps are briefly summarized below as they apply to the St. Catharines HCD Study.

Historical Review

The Study Area reflects the evolution of St. Catharines from the late 18th century to the present-day. This begins with the alignment of St. Paul Street which generally follows part of an Indigenous trail commonly called the "Iroquois Trail". By the late 18th century, colonial settlement in the area had begun, linked to Loyalists arriving in the aftermath of the American Revolution. The construction of the Welland Canal in the 19th century made St. Catharines an important location on the journey between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, a crucial transportation corridor at the time. The arrival of the Welland Canal resulted in the creation of a commercial core along much of St. Paul Street and an important source of waterpower for industrial development.

The industrial base of St. Catharines brought prosperity to the Study Area as people lived, shopped, and worked downtown. At the same time, people were drawn downtown to the various cultural attractions such as opera houses, playhouses, and later movie theaters. As a result of its geographical advantages and proximity to the Welland Canal, St. Catharines developed into the economic, social, and political centre of the Niagara Region by the mid-19th century. This is directly demonstrated by the decision to move the county seat to St. Catharines in 1862. As a result, numerous civic, institutional, and large commercial structures were constructed during this period. The trend occurred again in the mid-20th century as government expanded in the postwar years. Several civic structures with regional or federal connections were constructed during this period. This continued into the later 20th century with the introduction of large commercial buildings. This reflects the large workforce in the community and the prominent role the city played in the region's economy.

The decline and closure of several local industries in the late 20th century resulted in a general economic slump in St. Catharines, including within the Study Area, which persisted into the early 2010s. In the early decades of the 21st century, the City looked to revitalize the downtown area with construction of public spaces and strategic partnerships with local institutions like Brock University. These spaces include the First Ontario Performing Arts Centre, the Meridian Centre, and the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts.

Like many urban regional centres in Canada, the Study Area has faced considerable pressures during the 2020s as municipalities have grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing development pressures, and calls for intensification as a result of a nationwide housing crisis. The City's Official Plan highlights that Downtown St. Catharines, as one of the city's oldest areas, best reflects its cultural heritage, identity, and sense of place. Having played a significant role in the city's development, the City's Official Plan policies encourage the downtown to evolve as a key activity centre and multifunctional hub for government, civic, commercial, cultural, and residential activities, while also attracting investment and

infrastructure. The City has also been identified as an Urban Growth Centre by the Region of Niagara and is anticipated to accommodate intensification and new development in the future.

Heritage Character and Public Consultation

As mentioned, defining the character of a place is a multi-disciplinary process. The Project Team, including Public and Architectural Historians, Landscape Architects, and Planners, compiled a detailed inventory of the 452 properties within the Study Area. The area was determined to consist of a variety of architectural types. These ranged from typical 19th century commercial and residential structures to stately residences that reflected St Catharines' economic growth and success in the 19th and early 20th century to residential, and commercial construction typical to the post-Second World War period alongside contemporary architecture. More specifically, 8% of the building stock was built before 1852, 25% between 1853 and 1875, and 31% were built between 1876 and 1913. A total of 341 properties were determined to contain potential heritage value as stand-alone properties.

Our understanding of the history and built form of the HCD Study Area formed the basis for our first Public Input Centre (PIC) held in April 2024. During this open house styled event, the Stantec team presented findings related to the history of downtown and its existing characteristic alongside more generic information about how HCDs function. With 44 members of the public in attendance, the Project Team looked to expand the reach of consultation through preparation of multiple surveys. One was aimed at community members across the City and the second was business focused.

When asked about what people think is unique or special about the downtown a range of responses were provided by the survey respondents. Some responses included mention of the architecture and curvature of St. Paul Street, an appreciation for the charm and walkability of the downtown, and the variety of services offered, among other things. The public also helped to identify landmarks.

A strong majority of respondents indicated they were concerned about adequate protection of the City's older buildings and downtown character (82%). When offered an opportunity to provide open ended comments, a wide variety of feedback was received. The Project Team identified a number of themes associated with this feedback ranging from opposition to the district in general to a concern that without a district downtown will suffer further degradation. Other topics included support for adaptive reuse, concern for red tape, and a desire for revitalization, among others.

Alongside the public survey, an additional survey was distributed to the property and business owners within the HCD Study Area. With 46 respondents, the feedback received expressed concern for additional red-tape and approvals perceived to be associated with HCDs as respondents indicated their preference for no restrictions at all, permitting property owners to alter and demolish their property as they wish. Unlike the results of the city-wide survey, only about half of the property and business owners indicated an interest in the historical architecture of their properties or businesses.

Consultation with the public is ongoing. PIC 2 is planned for April 2025 and will include a presentation of the HCD Study results alongside a question-and-answer period. In addition to the public meetings, an interactive map has been posted online to allow members of the public to provide comments about things

they value or things they would like to change within the HCD Study Area. Equipped with a drawing tool, the map has been and will continue to be live through the duration of the HCD Study.

Definition of Sub-Areas

Through the course of analyzing the findings of the historical background review, inventory, planning review, and public consultation, Stantec determined that the architectural characteristics of the Study Area are set within a variety of streetscapes. Through an analysis of the visual and contextual qualities of the Study Area, the Project Team identified three distinct sub-areas that are based on the historical development of downtown St. Catharines: the St. Paul sub-area, Civic Centre sub-area, and South Church Street sub-area. These are briefly described below:

- The St. Paul Sub-Area is centred around the historic commercial streetwall encompassing much of St. Paul Street and sections of Queen Street and James Street. This streetwall is comprised mostly of mid-19th to early 20th century attached structures with examples of mostly sympathetic mid-20th to late 20th century infill. Many of these structures share a similar massing, setback, and design that supports a definable context.
- The Civic Centre Sub-Area includes many of the Study Area's civic, institutional, and mid-rise office properties. This sub-area contains a mixture of historic properties, including many of the Study Area's churches, former Lincoln County Courthouse, and City Hall, as well as mid-to-late 20th century office and commercial buildings. These structures are mostly located on Church Street and King Street between Queen Street and Academy Street. While some of the 20th century buildings replaced previous 19th century buildings, the variety and evolution in this sub-area reflects the importance of St. Catharines as the Niagara Region's social and economic centre.
- The South Church Street Sub-Area is located south of the Laura Secord Building to the termination of Church Street at Ontario Street. This area contains a concentration of mostly residential properties, many of which have been converted to commercial or mixed use. This concentration of converted properties is connected to the commercial and civic character of the Civic Centre Subarea which abuts this subarea.

Results and Recommendations

The Study Area presents a narrative of the development of St. Catharines from its founding along St. Paul Street to the modern day. This includes construction of the Welland Canal in the early 19th century through to the civic and commercial intensification of the downtown core in the mid-to-late 20th century. This culminated in development of sub-areas to reflect these phases of development. The entire HCD Study Area was evaluated according to O. Reg. 9/06 as was each sub-area. The results were clear that both the Study Area and each of the three sub-areas on their own exceeded the required 25% threshold for Part V designation. Moreover, the identified sub-areas contain distinct concentrations of heritage resources with differing physical, historical, and contextual significances reflective of different chapters in the story of St. Catharines' development.

The Project Team recognizes the challenges that lie ahead for municipalities to protect large numbers of heritage properties, especially in places identified for future intensification. We further acknowledge that proceeding with the HCD Plan stage will be done at the direction of municipal council, based in part, on the advice of staff. To provide Staff and Council with flexibility in next steps, the Project Team has developed a series of recommendations that are aimed at the conservation of heritage properties, current and future planning needs, and the ongoing and everchanging need for housing.

We strive to debunk the myth that heritage hinders change by providing municipalities with flexible recommendations and options. This is not to say that one area merits designation more or less than another. It is simply a recognition that there are factors outside of heritage conservation which Council may consider. Through preparation of multiple options, our intention is that Council can digest the merit of each area in accordance with the OHA, weigh input from the public, and contemplate the future of Downtown St. Catharines in an appropriate context. The following five options have been prepared based on the results of the HCD Study:

1. Proceed with an HCD Plan for the entire Study Area
2. Proceed with an HCD Plan for only the three sub-areas as a single HCD
3. Proceed with separate HCD Plans for the sub-areas as separate HCDs, producing the HCD Plans concurrently with one another
4. Proceed with separate HCD Plans for each sub-area as separate HCDs, producing the HCD Plans at separate and staggered timeframes
5. Do not prepare an HCD Plan and implement alternative approaches

Summarized:

- Option 1 prioritizes conservation of the largest number of heritage resources, including 97 listed properties within the Study Area.
- Options 2 and 3 prioritize conservation of heritage resources within concentrated areas (the sub-areas), including 62 listed resources within the Study Area.
- Option 4 would require prioritization of sub-areas for designation. When done at staggered timeframes, it is anticipated that listed properties within these areas will be removed from the register prior to completion of the HCD Plan putting these properties at risk of demolition.
- Option 5 prioritizes alternative planning approaches like a Community Planning Permit System or Secondary Plan for the Study Area and offers no recognition under the OHA. This would necessitate a separate planning process and leave the 97 listed properties vulnerable to alteration and demolition, after the OHA changes coming into effect in 2027.

In each case where an HCD Plan is recommended, the Plan(s) would need to consider a range of policies and guidelines for different types of contributing properties and the identified sub-areas. This may include distinguishing between different types of contributing properties, perhaps based on building age, type, and/or location. In each option, there may also be supplementary planning and policy tools that could support the area and property/business owners and enhance the creation of an HCD or multiple

HCDs, including enhanced grants, tax rebate programs, Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentives and commemorative/interpretive measures to celebrate the history of the Study Area.

Should council decide not to proceed with an HCD Plan for the Study Area or any of the sub-areas, it is recommended that in order to conserve some heritage resources within the downtown area, the City initiate Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports for the properties listed on the register and pursue Part IV designation for all those meeting two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06. This would include site specific research, description, and evaluation for each property. If an CHD is pursued, to help manage change and new development in the downtown the City should explore the feasibility of a Community Planning Permit System or Secondary Plan for the Study Area as tools to guide redevelopment.

The City should also consider opportunities to maintain and enhance CIP policies for heritage properties and supplement the desired approach with commemorative/interpretive measures for the Study Area. It is important to note that in terms of conserving heritage resources and managing change, HCDs are currently the only legislative tool that provides the robust framework to manage alterations, additions, and demolition for all properties within the Study Area. HCD plans are community driven tools that allow for a wide range of flexibility, rely heavily on community input for direction, and can be as strict or lenient as the community desires.

The other tools outlined above can provide guidance on new development and manage change on properties designated under Part IV of the OHA but have less ability to conserve the overall character and streetscape of the Study Area or sub-areas. It is also important to note that for each HCD by-law or notice of intention to designate a Part IV or V property, there will be a 30-day period where property owners may register their objection, potentially resulting in appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Multiple Ontario Land Tribunal appeals on Part IV designations can become time consuming and costly for municipalities.

It is recommended that Staff and Council review the various HCD boundaries and alternative tools provided, examine the feasibility of their various implementations, and consider public input provided through the HCD Study process in making their decision for next steps.

The Executive Summary highlights key points from the report only; for complete information and findings, the reader should examine the complete report.

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Abbreviations

ARA	Archaeological Research Associates Ltd.
BIA	Business Improvement Area
BTIF	Brownfield Tax Increment Finance Program
Cal. BP	Radiocarbon Years Calibrated Before Present
CE	Common Era
CIP	Community Improvement Plan
CIPA	Community Improvement Plan Area
CHVI	Cultural heritage value or interest
DED	Department of Economics and Development
FIP	Façade Improvement Program
GM	General Motors
HCD	Heritage Conservation District
HFIP	Heritage Façade Improvement Program
MCM	Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism
M	Metres
OASD	Ontario Archaeological Sites Database
OHA	Ontario Heritage Act
OHT	Ontario Heritage Trust
O. Reg 9/06	Ontario Regulation 9/06
OP	Official Plan
PIC	Public Information Centre
PPS	Provincial Planning Statement
QEW	Queen Elizabeth Way
SQM	Square Metres
TIF	Tax Increment Finance Program
TMHC	Timmins Martelle Heritage Consultants Inc.
UGC	Urban Growth Centre

1 Introduction

1.1 Study Purpose

The City of St. Catharines (the City) initiated the Downtown St. Catharines Heritage Conservation District Study (the Study) to determine whether the Study Area, in whole or in part, merits consideration for designation under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) as a Heritage Conservation District (HCD). HCD designations are policy-based tools that can help manage change in a community by providing a district planning framework for conserving the heritage character of a specific place. This allows for compatible new designs that coexist with the historic fabric of a community, rather than freezing a place in time.

The HCD Study was implemented in part to respond to recent changes to the OHA under the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* (Bill 23), which require municipalities to review their registers of heritage properties by January 1, 2027[1]. Properties that are listed on the register must be either designated under Part IV or V of the OHA or removed from the register and cannot be re-listed for a period of five years. The Study Area contains 97 properties that are currently listed on the City's register.

HCDs are completed in two phases: the HCD Study and the HCD Plan. The Study is the first phase in the HCD process and determines whether an area merits consideration for designation under Part V of the OHA. It provides the historical background of a study area, evaluation of resources, and the analysis required to identify the cultural heritage values and heritage attributes of an area. If an area is identified as meriting consideration for designation as an HCD, the second phase may be pursued (at Council's discretion), and an HCD Plan may be prepared to provide policies and guidelines to manage change in the proposed HCD to conserve its heritage attributes.

This HCD Study has five key objectives:

- **Understand** the historical development of the Study Area and the current planning framework
- **Identify** significant features or patterns in the development, architecture, building type, and landscapes of the Study Area
- **Engage** the community throughout the HCD Study process
- **Evaluate** the Study Area for HCD merit
- **Recommend** HCD designation or other planning measures, as appropriate

[1] Bill 23 originally gave municipalities the deadline of January 1, 2025, to review their heritage registers, but the timeline was extended to January 1, 2027, in July of 2024.

The HCD Study contains the following Appendices to assist the reader: a glossary of terms related to the HCD Study (Appendix A), a list of existing listed and Part IV designated properties in the Study Area (Appendix B), an inventory of properties in the Study Area (Appendix C), and blank copies of the comment sheets and surveys used as part of the public consultation program (Appendix D).

1.2 Location

The Study Area for the St. Catharines HCD was provided by the City. It is irregularly shaped and contains portions of Ontario Street, William Street, Queen Street, James Street, Carlisle Street, Bond Street, Academy Street, Court Street, St. Paul Street, Centre Street, King Street, Church Street, Duke Street, Lake Street, and several internal laneways. The Study Area is shown on Figure 1 and Figure 2. These streets align with concession roads from the former Township of Grantham, which was surveyed using a rectangular grid with an angled east/west axis to accommodate for the shoreline of Lake Ontario. Historically, the Study Area was located within Lots 17 and 18 of the Township of Grantham. The Study Area contains 452 properties in the historic downtown core of St. Catharines.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 HCD Evaluation and Boundary Analysis

This HCD Study follows the guidance outlined in the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM) *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit* (the Tool Kit), specifically the document *Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act* (MCM 2006). This document outlines the steps to undertake an HCD Study, including:

- Receiving a request to consider designation
- Consulting the municipal heritage committee
- Reviewing Official Plan (OP) provisions to determine if there is policy to support an HCD
- Evaluating cultural heritage value or interest and identifying heritage attributes
- Determining a boundary of the potential HCD
- Consulting the public

In completing the HCD Study, Stantec collected archival material, conducted historical background research, and undertook a review of existing planning documents and studies relevant to the Study Area. A site visit was undertaken by Project Team members to prepare an inventory of the Study Area and review boundary considerations. Inventory material was collected on March 15, 2024, April 18 and 19, 2024, and May 10, 2024, by the Stantec team. Information for the inventory was collected using Field Maps for ArcGIS. Inventory entries were completed both in the field and office and supplemented with historical research.

To evaluate the Study Area for cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI) and determine its potential merit as an HCD, the Project Team followed criteria issued under Section 41(1b) of the OHA. On January 1, 2023, amendments were made to the OHA including the establishment of criteria for determining

whether a proposed HCD area has CHVI. The OHA amendments are discussed in Section 2.2.3, and the criteria are summarized in Section 2.3.1 of this HCD Study.

The Project Team also considered guidance from the Toolkit in supporting evaluation of CHVI using the OHA framework. The following elements were considered in this HCD Study from the Tool Kit:

- Historical association
- Architectural styles
- Vernacular design
- Integrity
- Architectural details
- Landmark status or group value
- Landscapes and public open spaces
- Spatial patterns
- Land-use
- Circulation networks and patterns
- Existing boundaries or linear features
- Site arrangements
- Vegetation patterns
- Historic views

The presence or absence of the elements above, or the way in which they shaped the evolution of the Study Area, helped the Project Team identify the potential for CHVI. Information collected through the study allowed for an understanding of potential design or physical value, historical or associative value, and contextual values of properties within the Study Area. Based on research and analysis conducted through the HCD Study, the inventory assigned properties a status of “contributing” or “non-contributing”. For the purposes of this report, contributing properties are defined as properties that met two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 as amended by O. Reg. 569/22. Non-contributing properties meet one or no criteria. This relates to the requirement of the OHA that an HCD have 25% or more properties that satisfy two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06. Within the category of “contributing”, there can be a wide range of different property or building types. These are further discussed in Section 10.

Assigning properties a contributing or non-contributing status also becomes important if the Study Area moves to an HCD Plan phase. During the HCD Plan, policies and guidelines are prepared to manage change in the HCD. Typically, there are different types of policies and guidelines for properties that are contributing compared to those that are non-contributing. Further discussion of this with respect to the Study Area is provided in Section 11.

The heritage integrity of properties is also considered in the inventory, with a categorization of high, medium, or low. Buildings with high integrity typically have minimal change or sympathetic alteration or restoration to their historic form. Buildings with medium integrity have some alterations, but the original

style or form may still be apparent. Buildings with low integrity have typically been extensively altered. The consideration of integrity is used to help determine whether properties meet the criteria in O. Reg. 9/06 related to design or physical value and whether they are representative of particular styles or types. Integrity does not consider structural considerations. Integrity is also discussed in the HCD Study when considering the overall streetscapes and how the buildings and properties relate to one another and the HCD Study Area as a whole.

1.3.2 Public Consultation

Public consultation is an important part of an HCD Study as it enables the local community to provide input on what they value in their neighbourhoods. Community values are important in identifying historical research themes, information about specific properties, and the types of features within an HCD Study Area that may be valued as heritage attributes. Public consultation events are also important opportunities for the Project Team to provide information to the public about the HCD process. The information presented may include the fundamental goals of HCDs in general, details on the HCD Study process and overall designation process, among other items. The information may also answer questions or respond to concerns from the community. The Project Team's goal for the Downtown St. Catharines HCD Study has been to provide consultation that is:

- Open and inclusive, allowing for a broad level of communication within the Study Area and throughout the City
- Transparent, such that stakeholders and residents clearly understand the decision-making process
- Traceable, so that consultation documentation is a comprehensive summary of how and why the public and stakeholders are consulted and informed, how their comments and concerns have been addressed, and the commitments to carry forward into report preparation
- Continuous, occurring early and often so that the public is informed of important milestones in the project
- Easy to understand and communicate; technical details are communicated clearly, in plain language, and public information materials are graphically focussed
- Consistent with the information presented through other municipal initiatives, where applicable

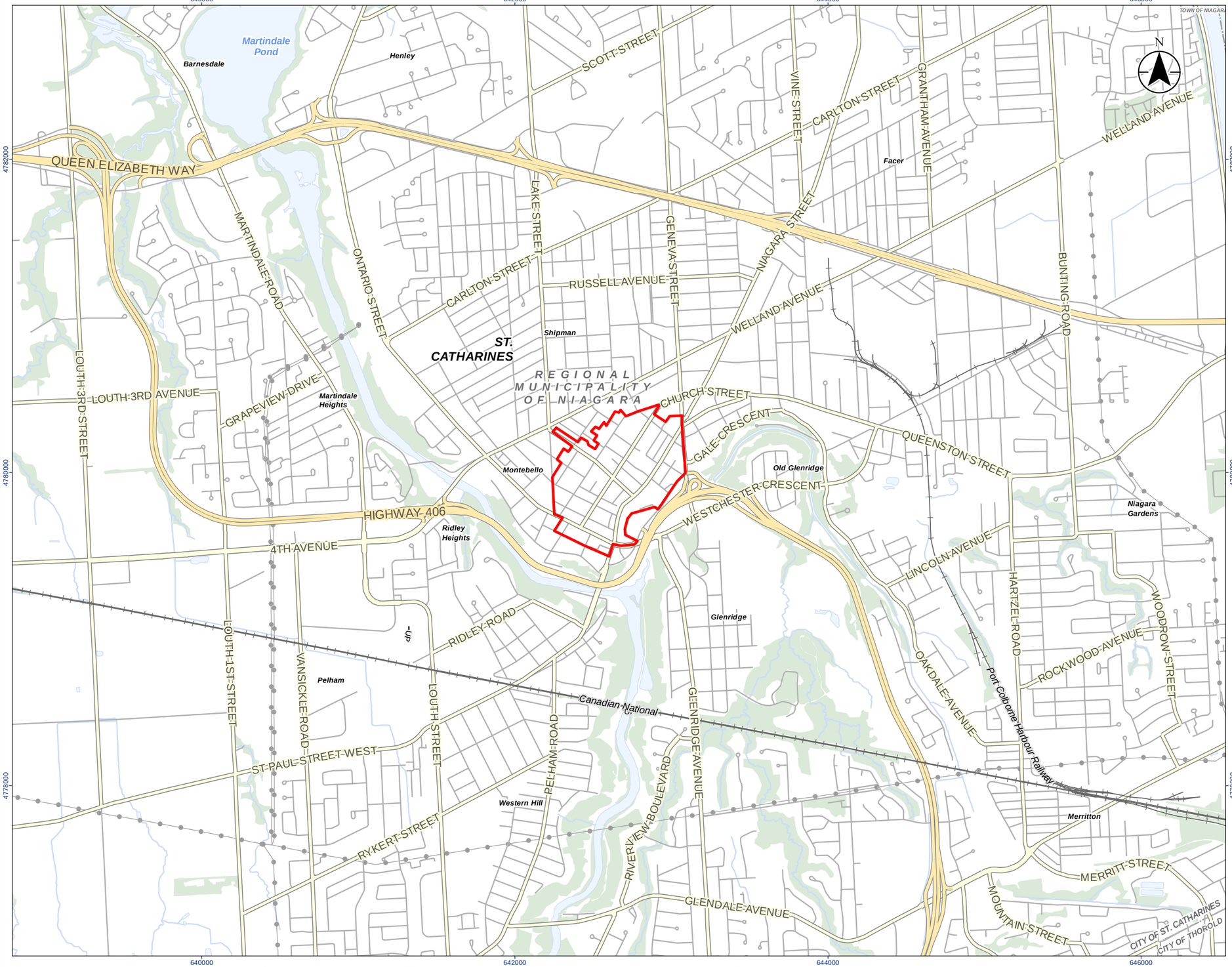
For the Downtown St. Catharines HCD Study, public consultation and engagement occurred in several forms, including:

- Presentations to the Downtown BIA and Heritage Committee
- Meetings with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Niagara Regional Native Centre, and Salem Chapel
- Meetings with the Downtown HCD Task Force
- Public Information Centres (PICs) to allow property owners and stakeholders opportunities for information sharing and discussion with the Project Team

- The Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study webpage hosted on the City's EngageSTC portal
- Public engagement tools including an online mapping tool and two surveys to administer online engagement opportunities and document public input
- Focused communication with the Downtown Business Association including a presentation by Stantec at the February 2024 board meeting and City staff attendance at the August 2024 board meeting
- Direct notifications (letters of invitation) mailed to property owners prior to key events as a tool to inform and remind of upcoming public engagement activities
- Direct correspondence and meetings between the public and City staff/the Project Team

Details and results of public consultation are discussed in Section 9.

Note to Draft: The second PIC meeting is anticipated for March in 2025 and the date for the second Downtown Heritage Conservation District Task Force meeting has not been determined. These dates will be incorporated once available, and a summary of their results will be added to Section 9.



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area
- Highway
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Hydro Line
- Unknown Pipeline
- Railway
- Watercourse
- Municipal Boundary
- Municipal Boundary, Lower
- Waterbody
- Wooded Area

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Notes

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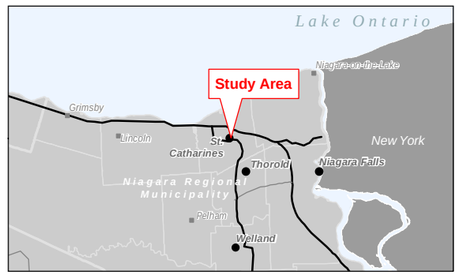

Project Location	160623198 REV1
City of St. Catharines	Prepared by BF on 2025-01-22
	Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-15

Client/Project

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.

1

Title

Location of the Study Area

Stantec

Legend

Study Area

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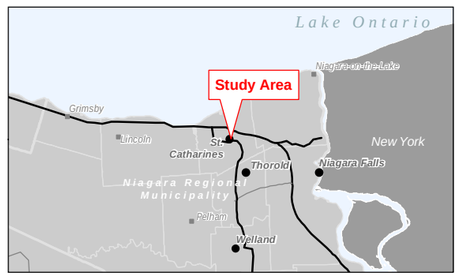


Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV1
Prepared by BF on 2025-01-21
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-15

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
2

Title
Study Area

2 Background

2.1 About Heritage Conservation Districts

As of 2020, Ontario contains 134 HCDs which span the province (Ontario Heritage Trust [OHT] 2020). These HCDs range from pre-confederation landscapes to mid-century modern buildings, and even active historic industries. At present, 56 of these HCDs are categorized by the OHT as “commercial”, “commercial-residential”, or “commercial-institutional”. HCDs represent places where planning tools are employed to maintain the specific character of a place and facilitate its retention for generations to come. Municipalities across the province have embraced the HCD as a tool to guide future development within their communities. HCDs can also be tools for a municipality to foster an appreciation of their community’s heritage resources and promote cultural tourism or contribute to a place’s identity or “brand”.

Downtown areas often contain concentrations of older buildings. These areas frequently exhibit patterns of development that demonstrate human history and evolution over time. Yet these areas are also often prone to many layers of alteration, ranging from façade modifications as businesses and consumer habits change, to infill development as provincial policies direct urban centres to move towards intensification. It is the role of the HCD Study to determine if an area contains a high enough concentration of heritage resources with distinct heritage attributes to merit consideration by Council for conservation. Technically speaking, an HCD is an area protected by a by-law passed by a municipality under Part V of the OHA. An HCD provides a framework for protecting and conserving heritage resources by creating policies and guidelines to manage change and new development within the district. HCDs are not intended to stop all change or “freeze” a place within a specific time period. Rather, they are an important community tool for balancing the ongoing needs for property maintenance and development while considering the elements that define a place and its history. Each HCD is unique and reflects the history and values of the community within which it is situated.

There are two phases required to designate an HCD: the Study and the Plan. The first phase identifies elements of the community that define the character of the Study Area. The results of the Study are compiled into an illustrative report that includes a review of the history of the Study Area, the results of an inventory of resources, policy overview, and recommendations for boundary delineation, heritage attributes and objectives of an HCD Plan, if appropriate. The second phase involves preparing a Plan including policies and guidelines to manage change in the area. During this phase, measures to protect the character of the area are articulated, including policy statements and guidelines for achieving the goals and objectives of the HCD. It is within this second phase that OP amendments are proposed, if needed, and by-laws are drafted. Following the passing of the proposed amendments/by-laws, the community has a chance to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (Plate 1).

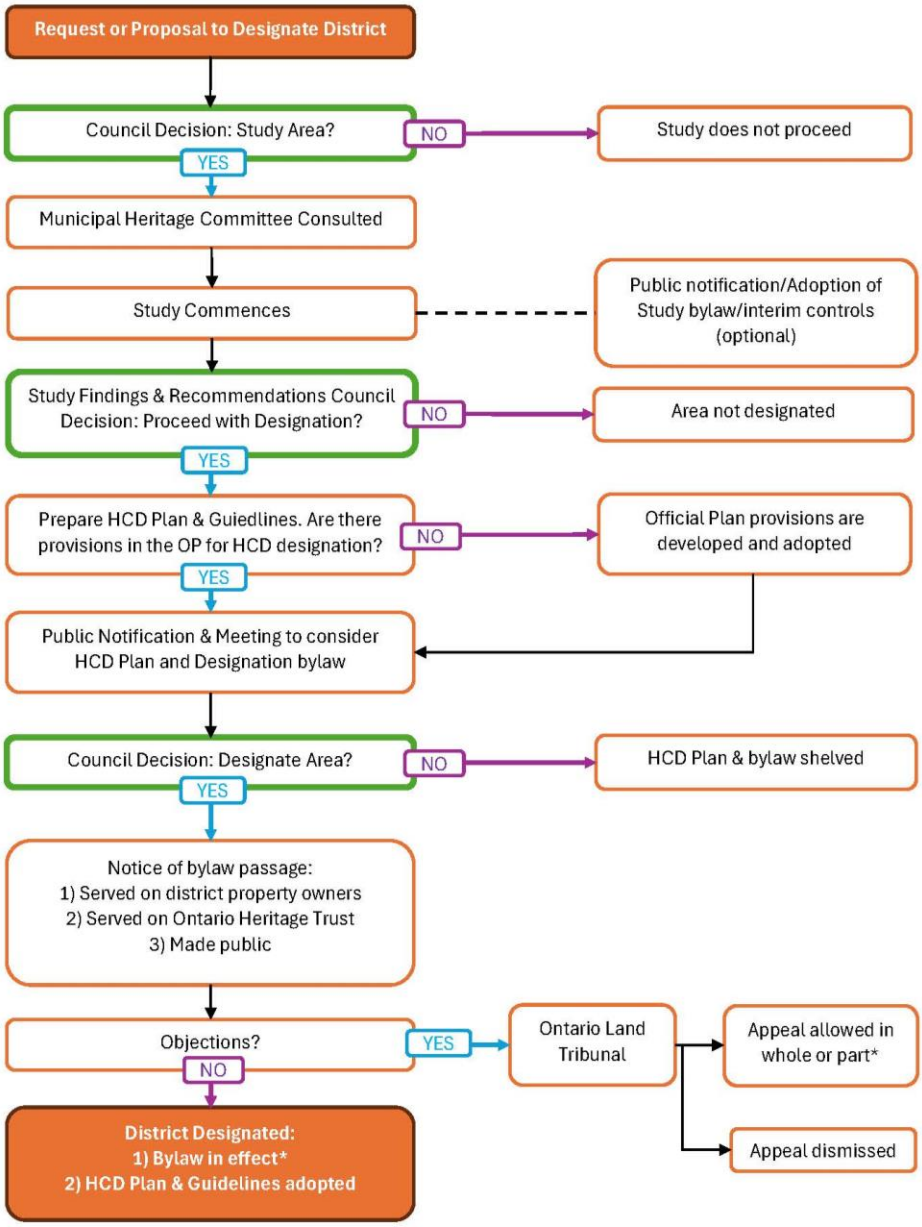


Plate 1 HCD Designation Process from the Toolkit (MCM 2006)

Not all proposed HCDs move past the first phase. Sometimes a place simply does not meet the framework established by the MCM for HCDs (See Section 2.3.1). In these cases, other planning measures may be considered. Alternatively, for a variety of reasons, municipal councils may choose to not proceed to the second phase. Ultimately, in Ontario, the onus is on the community to decide how to proceed and conserve their heritage. HCD Plans can be important tools for managing change in areas containing heritage buildings and landscapes.

2.2 Provincial Legislation and Policy

2.2.1 The *Planning Act*

The legal basis of Ontario's land use planning system is outlined by the *Planning Act* (Government of Ontario 1990). This legislative document identifies the approach to planning and assigns responsibilities and duties to those involved in the land use decision-making process, including policy development, land subdivision, development control, administration, and public participation. It sets out requirements for land use planning across the province.

Under the *Planning Act*, the Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, or the Ontario Land Tribunal are responsible for carrying out the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological, or scientific interest (Government of Ontario 1990). A key purpose of the *Planning Act* is to integrate matters of provincial interest into provincial and municipal planning decisions. Under the Act, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may also issue provincial planning statements on matters related to land use planning that are of provincial interest. Further policy guidance on these matters of provincial interest is provided in the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS).

2.2.2 Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS is applied province wide. On August 20, 2024, the Province announced the release of the new PPS, issued pursuant to Section 3 of the *Planning Act* (Government of Ontario 2024a, Government of Ontario 1990). The new PPS replaces both the PPS from 2020 and *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, also known as the Provincial Growth Plan (Government of Ontario 2020). The merging of these planning documents created a comprehensive, streamlined provincial planning framework to guide land use planning. This new document came into legislative effect on October 20, 2024. Although the Project commenced under the previous PPS, all further discussion is related to the PPS 2024 since it is now fully in effect.

The PPS includes properties designated under Part IV, Part V, or VI of the OHA as protected heritage properties. Under the PPS, "protected heritage property" is defined as follows:

> *property designated under Parts IV or VI of the Ontario Heritage Act; property included in an area designated as a heritage conservation district under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act; property subject to a heritage conservation easement or covenant under Part II or Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; property identified by a provincial ministry or prescribed public body as property having cultural heritage value or interest under the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties; property protected under federal heritage legislation; and UNESCO World Heritage Sites.*
>
> (Government of Ontario 2024a: 50)

Relevant policies from the PPS that speak to the conservation of heritage and archaeological resources include the following, with terms that are italicized being defined terms within the PPS:

- *Protected heritage property*, which may contain *built heritage resources* or *cultural heritage landscapes*, shall be *conserved*. (4.6.1)
- Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on lands containing *archaeological resources* or areas of *archaeological potential* unless the *significant archaeological resources* have been *conserved*. (4.6.2)
- Planning authorities shall not permit *development* and *site alteration* on *adjacent lands* to *protected heritage property* unless the *heritage attributes* of the *protected heritage property* will be conserved. (4.6.3)
- Planning authorities are encouraged to develop and implement:
  a) archaeological management plans for conserving *archaeological resources*; and
  b) proactive strategies for conserving *significant built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes*. (4.6.4)
- Planning authorities shall engage early with Indigenous communities and ensure their interests are considered when identifying, protecting and managing *archaeological resources*, *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes*. (4.6.5)
- A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies, boards, and Service Managers including managing natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral, and cultural heritage and archaeological resources. (6.2.1 c)

(Government of Ontario 2024a)

2.2.3 *Ontario Heritage Act*

The OHA was enacted in 1975 with the purpose of giving the province and municipalities the power to preserve heritage properties and archaeological sites. The OHA underwent comprehensive amendments in 2005 and 2023. The 2005 amendments strengthened and improved heritage protection in Ontario, as

the province and municipalities were given new powers to delay and stop the demolition of heritage properties while an appeals process was established that respected the rights of property owners. Alongside this power, municipalities were given an expanded ability to identify and designate sites of provincial significance and clear standards and guidelines for the preservation of provincial heritage properties were established. The 2005 amendment also provided enhanced protection of marine heritage sites, archaeological resources, and HCDs.

On January 1, 2023, changes made to the OHA under Bill 23 came into effect as did regulatory changes to *Ontario Regulation* (O. Reg.) *9/06* and O. Reg. 385/21. The 2023 amendments require that 25% of the properties within a proposed HCD meet two or more of the prescribed criteria (O. Reg. 9/06 as amended by O. Reg. 385/21). Bill 23 also included authority to set out the processes to amend and repeal HCD by-laws. At the time of writing, the MCM is still in consultation regarding these processes.

Two sections of the OHA are relevant to the Downtown St. Catharines HCD Study. Part V regulates the designation of HCDs. As outlined in the Tool Kit, municipalities are required to adopt an HCD Plan when an HCD is designated under Part V the OHA (MCM 2006). The HCD Plan must include a statement of objectives and provide policies and guidelines so that these objectives can be met, and change can be managed in the district. Municipalities have the option to implement interim control by-laws under Section 38 of the *Planning Act* for up to one year to protect areas that are being studied for HCD designation. Municipalities must consult with their heritage committees and the public in the development of an HCD Plan. Part IV regulates the designation of individual heritage properties. As outlined in the Tool Kit, when an HCD Plan is adopted and designated under the OHA, municipalities must consider the guidelines and policies of the HCD Plan when reviewing applications to alter or demolish a property designated under Part IV of the OHA (MCM 2006).

2.3 Evaluation of a Heritage Conservation District

2.3.1 Ontario Regulation 9/06

As discussed, the 2023 amendments to the OHA established criteria for the evaluation of an HCD. Prior to these changes, defined criteria did not exist for the requirements of HCDs and tools for determining merit as an HCD were drawn from the Tool Kit. As of January 1, 2023, under section 41(1b) of the OHA:

> *The council of a municipality may, by by-law, designate the municipality or any defined area or areas of it as a heritage conservation district if, where criteria for determining whether a municipality is of cultural have value or interest have been described, the municipality or any defined area or areas of the municipality meets the prescribed criteria.*
>
> (Government of Ontario 2023)

The following is the prescribed criteria under O. Reg. 9/06 as amended by O. Reg. 569/22:

1. At least 25 percent of the properties within the municipality or defined area or areas satisfy two or more of the following:
    i. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative or early examples of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
    ii. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
    iii. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
    iv. The properties have historical value or associative value because they have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.
    v. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
    vi. The properties have historical value or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
    vii. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain or support the character of the district.
    viii. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to each other.
    ix. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark.

(Government of Ontario 2023)

2.3.2 Characteristics of the *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit*

To supplement the criteria of O. Reg. 9/06, the Project Team also considered guidance from the Tool Kit, which notes that while each HCD is unique, many districts share a common set of characteristics, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 HCD Characteristics

Criteria	Description
A concentration of heritage resources	HCDs typically contain a concentration of historic buildings, structures, landscapes, or landscape elements, and/or natural features that are linked together by a shared context, culture, use, or history.
A framework of structured elements	HCDs often include structured components that define or contribute to an area's character. These may include major natural features (topography, landforms, landscapes, or water courses) or built features such as road or street patterns, nodes or intersections, landmarks, approaches, or defined edges.
A sense of visual coherence	HCDs often have a visual coherence that is indicative of their heritage value as being of a particular place or time. The visual coherence comes from similarities in resource types, scale, materials, massing, setbacks, or landscape patterns.
A distinctiveness	HCDs may be distinct from the surrounding area by virtue of the resources they contain or the ways in which they are situated.

The OHA gives no other guidance on identifying boundaries for an HCD other than that at least 25% of properties within an area must meet two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06. In practice, while that threshold may be met within a given study area, the properties within that area, and the criteria that they meet, may not always have strong or direct connections with each other. As an example, consider a Study Area that contains a small street with 12 properties. Perhaps two properties contain small, vernacular cottages from the mid-19th century that have historical associations with significant early settlers of the area. They might meet criteria for design/physical value and historical/associative value. Two properties might contain a late 19th century example of a Queen Anne residence that is representative of the style and contains a high degree of craftsmanship – they might meet two different criteria for design/physical value. Another property might contain a mid-century bank building that is a local landmark and was designed by a significant architect. This property might meet criteria for historical/associative value and contextual value. The remaining properties on the street might be a mix of different styles, types and dates, and meet one or no criteria. The challenge in this case is that while more than 25% of the properties on the street meet two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06, they may not have direct relationships to each other, or the broader context of the street. Supplementing the OHA criteria with the Toolkit characteristics provides an opportunity to consider the broader character of the area as a whole.

While it is important to note that the Toolkit does not have legislative authority and that the OHA takes precedence in outlining the process to establish CHVI, the Toolkit characteristics help knit together the various heritage values that are identified through the O. Reg. 9/06 evaluation. They tend to provide the unique sense of time and place that is so often experienced in an HCD. For that reason, the Project Team ascribed equal weight to their consideration alongside the prescribed criteria to provide a more in-depth evaluation and understanding of the characteristics of the Study Area when considering potential HCD boundaries where the OHA threshold is met.

3 Historical Development

3.1 Introduction

The following historical development section is not intended to be a definitive account of St. Catharines history but is rather an outline of the development of the community. The purpose of this history is to provide context for the consideration of an HCD in the downtown St. Catharines.

Historically, the Study Area is located within parts of Lots 17 and 18, Concession 6, in the former Township of Grantham, County of Lincoln. Today, the Study Area is located within the City of St. Catharines, a lower-tier municipality located within the Regional Municipality of Niagara, an upper tier municipality.

3.2 Physiography

The Study Area is located within the Iroquois Plain Physiographic Region of southern Ontario. This region encompasses the lowland bordering Lake Ontario between the Prince Edward Peninsula and Niagara-on-the-Lake. This area was formerly inundated by Glacial Lake Iroquois. This lake drained southeast into New York State (New York) and formed approximately 13,000 years ago as the Wisconsin Glacier retreated northward. As the glacier continued to retreat, the St. Lawrence Valley opened, and drainage shifted to the northeast and present-day Lake Ontario began to form. The former shoreline of Lake Iroquois remains evident into the present-day and areas formerly inundated by the lake have a soil composition that stands in contrast to the soil above the Niagara Escarpment to the south. The City of St. Catharines developed along the Homer Bar, an area of former shoreline that offered a dry and sandy building site (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 6). The width of the Iroquois Plain varies from a few hundred metres to about 13 kilometres (Chapman and Putnam 1984: 190-191).

The City of St. Catharines is in a part of the Iroquois Plain known as the Niagara Fruit Belt. This area is located between Hamilton and the Niagara River and contains sandy soils which facilitate the growth of fruit. While the area does contain ideal soil, the growth of the fruit industry was primarily linked to the favorably moderate climatic conditions of the area (Chapman and Putnam 1984: 191). The southern boundary of the Iroquois Plain in the City of St. Catharines is delineated by the Niagara Escarpment. The Niagara Escarpment is a former shoreline that stretches from Wisconsin in the west to New York in the east. The part of the escarpment on the Niagara Peninsula has an influence on the climate of the area by containing the moderating effect of Lake Ontario on lands below the escarpment, including the Study Area (University of Waterloo 1996; Gouglas 2001: 451). While the Niagara Fruit Belt contains no large watercourses, it contains a number of smaller creeks, including Twelve Mile Creek (Chapman and Putnam 1984: 190). This creek is located to the southwest of the Study Area and played an important role in the development of St. Catharines.

3.3 Indigenous Context

Indigenous peoples have lived in present-day southern Ontario for thousands of years, beginning with the retreat of the glaciers and gradual end of the Ice Age about 10,000 years ago (Ellis 2013). Contact between Indigenous peoples in Canada and European culture began in the 16th century (Loewen and Chapdelaine 2016). The nature of Indigenous settlement size, population distribution, and material culture shifted as European settlers encroached upon their territory (Ferris 2009: 114).

At the turn of the 17th century, the region of the Study Area was occupied by Iroquoian populations who are historically described as the *Neutre* (Neutral) Nations, so-called by the French, or the *Attiwandaron*, so-called by the Huron-Wendat. The autonym of the Neutral Nation is not conclusively known (Birch 2015). The historic Neutral Nations consisted of a confederacy of multiple nations. In 1649, the Seneca, with the Mohawk, led a campaign into present-day southern Ontario and dispersed the Neutral Nations, establishing Senecan control over the region (Heidenreich 1978; Konrad 1981).

Around 1680, the Mississauga began to move south into the lower Great Lakes basin and conflict ensued with the Mohawk and Seneca (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation n.d.). Mississauga oral traditions indicate that the Mohawks and Seneca eventually returned to the south of Lake Ontario and a peace treaty was signed in about 1695. Afterwards, the Mississauga settled in southern Ontario (Praxis Research Associates n.d.). St. Paul Street, located within the Study Area, is connected to the Indigenous history of the area. The alignment of St. Paul Street approximates the route of part of an Indigenous trail commonly called the “Iroquois Trail”. This trail linked Albany, New York to Detroit, Michigan and served as a major east-west route for Indigenous peoples, fur traders, explorers, and early colonists. On the Niagara Peninsula, this trail was located near the shoreline of Lake Ontario below the escarpment but somewhat inland from the lakeshore. This area was not subject to erosion from Lake Ontario and offered a better spot to ford the numerous streams of the Niagara Peninsula (Downtown St. Catharines 2024; Niagara Geopark 2022; Brown Homestead 2021; Burghardt 1969).

Beginning in the late 18th century, numerous treaties and land purchases were entered into between the Indigenous communities already residing on the land and the British Crown. The Study Area is situated on land located within Treaty 3, also known as the “Between the Lakes Purchase”. This treaty was entered into on December 7, 1792, between certain Mississauga peoples and representatives of the Crown. The treaty replaced an earlier Between the Lakes Purchase that was entered into in 1784 and contained uncertain boundaries. The treaty consists of land in between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie (Government of Ontario 2025).

3.4 Development of St. Catharines

3.4.1 Early Settlement and Survey (1783-1817)

The early colonial settlement of the Township of Grantham and St. Catharines is linked to the aftermath of the American Revolution (1775-1783). Historians continue to debate the total number of Loyalists in the Thirteen Colonies as well as the number of Loyalists who left the United States for Great Britain and other

British colonies, including Canada (Ranlet 2014). Regardless, the development of the Niagara Peninsula in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was strongly influenced by a migration of Loyalists.

During and after the war, Fort Niagara was an important rallying point for Loyalists and was the home to the Loyalist regiment known as Butler's Rangers (Shipley 1987: 14). The fort was located on the frontier between New York and Canada and therefore relatively accessible to Loyalist refugees. Canada had been ceded to Britain by France in 1763 and the colony's mostly Indigenous and French population did not share the grievances of the Thirteen Colonies. Officials at the fort proposed temporarily settling Loyalists along the western shore of the Niagara River (Fryer 1984:76). This community of Loyalists could grow crops to support the soldiers stationed at Fort Niagara. After the war, the settlement became permanent as many Loyalists realized a return to the United States would not be feasible (Fryer 1984: 106).

To facilitate the settlement of the north shore of the Niagara Peninsula, the colonial government divided the area between the Niagara River and Hamilton Harbour into townships and ordered surveys of each township (Turner 1994: 234-235; Logan 1973: 73). These townships were numbered between one and thirteen and progressed in ascending order from east to west. Present-day St. Catharines was located within Township Number Three (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 16). The survey of the township was completed by Daniel Hazen from December 1787 to March 1788 (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 24).

All the numbered townships were surveyed using the front and rear survey system (Turner 1994: 236; Association of Ontario Land Surveyors 1997). This survey system was popular between 1787 and 1813 and consisted of lots 100 acres in size and road allowances in front of each concession and between every other lot. This survey system was considered prohibitively expensive by colonial officials and only thirteen townships on the Niagara Peninsula were surveyed using this method (Weaver 1962: 15).

Township Three's survey was based on lines running parallel to Lake Ontario's shoreline. The result was a survey with east to west concession lines at an angle of 65º. This angled grid pattern remains recognizable within St. Catharines into the present-day, including within the Study Area (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 24). The survey included no reserves for townsites, schools, or churches (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 22). While sixty percent of the first land grants in Township Three were for veterans of Butler's Rangers, the two lots containing the Study Area were not among these grants as these lots had previously been occupied (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 16-17).

John Graves Simcoe served as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada from 1791 to 1796. An avowed Anglophile, he instituted a naming convention for the colony based largely on British place names. Simcoe created 19 counties, with Township Number Three being located in Lincoln County (Archives of Ontario 2024a). Around this time, Township Number Three was formally named Grantham Township. This name was taken from the Town of Grantham in Lincolnshire, England (Gardiner 1899: 272).

Aside from Lake Ontario itself, the main transportation route within the newly surveyed township was a part of the previously discussed Iroquois Trail between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment (see Section 3.3). This road was known to early settlers as the Queenston-Grimsby Road (Hall 1838; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 10, 22). Part of the trail roughly followed the alignment of present-day St. Paul Street and was crossed by Twelve Mile Creek (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 10; 22). Originating above the escarpment in Fonthill, the creek flows north and empties into Lake Ontario at Port Dalhousie (Niagara

Peninsula Conservation Authority 2016). Early settlers recognized the potential of Twelve Mile Creek as a source of waterpower for mills. By 1792, several mills had been constructed along Twelve Mile Creek and Twelve Mile Creek became the most important centre for milling on the Niagara Peninsula (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 22).

The milling activity around Twelve Mile Creek attracted settlers to the area where the trail and creek intersected. As a result, a small settlement began to grow at this location known as “The Twelve”. This name was derived from its location on Twelve Mile Creek, which itself was named because it was approximately twelve miles (19.3 kilometres) from the Niagara River (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 22). Other early settlements on the Niagara Peninsula followed a similar naming convention: Homer was originally known as “The Ten” and Grimsby was originally known as “The Forty” (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 24; Powell 1951: 37). By the end of the 1790s, the community contained a storehouse, school, church, tavern, and a few dozen families. The tavern was located at the intersection of present-day Ontario Street and St. Paul Street, at the southeast border of the Study Area. The tavern was an important gathering place and was operated by Paul Shipman. The Twelve soon also became known as “Shipman’s Corners “. Shipman died in 1825, and St. Paul Street was named in his honour (Shipley 1987: 16; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 22). Other areas of settlement in the vicinity of Twelve Mile Creek around this time included present-day Power Glen, present-day Martindale, and present-day Port Dalhousie.

The development of the Niagara Peninsula was interrupted by the War of 1812 (1812-1815). While St. Catharines was never directly attacked by American forces, the settlement and its citizens supported the British war effort and were near the frontlines of the conflict. The hamlet quartered British soldiers and contained a military headquarters. Twelve Mile Creek formed a natural defensive barrier and the areas surrounding St. Catharines were the sites of scouting activity and skirmishes. A local militia was raised and many militiamen also found themselves on the frontlines of major battles (Shipley 1987: 16; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 27). As the Niagara Peninsula was a focal point of the conflict, the war became an important component in the area’s evolving identity.

In the years after the War of 1812, St. Catharines was one of many small hamlets which dotted the Niagara Peninsula. The hamlet contained a population of about 100 and had a church, school, tavern, brickyard, a nearby brewery and distillery, a saltworks, and multiple mills. Although the hamlet contained some businesses and industries, its economy was primarily based around serving the surrounding farmsteads in Grantham Township (Shipley 1987: 29; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 30).

Around this time, the name St. Catherines (or St. Catharines) fully supplanted both The Twelve and Shipman’s Corner. The name first entered use in the 1790s and was made official when a post office was opened in 1817. The origin of this name is not definitively known but was likely named in honour of Catharine Hamilton. She was the wife of Robert Hamilton, a successful merchant and colonial official in Queenston. He also owned land, a mill, and warehouse. When Catharine died in 1796, Hamilton donated some of his land in to build a church named St. Catharines. Other possibilities include Catharine Butler, wife of John Butler of Butler’s Rangers and Catharine Merritt, wife of the early settler and mill owner William Hamilton Merritt. At the behest of William Hamilton Merritt, the spelling was formalized as St. Catharines in the early 1820s (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 35).

3.4.2 The Welland Canal (1818-1830)

St. Catharines social and economic trajectory was permanently altered in the 1820s when the Welland Canal was opened through the community. This would facilitate the transformation of St. Catharines from a rural hamlet to the largest settlement in the Niagara Region. Historically, commerce and transportation along the Great Lakes and into the St. Lawrence River was bottlenecked by Niagara Falls. A lengthy portage along two possible portage routes was required to bypass Niagara Falls which added time and expense to transit. Connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie via canal to bypass Niagara Falls had been discussed as early as the 1690s when Canada was part of New France (Shipley 1987: 29; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 37).

Following the independence of the United States, one of these portage routes was now located in New York and unavailable to the British. Experiences during the War of 1812 proved it was difficult to defend the remaining British route. Of further concern to British officials was the impending construction of the Erie Canal in New York. The canal was announced after the War of 1812 and planned to link Lake Erie with the Hudson River near Albany. This would provide direct access to the Atlantic Ocean and bypass Niagara Falls and the entire St. Lawrence River. Canada's merchant class and colonial officials feared the political and economic ramifications of trade along the Great Lakes being funneled into New York. As a result, serious discussion began in Canada about building a canal through the Niagara Peninsula to bypass Niagara Falls and keep trade strong along the St. Lawrence River (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 37-38; Shipley 1987: 29-30; Craig 1963: 153-154).

The primary promoter of the Welland Canal was William Hamilton Merritt of St. Catharines (Plate 2). He was born in Bedford, New York in 1793. His father, Thomas Merritt had served in the Queen's Rangers under John Graves Simcoe. In 1796, Thomas and his family relocated to St, Catharines. The family soon achieved some prominence and Thomas served as a Sheriff. In 1809, William completed his education and eventually became an influential farmer, militia officer, miller, and storekeeper. During the War of 1812, he served as a dragoon and was captured by American forces at Lundy's Lane. Merritt was held in Cheshire, Massachusetts in relatively comfortable circumstances along with other British officers. He was not released until the end of the war and returned to St. Catharines through New York (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 36; Craig 1963: 154; United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada n.d.).

While Merritt is widely credited as the canal's founder, it is important to note the construction of a canal between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario was economically important to Upper Canada's prominent politicians and business leaders. As a result, they took a vested interest in the project. This group of individuals is often referred to as the "Family Compact". Many members of the "Family Compact" were closely involved in the construction of the Welland Canal and expected to financially benefit from the canal's completion through land speculation and a general increase in trade (Aitken 1952: 64).

Despite the tensions between Britain and the United States, Merritt retained close connections with New York. After the war, he married Catharine Prendergast, the daughter of a New York State Senator. In 1818, he and other residents of the Niagara District petitioned the Legislature of Upper Canada to build a canal to rival the Erie Canal. Early ideas for a canal included building a canal from Burlington Bay to the Grand River or building a canal on the Niagara Peninsula that terminated at present-day Niagara-on-the-Lake (Shipley 1987: 30; Craig 1963: 154).

Instead, Meritt proposed a canal which linked Twelve Mile Creek and the Welland River. Meritt considered this the most direct route and knew this would significantly benefit the mills and properties he owned in St. Catharines. The selection of this route triggered widespread land speculation along the canal's route, including within the Study Area. Many members of the "Family Compact" were large landowners and speculators and investing in land along the canal proved profitable (Aitken 1952: 66) In 1824, Meritt and his associates met at Shipman's Tavern and founded the Welland Canal Company (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 38; Craig 1963: 154). Meritt, his supporters, and the colonial government believed the project would be relatively easy to fund and complete. In addition, government administrators were pleased that a private company would handle the construction and cost of the canal.

Meritt immediately found difficulty in securing the required capital in British North America and turned to his contacts in western New York. Investors around Syracuse were also eager to facilitate trade between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. A side-cut of the Erie Canal was proposed in New York between Oswego and Syracuse. Using the Welland Canal, New York's shipping bound for Syracuse on Lake Erie could travel to Oswego and significantly reduce the mileage required to reach Syracuse. As a result, nearly half of the initial money raised to build the Welland Canal was provided by investors from New York. To secure this funding, Merritt had to expand the proposed size of the canal to accommodate schooners and sloops. In addition, Merritt gained access to American engineers and builders who had significant experience in canal construction (Craig 1963: 155).

Construction of the Welland Canal began in November 1824, several months before the Erie Canal was opened. The project immediately ran into difficulties and cost overruns imposed by the 300-foot (91 metre) elevation change and complex number of locks required. An extra £175,000 was required to continue construction. This also necessitated an amendment of the company's charter from Upper Canada. The charter was amended on condition that American influence was curtailed by codifying that the directorate of the company was only open to residents of Upper Canada. The government of Upper Canada also provided further support through loans and land grants to the company. A further £25,000 was loaned by the government of Lower Canada as Montreal's merchant class had a vested interest in the continued use of the St. Lawrence River for transportation (Craig 1963: 156-157). In November 1829, the first two ships traversed the new canal (Craig 1963: 156-157). Historical mapping from 1828 shows the canal's initial alignment (Plate 3).

The Welland Canal Company built a corporate office within the Study Area near the west end of St. Paul Street making St. Catharines the focal point of the canal's administration (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 46). In 1830, the canal was expanded when a new section upstream of the Welland River to Lake Erie was completed to bypass strong currents near the mouth of the Welland River (Craig 1963: 156-157). This would be the first of many modifications to the canal.

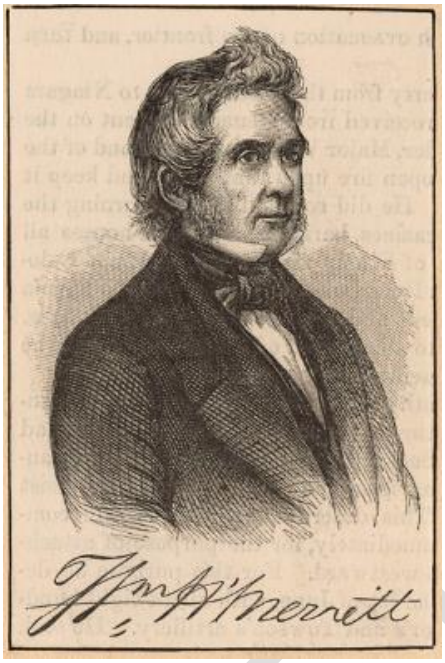


Plate 2 **William Hamilton Merritt (Library and Archives Canada No Date)**

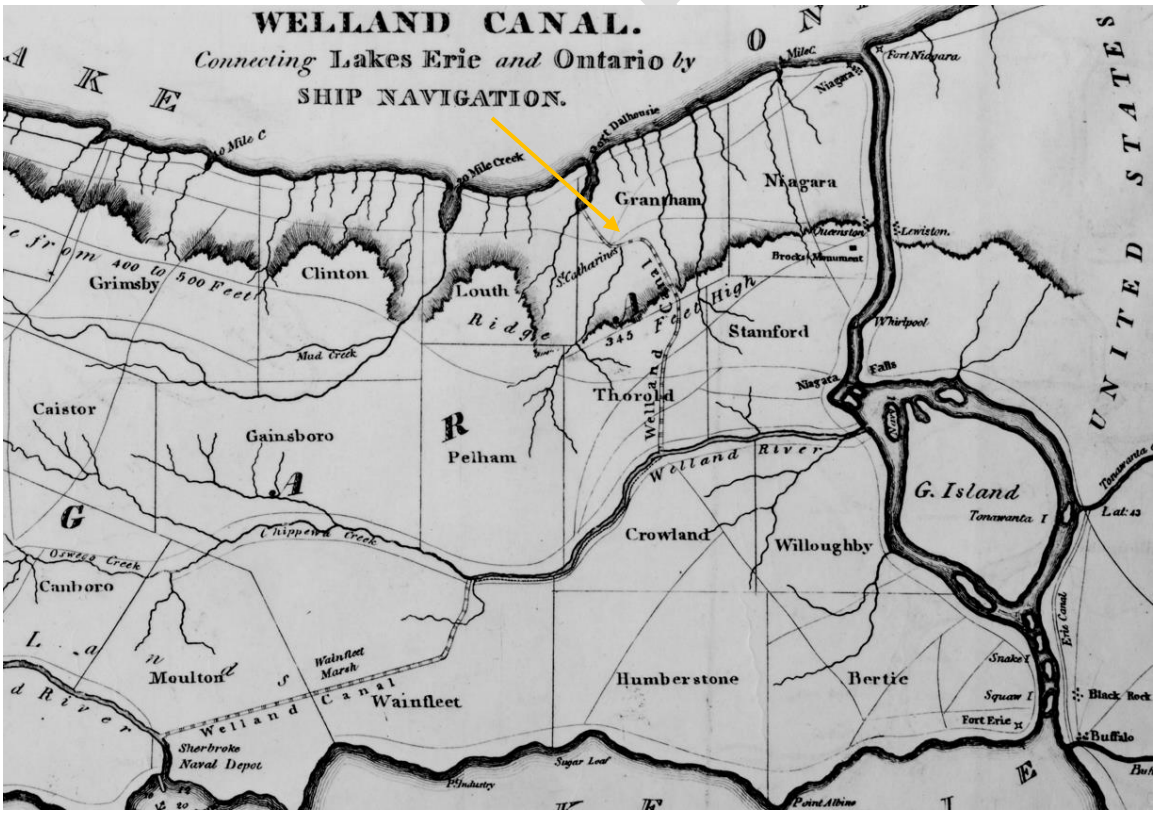


Plate 3 **Mapping showing the route of the First Welland Canal; St. Catharines is denoted by an arrow (Brock University 1828)**

3.4.3 Incorporation and the Canal Boom (1831-1852)

Following completion of the canal, a mill race was built between Meritton and St. Catharines in the 1830s. Three feeds from the mill race were built to enable industrial development in the community. The route of this former mill race (also called the hydraulic raceway) within the Study Area was to the east of St. Paul Street. During the 1830s, many new industries were founded in St. Catharines who used this waterpower and took advantage of access to the Welland Canal. These industries included a grist mill, pail factory, carding mill, brewery, tannery, and sawmill (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 45). Around this time, ship building also began at St. Catharines (Shipley 1987: 55).

By 1835, the population of St. Catharines had grown to 1,130 (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 40). The population consisted of a mix of Loyalists and their descendants, and more recent immigrants from the United States, Great Britain, and Ireland. A large number of Irish immigrants fleeing poverty came to St. Catharines to work on the Welland Canal and its myriad of expansions and improvement projects. Beginning in the 1830s, the community also included a growing Black population, many of whom were freedom seekers from enslavement who traveled the Underground Railroad to Canada (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 45).

The success of the Welland Canal soon led to long delays for vessels on its route. In addition, the canal was not deep enough and the locks not large enough to accommodate large vessels. In 1841, due to financial pressures the Welland Canal was taken over by the provincial government. To address these issues, the provincial government continued work on the Second Welland Canal, which began construction in 1840. This deeper and wider route contained less stone locks and rerouted the southern section of the canal while retaining use of Twelve Mile Creek. The Second Welland Canal was opened in 1845 (Andreae 1997: 126; Albanese and Westwater 2014).

Reflecting its growing success, St. Catharines was incorporated as a town in 1845 with a population of about 3,500 (Smith 1846: 176; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 43; 72). In 1846, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer* remarked the following on the Town of St. Catharines:

> *The town is beautifully situated, having a fine view for a considerable distance of the Welland Canal and surrounding country. It is a place of much trade, which arises partly from its contiguity to the Welland Canal, and partly from its extensive waterpower—an immense quantity of wheat being annually converted into flour. The town is well laid out and contains some excellent buildings (Smith 1846: 177-178).*

The gazetteer further noted that St. Catharines contained frequent stagecoach service to Hamilton and Fort Erie, with connecting boat service to Toronto and Buffalo. Services available in St. Catharines during this time included six physicians and surgeons, five lawyers, and many stores which catered to the town's growing population (Smith 1846: 178). By the 1840s, it was evident that aside from its role as an industrial and transportation hub, St. Catharines was beginning to overshadow the Town of Niagara (present-day Niagara-on-the-Lake) as the social and economic centre of the Niagara region (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 72). The first town hall of St. Catharines, completed in 1849, is located within the Study Area and was designed by the prominent architect Kivas Tully (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 72).

The Census of 1851 enumerated the population of St. Catharines as 4,368. The population consisted mostly of people born in Canada, Irish immigrants, American immigrants, and a smaller but sizable number of people born in England, Wales, and Scotland (Board of Registration and Statistics 1853). A *Toronto Globe* article from 1852 described St. Catharines as "the chief depot of the Welland Canal" and an "important mercantile town". In particular, the article noted that the town contained mills, foundries, and a shipyard that were among the best in the province (Toronto Globe 1852).

3.4.4 Railways, Reciprocity, and Freedom Seekers (1853-1866)

Railway service in St. Catharines began in 1853 when the Great Western Railway was built to the south of the Welland Canal (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 83-85). The construction of the railway was heavily promoted by merchants from nearby Hamilton and attracted enough investment to complete its mainline between Niagara Falls and Windsor in January 1854. The railway was instrumental in stimulating the economy in the communities it ran through and provided a valuable link between New York and Detroit (Baskerville 2006).

However, St. Catharines did not grow into an important railway town like London, Hamilton, or Toronto. The trackage and railway station were located to the west of the downtown. As a result, the railway station was located up a steep hill that was especially treacherous during the winter. The decision to bypass downtown St. Catharines saved the Great Western Railway the expense involved with building a bridge over the Welland Canal. This would have required a swing bridge or particularly high crossing (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 85). A second railway line was built by the Welland Railway to the north of the Study Area between 1856 and 1859. This railway linked Lake Ontario with Lake Erie via Port Dalhousie and Port Colborne (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 87-88).

Despite bypassing downtown St. Catharines, the completion of these railways was a boon for the area. It was now easier for farmers to market their products in Buffalo, Hamilton, and Toronto. The arrival of the railway also facilitated the transition from wheat farming to fruit farming in Grantham Township. Fruit grown in the township could now be easily transported for export or domestic consumption. Within St. Catharines, the railway also spurred industrial development as new factories purchased land along the railway tracks and Welland Canal (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 92-93).

The arrival of the railway also coincided with the signing of the *Canadian-American Reciprocity Treaty* of 1854 (Reciprocity). The treaty reduced duties and tariffs on the exchange of certain goods between British North America and the United States, including many natural resources. An early advocate of reciprocity was William Hamilton Merritt. The widespread construction of railways in Canada around the time of the signing facilitated this increased trade between the United States and Canada (Masters 2013). The location of St. Catharines along the main railway line between Buffalo and Detroit, the Welland Canal, and its overall proximity to New York meant that the community had much to economically gain from Reciprocity. In addition, the start of the Crimean War that same year provided additional demand for exports (Statistics Canada 1925: 322).

Within one year of the signing of the treaty, the price of wheat near St. Catharines surged as American buyers raced to enter the Canadian market. That year, one miller noted that over 80,000 bushels of wheat were waiting for export to New York. A correspondent for the *Toronto Globe* noted "…surely this [St. Catharines] must fast become a centre point for transshipment and consignment of an immense amount of Canadian produce" (Toronto Globe 1855). The same article also noted that "…property here is rising fast in value, and with the immense waterpower that is yet comparatively untouched, and I believe in many cases almost unknown, St. Catharines bids fair to become before long the "Manchester" of Upper Canada" (Toronto Globe 1855). Reflecting this sustained growth, the county seat of Lincoln County was transferred from present-day Niagara-on-the-Lake to St. Catharines in 1862. The Town Hall built in 1849 also served as the county's offices (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 143).

The prosperity facilitated by the arrival of the railway and Reciprocity is evidenced by the Census of 1861. The census recorded St. Catharines' population as 6,284, an increase of 43% in just ten years. About half of the population consisted of people born in Canada. The second largest group was Irish immigrants. Americans comprised the third largest group and included many formerly enslaved people. That year, the census enumerated 472 "colored persons" and noted that this heading was included in other columns, indicating that many of the Americans enumerated were likely freedom seekers (Bureau of Agriculture and Statistics 1861). St. Catharines' Black community was centred around North Street, located just to the north of the Study Area (TVO 2019; Redmond 2023).

Growth of this community was fueled by the passage of the *Fugitive Slave Act* by Congress in 1850 as St. Catharines became an important terminus of the Underground Railroad. While neither a railroad nor an organized institution, in the words of the Detroit Historical Society, the Underground Railroad was a "secret network of financial, spiritual, and material aid for formerly enslaved people" (Detroit Historical Society 2023). The role of Canada in the Underground Railroad became especially important after the *Fugitive Slave Act* was passed by Congress. Under the act, individuals who had escaped enslavement anywhere in the United States could be captured and returned to enslavement in the American south. After the passage of this law, many freedom seekers became determined to make their way into Canada, where slavery was illegal, and slave catchers had no jurisdiction (Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 2023).

Among these freedom seekers was Harriet Tubman (Plate 4). She was a noted American abolitionist and former enslaved person who led many groups seeking freedom into Canada over the suspension bridge at Niagara Falls (National Park Service 2022). Following the passage of the *Fugitive Slave Act,* Tubman lived in St. Catharines and continued her role in the Underground Railroad. In St. Catharines, Tubman resided on North Street, located to the north of the Study Area (TVO 2019). She returned to the United States during the American Civil War (1861-1865) to serve as a nurse. After the war, she settled in Auburn, New York (TVO 2019). The Union victory in the Civil War resulted in the abolition of slavery in the United States. In the following years, approximately two thirds of the freedom seekers in Canada returned to the United States to be reunited with their families and communities (Landon 1920: 240; Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 2023). Others remained in Ontario and made contributions to the development of the province, including establishing farms, churches, schools, cultural organizations, and newspapers (Henry-Dixon 2006).

While exports to the United States boomed during the war, partially to feed the Union Army, other factors aligned to set the stage for the end of Reciprocity. During the war, many Americans believed the British government sympathized with the Confederate States. In addition, both sides worried that economic cooperation could eventually lead to political union. Some Canadians worried about annexation to the United States while southern Americans worried that the addition of the Canadian provinces would upset the balance of power in the federal government. Shortly after the end of the Civil War, the United States government abrogated Reciprocity (Masters 2013).

Plate 4 Harriet Tubman, *circa* 1868 (Library of Congress 1868)

3.4.5 The Third Welland Canal, the National Policy, and Industrial Growth (1867-1888)

The Census of 1871 provides detailed information about the businesses and industries of St. Catharines at the time. The census recorded 427 different enterprises within the town. While many industries used waterpower, others had turned to steam power. Some industries which used steam included the Taylor and Bate Brewery south of the Study Area on Yates Street and the Yale and Company Foundry located near the border of the Study Area at Church and St. Paul Street. The census shows St. Catharines had a diverse industrial base including industries and businesses such as shipbuilding, tool making, milling, printing, carriage making, brewing, foundries, and brick making. In addition to these numerous industries, the community also contained dozens of typical small businesses engaged in trades such as tailoring, tanning, dressmaking, shoemaking, carpentry, building, masonry, baking, and millinery (Canadian Industry 1871 Project 2008).

Following Confederation, the government of Prime Minister John A. MacDonald began unsuccessful efforts to renew a reciprocity agreement. After several rebuffs, in 1878 his government introduced the "National Policy". This policy aimed to promote the growth of Canadian industry and manufacturing with high protective tariffs. In addition, one of the tacit goals of the National Policy was to encourage American manufacturers to establish Canadian subsidiaries to avoid triggering tariffs (White 1985: 150). While Reciprocity had proved a boon to millers and the Niagara Peninsula's farmers, St. Catharines was uniquely poised to benefit even more from the adoption of the National Policy.

St. Catharines, located along the main railway line between Buffalo and Detroit, was only 15 kilometres from the border, had ample waterpower, was surrounded by fertile farmlands, and was located along the Welland Canal (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 111). The adoption of the National Policy accelerated an industrial expansion in St. Catharines that had already started during the years of Reciprocity (Shipley 1987: 62). By the end of the 19th century the main industries in St. Catharines included fruit processing and production, flour milling, woodworking, metal working, pulp and paper, and textiles (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 121-132). This industrial base and associated job growth resulted in St. Catharines developing a prosperous commercial core along St. Paul Street and King Street surrounded by residential streets (Shipley 1987: 62).

Between 1871 and 1881, the population of St. Catharines grew from 7,864 to 9,631 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953). During this time, municipal services were increased to accommodate this growing urban population. Telephone service was introduced in 1878 and in 1879 a waterworks was completed to provide a large source of drinking water (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 93; 115). At the same time, the City developed an increasingly vibrant social and cultural scene. Within the Study Area, the Grand Opera House opened in 1877 at 47 Ontario Street (since demolished) and the St. Catharines Club at 77 Ontario Street opened within the Study Area in 1878. The west end of the City within and adjacent to the Study Area contained many indoor entertainment venues (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 195).

To reflect the continued success of the community, St. Catharines was incorporated as a city in 1876 (Shipley 1987: 62). The change of municipal status became effective on May 2, 1876. To celebrate, the day was observed as a holiday in the new city. Celebrations included the ringing of bells, cannon fire, flag flying, a "grand march", fireworks in Montebello Park, and a ball at City Hall (Toronto Globe 1876). The

reincorporation also included annexing an additional 1,000 acres of land in Grantham Township into the city's new boundary. This increased the population of the new city by around 1,000 people (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 144).

As the industrial base of St. Catharines was growing, it had become increasingly apparent that the Welland Canal was facing obsolescence. The increasing size and complexity of ships made navigating the meandering section of the canal along Twelve Mile Creek difficult. A photograph from *circa* 1885 shows St. Paul Street in the foreground and the meanders of the canal in the background (Plate 5). Beginning in 1871, the Dominion government developed plans to construct a new canal route which bypassed Twelve Mile Creek via a cut east of Homer (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 95). Work on this new canal route, called the Third Welland Canal, began in 1876 and it was opened in 1887 (Shipley 1987: 47-48; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 95-96). While Twelve Mile Creek had now been bypassed, the locks south to Merritton were maintained so local traffic could continue to use the route and waterpower remain available (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 95). However, the City did experience a reduction of canal-based trade in the downtown area due to the relocation (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 96).

Other transportation projects undertaken in St. Catharines during the 1870s and 1880s included the establishment of a streetcar network in the city and construction of the St. Catharines and Niagara Railway in 1882 (Plate 6). The streetcar network was established in 1879 and was initially a horse drawn system on Ontario Street, St. Paul Street, and Queenston Street. The next year, service was extended to the railway stations. In 1882, service was extended to Thorold. The route was electrified in 1887, and power was provided by a generator located at Lock 12 of the Welland Canal (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 98). The St. Catharines and Niagara Central Railway was chartered to provide an alternative to the Grand Trunk Railway, which had recently amalgamated with the Great Western Railway and Welland Railway. The railway received funding from the City government on the condition it build a station closer to the downtown, accommodate both passenger and freight traffic, and not link or amalgamate with the Grand Trunk Railway. These conditions were met, and the railway opened in 1887 and was extended to St. Catharines the next year. The train station was located at James Street and Raymond Street, near the western boundary of the Study Area. The railway provided improved freight and passenger access to Niagara Falls and Buffalo (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 91).

Plate 5 **St. Paul Street and the Welland Canal, *circa* 1885. Some of the structures along this stretch of St. Paul, including 20-24 St Paul Street, 28 St Paul Street, and 32 St Paul Street, remain (St. Catharines Public Library 2024)**

Plate 6 **Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto Railway Car on St. Paul Street at Carlisle Street, no date (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

3.4.6 Electrification, Competitive Advantage, and the Fourth Welland Canal (1889-1913)

The rapid growth of St. Catharines cooled after 1881. Between 1881 and 1901 the population of St. Catharines fluctuated between about 9,000 and 10,000 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953). This relative flattening of St. Catharines development during this period can likely be attributed to the bypassing of downtown St. Catharines by the Welland Canal. As a result, St. Catharines was one of the few cities in Ontario to not show rapid growth during this period of urbanization in Ontario's history. In comparison, during this same timeframe the population of Hamilton grew 46%, Toronto grew 140% (partially due to annexations), Brantford grew 72%, London grew 92% (partially as a result of annexations), Guelph grew 16%, Berlin (Kitchener) grew 140%, Galt (Cambridge) grew 51%, and Windsor grew 85% (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953).

The advent of large-scale hydroelectric development in the early 20th century would result in renewed growth for St. Catharines. Early hydroelectric development in St. Catharines had started in the 1880s when generators were installed at Lock 5 of the Welland Canal. Another early provider of power was the Canada Hair Cloth Company, located within the Study Area (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 115; St. Catharines Museum 2018; Canadian Consulting Engineer 2014). By the turn of the 20th century, power generated at Lock 5 by the St. Catharines Electric Light and Power Company provided streetlighting in the city and powered some 3,000 incandescent light bulbs. This was supplemented by a generator at Lock 3 which provided electricity to industrial operations. However, additional sources of power were required to accommodate future growth.

The new power requirements were sourced from the DeCew Falls Generating Station, completed in 1898 by the Cataract Power Company of Hamilton (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 115; St. Catharines Museum 2018). St. Catharines also benefited from the construction of hydroelectric generating stations along the Niagara River. The construction of the Ontario Power Generating Station and Canadian National Power in 1905 provided ample capacity and a relatively short transmission distance to St. Catharines. As a result, electricity costs in St. Catharines were lower than many other cities in Ontario (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 115).

The arrival of ample and cheap hydroelectric power in St. Catharines resulted in St. Catharines regaining a competitive advantage over neighbouring cities. After 1891, the city entered into a period of sustained growth that continued until the late 20th century (Plate 7). Between 1891 and 1911, the population of St. Catharines grew from 9,170 to 12,484 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953) (Plate 8).

In 1911, Ontario contained a total of 18 cities. While St. Catharines had a population comparable to Stratford, St. Thomas, or Chatham, the manufacturing output of St. Catharines surpassed these comparable municipalities. This is likely due to the geographical and transportation advantages of the city, which also likely allowed for a lower material cost. This is summarized in Chart 1.

By the eve of the First World War, St. Catharines was clearly an important manufacturing centre in Ontario. During this same time, the fruit industry continued to grow, and St. Catharines was home to many canneries, cold storage facilities, and fruit box and basket companies. St. Catharines nascent automotive industry also began in 1905 when Packard Electric began manufacturing cars on contract for the American company Oldsmobile. Their plant in St. Catharines was the first in Canada to be built specifically for the manufacture of cars. In 1909, this business was sold to the Reo Motor Car Company. The company enjoyed a great deal of success, and the first trans-Canada car trip was sponsored by Reo and completed in a car built in St. Catharines (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 121-132; St. Catharines Museum 2025; Globe and Mail 2012). As the car industry grew, many factories that had produced wagon parts and farm implements switched to the manufacture of car components (Shipley 1987: 74).

The largest employer in St. Catharines and the Niagara Peninsula during this time was McKinnon Chain, which operated in Tonawanda, New York, and St. Catharines. In St. Catharines, they operated a foundry on a 43-acre site on Ontario Street along the route of the Second Welland Canal. This company would eventually be purchased by General Motors, which was historically one of the largest employers in St. Catharines (Jackson and Wilson 1992:121-132).

Additionally, by the early 20th century, due to the National Policy and easy transportation access to the United States by rail and canal, many American businesses had opened factories in St. Catharines. This included the Whitman and Barnes knife works of Ohio, the Flynn Brothers cannery of Buffalo, the Tribune Paper Company of Chicago, and Yale Locks of Connecticut (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 113). This period in St. Catharines was also marked by industrial consolidation as smaller factories closed or were amalgamated. Between 1880 and 1920 the number of companies in St. Catharines decreased by 50% (Shipley 1987: 70). Factory closure and moving was most pronounced along the route of the now bypassed Second Welland Canal at Twelve Mile Creek as manufacturers moved to areas with better rail access and larger properties. Closures mostly included older flour mills, textile mills, breweries, and tool making factories (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 139). Despite a general decline of industry along the canal,

within the Study Area the Canada Hair Cloth Factory continued to prosper (St. Catharines Museum 2016).

While the Third Welland Canal had only been completed in 1887, ships were already growing too large to easily navigate the waterway. In 1913, work began on the Fourth Welland Canal, located 7.5 kilometres to the east of the Study Area. This new route was a shorter route than the Third Canal and ran almost directly north to south. However, construction was delayed during the First World War (Shipley 1987: 48).

In May 1914, St. Catharines was visited by the Governor General of Canada, the Duke of Connaught. This marked the first visit of a Governor General to St. Catharines since Lord Dufferin's tenure in the 1870s (Toronto Globe 1914a). The visit provided the people of St. Catharines an opportunity to showcase their community and reflects the role of St. Catharines as a regional centre. Upon his arrival in St. Catharines by the Grand Trunk Railway, the Duke was brought to Montebello Park by a local military escort. The park contained a specially built stand and over 3,500 school children were in attendance. After visiting the park, the Duke keenly toured the Welland Canal. At the canal, William Hamilton Meritt's granddaughter presented a historical sketch of the canal as a gift.

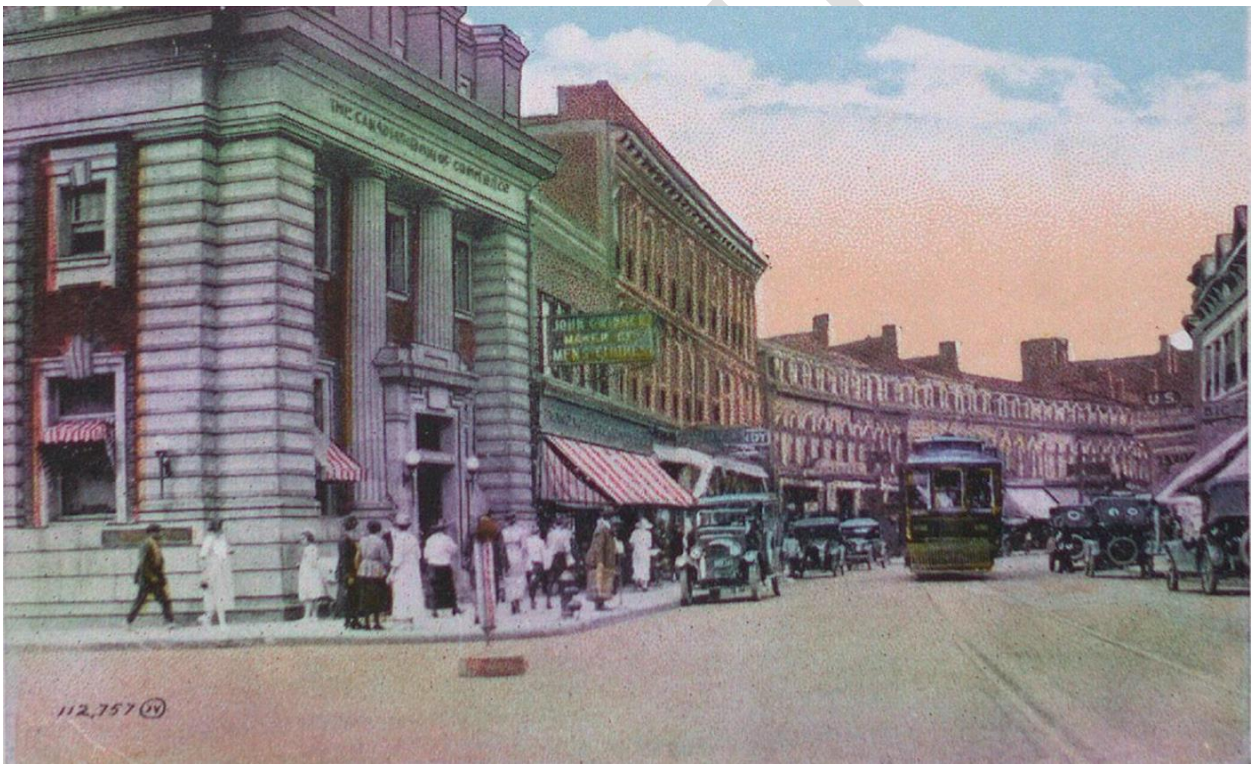


Plate 7 **St Paul Street from the corner of Queen Street, looking east, *circa* 1915. Much of the buildings on the north side of this portion of St. Paul remain *in situ* (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

Plate 8 **Market Square at 50 Church Street, *circa* 1900 (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

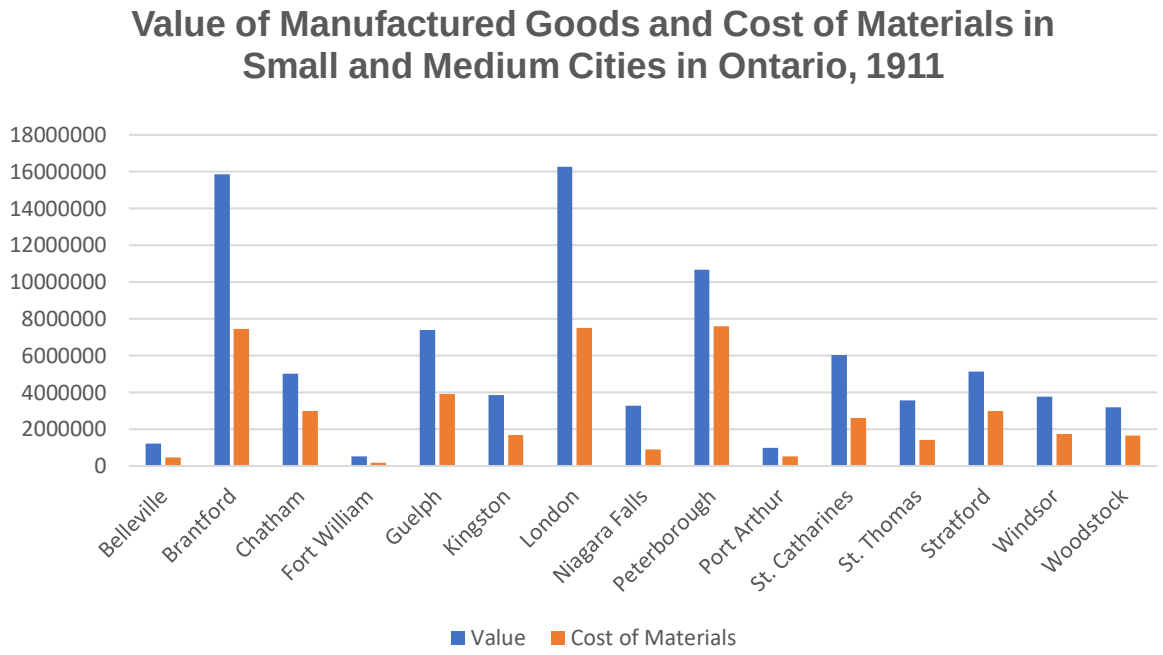


Chart 1 **Value of Manufactured Goods and Cost of Materials in Small and Medium Cities in Ontario, 1911**[2]

3.4.7 The First World War, the Interwar Period, and the Second World War (1914-1945)

The industrial output of St. Catharines increased during the First World War as manufacturers began producing war materiel. Production benefited from the increasingly available capacity from the Niagara hydroelectric developments. During the war, shell production contracts were awarded to Crocker-Wheeler, REO, and Packard Electric (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 230). The people of St. Catharines also donated generously to the war effort and in 1915 the city raised the most donations per capita in Ontario (Globe and Mail 1915) (Plate 9). During the war, hundreds of local men enlisted in the armed services and St. Paul Street was home to parades of soldiers who marched enroute to the train station to travel overseas. A total of 265 citizens of St. Catharines died in the conflict (Shipley 1987: 21-24). Just south of the Study Area, a cenotaph, in honour of those who died, was dedicated in 1927 by the Prince of Wales (Shipley 1987: 24).

The war effort and increasing industrial production resulted in a period of marked growth in St. Catharines between 1911 and 1931. The Census of 1931 recorded the city's population as 24,753, an increase of

[2] For the purpose of this chart, a small or medium city is defined as a city with a population of less than 50,000 in 1911. As a result, Hamilton, Ottawa, and Toronto are excluded (Census of Canada 1911).

almost 98% since 1911 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953). During this time, new developments of working-class housing were built outside the Study Area near factories to accommodate the growing population. The residential parts of the Study Area remained mostly middle class as the prewar housing stock of this area was generally larger (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 268). The industrial prosperity and the Welland Canal attracted many new immigrants to St. Catharines. While most residents of the city continued to have British or Irish ancestry, an increasing number of new immigrants from the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Scandinavia, Ukraine, and China moved to the City (Census of Canada 1921).

Access between downtown St. Catharines and the outskirts of the City were improved in 1914 when the Glen Ridge Bridge and Burgoyne Bridge were completed outside of the Study Area. The completion of the Burgoyne Bridge resulted in the extension of St. Paul Street across Twelve Mile Creek and required the expropriation of properties within the Study Area (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 215-216).

Work briefly resumed on the Fourth Welland Canal after the First World War but was again delayed by labor disputes and competition with the construction of the Sir Adam Beck Generating Station. Work on the Fourth Canal would slowly continue until its completion in 1932 (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 245-246). During the 1920s, numerous infrastructure projects were undertaken in the city to support this period of rapid growth. The city's streetcar system, including within the Study Area, was expanded. Along St. Paul Street between James Street and Geneva Street the line was doubletracked to add capacity (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 239). In 1918, the St. Catharines Public Utilities Commission was founded and by the end of the 1920s most homes in St. Catharines had access to telephone, electrical, and water service (Plate 10). During this time, dozens of kilometres of roadways in the city were paved with asphalt (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 251) (Plate 11). A photograph from *circa* 1925 shows a prosperous St. Paul Street with many businesses, streetcar tracking, and ornate streetlighting (Plate 12 and Plate 13). Around this time, the Study Area became home to many movie theaters as the pastime continued to grow in popularity. Examples include the Hippodrome near St. Paul Street and James Street (since demolished) and the Town Cinemas at 280 St. Paul Street (presently vacant). In their early days, both these theaters also included vaudeville acts along with movies (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 197).

As a result of the city's broad industrial base, St. Catharines was spared the worst effects of the Great Depression during the 1930s. However, during the Great Depression construction activity in St. Catharines decreased and some citizens struggled with unemployment. The City provided unemployment relief of $3.50 a week to married men with a family and a Works and Relief Committee was formed within the City (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 273). Tasks completed by the relief workers included street grading, tree stump removal, and cleaning the hydraulic raceway (St. Catharines Museum 1930). By 1931, about one third of St. Catharines' workforce was employed in manufacturing. Significant industries included automobile manufacturing, electrical manufacturing, textile production, foundry and forging works, hardware and tools, canning, silk goods, and bakeries (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 265). Many of these factories were American owned and during the 1920s the United States gradually became Canada's largest trading partner and source of capital (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 268). Among these American investments was the 1929 purchase of McKinnon Industries Limited by General Motors (GM). GM would grow to be one of the largest employers in St. Catharines during the mid to late 20th century (Shipley 1987: 141). Despite the economic downturn, construction of a new City Hall, located within the Study Area, began in 1936. The building was completed in 1937 (St. Catharines Museum 2022).

The rapidly increasing popularity of the car during the 1920s and 1930s led to increasing congestion problems on the existing intercity roadways between the major communities along Lake Ontario including Toronto, Burlington, Hamilton, and St. Catharines. To alleviate these congestion issues, a new four lane highway was planned between Toronto and Niagara Falls. To improve motorist safety, the roadway was designed with a centre median to diminish crossover accidents. This would be the first divided highway constructed in Canada. The highway was constructed in phases between 1932 and 1939 and was originally known as The Middle Road. The segment of roadway between Toronto and Hamilton was completed in 1937 (Bevers 2021). Between 1938 and 1939 the highway was extended east to Niagara Falls (Department of National Defence 1938; Bevers 2021). The extension east towards Niagara Falls hugged the shoreline of Lake Ontario and then cut southeast towards Niagara Falls through Grantham Township. Access to the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) was located about 1.3 kilometres to the northeast of the Study Area.

The start of the Second World War in 1939 ended lingering negative impacts from the Great Depression in St. Catharines. Building permits issued in the City grew during the war and the amount of people employed in manufacturing doubled between 1938 and 1943 (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 283). In 1941, the population of St. Catharines was recorded as 30,275 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953). Similar to the First World War, the industries of St. Catharines shifted to wartime production to support the Allied cause. Major producers of war materiel included McKinnon (GM), which received contracts from the government to produce military vehicle parts and Thompson Products which produced engine components for military aircraft. Other companies, including English Electric and Ferranti-Packard, produced shells, fuses, trainer plane components, and other materiel. These production demands required an expansion of the workforce. However, about 4,000 of St. Catharines' male population had joined the armed forces. As a result, women entered the workforce and constituted about a quarter of the city's labor force during the war (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 280, 291).

In St. Catharines, 4,000 men and 150 women enlisted in the armed serviced. A total of 215 people from St. Catharines were killed in the conflict. Two memorial tablets within the Study Area at City Hall honour those lost (St. Catharines Museum 2020).

Plate 9 **A Victory Celebration on St. Paul Street, *circa* 1918. Buildings in the mid-right of this photograph survive, including 101 St. Paul Street, 105 St. Paul Street, 107 St. Paul Street, and 117 St. Paul Street (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

Plate 10 **Church Street near the corner of Queen Street, looking east, *circa* 1909. Much of the north side of Church Street, including 27 Church Street, 29 Church Street, and 31 Church Street, remain *in situ* (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

Plate 11 **Queen Street from about St. Paul Street, looking north, *circa* 1920s. This streetscape has been significantly altered, with only 101 St. Paul and some of 17 Queen Street remaining (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

Plate 12 **St. Paul Street, circa 1925. Parts of this streetscape remain, including 145 St. Paul Street, 149 St. Paul Street, 157 St. Paul Street, and 163 St. Paul Street. (St. Catharines Public Library 2024)**

Plate 13 **St. Paul Street at Ontario Street, *circa* 1920s. Some of the structures on the southeast side of St. Paul remain, including 20-24 St Paul Street, 28 St Paul Street, and 32 St Paul Street (St. Catharines Public Library 2024)**

3.4.8 Baby Boom, Amalgamation, and Regional Government (1946-1970)

Like much of Canada and the United States, St. Catharines experienced rapid development in the decades following the Second World War. In 1951, St. Catharines population was recorded as 37,984 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953). Beginning in the 1950s, a wave of suburban detached home construction began in and around St. Catharines, especially to the north of the Study Area near the QEW. In the years after the Second World War, streetcar service was gradually abandoned and replaced with bus service. The increasing prevalence of the car also caused considerable traffic jams along St. Paul Street. In 1947, the city's first parking meters were installed downtown, although this did little to decrease congestion (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 298).

While the percentage of people employed in manufacturing peaked during the Second World War, manufacturing remained a key component of the city's economy in the postwar period (Shipley 1987: 74). The large investments undertaken to support the war effort meant that the city's manufactures were well poised to transition to civilian production. The expansion of existing industrial plants and new factories after the Second World War was spurred by domestic and foreign investment (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 308). By the 1960s, the McKinnon Plant owned by GM became the largest employer on the Niagara

Peninsula outside of Hamilton. In 1963, the company employed a workforce of over 5,000 people (Department of Economics and Development [DED] 1963: 62).

The fruit industry also remained important in the Niagara Region, and in the years after the Second World War the growing of grapes for wine making became increasingly common (DED 1963: 34). To capitalize on the growth of the area's wine industry, St. Catharines began the Niagara Grape Festival in 1951. The festival is typically held adjacent to the Study Area in Montebello Park. By 1957, there was approximately 2,500 grape growers in the area (Globe and Mail 1957).

The completion of the QEW between the Peace Bridge and Niagara Falls in 1956 finished another important and quick connection with New York, sustaining continued American investment (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 308). In 1963, the Garden City Skyway was completed, which brought six lanes of traffic on the QEW over the Welland Canal. Around the time the skyway was completed, King's Highway 405 was completed. King's Highway 405 is located just east of St. Catharines and opened in 1963. The highway linked to the recently completed Queenston-Lewiston Bridge between Ontario and New York providing another link with New York State and the New York State Thruway which ran between New York City and the Buffalo area (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 330). Another link in the provincial highway network was completed in 1965 when King's Highway 406 was built between the St. Catharines and Welland. However, this original alignment of Highway 406 did not connect to the QEW, and motorists had to use local roads in St. Catharines to reach the QEW (Bevers 2024; DED 1963: 77).

Another factor in St. Catharines continued industrial prosperity was the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959. The Seaway linked the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean and used the existing Welland Canal between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. To accommodate capacity requirements of the Seaway, the canal was deepened to 27 feet (8.2 metres). Reflecting its long history with Great Lakes transportation, St. Catharines was selected as the headquarters of the Western Region of the Seaway Authority (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 310; DED 1963: 69-70). The opening of the Seaway brought a marked increase of shipping traffic along the Welland Canal, with the Ontario Department of Economics writing in 1963 that "The impact of the of the Seaway on the Welland Canal has been clear and unmissable" (DED 1963: 69-70).

The rapid growth of this period meant that the formerly rural areas surrounding St. Catharines were becoming increasingly suburbanized. For example, between 1941 and 1951 Grantham Township's population increased markedly from 7,052 to 15,411. The smaller villages near St. Catharines also experienced rapid growth. The population of Port Dalhousie increased from 1,723 to 2,616 and Merritton's population increased from 2,993 to 4,714 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953). This growth strained public services and resulted in disputes over the distribution of tax dollars. In the mid-1950s, St. Catharines annexed surrounding land five times to add newly suburbanized areas into the municipal boundary (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 324).

Suburbanization began to draw shoppers away from the downtown and Study Area and the Study Area began its transition to increasing commercial and civic use, a trend which continued into the late 20th century (Plate 14). At the same time, the growing population and prosperous economy required an expansion of services throughout Ontario. Within the Study Area, many new commercial and civic structures were built in the mid-20th century. This includes the Laura Secord Building at 32 Church Street

and the Niagara Regional Police Headquarters at68 Church Street. An early mid-rise office development completed in the 1950s was the Royal Trust Building at 4 Queen Street. However, many of these new developments resulted in the demolition of existing structures (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 306-307).

In 1959, a study was launched to consider the amalgamation of Grantham Township and St. Catharines (Globe and Mail 1959). In 1960, the Ontario Municipal Board ruled that St. Catharines, Meritton, Port Dalhousie, and Grantham Township would be amalgamated effective January 1, 1961 (Globe and Mail 1960a). While some residents of the area, especially in Meritton opposed the move, the amalgamation went into effect as scheduled (Globe and Mail 1960b; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 324-325). The population of the newly enlarged City of St. Catharines was recorded as 84,472 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1962). The expansion of St. Catharines was part of a broader trend on and near the Niagara Peninsula. Between 1958 and 1963 similar amalgamations were completed in Burlington, Welland, and Niagara Falls (DED 1963: 28).

The surging population and postwar baby boom required a widescale expansion of the city's school system. Between 1948 and 1968 the number of schools in the city increased from 15 to 40. To serve the postsecondary educational needs of the Niagara Peninsula, Brock University was incorporated in St. Catharines in 1962. The university's first class graduated in 1967 (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 327-328). Brock University remains an important employer in the City today and maintains a presence within the Study Area at the former Canada Haircloth Building at 15 Artists' Commons (Plate 15).

In 1966, Dr. Henry B. Mayo conducted a review of local government and recommended that Lincoln County and Welland County be merged into a new regional government (Globe and Mail 1969). A regional government would have more powers than a county and be responsible for coordinating land use planning, social services, and infrastructure in the burgeoning areas of the province (Archives of Ontario 2015b). In accordance with his findings, in January 1970, the municipalities of the Counties of Lincoln and Welland, including the City of St. Catharines, were restructured into the Regional Municipality of Niagara. The two counties and their 26 municipalities were replaced by one regional government and 12 municipal governments (Niagara Region 2025). The introduction of regional government to Niagara resulted in the division of Louth Township between St. Catharines and the newly created Town of Lincoln (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 333). The new region was tasked with assessment, regional tax levy, capital borrowing, planning, water treatment and distribution, sewage treatment, regional roads, welfare, health, parks, recreation, and conservation (Globe and Mail 1969).

Plate 14 **A Bus and a streetcar at St. Paul and Ontario Street, *circa* 1950. While the three-storey structure located in the centre of this photograph has since been demolished, 19 Ontario Street (the corner of the structure with stone quoins), remains (St. Catharines Public Library 2024)**

Plate 15 **Staff of Canada Hair Cloth Co. Ltd, *circa* 1984 (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

3.4.9 Leveling Off and a Changing Downtown (1971-1990)

Beginning in the 1970s, St. Catharines population growth began to level. Between 1971 and 1991, the population increased moderately from 109,722 to 129,300 (Statistics Canada 1971; Jackson and Wilson 1992: 374). During this time, St. Catharines remained known for its manufacturing prowess, connections to the fruit industry, and location along the Welland Canal. GM remained the City's largest employer and further expanded their factory employing 9,000 people in 1981 (Globe and Mail 1981). An article in the *Globe and Mail* from 1981 offered a glowing and varied view of life in St. Catharines during this time:

> *St. Catharines is located in the heart of the Niagara Peninsula fruit belt, a place where factory and farm stand side by side, the living is easy and the weather temperate. It is the "Garden City", where the wine industry mixes with the auto industry and the Welland Canal makes it a deep-sea shipbuilding centre 1,200 miles from the ocean. Open farmland and a downtown market square provide a distinctly rural flavor and a university (Brock) offers an academic atmosphere (Globe and Mail 1981)*

Despite the role of the downtown as the historic core of St. Catharines, the proliferation of suburban shopping plazas and their easy parking continued to draw shoppers away from the downtown. A survey from 1981 indicated that as much of a quarter of the city's population rarely visited downtown (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 339). During this same time, new office mid-rise and high-rise office towers such as Corbloc and One St. Paul began to alter the city's skyline and streetscape. As a result, office space became the predominant land use in the downtown core (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 340). In the early 1980s, the provincial government built a new registry office and courthouse in the downtown (Globe and Mail 1981). Aerial photographs from the 1966 and *circa* 1985 show a marked change in the downtown core as formerly residential areas, especially along Church Street, were replaced by a proliferation of office buildings in the late 20th century (Plate 16 and Plate 17).

While the downtown was losing market share as the city's main shopping destination, efforts were undertaken to bring shoppers back downtown. To entice shoppers back downtown, during the 1980s a series of parking, pedestrian, and storefront improvements were undertaken. This included the construction of parking garages which added over 1,000 parking spaces, new storefront awnings and canopies, and landscaping improvements like new lighting and sidewalks (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 339; Globe and Mail 1981).

In 1984, King's Highway 406 was linked with the QEW by building a new four-lane highway, completing a seven-year project. Part of this highway was built on filled-in sections of the former Welland Canal Route. The completion of this route finally linked King's Highway 406 with the QEW (Bevers 2024). This extension was controversial as the new segment of Highway 406 essentially bypassed downtown St. Catharines. The downtown community had a mixed reaction to this new highway segment. It was either seen as a way to bring people speedily into the downtown core or as a way to easily bypass visiting downtown altogether. (Globe and Mail 1981; Bevers 2024; St. Catharines Standard 1984).

Despite the numerous changes to the Study Area during the 1950s to 1980s, it retained many aspects of its 19th century streetscape. St. Paul Street retained, and continues to retain, much of its historic streetwall. East of St. Paul Street, the topography of the area continued to slope towards the infilled Welland Canal, providing a tangible link to the former canal route. While many parts of the Study Area were intensified at this time and many residential areas redeveloped into office use, this change in land use represents the continued role the Study Area played as the economic and social centre of St. Catharines and the Niagara Region.

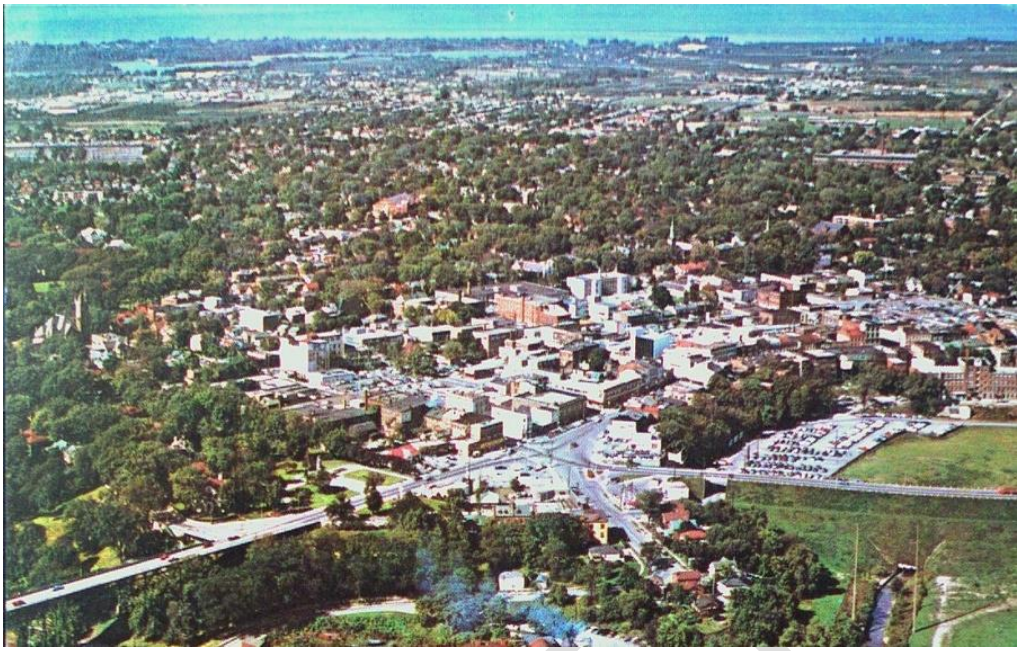


Plate 16 **Aerial view of St. Catharines, *circa* 1966 (St. Catharines Public Library 2024)**

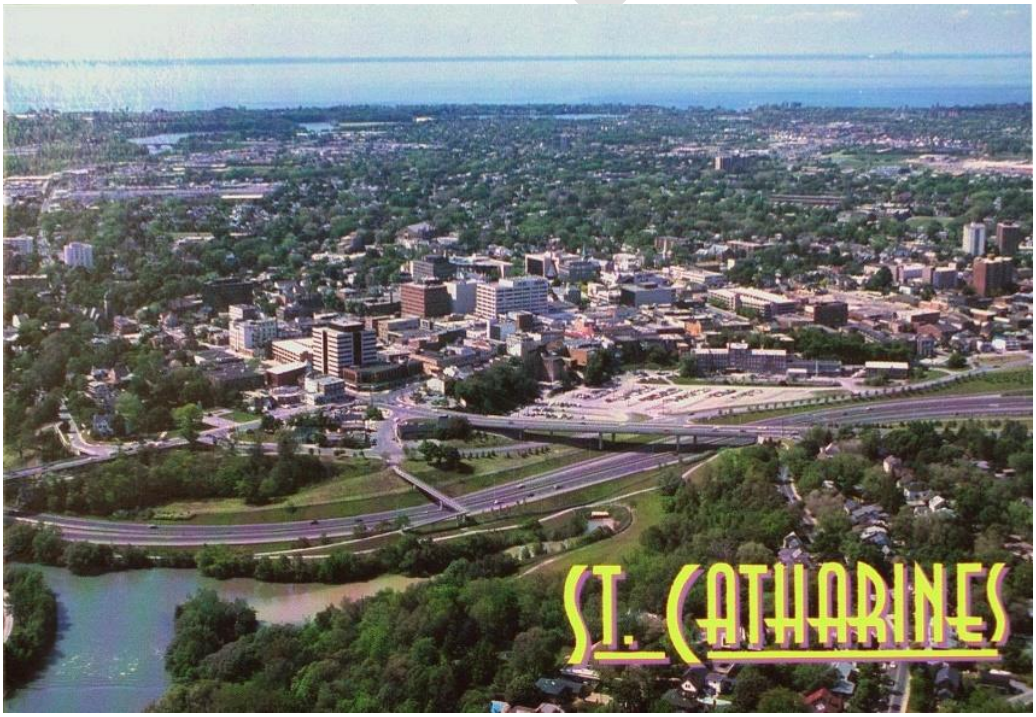


Plate 17 **Aerial view of St. Catharines, circa 1985, Showing Proliferation of Office Buildings (St. Catharines Public Library 2024)**

Plate 18 **Corner of King and Court Streets, *circa* 1973. This corner remains as it appears in the mid 1970s, with 38 Court Street, 39 Court Street, and 211 King Street still *in situ* (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).**

3.4.10 Industrial Decline and Renewed Growth (1990 to Present Day)

Beginning in the 1970s, the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada experienced a steep decline in manufacturing, often referred to as deindustrialization. As a result, this region received the moniker the “Rust Belt” (High 2003: 4-5). During the 1980s, St. Catharines appeared mostly insulated from this decline in manufacturing. GM, the largest employer in the City, continued to invest in St. Catharines and continued to employ nearly 9,000 people through the 1980s (Globe and Mail 1996).

It is important to understand that St. Catharines and many “Rust Belt” communities continue to grapple with the legacy of deindustrialization. The negative economic effects of deindustrialization have now impacted several generations of people. Views and analysis on this sensitive topic remain varied and a definitive account of the social, political, and economic impacts of deindustrialization are outside the scope of this Study. Nevertheless, communities throughout the Rust Belt have faced increases in

joblessness and strains on social services which have had substantial impacts on communities. In many cases, downtown cores have faced the brunt of these impacts.

As the 1980s progressed, increasing efforts were made to promote free trade between Canada and the United States and later Mexico. However, local St. Catharines politicians and labour advocates were wary of promoting free trade. In 1985, one local politician noted, “Free trade will result in the loss of jobs rather than the enhancement of jobs” (St. Catharines Standard 1985). This fear was rooted in the belief that American companies would opt to close their local facilities if free trade was adopted (St. Catharines Standard 1985).

While manufacturing in the Great Lakes region had been in decline since the 1970s, the controversial 1993 passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has sometimes been credited with spurring further increases in deindustrialization across Canada and the United States. In 1993, Ontario Premier Bob Rae noted his opposition to NAFTA, explaining, “It will put downward pressure on wages and labor standards [in Ontario]” as manufacturers relocated to Mexico (St. Catharines Standard 1993).

By the early 1990s, GM was struggling to compete and was facing mounting financial pressure. In 1992, the first round of significant layoffs were announced at the GM plants in St. Catharines (Globe and Mail 1992). By 1996, the number of people employed by GM in St. Catharines had decreased to 5,200 (Globe and Mail 1996). Layoffs at GM continued into the 2000s and the company had just under 4,000 workers by 2002 (Globe and Mail 2002). The decline of GM in St. Catharines had a cascading effect as companies which had for decades supplied parts and components for GM found themselves struggling to remain viable (Globe and Mail 2007). In 2010, the GM Components Plant on Ontario Street was permanently closed. The GM Propulsion Plant on Glendale Avenue continues to operate into the present-day and builds V8 engines and transmissions (St. Catharines Standard 2018; GM 2024). The population of St. Catharines was recorded as 131,400 in 2011, showing that population growth in the city had largely stagnated beginning in the 1990s (Statistics Canada 2016).

The resulting economic decline particularly impacted the downtown core, which was already struggling to compete with the suburbs. The concerns over the downtown were reflected in St. Catharines’ 1994 mayoral election where the decline of the downtown was seen as a major issue facing the City’s next mayor (St. Catharines Standard 1994a). That same year, another article in *The Standard* reflected on the decline of St. Paul Street and noted, “Vacant storefronts create a gap-toothed look along St. Paul” (St. Catharines Standard 1994b). While St. Paul Street was struggling, parts of King Street and Church Street in the Study Area were considered more prosperous in the mid-1990s due to the adjacent mix of shops, houses, churches, and offices (St. Catharines Standard 1994b.

By the early 2000s many storefronts on St. Paul Street continued to be noted as empty (Globe and Mail 2005). Around this time, critics of the downtown began to target the student bar scene believing students were partially responsible for vandalism and disruption downtown. In response, in 2007 the city placed a one-year ban on the opening of new bars downtown. However, many people believed students were being unfairly maligned and noted their presence downtown served as a boost to the economy (St. Catharines Standard 2007). At the same time, office vacancies have increased within the Study Area and One St. Paul Street, one the Study Area’s most prominent office buildings, is presently vacant.

During the 2010s, concerted efforts were made to revitalize the downtown. Brock University adaptively reused the Hair Cloth Factory Building and built the Marilyn I. Walker School of the Fine and Performing Arts as a downtown campus location. Another cultural attraction opened within the Study Area is the First Ontario Performing Arts Centre. To accommodate large concerts and sporting events, the Meridian Centre was built and is home to the Niagara Ice Dogs OHL team. These projects have spurred a new period of investment in the downtown. Between 2014 and 2018 the annual value of construction permits in downtown St. Catharines tripled (Globe and Mail 2015; Globe and Mail 2019). At the same time, office vacancies have increased within the Study Area and One St. Paul Street, one the Study Area's most prominent office buildings, is presently vacant.

The Census of 2021 recorded the population of St. Catharines as 136,803, an increase of 2.8% since 2016. Census data shows that about a third of the workforce in the city is employed in sales and service occupations. Other significant workforces include the trades, health, and business. The number of workers employed in manufacturing was recorded as 3,195 out of a labor force of 67,120 (Statistics Canada 2023).

Plate 19 137 and 169 St. Paul Street, April 2004 (St. Catharines Public Library 2024).

3.4.11 Historical Population Data and Discussion

For comparative purposes, a select group of small and medium cities in Ontario are presented below in Chart 2 and Chart 3. Cities have been selected based on their proximity and relative size in comparison to St. Catharines (Brantford, Kitchener, and Cambridge), location along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway (Oshawa and Windsor), and historical association with car manufacturing (Oshawa, St. Thomas, and Windsor). It is important to note that the growth shown here also reflects annexations and amalgamations which increased the area of a city.

Chart 2 shows that prior to the late 19th century, most of these settlements were relatively small. During this time, Ontario was a predominantly rural and agricultural in character. After 1881, urbanization in the province began to accelerate and by the turn of the 20th century all the communities on the chart were experiencing population growth. By the 1920s, the growth rate of St. Catharines had surpassed Brantford, St. Thomas, and Cambridge, reflecting the general prosperity of the Study Area during this time and the sizable nature of St. Paul Street's commercial streetscape. These communities had less diversified industries and transportation options than St. Catharines (such as railways in St. Thomas) and were located further away from cheap sources of hydroelectric power. The noted growth of Windsor after 1911 is partially due to significant amalgamations and annexations.

Chart 3 shows that like much of Ontario, the postwar baby boom led to steady population growth. While St. Catharines experienced organic population growth, the 1960 amalgamation with Grantham, Port Dalhousie, and Merriton also significantly increased the city's population. By the 1970s this growth and largescale annexations and amalgamations had subsided through much of Ontario, and growth slowed in many communities. Other communities that were heavily reliant on auto manufacturing such as St. Thomas and Windsor experienced similar population trends. This reflects the economic struggles faced by downtown St. Catharines beginning in the 1990s and continuing into the 2010s. While the automotive industry was also a significant part of Oshawa's economy, it was likely at least partially insulated from this trend of slow population growth due to its proximity to Toronto.

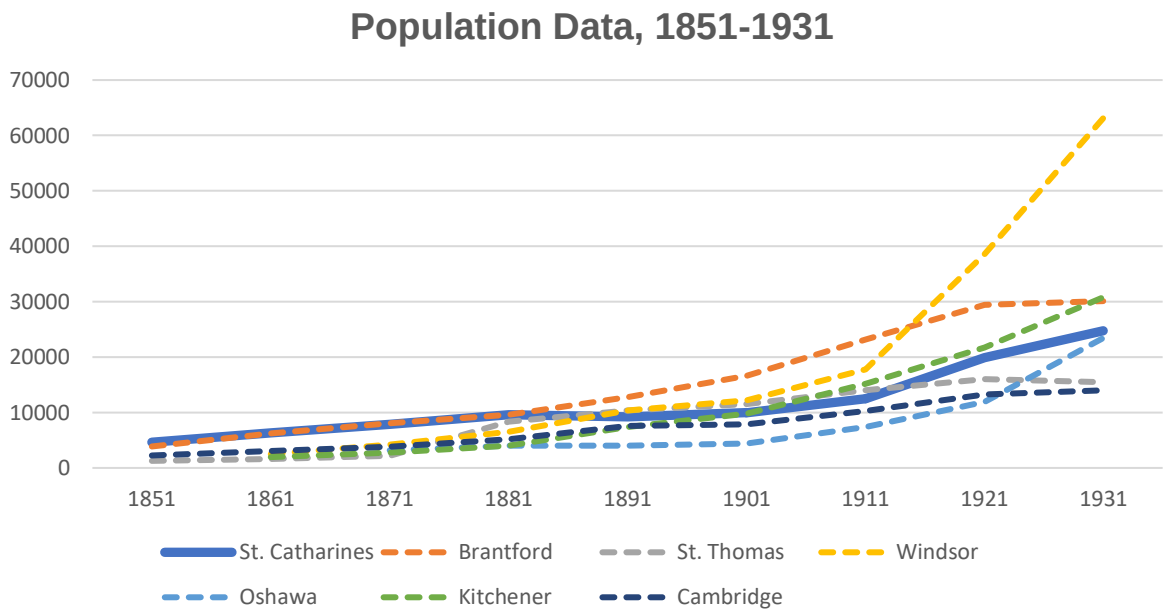


Chart 2 **Population of Select Cities in Southern Ontario, 1851-1931 (Board of Registration and Statistics 1853; Board of Registration and Statistics 1861; Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953)**

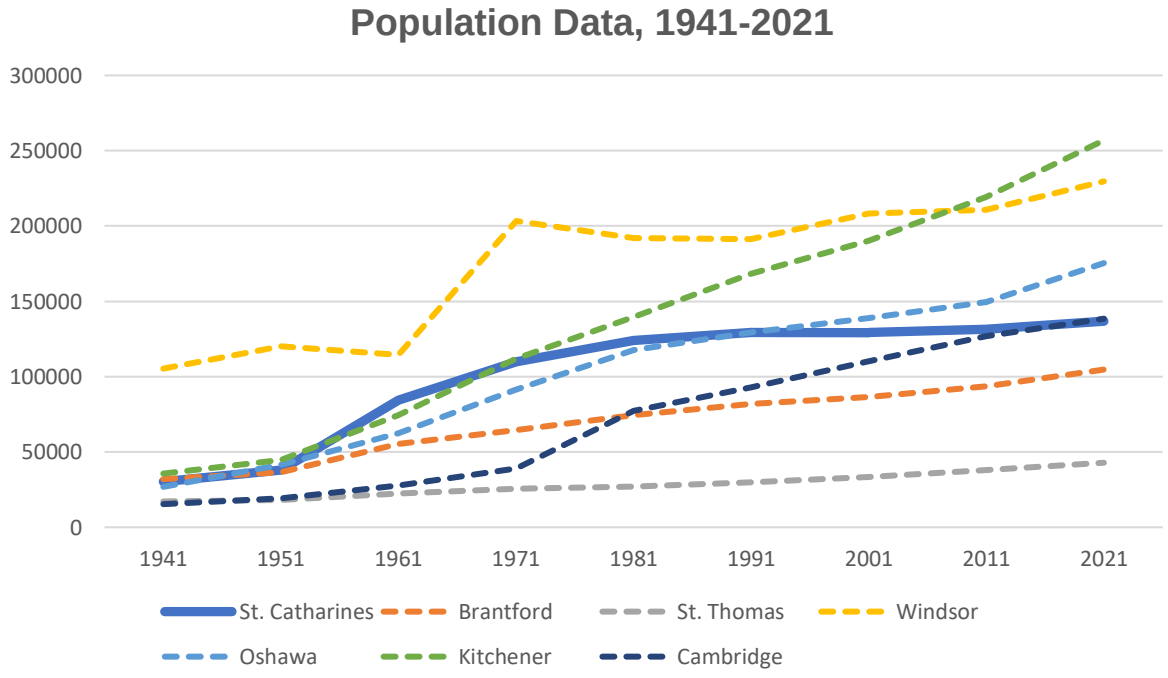


Chart 3 **Population of Select Cities in Southern Ontario, 19412021 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1953; Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1962; Statistics Canada)**

3.5 Development of the Study Area

3.5.1 Overall Pattern of Development

The Study Area is situated in the historic core of St. Catharines. Like many early communities in Ontario, St. Catharines grew near a historic transportation route and source of waterpower. St. Catharines is not an exception and grew around Twelve Mile Creek and St. Paul Street. By the turn of the 19th century, St. Paul Street was firmly entrenched as the main thoroughfare in the community (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 23). While many communities with similar circumstances did not grow into towns or cities, the location of St. Catharines along the Welland Canal ushered in a period of considerable growth centred along St. Paul Street and then eventually spreading west.

By the 1820s, St. Paul Street was supplemented by Ontario Street as the community continued to grow. However, the community remained a pioneer settlement, and both road conditions were noted as in "a rough state" with patches of uneven terrain and tree stumps (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 33). The first major subdivisions of land along St. Paul Street and Ontario Street began in the 1820s, likely in anticipation of the construction of the Welland Canal (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 33). Historical mapping from 1829 (incorrectly labeled 1809 by the printer) shows the alignment of present-day Ontario Street and St. Paul Street as well as the subdivision of land into park lots was progressing along St. Paul Street (Figure 3).

The opening of the Welland Canal in 1829 provided ample new sources of waterpower and placed St. Catharines along a key transportation corridor in Upper Canada. As a result, the community entered a period of rapid growth during the 1830s and 1840s. Between 1831 and 1836, much of the present-day street grid of the Study Area was laid out (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 34). Historical mapping from 1852 shows that much of the present-day Study Area had been subdivided and built. The Census of 1851 noted that most residences in the community were of timber or frame construction (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 78). Shortly after incorporation in 1845, St. Catharines passed a bylaw which banned the construction of new frame buildings on St. Paul Street between Yates Street and James Street. While the bylaw had a few exceptions, it was passed to reduce the risk of fire. Like many communities, multiple fires were recorded during the early years of the community and as a result fire protection was expanded in the 1840s and 1850s (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 77, 80). As most frame structures dated to the pioneer period, they were eventually replaced with brick structures or burned down (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 77).

In general, this mapping shows a higher number of detached structures compared to the present-day and indicates that while much of St. Paul Street had been developed, numerous building lots remained unimproved on other streets within the Study Area (Figure 4). By the 1860s, St. Catharines was assuredly the largest and most economically vibrant community in the Niagara Region as the community developed into the regional economic, social, and political centre of the area.

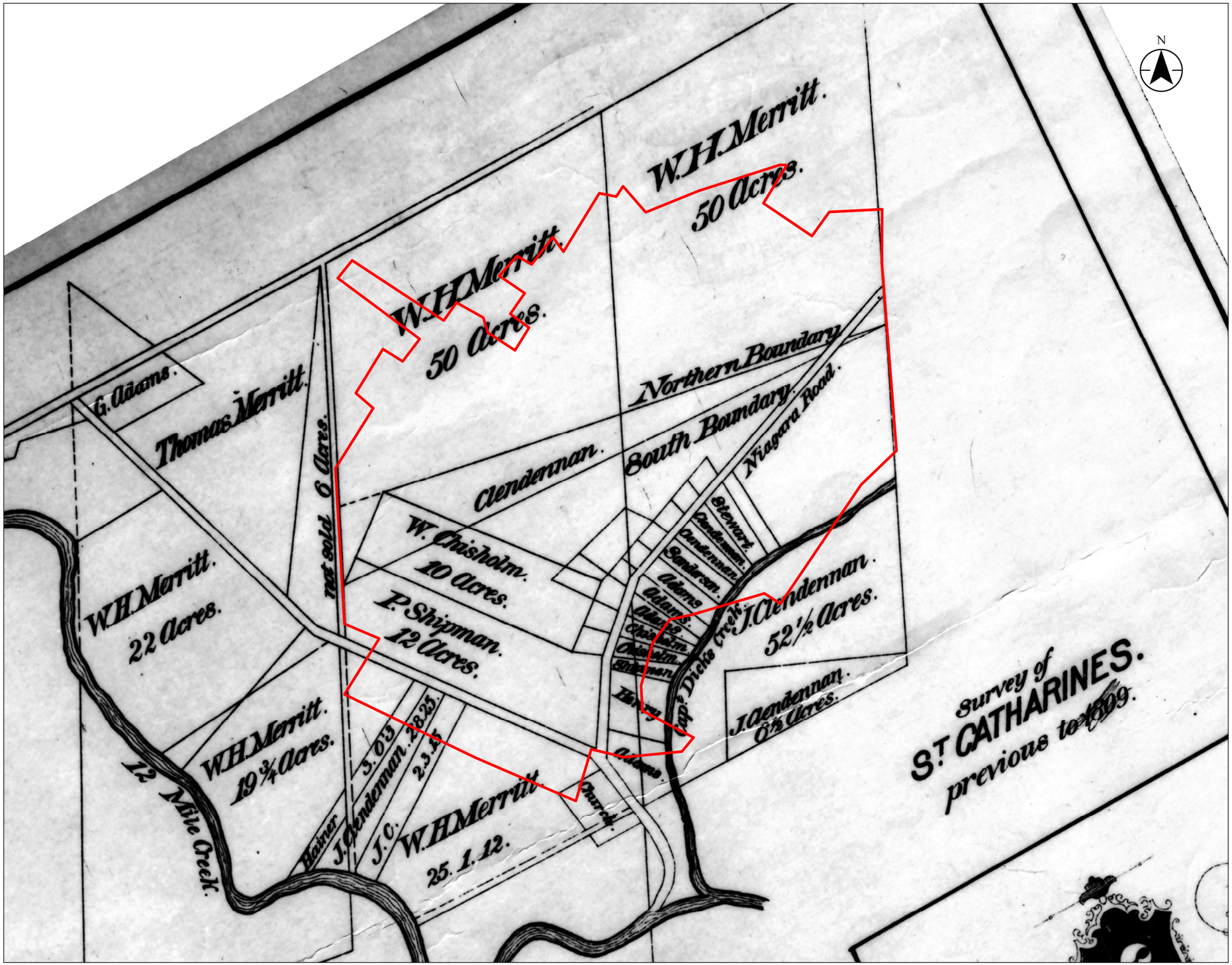
Historical bird's eye mapping shows that by 1875 the Study Area was mostly developed and much of the present-day character of St. Paul Street was in place. The mapping shows a consistent two to three storey street wall of attached and semi-attached buildings along much of St. Paul Street (Figure 5). While the mapping indicates that the street wall of St. Paul Street was in place and much of the Study Area had

been developed, the roads remained unpaved, and many citizens found the sidewalks inadequate. In 1883, new sidewalks were installed in much of the Study Area and consisted of a mix of plank, brick, stone, concrete, asphalt, and brick (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 106). The paving of the streets within the Study Area began in the early 20th century and St. Paul Street was paved in 1905 (Jackson and Wilson 1992: 110).

Fire insurance mapping from 1913 shows that St. Paul Street within the Study Area consisted of a nearly uninterrupted street wall of attached brick two to three storey structures between Ontario Street and James Street. This stretch of St. Paul Street contained only a single frame structure and several brick structures with stone facing. The buildings were occupied by mostly small businesses and offices. To the west of St. Paul Street, commercial use continued to about King Street along Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street. Most of the Study Area west of King Street was residential and consisted of a mix of mostly frame and brick structures (Figure 6). An aerial photograph from 1921 shows the consistent street wall along St. Paul Street, the continuation of commercial structures to about King Street, and the more suburban, residential, and treed character of the Study Area west of King Street (Figure 7).

This overall composition of the Study Area outlined in the previous paragraph remained intact into the 1950s (Figure 8). Beginning in the 1960s, former structures west of Church Street were demolished and converted into parking. As a result, the residential character of this area has diminished over the last 50 years and today most residential areas are located along the edges of the Study Area. At the same time, civic, institutional, and commercial use on King Street and Church Street intensified. Many of these structures were built in the mid-20th century and reflects the role of St. Catharines as a regional centre on the Niagara Peninsula and the broader expansion of government services in postwar Canada. Important mid-20th civic and institutional buildings include the St. Catharines Municipal Building (50 Church Street), the Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse (59 Church Street), the St. Catharines Centennial Public Library (54 Church Street), the former Region of Niagara Police Headquarters (68 Church Street), the Laura Secord Building (32 Church Street), and the original Lincoln County Courthouse (101 King Street). Mid-rise commercial development also became prevalent during this time which reflects the broader reorientation of downtown St. Catharines in the decades after the Second World War. During this time, many shoppers were drawn away from the downtown and land use pivoted towards office space. Aerial photography from 1971 shows this transition underway (Figure 9). This trend continued east of King Street into the late 20th century as new office buildings were completed in this area and new structures like the Niagara Transit Commission Building and the Garden Street/Carlisle Parking Garage were built in formerly residential areas.

A period of economic decline beginning in the 1990s and persisting into the 2010s caused a reduction in the number of businesses and offices within the Study Area. As discussed in Section 3.4.10, efforts have been made in the last decade to create new opportunities for businesses and cultural venues within the Study Area. However, the issues facing the Study Area were compounded in the 2020s by the COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide housing crisis.



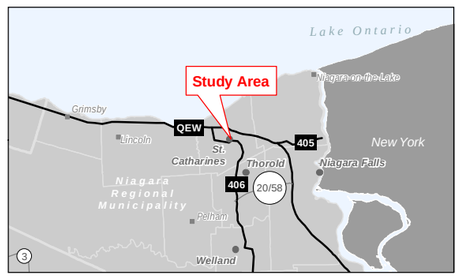
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Historic image not to scale.
2. Reference: Page, H.R. 1876. Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Lincoln and Welland. Toronto: H.R. Page and Co.



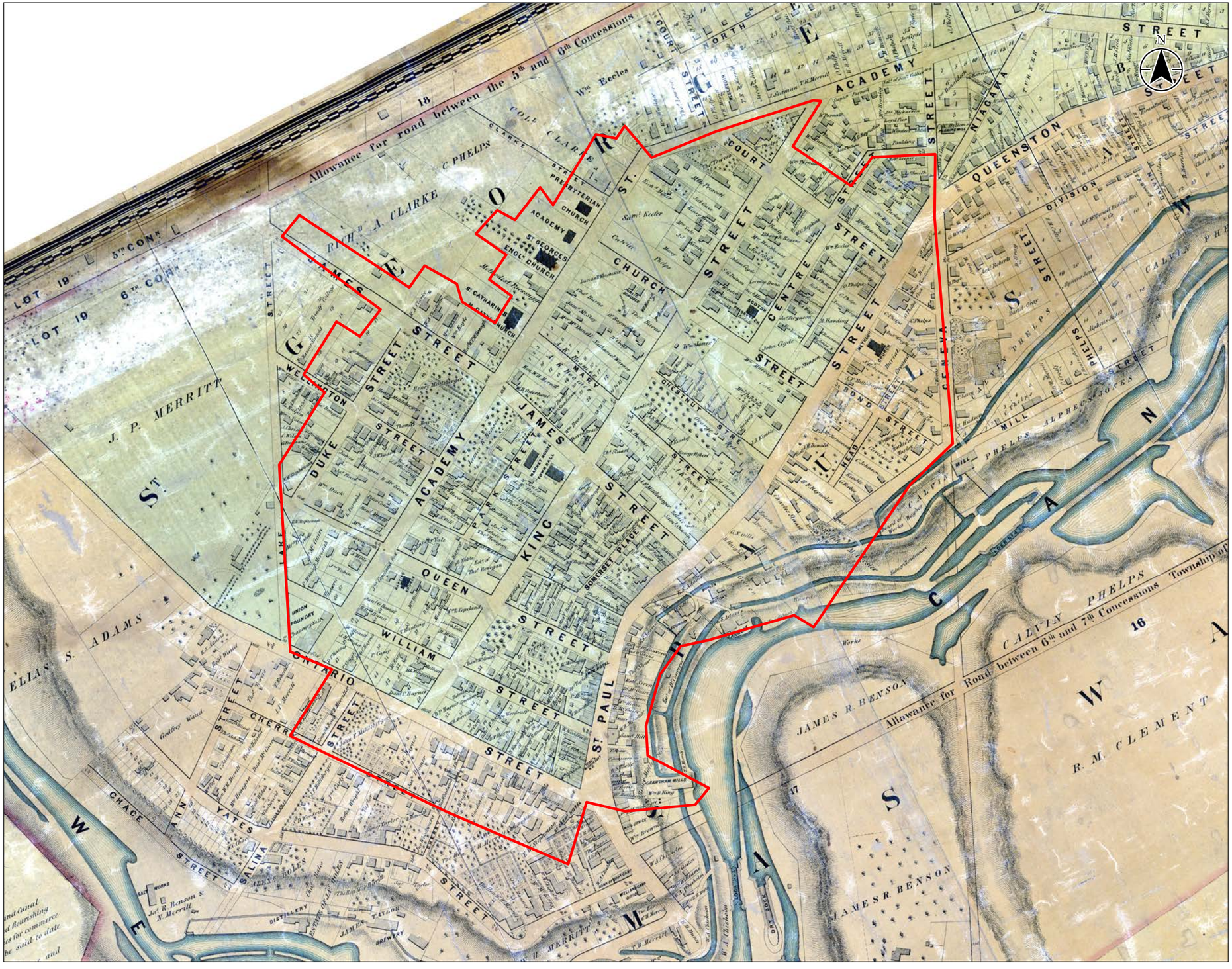
Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV1
Prepared by BF on 2024-04-12
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
3

Title
Historical Mapping, circa 1829
(incorrectly dated as 1809)



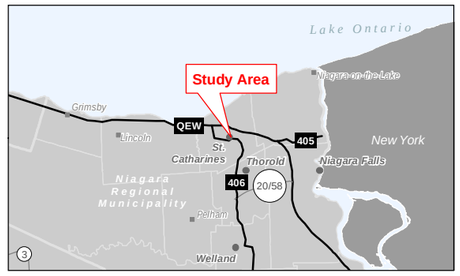
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Historic image not to scale.
2. Reference: Smith, Marcus. 1852. Map of the Town of St. Catharines.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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Prepared by BF on 2024-04-12
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
4

Title
Historical Mapping, 1852

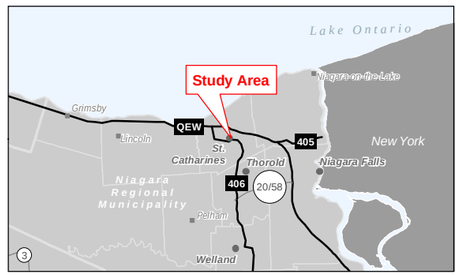
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Historic image not to scale.
2. Reference: Brosius, H. 1875. St. Catharines, 1875, Province Ontario. Reprinted by the St. Catharines Historical Museum.



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City of St. Catharines

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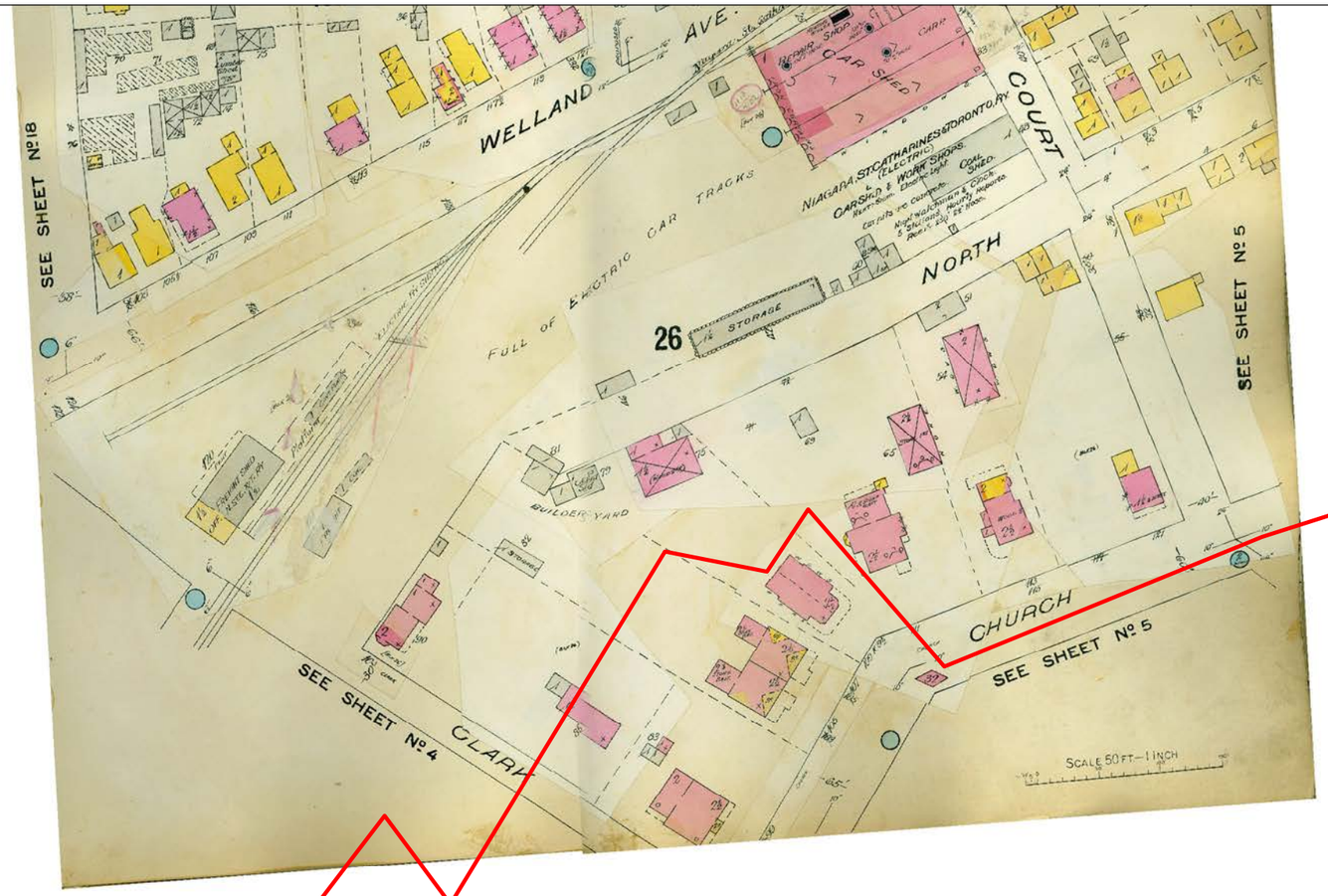
Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
5

Title
Historical Mapping, 1875



N

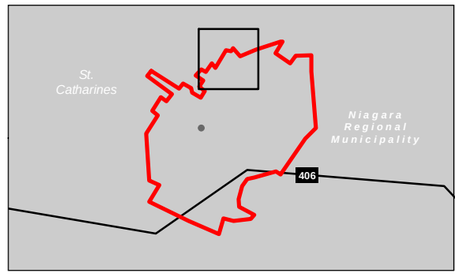
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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City of St. Catharines

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Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.1

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913

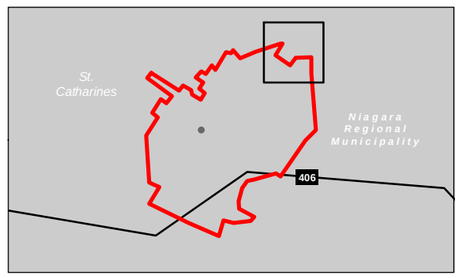
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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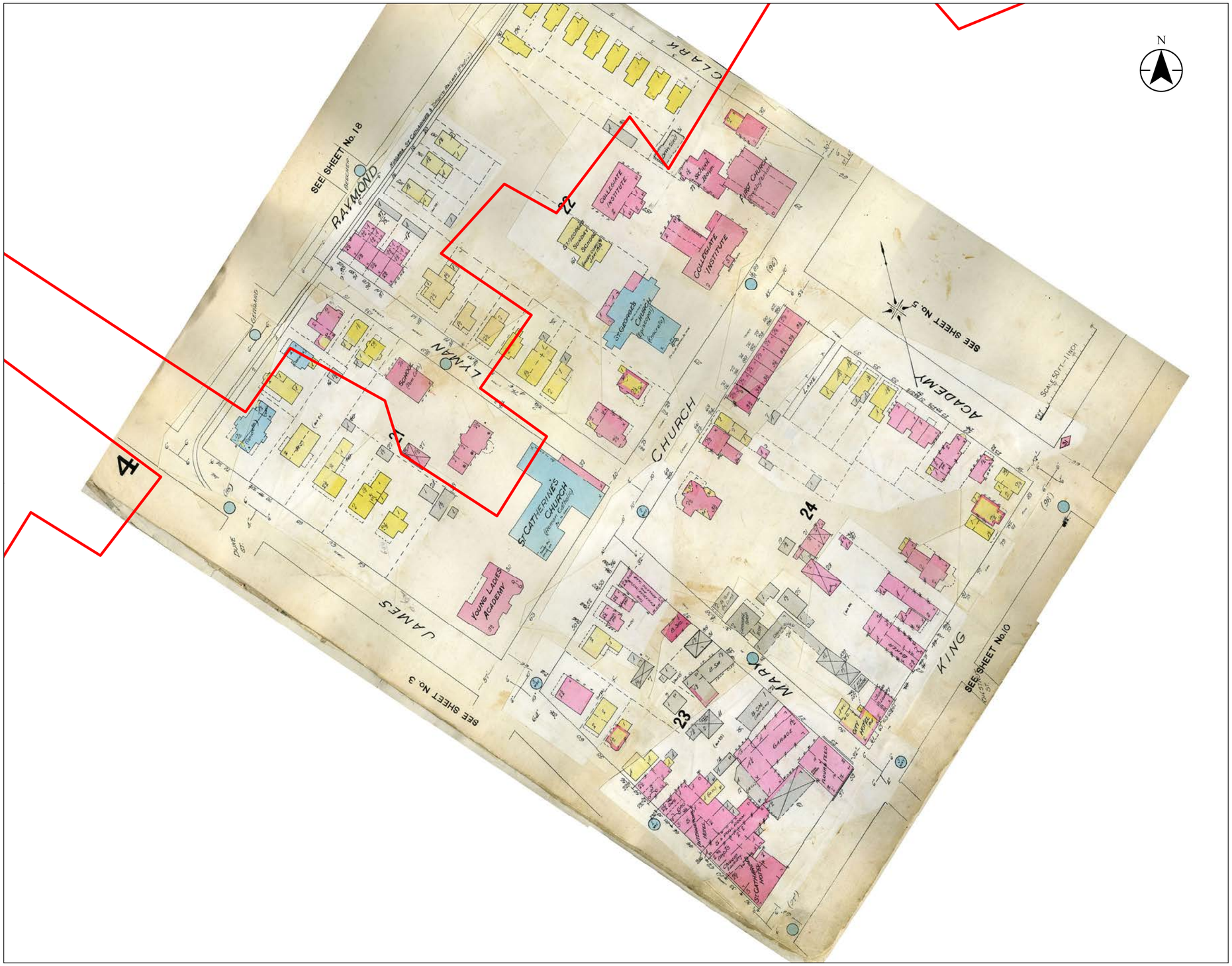
Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.2

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



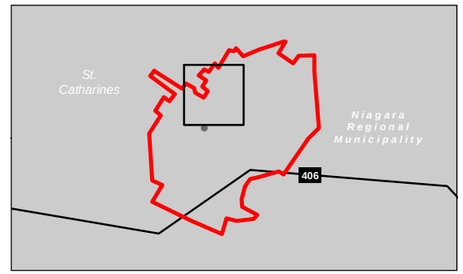
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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City of St. Catharines

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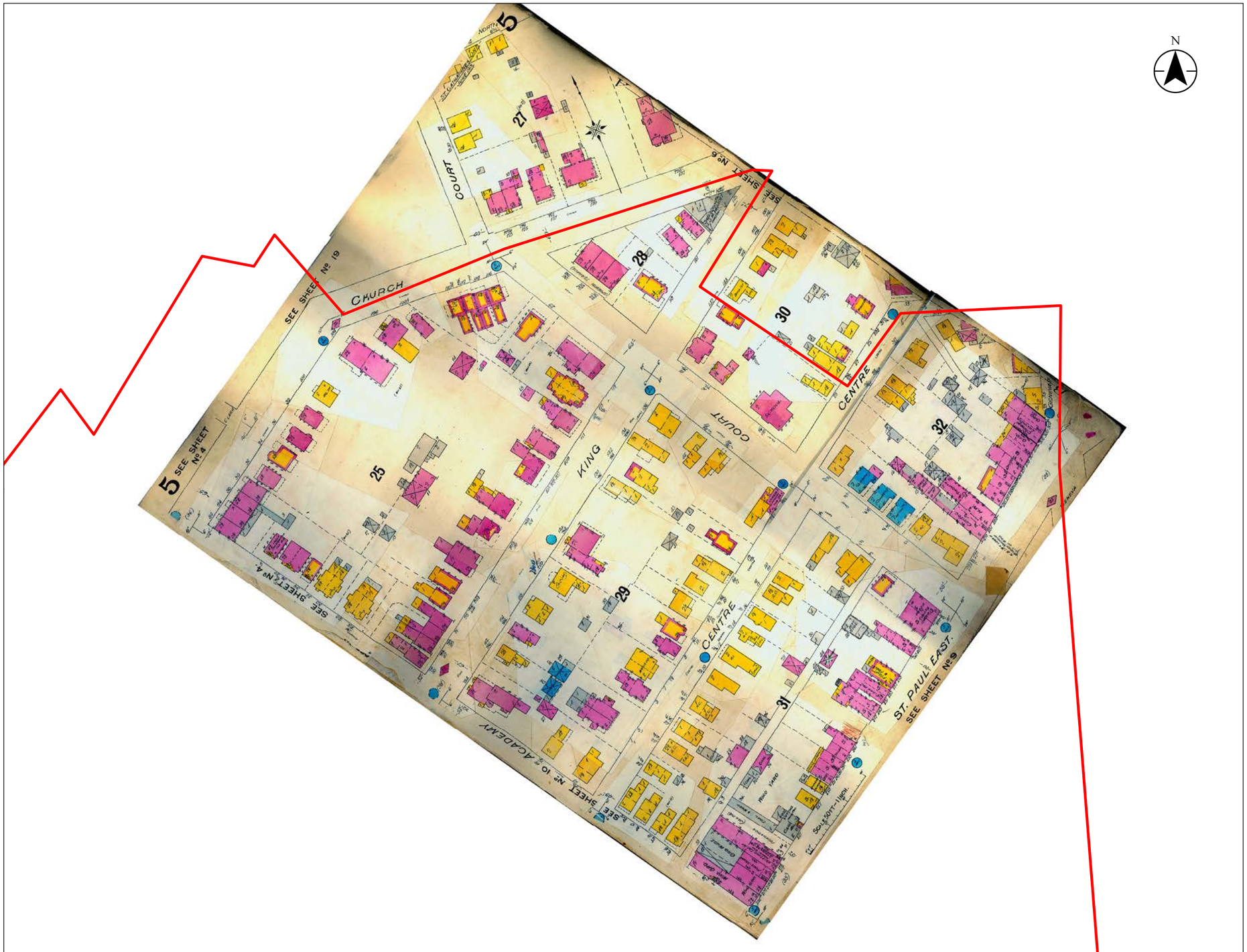
Prepared by BF on 2024-04-12
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.4

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



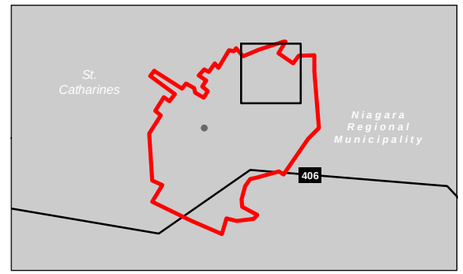
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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City of St. Catharines

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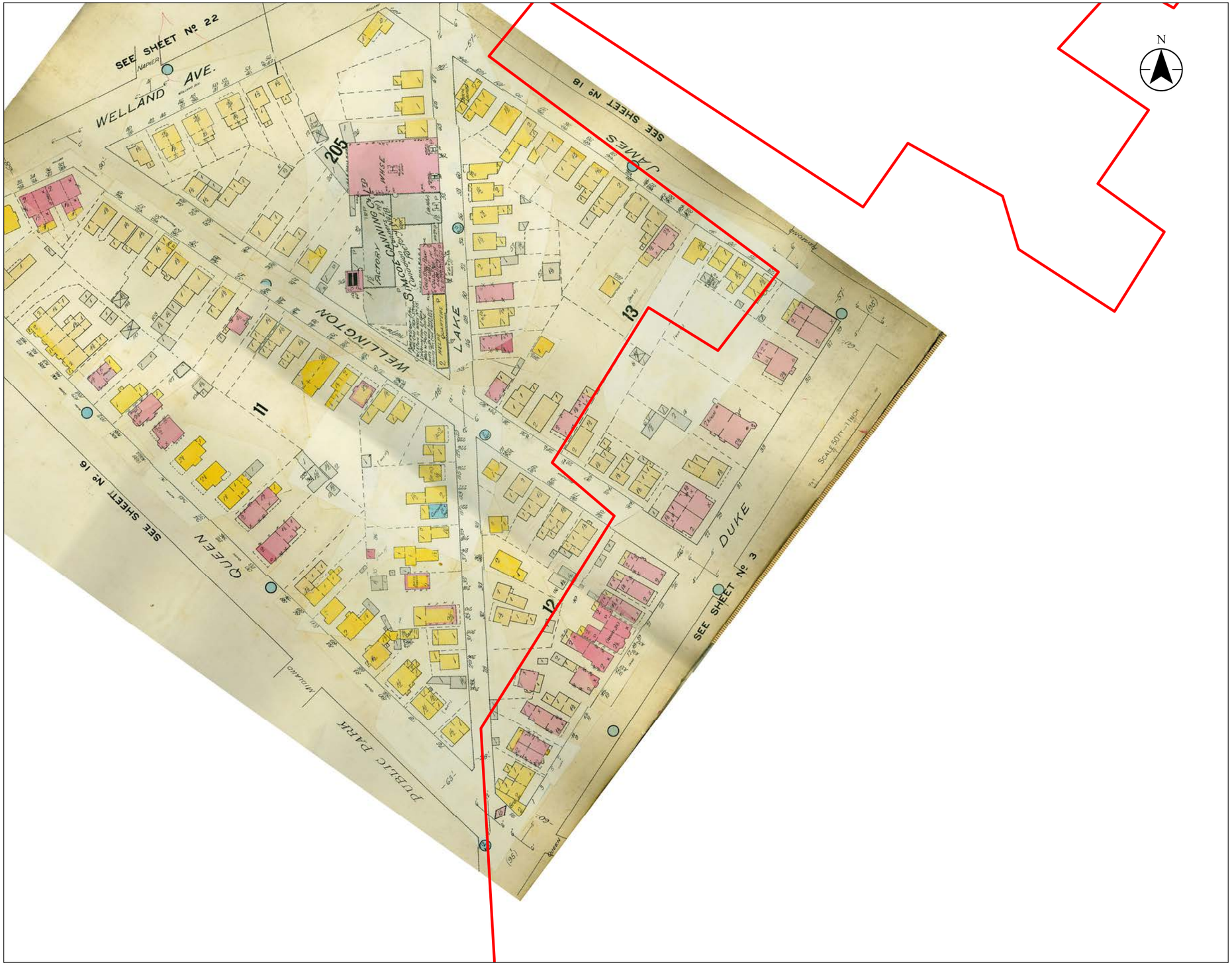
Prepared by BF on 2024-04-12
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.5

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



N

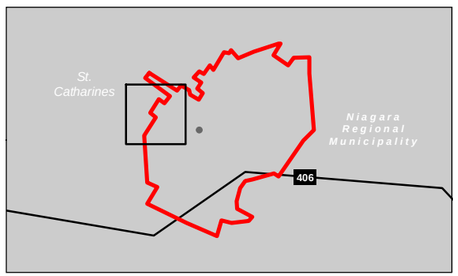
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

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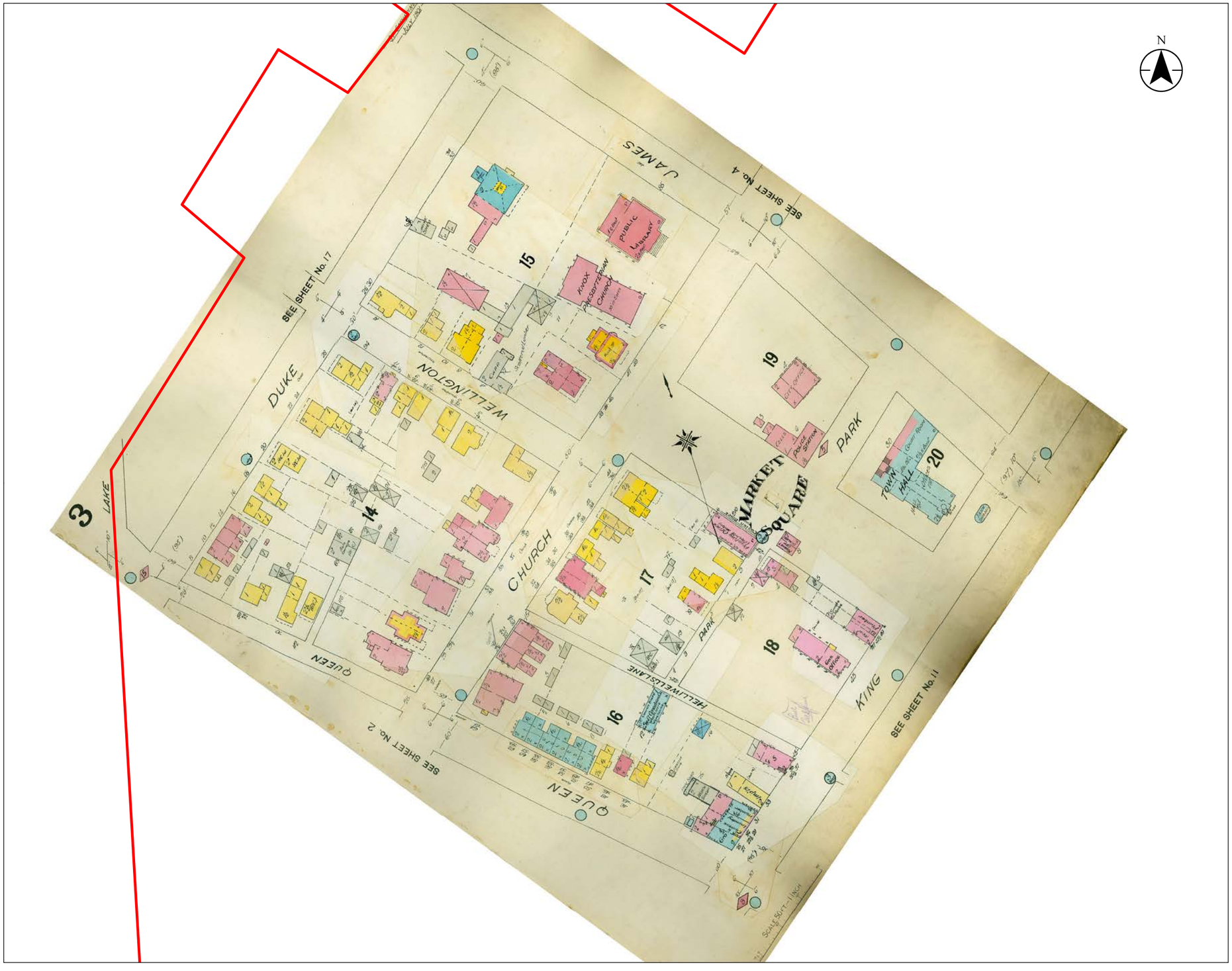
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.6

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



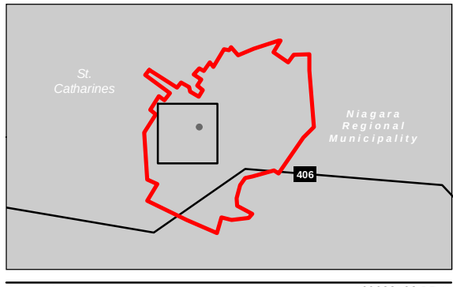
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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City of St. Catharines

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CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.7

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913

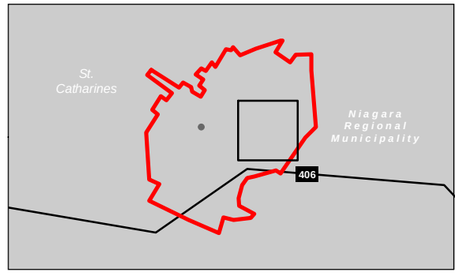
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.8

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913

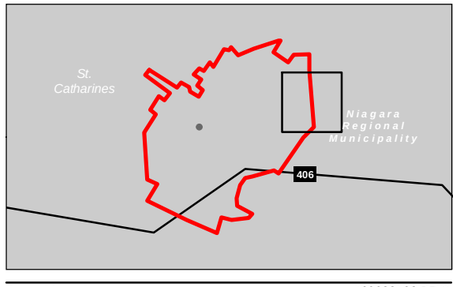
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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City of St. Catharines

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CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.9

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913

N

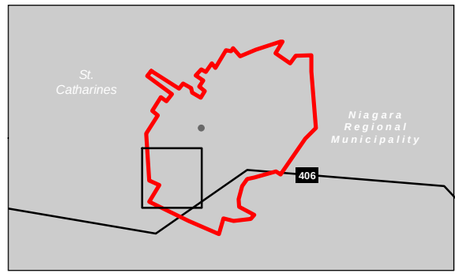
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



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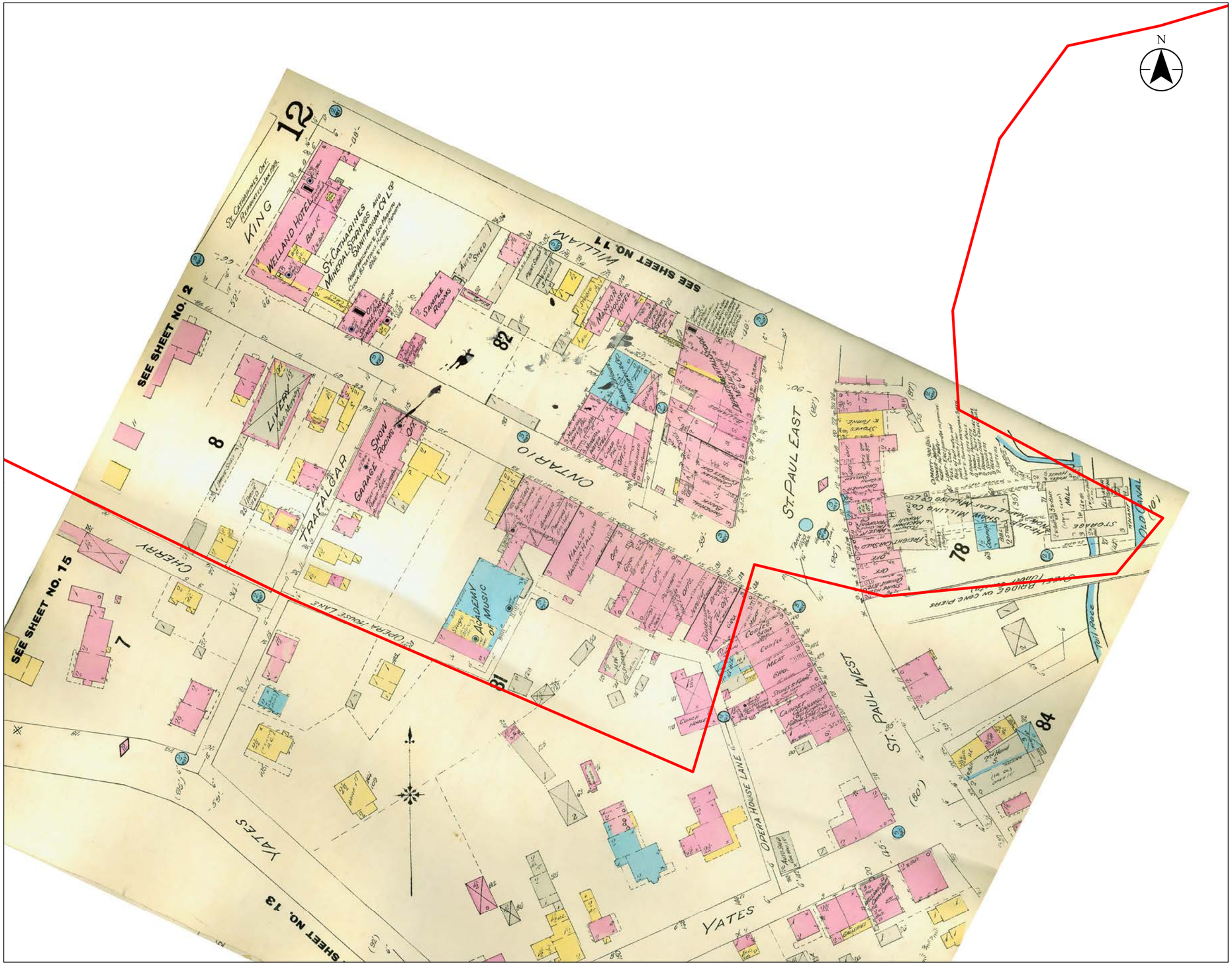
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.10

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



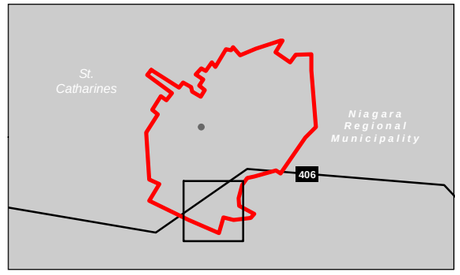
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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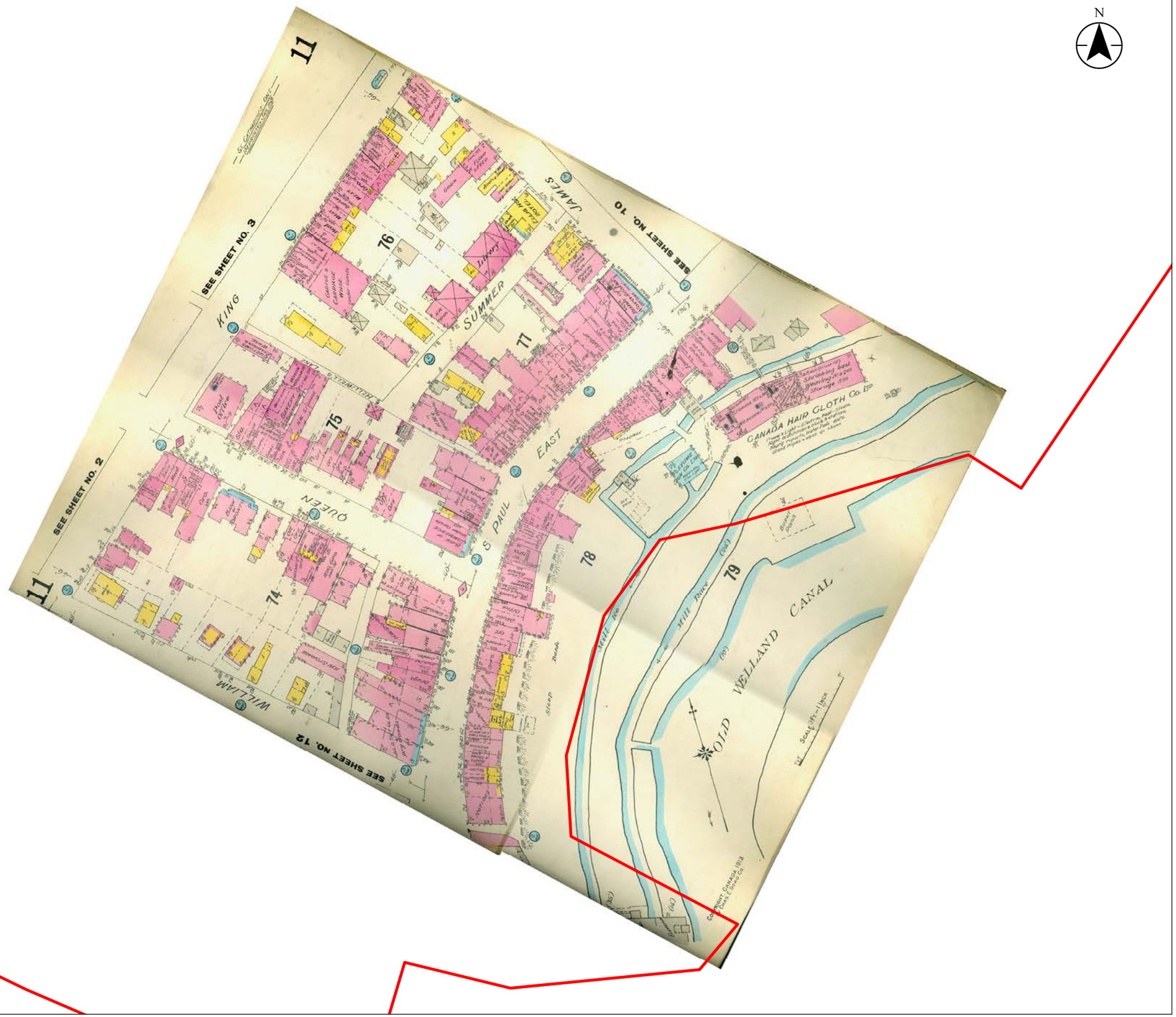
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.11

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



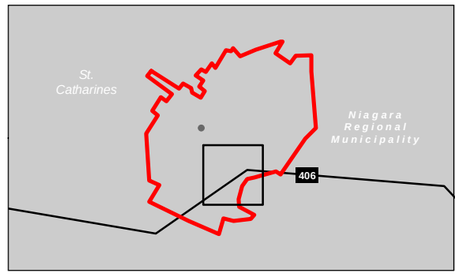
Stantec

Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Goad, Charles E. 1913. St. Catharines, Ontario. Toronto: Charles E. Goad Civil Engineer.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV1
Prepared by BF on 2024-04-12
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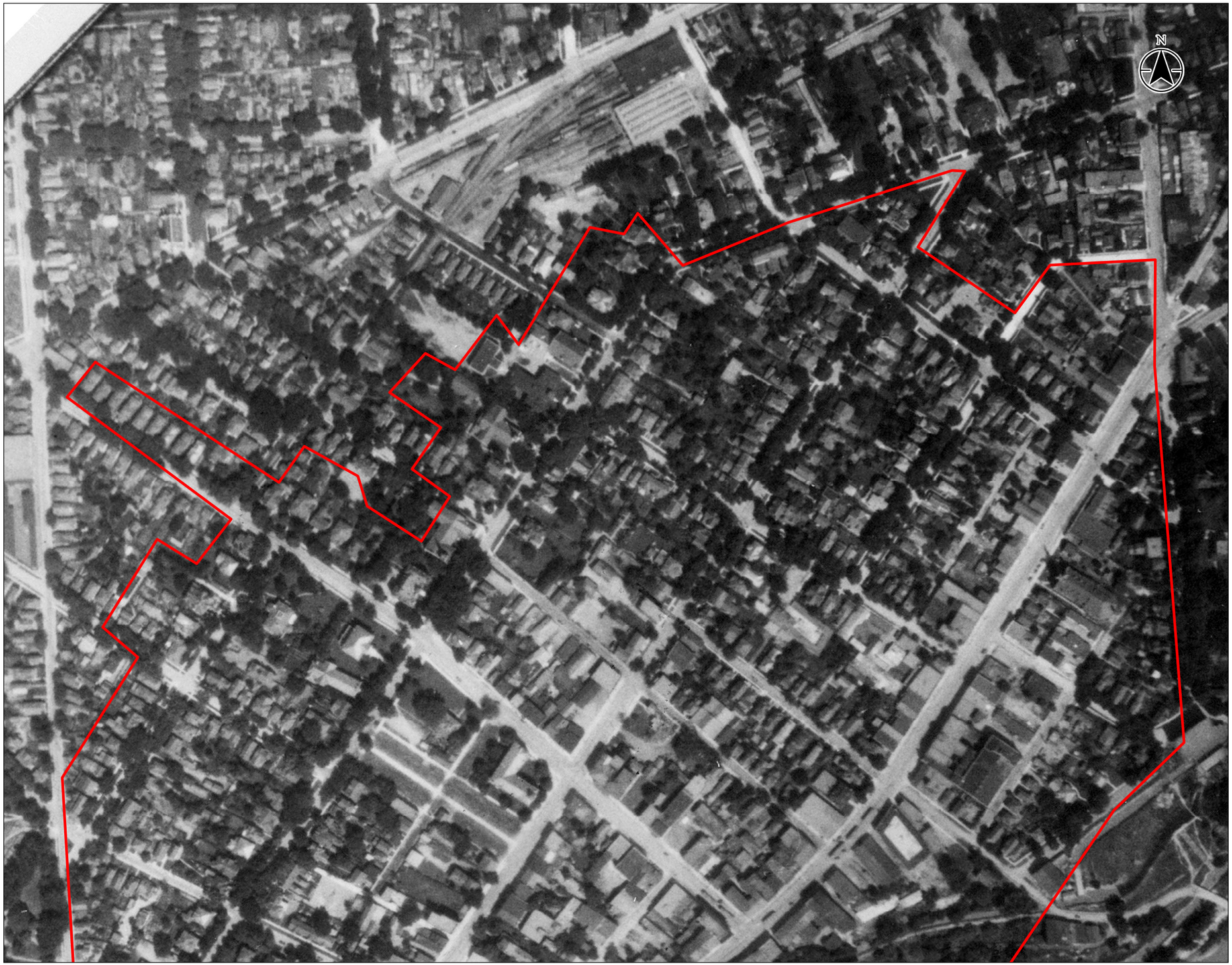
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
6.12

Title
Fire Insurance Mapping, 1913



Stantec

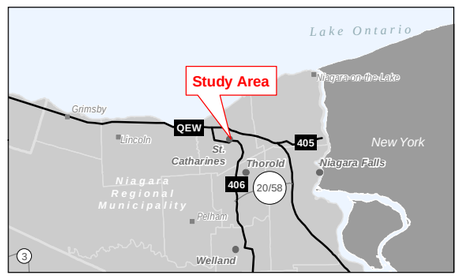
Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

0 100 200 m

1:3,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1921. H22-52.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
7.1

Title
Aerial Photograph, 1921

Stantec

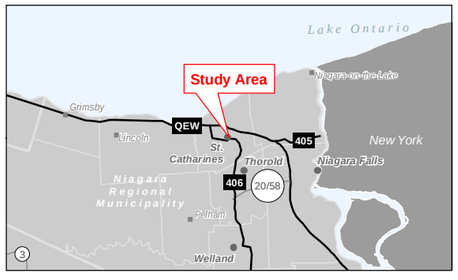
Legend

Study Area (Approximate)

0 100 200 m

1:3,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1921. H22-52.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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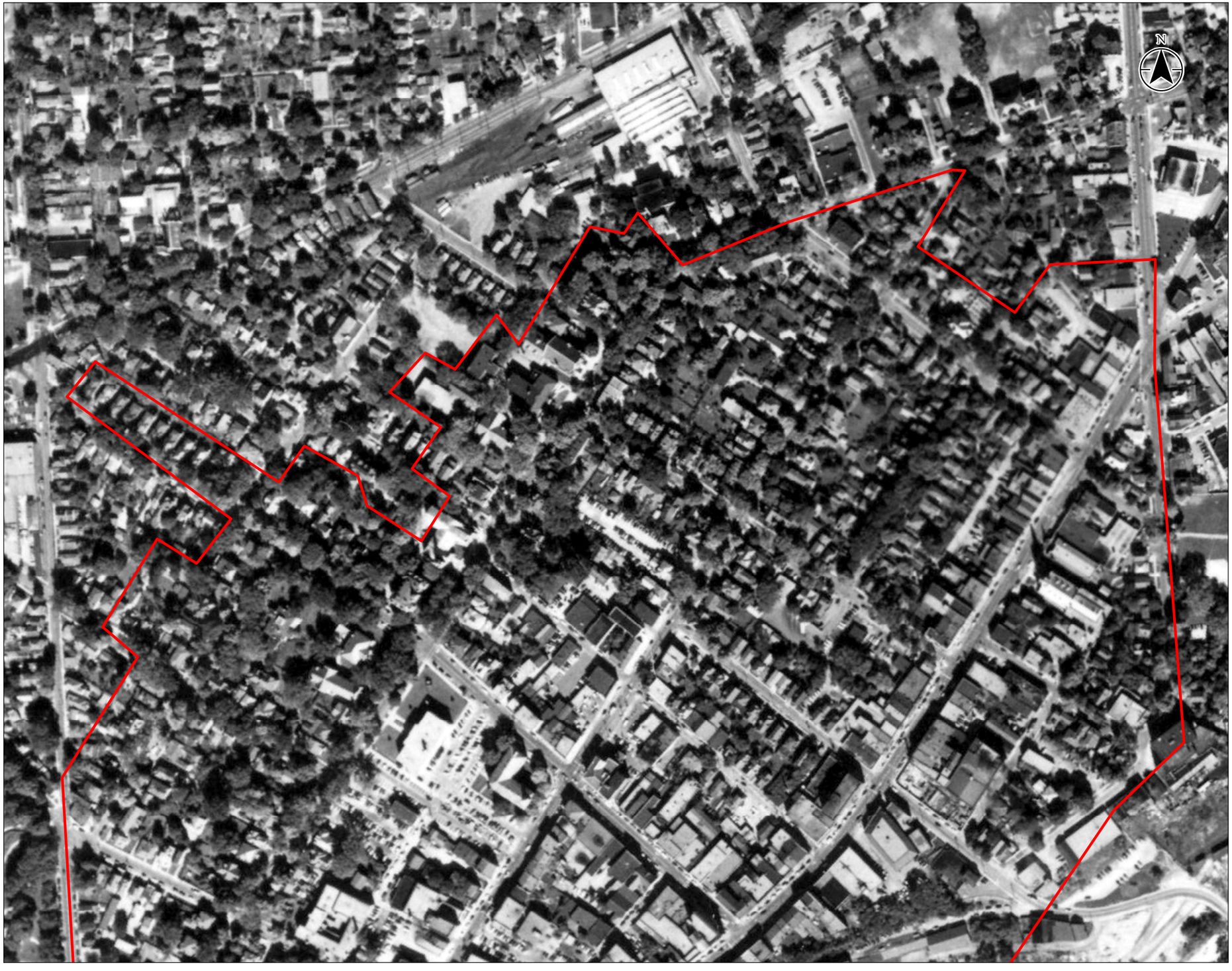
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
7.2

Title
Aerial Photograph, 1921

\\cd0004-prfs04\work_group\01609\active_Other_PCs_Active_609_GIS\160623198\03_data\gis_cat\gis\mxds\client\report_figures\HCD_2024\160623198_HCD_Fig07_1921aerial.mxd Revised: 2024-04-12 By: bfonseca



Stantec

Legend

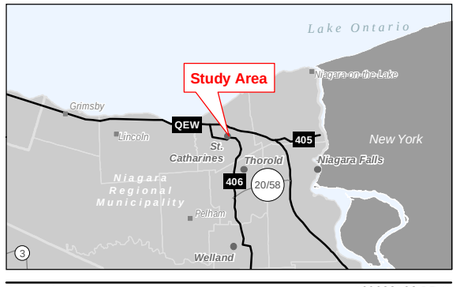
Study Area

0 100 200 m

1:3,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Ministry of Natural Resources Canada. 1954. 4307-172.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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Prepared by BF on 2025-01-22
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

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CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
8.1

Title
Aerial Photograph, 1954

Stantec

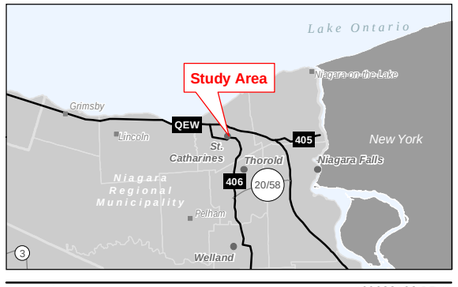
Legend

Study Area

0 100 200 m

1:3,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Ministry of Natural Resources Canada. 1954. 4307-172.



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City of St. Catharines

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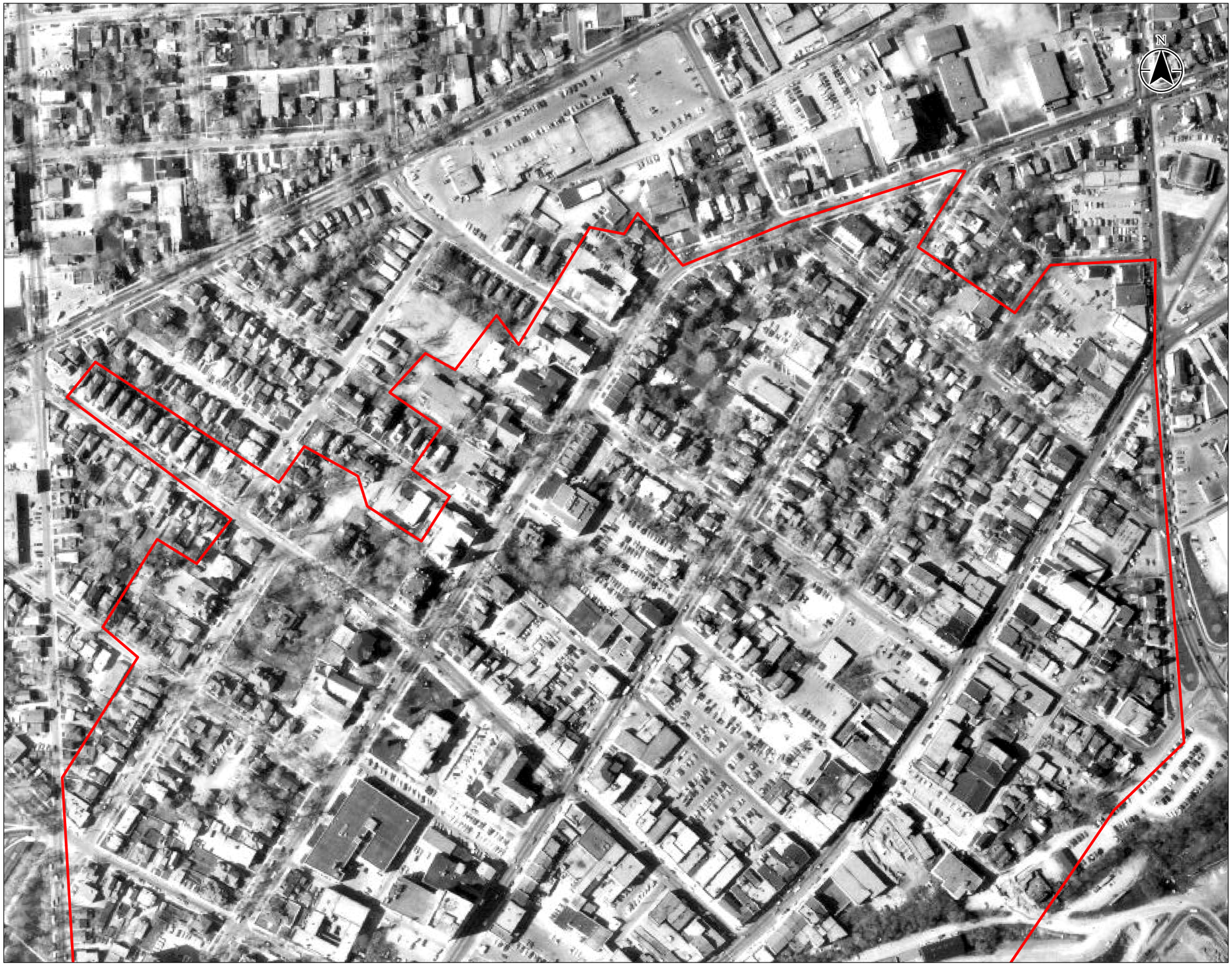
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
8.2

Title
Aerial Photograph, 1954



Stantec

Legend

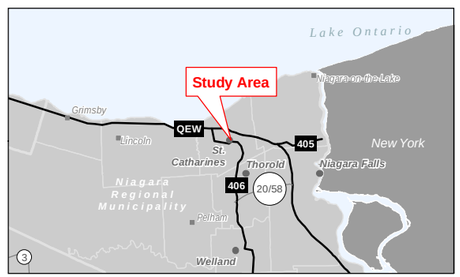
Study Area

0 100 200 m

1:3,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Canada Department of Highways. 1971. Line 17-347.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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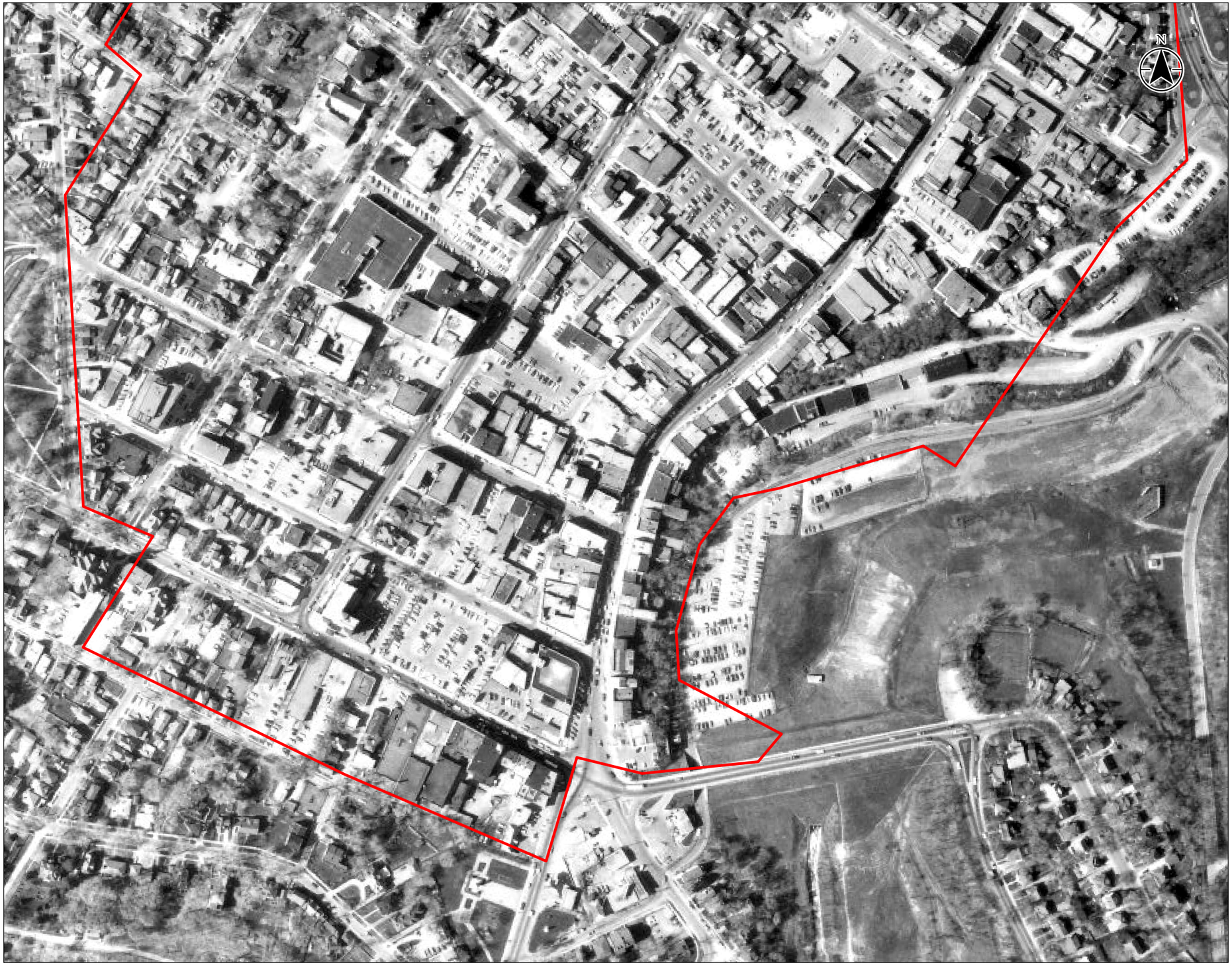
Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
9.1

Title
Aerial Photograph, 1971



Stantec

Legend

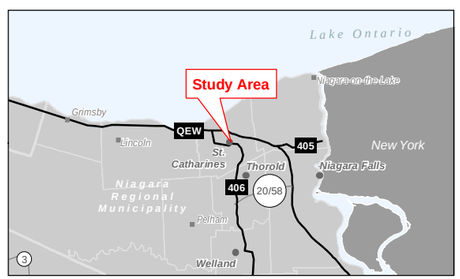
Study Area

0 100 200 m

1:3,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Reference: Canada Department of Highways. 1971. Line 17-347.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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Technical Review by TC on 2024-04-12

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CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
9.2

Title
Aerial Photograph, 1971

3.5.2 Commercial and Mixed-Use Development

The earliest remaining commercial structures in the Study Area are located on or near St. Paul Street. These commercial buildings are typically two to four storey attached structures with a first storey storefront and upper storey dwelling units. This type of architecture is typical of downtown communities in Ontario and much of North America during the mid-19th to early 20th centuries. The linear alignment of these buildings and their relatively compact footprint reflect their dependence on streetcar service and walkability in a period before the widespread adoption of the car (McAlester 2013: 60). In addition, the commercial core of St. Catharines was located close to the Welland Canal and its associated industries.

The commercial core has experienced infill development in the mid to late 20th century. After the Second World War, development became centred around automobile use and shopping habits shifted to shopping plazas outside of the downtown. In response, commercial development shifted away from retail shopping to office space. Many office buildings were completed in downtown St. Catharines during the mid-20th and late 20th century including One St. Paul and 15 Church Street.

3.5.3 Residential Development

While the Study Area is predominantly commercial in character, much of it west of King Street was formerly residential into the mid-20th century. Today, pockets of residential development remain near the edges of the Study Area. This includes sections of James Street, Duke Street, Church Street, Academy Street, King Street, and Court Street. These residences mostly date from the late 19th to early 20th centuries and are detached structures on narrow lots with small setbacks between the street and building. These residences are typically one and one half to two storeys in height and were designed for the City's growing middle class and upper class as the city expanded. The location of these residences near the downtown core allowed for workers to walk to and from work and stores. As the city continued to grow into the early 20th century and mid-20th century, low-rise and mid-rise apartment buildings such as 45-47 William Street and 99 Church Street were also constructed within the Study Area.

3.5.4 Industrial Development

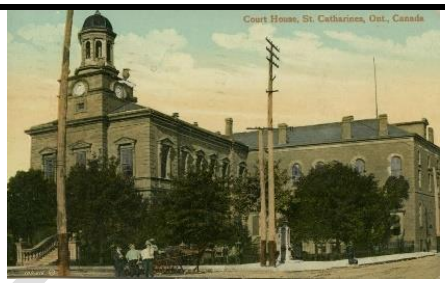
Development of industry within the Study Area was spurred by the completion of the mill races east of St. Paul Street. During the 19th century numerous industries were established along the mill race. Following the realignment of the Welland Canal to bypass Twelve Mile Creek and the widespread adoption of steam power and later electrical power, the importance of industry to the Study Area began to decline as industries moved to larger parcels of land outside the urban core. The former Canada Hair Cloth Factory, located at 15 Artists' Commons remains the most tangible sign of the Study Area's industrial heritage.

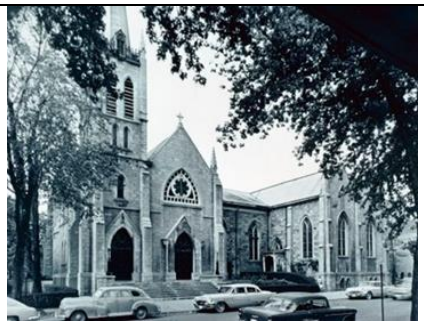
3.5.5 Civic and Institutional Development

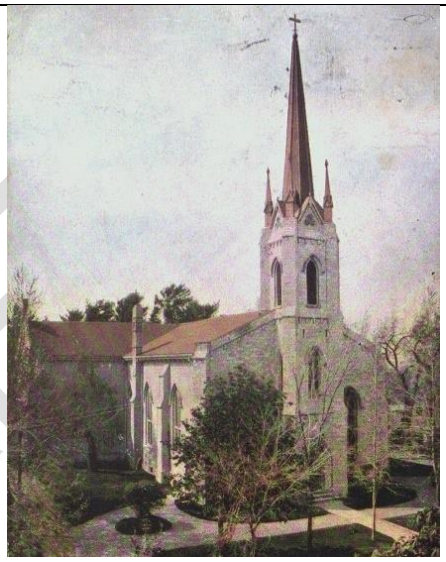
The institutional and civic development of the Study Area is tied to St. Catharines role as the region's political, economic, and social centre. As a result, the Study Area contains many civic, religious, and institutional structures which are of both local and regional importance. Religious structures include

several prominent churches. Some of these churches contained cemeteries founded prior to the banning of burials within city limits in 1857 (St. Catharines Museum 2017). Many of these structures are located on Church Street between Helliwell's Lane and Academy Street. These structures are summarized Table 2.

Table 2 Civic, Institutional, and Religious Structures within the Study Area

Name and Address	Key Information	Photo
Original Town Hall/Lincoln County Courthouse, 101 King Street	This property contains St. Catharines' original town hall. It was designed in 1849 by the noted architect Kivas Tully. In 1865, the Lincoln County offices and courthouse relocated to the property and an addition was completed (City of St. Catharines 2023a; Taylor 1992: 10).	 Doors Open Ontario n.d.
Laura Secord Building, 32 Church Street	This federal building was constructed in 1956 to house the post office, national revenue department, and customs department. It is historically associated with the expansion of the federal government in the decades after the Second World War. The building is also valued for its modernist design and is a recognized federal heritage building (Parks Canada 1999).	 St. Catharines Library 2024
St. Catharines Municipal Building, 50 Church Street	Construction of this long-planned building began in 1936 to replace a temporary municipal building that had been used since 1870s. The building was designed by the local architect Robert MacBeth and is faced in Queenston limestone. It is noted for its Art Deco design elements (St. Catharines Museum 2022; Taylor 1992: 13).	 St. Catharines Library 2024

Name and Address	Key Information	Photo
Knox Presbyterian Church, 53 Church Street	The congregation was founded in St. Catharines in 1841. The current building was completed in 1860 and was built to accommodate the town's growing Presbyterian congregation. Some early congregants were stonemasons who labored on the Welland Canal. It was renamed Knox Presbyterian Church in 1875 (Archives Association of Ontario 2024c; Taylor 1992: 14; Lawrie 1891).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse, 59 Church Street	This provincial courthouse was completed in 1983 at a cost of $15,700,000. Designed during a period of high energy prices, it was designed to be especially energy efficient (Globe and Mail 1987).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria, 67 Church Street	This Catholic Cathedral was built between 1843 and 1845. It replaced a previous wooden structure on this property. Funding for the church was raised by Irish Catholic canal laborers and some of these workers also helped build the church. The church has served as a centre for Catholics in the Niagara Region (Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Catharines 1982; Taylor 1992: 14).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
St. Catharines Centennial Public Library, 54 Church Street	Following the amalgamation of Port Dalhousie, Merriton, and Grantham Township with St. Catharines the existing library was deemed insufficient. The Centennial Public Library was built between 1976 and 1977 and named in honour of the city's centennial (Gannon 2022).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024

Name and Address	Key Information	Photo
Niagara Regional Police Headquarters, 68 Church Street	This building was completed in 1963 to serve as the headquarters for the city's police force. Following creation of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the city's police force became part of the new regional police. This building initially served as headquarters for the new regional police and is presently vacant (Niagara Regional Police 2019).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
St. George's Anglican Church, 83 Church Street	St. George Church's is home to one of Canada's oldest Anglican communities. The original church was built in 1796 nearby present-day Yates Street. Following the completion of the Welland Canal and subsequent growth of St. Catharines, a larger space for the community's Anglicans was desired. St. George's Church was built between 1835 and 1840. It has continuously served the community for over 200 years (St. George's Anglican Church 2024; Taylor 1992: 16; McMaster University 2025).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
First United Church, 95 Church Street	First United Church traces its origins to the First Presbyterian congregation in St. Catharines. The congregation built their first church on the property in 1834 while the present building was completed in 1878. The First United Church congregation was founded in 1925 following a partial amalgamation of Protestant denominations. In 2004, the church amalgamated with the Grantham United Church (Archives Association of Ontario 2024b; Taylor 1992: 17).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024

Name and Address	Key Information	Photo
Grantham Academy/ St. Catharines Collegiate Institute, 85 Church Street	Grantham Academy was founded as a private secondary school in 1829. Over the years, the building has been expanded, and the dates of the additions are visible above the main entrance. In 1890, the school was reorganized as St. Catharines Collegiate Institute. It is presently the Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre (St. Catharines Museum 2023).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
First Ontario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul Street	The First Ontario Performing Arts Centre opened in 2015. The 95,000 square foot building is part of a wider effort to promote the city's local artists and culture (City of St. Catharines 2023).	 St. Catharines Public Library 2024
Garden City Tower, 301 St. Paul Street	The Garden City Tower, built 1996, is a civic structure with an 11-storey tower and a bus terminal with regional bus service.	 Stantec, 2024
Market Square, 91 King Street	The market square was the historic location of the city's market. In the 20th century, a bus station was built over the site. In 1986, the bus station was moved and the market reopened in its historic location under a new canopy.	 Stantec 2024

Name and Address	Key Information	Photo
Silver Spire United Church, 366 St. Paul Street	This church was built between 1861 and 1863 for local Methodists and replaced a previous frame structure. The church was modeled after the Grace Methodist Church in Buffalo. It is presently a United Church.	 Stantec 2024
Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts 15 Artists' Common	This building was constructed in 1888 and is historically associated with the Canada Hair Cloth Company. Beginning in 2015, it has been adaptively reused by Brock University to house their school of fine and performing arts.	 Stantec 2024

3.5.6 Significant Architects and Builders

Throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries, St. Catharines had many prolific architects and builders constructing residential, commercial, and civic structures throughout the city. Some of these individuals include Kivas Tully (1820-1905), Samuel Goodfellow Dolson (1827-1911), George J. Metzger (1855-1929), Arthur E. Nicholson (1881-1945), Robert Ian MacBeth (1891-1978), Lionel Hesson (1890-1973),

Kivas Tully is a well-known architect within Ontario as he was involved with the Ontario Department of Public Works for many years. Tully designed many civic and commercial structures including the Custom House and Trinity College, both in Toronto, as well as contributed significantly to the construction of the Insane Asylums in Toronto, London, Hamilton, Kingston, Orillia, Mimico, and Brockville (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.a.). Within the Study Area, Tully is credited with designing 101 King Street (former Lincoln County Courthouse).

Samuel Goodfellow Dolson was best known as a builder and contractor in the Niagara Peninsula (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.b.). In the 1880s, Dolson began advertising himself as an architect and was one of the founding members of the Ontario Association of Architects. (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.b.). He is credited with having erected over three hundred buildings in St. Catharines (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.b). Within the

Study Area, Dolson was identified as designing 95 Church Street (Royal House Redeemed Christian Church of God) and 183 King Street (now the YWCA Niagara Region).

George J. Metzger was a prominent architect in Buffalo, New York during the late 19th and early 20th century (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.c.). After entering the profession in 1875, Metzger served as the County Architect for Erie County and was credited with the design of Mount Carmel Hospice in Niagara Falls, as well as Main Street Bewery (later Weyland's Brewery) and the 65th Armoury in Buffalo (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.c.). Within the Study Area, Metzger was identified as designing 80-88 St. Paul Street.

Arthur Edwin Nicholson designed many residential, commercial, and civic structures in the City of St. Catharines (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.d.). Working as both an independent architect, and in partnership with Robert Ian MacBeth (Nicholson & MacBeth), Nicholson was responsible for designing structures including (but not limited to): the police station at Park Street and Market Square, the Isolation Hospital on Lincoln Avenue, St. Paul's Ward Public School, the St Thomas Anglican Church, Grantham Methodist Church, Queen Street Baptist Church, Welland Avenue Methodist Church, and St George's Anglican Church (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.d.). Within the Study Area, Nicholson designed 2 Lake Street and 44 Ontario Street (formerly the Lincoln County Registry Office).

Robert Ian MacBeth took up residence in St. Catharines, after immigrating from Scotland in 1914 and found a job as a draftsman with Arthur. E. Nicholson (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.e.). After moving to Toronto to gain more experience, Nicholson invited him to form a partnership in 1921 (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.e.). Together, Nicholson & MacBeth was credited with over thirty designs for impressive private residences for wealthy clients in Niagara (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.e.). The firm was well known for their refined Tudor Revival style (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.e.). MacBeth himself was well known for his Art Deco style, including the façade of the St. Catharines City Hall (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.e.). Within the Study Area, MacBeth designed 44 Ontario Street (formerly the Lincoln County Registry Office).

Lionel Hesson was trained under the leading architect of the town, Arthur E. Nicholson (discussed below) from 1907 to 1913 (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.f.). After working in the provincial Department of Public Works (1913-1916) and the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario (1916-1918), Hesson eventually returned to St. Catharines and worked for Nicholson & MacBeth (1923-1925) before opening his own office in 1935 (Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada n.d.f.). Within the Study Area, Hesson was identified as designing 145 King Street (formerly the Grantham Town Hall).

3.6 Identification of Key Themes

The Study Area reflects the evolution of St. Catharines from the late 18th century to the present-day. The overall development of the Study Area has been influenced by several key themes. The following key themes have been identified for the Study Area.

3.6.1 Geography

The development of St. Catharines, beginning with its founding at the end of the 18th century, has been influenced by its position on the Iroquois Plain. This narrow strip of land between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment has served as a critical east-west conduit through the Niagara Peninsula.

The first Loyalist settlers in St. Catharines used an Indigenous trail south of the shoreline to make their way to Twelve Mile Creek. This creek proved to be a useful source of waterpower and St. Catharines began to develop around the creek and Indigenous trail. The role of the Iroquois Plain as an east-west conduit was reinforced when the Great Western Railway was built through the Niagara Peninsula along the Iroquois Plain in the mid-19th century. During the 20th century, the QEW was also routed near the shoreline. The City's location along the Iroquois Plain has meant that it has been serviced by critical transportation routes along the Niagara Peninsula. In addition, as the Niagara Peninsula is the main land corridor between western New York and Toronto, St. Catharines was well suited to benefit from its geographical proximity to these major markets.

Another significant geographic distinction of St. Catharines and the Iroquois Plain within the Niagara Peninsula is its mild climate and sandy soil. This combination of geographic factors resulted in largescale fruit growing around St. Catharines in Grantham Township. While other parts of Ontario contained soil favorable to fruit cultivation, only the Iroquois Plain part of the Niagara Peninsula contained a mild enough climate. In addition, this area is located along important transportation routes such as railways and highways and near major markets for foodstuffs such as Toronto, Hamilton, and Buffalo. This has contributed to St. Catharines moniker as "The Garden City".

3.6.2 The Iroquois Trail

St. Paul Street and the early development of the Study Area is directly connected to the Indigenous history of the area. The alignment of St. Paul Street approximates the route of part of an Indigenous trail commonly called the "Iroquois Trail". This Indigenous trail linked Albany, New York to Detroit, Michigan. This served as an important overland transportation route for Indigenous peoples and colonial settlers alike.

3.6.3 Loyalist Settlement

The early development of St. Catharines, including the Study Area, is partially linked to the settlement of the Niagara Peninsula by United Empire Loyalists and later American settlers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many of St. Catharines earliest settlers were Loyalists, descendants of Loyalists, or veterans of the American Revolution including Paul Shipman and William Hamilton Merritt. Due to its proximity to the United States and fertile soil, the Niagara Peninsula was one of the earliest settled areas in Ontario. Therefore, a significant portion of the population in the 19th century descended from United Empire Loyalists. In general, immigration to Upper Canada from the United States took place between the American Revolution and commencement of the War of 1812. It was not until the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 that large scale immigration to Upper Canada from the British Isles began (Craig 1963: 124).

3.6.4 The Welland Canal

The Welland Canal transformed St. Catharines from a rural hamlet in the early 19th century to the largest settlement in Lincoln and Welland Counties by the mid-19th century. The Welland Canal made St. Catharines a key location on the journey between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. The role the Welland Canal played in the development of the Study Area is directly demonstrated by the 19th century streetwall along much of St. Paul Street. The street was located adjacent to the canal and directly benefitted from its proximity to the waterway. The canal also provided an important source of waterpower for industrial development. As a result, numerous industries developed along the canal, including milling, ship buildings, and the export of agricultural goods. When downtown St. Catharines was bypassed by the Third Welland Canal in the 1880s, it caused a notable drop in the economy of the area for several decades.

3.6.5 Underground Railway

St. Catharines was an important destination on the Underground Railway, especially following passage of the *Fugitive Slave Act* by Congress in 1850. Under the act, individuals who had escaped enslavement in the United States could be captured and returned to enslavement in the American south. After the passage of this law, many freedom seekers became determined to make their way into Canada, where slavery was illegal, and slave catchers had no jurisdiction. Among these freedom seekers was Harriet Tubman. She was a noted American abolitionist and former enslaved person who led many groups seeking freedom over the suspension bridge at Niagara Falls into Canada. Tubman settled in St. Catharines before returning to the United States during the American Civil War to serve as a nurse. While many freedom seekers resided outside of the Study Area, they would have worked and shopped within the Study Area.

3.6.6 Manufacturing Centre of Niagara Region

St. Catharines had developed a significant industrial base due to its location on the Welland Canal and access to ample waterpower. Protectionist tariff policies beginning in the 1870s spurred further industrial investment in St. Catharines as new industries were attracted to the town due to its sizable workforce, waterpower, and proximity to the United States and Toronto. The industrial base of St. Catharines brought prosperity to the Study Area as people lived, shopped, and worked downtown. At the same time, people were drawn downtown to the various cultural attractions such as opera houses, playhouses, and later movie theaters.

The attractiveness of St. Catharines for industrial investment was furthered in the early 20th century when the community was connected to cheap hydroelectric power from the Niagara River. The automobile industry became established in St. Catharines during the early 20th century and by the mid-20th century was one of the largest sources of employment in the city. This persisted until the 1990s when GM began a series of layoffs which reduced much of this workforce. The decline of GM in St. Catharines had a cascading effect as companies which had for decades supplied parts and components for GM found themselves struggling to remain viable. This resulted in a general economic slump in St. Catharines, including within the Study Area, which persisted into the early 2010s.

3.6.7 Regional Centre

As a result of its geographical advantages and proximity to the Welland Canal, St. Catharines developed into the economic, social, and political centre of the Niagara Region by the mid-19th century. This is directly demonstrated by the decision to move the county seat to St. Catharines in 1862. As a result, numerous civic, institutional, and large commercial structures were located downtown, as well as numerous churches. This is also historically demonstrated by the number of cultural and entertainment institutions such as opera houses, playhouses, and movie theaters that operated downtown. This trend was further strengthened in the mid-20th century as government expanded in the postwar years. Numerous civic structures with regional or federal links within the Study Area were built such as the Laura Secord Building (32 Church Street) and the Niagara Regional Police Headquarters (68 Church Street). In addition, numerous large commercial buildings were completed within the Study Area in the mid-20th century and late 20th century. This reflects the large workforce in the community and the prominent role the City played in the region's economy. Examples within the Study Area include One St. Paul Street, 110 James Street, 15 Church Street, and 43 Church Street. This trend continues into the present-day with the construction of the First Ontario Performing Arts Centre, the Meridian Centre, and the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts.

Like many urban regional centres in Canada, the Study Area has faced considerable pressures during the 2020s as municipalities have grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing development pressures and calls for intensification as a result of a nationwide housing crisis.

4 Archaeology

4.1 Introduction

The City's past is visible in the built heritage still present within the community today. However, there are also archaeological remains in the vicinity that date back thousands of years. While not necessarily a visible daily reminder to the local population of St. Catharines' heritage, archaeological resources that have been recovered and those still in the ground yet to be reclaimed can be used to help reconstruct the past of both Indigenous and European inhabitants within the St. Catharines area and beyond.

While Archaeology is typically considered under Part VI of the OHA, it is important to understand the current archaeological framework within the context of a potential HCD to understand how archaeological resources are identified and managed. The archaeological heritage of the Study Area is addressed by the Garden City Plan (GCP) and the Niagara Region OP (NOP), which direct readers to conservation of archaeological resources in accordance with provincial requirements such as the OHA and the Environmental Assessment Act. It is also addressed by the *Niagara Region Archaeological Management Plan*, which was completed in December 2023 and endorsed by Regional Council in March 2024.

The GCP and NOP direct readers to the Region's Archaeological Management Plan for policies regarding the identification and mapping of areas of archaeological potential and for establishing procedures for the protection and interpretation of archaeological sites (City of St. Catharines 2018: 16; Niagara Region 2024: 188). The *Niagara Region Archaeological Management Plan* contains a model for determining possible areas of archaeological potential within the region; that is, areas where archaeological resources may be found based upon known archaeological resources, existing oral and written documentation, geographic features, and other criteria (Niagara Region 2023: 31-38).

The provincial process for archaeological assessments of terrestrial sites which is outlined in the MCM's 2011 *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (the archaeology Standards and Guidelines) includes four stages (MCM 2011). A Stage 1 archaeological assessment requires a property specific background study and property inspection by a licensed archaeologist. This assessment includes a land use history and evaluates the property against various criteria outlined in the archaeology Standards and Guidelines that helps predict the likelihood that archaeological resources exist within the property.

If the results of the Stage 1 assessment indicate the property retains archaeological potential, an archaeological survey (Stage 2 archaeological assessment) of the property is required. If significant archaeological resources are identified during the Stage 2 survey, the resources are further assessed through a site-specific archaeological assessment (Stage 3 archaeological assessment). If it is determined through the Stage 3 assessment that the archaeological resources have further CHVI, a mitigation plan for the resources must be developed. Options for the mitigation plan include the long-term avoidance and protection of the archaeological resources (a Stage 4 archaeological mitigation by avoidance and protection) and excavation of the archaeological resources (a Stage 4 archaeological mitigation by excavation). The mitigation of an archaeological site is complete when the site has received

formal long-term protection or has been excavated and is determined to have no further CHVI according to the licensed archaeologist's report that has been reviewed and found to be compliant by the MCM.

As part of the Indigenous Archaeological Potential Model, a broad archaeological cultural history is provided in the Niagara Region's archaeological management plan (Niagara Region 2023: Appendix A Table A1); Table 3 is based upon that table with some modifications in the Post-contact Period rows.

Table 3 Archaeological Culture History of the Niagara Region

Period	Date Range (Radiocarbon Years Calibrated Before Present [cal. BP] or Common Era [CE])	Lifeways and Environment
Early Paleo	13,000-12,500 cal. BP	Hunters and fishers; early Lake Wainfleet
Late Paleo	12,500-11,000 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers; receding Lake Wainfleet
Early Archaic	11,000-9,000 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers; seasonal round (warm season base camps and cold season dispersal); low water levels in Ontario and Erie basins
Middle Archaic	9,000-5,000 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers; seasonal round; northern hardwood forest established; rising water levels in Ontario and Erie basins; return of Lake Wainfleet *circa* 6,000 cal. BP
Late Archaic	5,000-3,000 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers; seasonal round; modern environments; establishment of lake levels close to modern *circa* 4,000 cal. BP
Early Woodland	3,000-2,300 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers; seasonal round; introduction of pottery
Middle Woodland	2,300-1,500 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers; seasonal round; introduction of maize
Late Woodland	1,500-300 cal. BP	Hunter-gatherers (seasonal round) and farmers (semi-permanent villages and seasonal camps)
Post Contact	1600-1650 CE	Initial contact with Europeans
	1650-1800 CE	Tribal displacements and European occupation (see Section 3.4 of this study)
	1800-present CE	Major non-Indigenous colonization and European occupation (see Section 3.4 of this study)

4.2 Archaeological Potential Versus Archaeological Resources

There are two key aspects of archaeology considered within the *Niagara Region Archaeological Management Plan*: archaeological potential and archaeological resources. The definitions in the Region's Archaeological Master Plan are as follows:

- **Areas of archaeological potential** means areas with the likelihood to contain *archaeological resources.* Criteria to identify archaeological potential are established by the Province. The OHA

requires archaeological potential to confirmed by a licensed archaeologist (PPS 2024, emphasis added).

- **Archaeological Resources** In the context of the archaeology Standards and Guidelines, objects, materials and physical features identified by licensed archaeologists during a Stage 2 archaeological assessment as possibly possessing cultural heritage value or interest. Analysis using the criteria set out in the archaeology Standards and Guidelines determines whether those objects, materials, and physical features meet the definition of an archaeological site under the OHA and whether Stage 3 archaeological assessment is required. In various planning and development contexts, the term may refer to any or all archaeological potential, artifacts, and archaeological sites.
- According to the PPS, archaeological resources include artifacts, archaeological sites, and marine archaeological sites, as defined under the OHA. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the OHA.

(Niagara Region 2023: 45)

To expand upon the first definition, archaeological potential is theoretical; this is a measure of the possibility that archaeological resources could be found within the Study Area. When an archaeologist speaks of the archaeological potential of a study area, they are not stating that there are archaeological resources to be found in that study area, merely that archaeological resources could be found. Since archaeological resources must be deposited by humans and then preserved through the passage of time, an area with archaeological potential may or may not yield archaeological resources depending on whether the landscape has been altered, whether what people left behind has been preserved by natural processes, or whether people even left behind evidence that they were there at all.

To expand upon the second definition, archaeological resources are concrete expressions of the past (leaving aside the vast theoretical literature concerning the nature of that concrete expression). When an archaeologist recovers a physical artifact left behind by human activity or can define a discrete archaeological site where people once lived, worked, played, or performed in some other fashion, then archaeological resources can allow people in the present a window into the past. The archaeological resources can then be interpreted to demonstrate something about the past and support (or at least interact with) other lines of evidence that contribute to the knowledge of the area's heritage.

In the context of an HCD, archaeological potential contributes to the possibility of heritage information to be gleaned from the archaeology of the Study Area. Documented archaeological resources contribute material data that can be used to construct at least a portion of the available heritage information for the Study Area.

4.3 Archaeological Sites within the Study Area

Given the development that has been undertaken within the Study Area during the 20th and 21st centuries, a number of archaeological sites have been documented. The MCM maintains records of these archaeological sites in the Ontario Archaeological Sites Database (OASD) for the province (Government of Ontario 2024b). The OASD is a database of all registered archaeological sites in the province as

reported to the Ontario government by archaeologists, both professional and avocational, and other individuals. For licenced archaeologists, the OASD can further be used to refer to the archaeological licence reports or published literature linked to each of these archaeological sites. For the purposes of this study, the OASD itself was mostly relied upon with occasional reference to additional literature as noted.

The OASD was queried for the Study Area and a surrounding buffer. There were five previously registered archaeological sites identified within or immediately adjacent to the Study Area which are documented below in Table 4. The OASD reflects the archaeological sites found within the Study Area and not necessarily the archaeological potential in the Study Area. The lack of known Indigenous archaeological sites does not mean that there were no such sites in the Study Area, just that there has not been enough archaeological investigation of the Study Area to allow for a determination of their presence or absence within the Study Area.

An archaeological site's Borden number is a unique designator within the Borden system, a national grid system designed by Charles Borden in 1952 (Borden 1952). The grid covers the entire surface area of Canada and is divided into major units containing an area that is two degrees in latitude by four degrees in longitude. Major units are designated by upper case letters. The width of basic units reduces as one moves north due to the curvature of the earth. In southern Ontario (and in the Niagara Region), each basic unit measures approximately 13.5 kilometres east-west by 18.5 kilometres north-south. Basic units are designated by lower case letters. Individual sites are assigned a unique, sequential number as they are registered. These sequential numbers are issued by the MCM, who maintain the Ontario Archaeological Sites Database. The archaeological sites discussed here fall within Borden block AgGt.

Table 4 Archaeological Sites within the Study Area

Borden Number	Site Name	Time Period	Affinity	Site Type	Last Stage Completed	Consultant
AgGt-211	Canada Hair Cloth Property, the Tailrace I Site	Post-Contact	Euro-Canadian	Industrial	Stage 2	AMEC Environment and Infrastructure
AgGt-213	Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandia Cemetery	Post-Contact	Euro-Canadian	Cemetery	Stage 3	Archaeological Research Associates Ltd. (ARA)
AgGt-251	31 Duke Street & 18-20 Wellington Street	Post-Contact	Euro-Canadian (English, Irish, Other German)	Residential	Stage 3	Timmins Martelle Heritage Consultants Inc. (TMHC)
AgGt-255	Eccles Site	Post-Contact	Euro-Canadian	Residential	Stage 4	CRM Lab Archaeological Services Inc.
AgGt-325	Packard Electrical Company	Post-Contact	Euro-Canadian	Manufacturing	Stage 4	ARA

The following paragraphs include summaries of the archaeological assessments and recommendations for each of the sites identified in Table 4. The four sites marked with an asterisk (*) are located within, or partially within, the St. Catharines HCD Study Area. The fifth site is located adjacent to the HCD Study Area.

***AgGt-211: Tailrace I Site (Canada Hair Cloth Property):** A due diligence Stage 2 investigation of the Tailrace I Site was conducted by Amec Environment and Infrastructure in 2013 (Amec Environment and Infrastructure 2015). The Tailrace I Site was discovered during construction associated with redevelopment in support of the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts. The construction work uncovered a masonry feature that was previously part of a covered tailrace within an integrated network of hydraulic raceways. The network of raceways was used to power operations at the former Canada Hair Cloth building, which has since been adaptively reused as part of the Brock University campus. The interior of the Canada Hair Cloth building had been substantially remodelled sometime after the tailrace fell out of use, obscuring the tailrace's function in the manufacturing process. However, this type of industrial archaeological feature is rare both regionally and provincially and was determined to retain CHVI as a result. Outstanding archaeological concerns for the site were addressed when the site was fully documented as part of a Stage 2 assessment and brick and stone samples were taken for analysis.

***AgGt-213: Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandria Cemetery:** Human remains were first uncovered on the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandria property during construction activities in 2015 and, following a partial Stage 3 burial site investigation, the site was named the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandra Cemetery under Borden number AgGt-213 (ARA 2017). The study area included a large mechanically excavated area as well as displaced soils that had been moved to a landfill during construction activities. The burial site investigation, including screening of the displaced soils, recovered three pre-contact Indigenous lithics, 755 Euro-Canadian artifacts dating from the early 19th to mid-20th century, five grave shafts with visible human remains, and two features that were possible grave shafts.

Background research indicated that the cemetery primarily dates from *circa* 1827 to 1856. While the project lands were determined to have no remaining archaeological potential and were not recommended for further work, it was determined that the unassessed portions of the site retained further CHVI and additional Stage 1, 2, and 3 assessments were recommended. The report also recommended that an additional Stage 3 investigation using mechanical screening be completed to facilitate recovery of all artifacts and human remains from the large volume of displaced soil that was moved to a landfill.

An additional Stage 1, 2, and 3 archaeological assessment of part of the previously unassessed lands was undertaken by ARA using the burial features identified in the 2017 partial burial site investigation report and a 10 metre buffer as the basis for the Study Area (ARA 2018). At the time of the assessment, the Study Area was part of a paved parking lot. The additional burial site investigation was unable to identify the limits of the Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria Cemetery as issues arranging for an appropriate mechanical screener caused the project to stall. A partial burial site investigation report was filed with recommendations for additional Stage 1, 2, and 3 archaeological assessments to complete the burial site investigation. The partial investigation report from 2018 documented 458 Euro-Canadian artifacts, 2,239 human remains, and three additional grave shafts. Funerary artifacts accounted for majority of the artifact assemblage. Approximately 98% of the human remains demonstrated evidence of impact from previous construction, mechanical excavation/screening activities, or other mechanical processes. The highly fragmented nature of the remains limited the possible analysis, but it was

determined that the minimum number of individuals in the site was six, including three adults and three subadults. The site is notable for its extremely high level of integrity, especially in the lower portions of the grave shafts, and has historical associations with the early Euro-Canadian settlement of St. Catharines and with the settlement's Roman Catholic population.

***AgGt-251: 31 Duke Street & 18-20 Wellington Street:** A Stage 1 and 2 archaeological assessment of a gravel parking lot at 31 Duke Street and 18-20 Wellington Street was undertaken by TMHC as part of an Infrastructure Ontario Class Environmental Assessment. Background research for the Stage 1 determined that the study area had potential for archaeological remains due to its proximity to 19th century thoroughfares, the early municipal core of St. Catharines, and mapped 19th century structures associated with William Harris, John and Catherine Grey, and Catherine and Mary Adams. Stage 2 test trenching was undertaken throughout the historic settlement lots and identified buried structural remains and potential artifact-bearing subsurface features related to 19th century settlement in the study area, particularly at 31 Duke Street. The archaeological remains identified included some related to Catharine and Mary Adams' mid-19th century occupation of 31 Duke Street. Catherine and Mary Adams belonged to one of St. Catharines' most prominent early families. The Adams family was actively involved in early politics and abolitionist organizations in the City. The site was determined to retain further CHVI and Stage 4 mitigation was recommended.

AgGt-255: The Eccles Site: The Eccles Site was subject to a Stage 4 archaeological site mitigation undertaken by CRM Lab Archaeological Services Inc. in advance of a proposed property redevelopment (CRM Lab Archaeological Services Inc. 2019). The salvage excavations documented 21 features, including three which were interpreted as being solely from the 19th century and 371 artifacts which predominantly represented the mid to late 19th and early 20th centuries. Analysis of the features and artifacts interpreted the site as a mid- to late 19th century, domestic, Euro-Canadian occupation. The Eccles Site was completely excavated within the boundaries of the subject property to be impacted by the proposed property redevelopment.

***AgGt-325: Packard Electrical Company:** A partial Stage 4 excavation report for the Packard Electrical Company site is currently awaiting ministry review. Based on the Site Record for AgGt-325, this site contains part of the stone foundation and basement floor associated with the former Packard Electrical Company building (Government of Ontario 2024c). No artifacts were recovered during the partial Stage 4 excavation. The site retains CHVI, and additional Stage 4 excavation is recommended. The Packard Electric Company, which specialized in the production of electrical transformers and meters, was founded in 1894 and built a stone manufacturing plant overlooking the old Welland Canal (St. Catharines Standard 1946).

5 Architectural Character

5.1 Introduction

An analysis of building types, architectural styles, and materials within an HCD Study Area can yield a greater understanding of the social and cultural factors that influence the development of a place over time. The study of built influence within an HCD Study Area also provides a basis for identifying CHVI for an HCD where there are design/physical values. This analysis in the Study phase is also useful if the HCD progresses to the Plan Phase. The analysis of building types, architectural styles, materials, and building heights provides an understanding of what stylistic attributes may be conserved, and how new development can be an appropriate fit given historic conditions. The following sections provide an overview of building types, architectural styles, and building (or cladding) materials found within the Study Area.

5.2 Building and Property Types

The Study Area contains a mix of commercial, residential, civic, institutional, and religious buildings. Historically, the commercial core of St. Catharines was located on St. Paul Street resulting in a concentration of commercial structures along a streetwall on both sides of St. Paul, as well as on some of the connecting streets branching off St. Paul Street. As St. Catharines developed and changed over the course of the 20th century, other commercial building types were constructed, including taller commercial office buildings in the area northwest of St. Paul Street, including areas around Church Street, James Street, and King Street.

Some of the properties characterized as commercial also contain other uses above the first storey. These properties typically include 19th and early 20th century structures that would traditionally have contained a shop or similar commercial use on the first storey, with residential quarters above. In some cases, these would have been occupied by the business owner and their family, while in others they may have been let out to tenants to generate income for the property's owner or landlord. The form of buildings with first storey commercial use and residential use above is common to urban areas in Ontario and typically found along major roadways in the historic downtown core, or on side streets that branch off major roads. This type of commercial structure was frequently built up to front and side lot lines, usually abutting a neighbouring structure with no space in between. In some cases, buildings were constructed as "blocks" by the same builder, containing an overall structure with one unified design, but contained multiple individual property lots separated by firewalls. The result tends to create a continued "streetwall" that is distinctive of more urban areas. In this report, these types of properties have been categorized principally as a commercial structure due to the nature of the typical commercial building form that is distinct from historical residential properties, which often included structures that were surrounded by yards or had at least some measure of setback from the lot line.

There are 243 properties (53% of the total number of properties in the Study Area) that currently have a commercial use. This includes 19th and early 20th century properties in the streetwall along St. Paul Street, most of which have retained their original commercial use and 20th-century purpose built

commercial buildings outside of St. Paul Street. Not all commercial uses reflect the original use or built form of the structure. Over time, buildings within the Study Area have been adapted to serve different uses, particularly former residential structures that have been converted to commercial use. Approximately 63 (14%) of the properties that currently have a commercial use were historically residential, based on their building form. The conversion from residential to commercial use is not uncommon in historic urban areas, and in the Study Area is reflective of the role of St. Catharines as a Regional Centre and the relocation of residents away from the downtown core as the City continued to grow and suburbanize.

Currently the Study Area contains 131 properties (roughly 29%) with an existing residential use. Most of the residential properties are located towards the outer edges of the Study Area. Properties with residential use include a variety of forms including single detached structures, semi-detached and rowhouse structures, low-rise residential apartments, and higher density residential developments. The residential properties are generally located at the edges of the Study Area but intermix with some commercial property types closer to the core of the Study Area. Out of the 452 properties in the Study Area, 226 (roughly 50%) were constructed as residences.

The remaining property and building types in the Study Area include 41 parking lots (9%), 8 civic structures (2%), 9 institutional structures (2%), 8 mixed use properties (2%), 6 places of worship (1%), 3 park and open space areas (1%), and 5 properties (1%) that are currently vacant lots, either from the result of a previous demolition or pending development. While they reflect relatively small percentages of the overall total of property and building types in the Study Area, the civic, institutional, and places of worship often have larger and distinct building forms that are visually prominent. Several of the civic, institutional, and places of worship are concentrated near the intersection of Church Street and James Street, though others are located off St. Paul Street. Civic and institutional properties in the Study Area include City Hall, the Centennial Public Library, the historic Town Hall and Market House, First Ontario Performing Arts Centre, the Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse, and an arts and multicultural centre (housed in a 19th century school building). All six places of worship in the Study Area are Christian denominations including Presbyterian, Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, and United.

A summary of the property types in the Study Area with approximate percentages is illustrated in Chart 4 and on Figure 10. It should be noted that properties containing buildings that have been converted from their original use to a new use, such as a residential structure becoming a commercial store, are represented here based on their current property type.

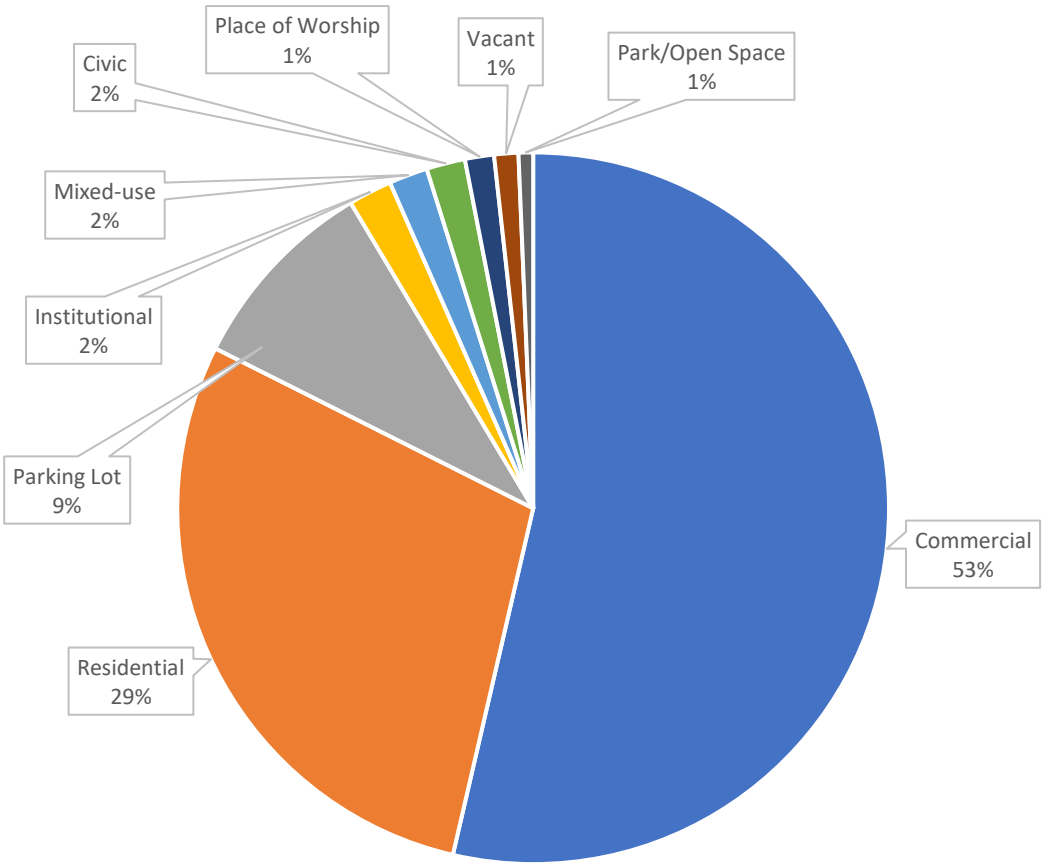
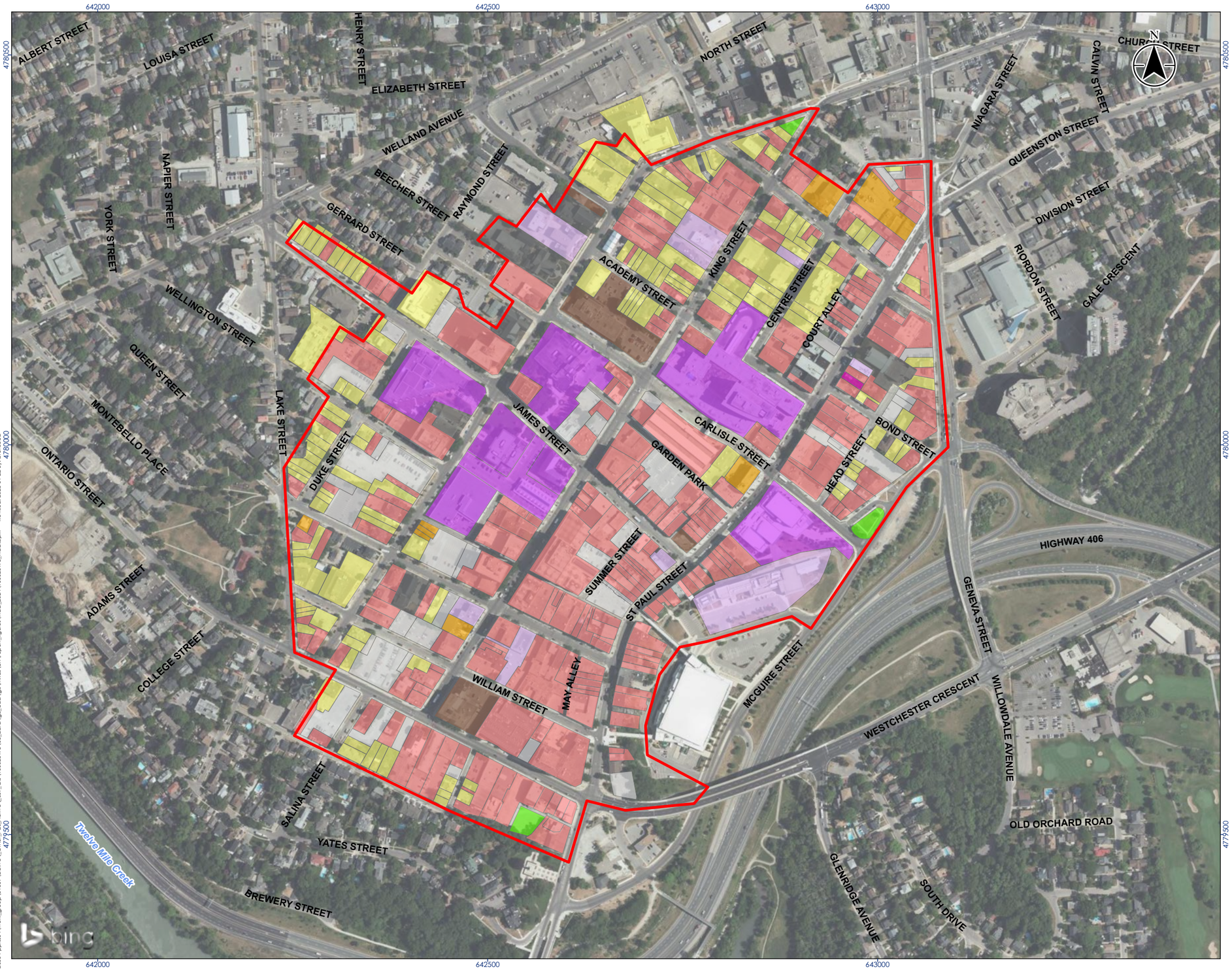


Chart 4 Current Property Types



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Current Property Use

- Civic
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Mixed Use
- Other
- Park/Open Space
- Parking Lot
- Place of Worship
- Residential
- Vacant

0 100 200 m

1:5,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

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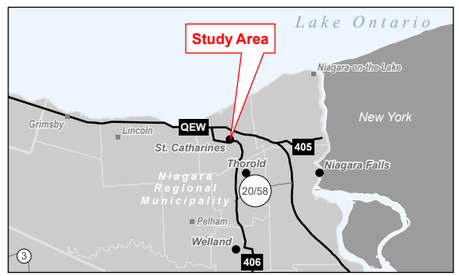

Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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Technical Review by AW on 2025-01-02

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
10

Title
Current Property Uses

5.3 Construction Periods

The majority of buildings in the Study Area were built between the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries and reflect the historical development of downtown St. Catharines outlined in Section 3. Of the 408 properties in the Study Area that contain a structure, 32 were built before 1852 (8%), 102 were built between 1853 and 1875 (25%) and 127 were built between 1876 and 1913 (31%), for a total of 64% of the building stock constructed prior to the First World War. This is reflective of the Study Area's role as the commercial core, supported by the industrial base provided by the adjacent Welland Canal and other area industries. Residential properties surrounding the core provided close access for workers, business owners, and merchants. St. Catharines as a whole continued to experience growth during the First and Second World Wars and during the interwar years. Within the Study Area, 71 structures (17%) date to this period. St. Catharines as a whole grew substantially in the post-war period, with a population and suburban construction boom. In the Study Area, 33 properties (8%) were constructed between 1940 to 1969.

The later decades of the 20th century saw distinct changes in the Study Area. There was a gradual decline of the downtown core as the primary shopper district of the City, as shoppers were drawn to the car friendly shopping plazas of the suburbs. To attract shoppers to the downtown core, greater numbers of parking lots, parking garages, and contemporary commercial structures like One St. Paul Street were built. The creation of the Regional Government resulted in an increase of commercial and office high-rise buildings and structures like the provincial registry office and courthouse that changed the skyline of the downtown core. In the Study Area, 31 properties (8%) were built between 1970 to 1999. Growth in the downtown core began to level off in the late 20th century as a result of declining local industry. In recent decades, there have been efforts to revitalize the downtown through the construction of the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre. St. Catharines has also been identified as a Regional Growth Centre in the local planning framework, and residential and mixed-use developments have also been constructed. A total of 15 properties (3%) in the Study Area date from 2000 to present day.

A summary of the construction periods in the Study Area with approximate percentages is illustrated in Chart 5 and on Figure 11.

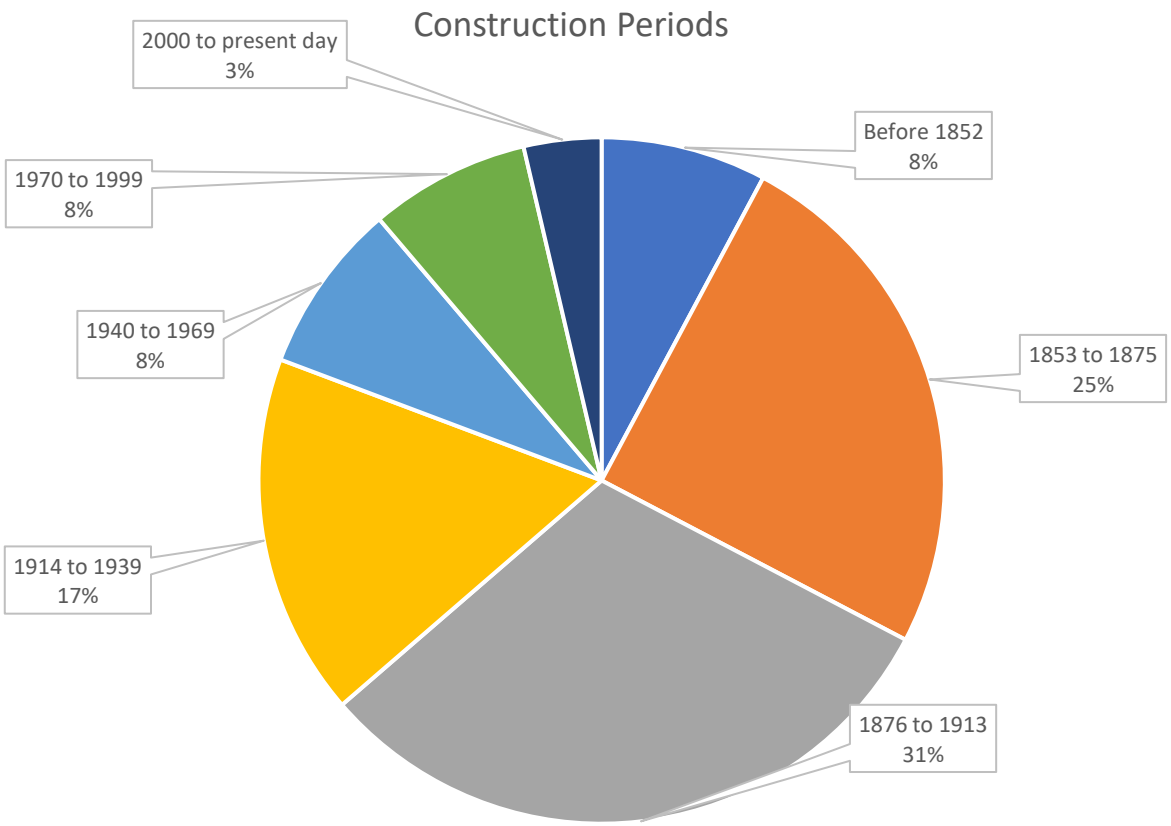
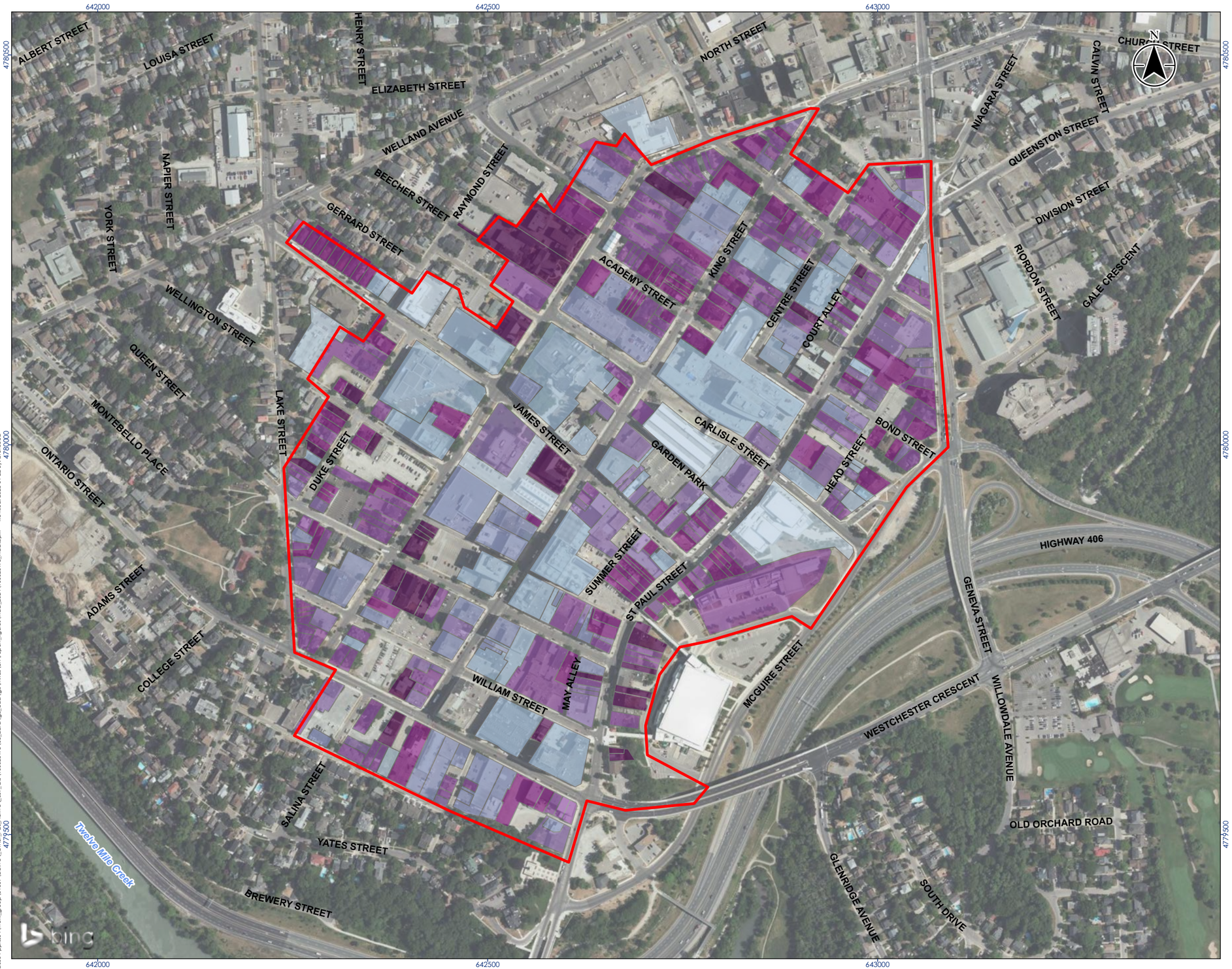


Chart 5 Construction Periods



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Construction Period

- Before 1852
- 1853-1875
- 1876-1913
- 1914-1939
- 1940-1969
- 1970-1999
- 2000+

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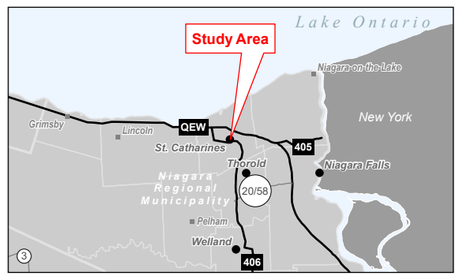

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Figure No.
11

Title
Construction Period

5.4 Styles and Influences

The Study Area contains buildings representative of, or influenced by, a variety of architectural styles as outlined in Chart 6. Properties marked as “Not Applicable” (N/A) for their architectural style typically consist of vacant lots, parking lots, and parks or open space.

Nearly two thirds of the structures in the Study Area date from the 19th to the early 20th century, with the largest concentrations occurring between 1853-1875 (25%) and 1876-1913 (31%). This reflects the overall development and population trends of the Study Area before the onset of the First World War. The presence of architectural styles in the Study Area including Second Empire, Renaissance Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Edwardian reflects the development of the Study Area during this period and the prosperity of St. Catharines in the 19th and early 20th century. Approximately one third of the structures in the Study Area (34%) are representative of various 20th styles, including modernist and brutalist examples. The presence of these styles marks indicates the shift from the main street commercial core and surrounding residential area to regional centre and includes many of the mid-to-late 20th century office, civic, and institutional buildings. Vernacular structures account for 40% of the buildings in the Study Area and reflect both 19th and 20th century buildings. There are between one and examples of several other architectural styles, including Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Craftsman/Arts and Craft, International, Beaux-Arts, contemporary replicas, minimal traditional, Neo Gothic, and Tudor revival that each account for less than one percent of the overall Study Area (these labels are not shown on Chart 6 due to their small percentage). The following sections contain brief overviews of the main architectural styles found within the Study Area.

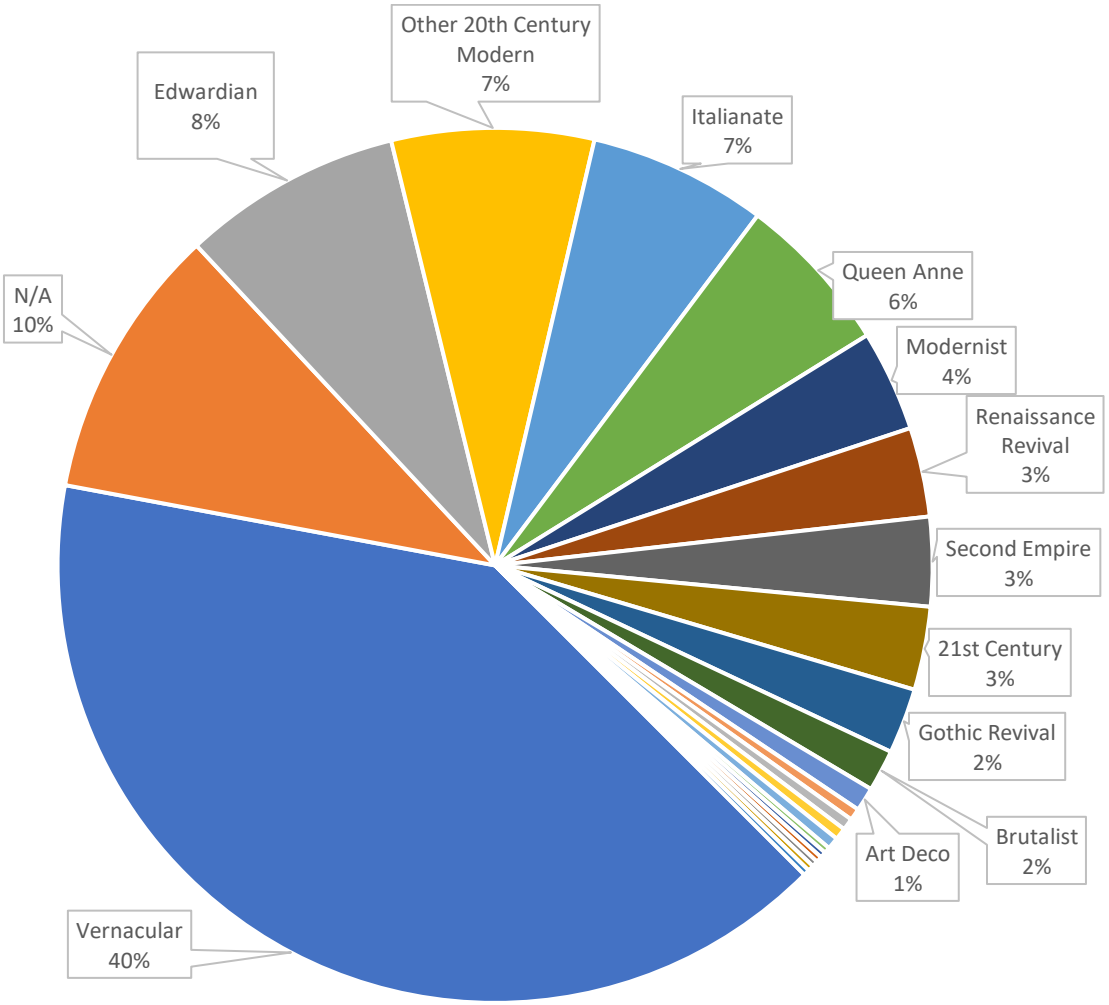
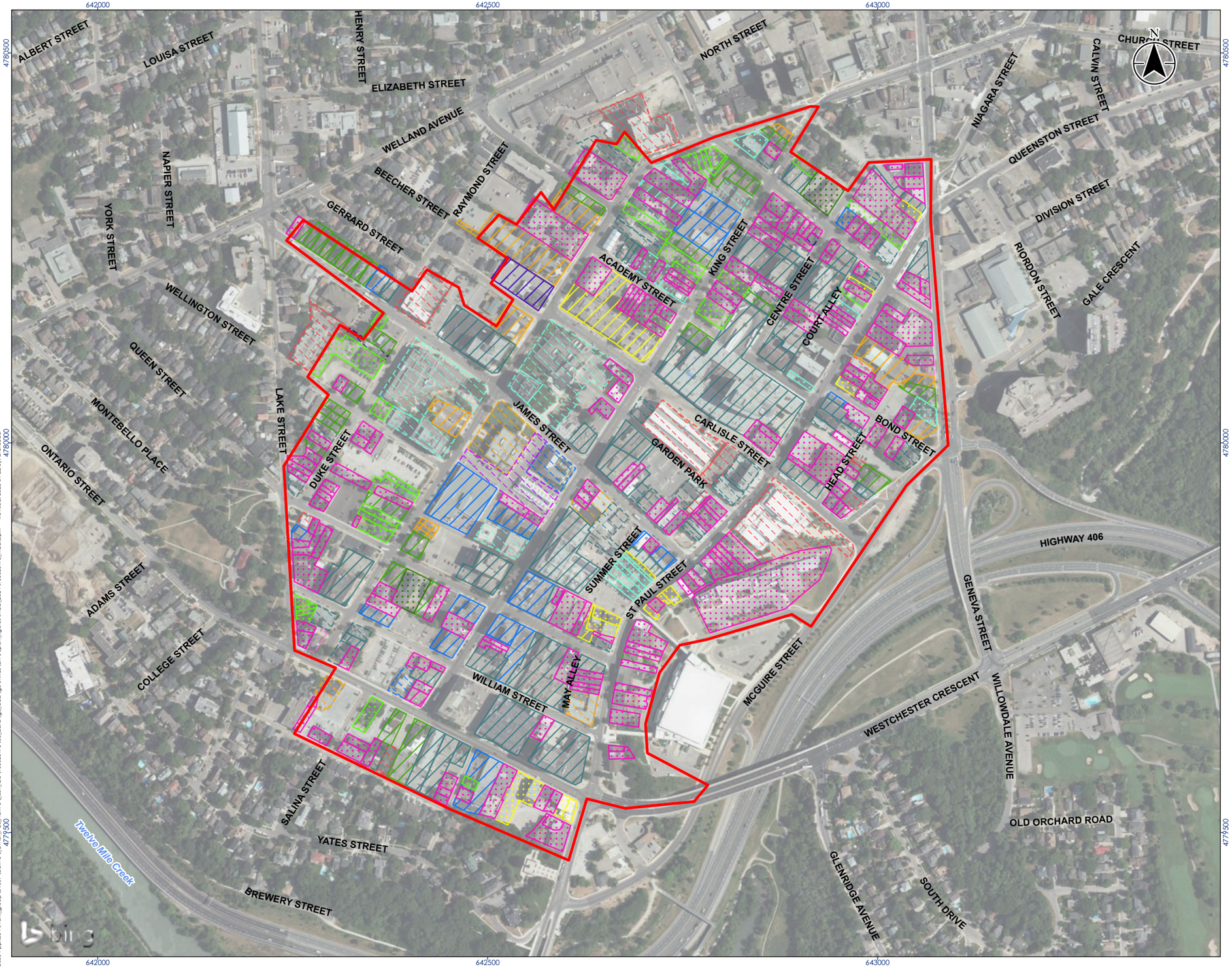


Chart 6 Summary of Architectural Styles



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Architectural Style

- 21st Century
- Art Deco
- Beaux-Arts
- Brutalist
- Classical Revival
- Colonial Revival
- Contemporary Replica of Historical Style
- Craftsman/Arts and Crafts
- Edwardian
- Gothic Revival
- International
- Italianate
- Minimal Traditional
- Modernist
- Neo Gothic
- Other
- Other 20th Century Modern
- Queen Anne
- Renaissance Revival
- Romanesque Revival
- Second Empire
- Tudor Revival
- Vernacular

0 100 200 m

1:5,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

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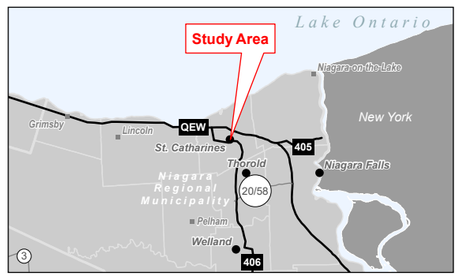

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Figure No.
12

Title
Architectural Styles

5.4.1 Italianate and Renaissance Revival

The Italianate style was popular between 1850 and 1900 (Blumenson 1990: 58). The style began in England as part of the Picturesque Movement. Italianate architecture often includes hip roofs, cupolas, ornate brackets, segmental arch windows, and deep projecting eaves (Photo 1 to Photo 6). Dichromatic brick work is often used to contrast quoins and voussoirs. Italianate residences varied in complexity and ornamentation, ranging from conservative Georgian inspired designs to highly ornate residences with multiple projecting bays and ample ornamentation. In North America, the Italianate style was popular in both urban and rural settings and included both residential and commercial examples (Blumenson 1990: 58-59). The Study Area contains 30 examples of the Italianate design style, accounting for approximately 6.6% of the properties within the Study Area.

Renaissance Revival architecture was popular from about 1870 to 1910 and was a revival of Italian renaissance era structures. It shared similarities with the Italianate style, including the use of arched windows and decorative ornamentation. Typical characteristics include flat roofs, segmental arch windows, columns, cornices, and pilasters. Renaissance Revival architecture was more commonly found in commercial structures. There are 15 Renaissance Revival style structures, approximately 3% of the properties in the Study Area.

Photo 1 **23 Ontario Street, example of commercial Renaissance Revival style**

Photo 2 **80-88 St Paul Street, example of commercial Renaissance Revival style**

Photo 3 **31 Church Street, example of residential Italianate style**

Photo 4 **164 King Street, example of residential Italianate style**

Photo 5 **170 James Street, example of residential Italianate style**

Photo 6 **83 Ontario Street, example of residential Italianate style**

5.4.2 Queen Anne

The Queen Anne style was popular between about 1880 and 1910. The style contains a mix of different English and continental European designs. In Canada and the United States, the Queen Anne style frequently included an irregular plan, towers, broad gables, pediments, projecting bays, and tall chimneys (Blumenson 1990: 102). The use of multiple materials on a single façade is also common, with brick, terra cotta tile, and wood shingle frequently utilized (Blumenson 1990: 102) (Photo 7 to Photo 11). The Queen Anne style was most commonly used in residential construction. The style was particularly popular among the burgeoning middle and upper classes of North America. The ornate design and detailing of Queen Anne residences allowed owners to express their wealth and social status (Kyles 2022). After 1910, the Queen Anne style fell out of favour and was replaced by Period Revivals and the Edwardian Style. The Study Area contains 27 examples of the Queen Anne design style, accounting for approximately 6.0% of the properties within the Study Area, most of which are located in the outer edges of the Study Area, outside of the commercial core in predominantly residential or former residential areas.

Photo 7 **27 Church Street, example of residential Queen Anne style**

Photo 8 **29 Church Street, example of residential Queen Anne style**

Photo 9 **33 Duke Street, example of residential Queen Anne style**

Photo 10 **35 Church Street, example of residential Queen Anne style**

Photo 11 **214 King Street, example of residential Queen Anne style**

5.4.3 Edwardian

The Edwardian style was popular between approximately 1900 and 1930 (Blumenson 1990: 166). Edwardian architecture commonly includes balanced façades, smooth brick surfaces, simple but large roofs, rectangular windows with stone lintels and sills, and a general sense of simplicity and order (Blumenson 1990: 166) (Photo 12 to Photo 17). Edwardian façades are often dominated by large classically derived porticos and porches. Dormer windows, tall chimneys, brick piers, and projecting roof lines are all also commonly associated with Edwardian architecture. Edwardian architecture was relatively plain with a selective display of classical elements, although commercial structures tended to be more ornate than residences. The style was popular in both urban and rural settings and included both residential and commercial examples. The Study Area contains 37 examples of the Edwardian design style, accounting for approximately 8.2% of the properties within the Study Area. Many of these are located in the transitional or residential/formerly residential areas of the Study Area, outside the commercial core, though some examples are present within the commercial core as well.

Photo 12 **74 Queen Street, example of commercial Edwardian style**

Photo 13 **101 St Paul Street, example of commercial Edwardian style**

Photo 14 **28 James Street, example of residential Edwardian style**

Photo 15 **58 Ontario Street, example of residential Edwardian style**

Photo 16 **16 Cherry Street, example of residential Edwardian style**

Photo 17 **92 Church Street, example of residential Edwardian style**

5.4.4 Ontario Vernacular Structures

Many of the 19th century to early 20th century buildings in the Study Area fall into the broad category of Ontario vernacular architecture. Vernacular buildings make use of local forms and materials and may have limited architectural influences from one style or numerous styles. In some cases, vernacular buildings refer to regional cues that stem from the settlement history of a particular area. Within St Catharines and the broader southern Ontario region, vernacular materials include red brick, buff brick, and, to a more limited extent, stone. Most building materials were acquired locally up until the early 20th century, until the increase in transportation networks allowed for a wider and more economic distribution of materials.

The forms of 19th and early 20th century vernacular structures in St. Catharines often take cues from popular styles of architecture in 19th and early 20th century Ontario such as Edwardian, Italianate, and Queen Anne (Photo 18 to Photo 23). These vernacular structures often contain less distinctive architectural embellishments but retain a key feature of a certain style such as massing and form. Residences typically follow a base design rooted in a specific style with porches, entrances, rooflines, and decorative elements that draw from additional style or have been added at a post-construction stage in the structure's past. Commercial structures typically have a commercial first storey with storefront windows and additional stories that support residential or other commercial units. The overall style may use design elements from specific styles, such as cornice brackets, drip moulds, or pilasters, but stops short of being a representative example of a single cohesive style.

Photo 18 **46 James Street, example of commercial Vernacular style**

Photo 19 **288 St Paul Street, example of commercial Vernacular style**

Photo 20 **104 St Paul Street, example of commercial Vernacular style**

Photo 21 **3 Bond Street, example of Commercial Vernacular style**

Photo 22 **38 Academy Street, example of residential Vernacular style**

Photo 23 **21 Centre Street, example of residential Vernacular style**

5.4.5 Contemporary Architecture

The umbrella term of contemporary architecture refers to buildings found in the Study Area that primarily date to the post-war era. The category "Other 20th Century Modern" used in the Study Area inventory refers to 20th century buildings that are contemporary in design but may have fewer defining characteristics of a particular subset of modern architecture, such as modernist, brutalist, or international design, or combine characteristics of these subsets. 20th century modern buildings in the Study Area include a range of materials including concrete, metal, glass, External Insulating Finishing System (EIFS), siding, or contemporary stone veneer. Within the Study Area, 20th Century Modern buildings typically include commercial buildings and higher density residential apartment buildings (Photo 24 toPhoto 28). They are predominantly located in the commercial and transitional areas beyond St. Paul Street, though there are examples along St. Paul Street and within the more residential or formerly residential areas as well.

Photo 24 **1 St. Paul Street, example of Other 20th Century Modern style**

Photo 25 **63 King Street, example of Other 20th Century Modern style**

Photo 26 **63 Church Street, example of Other 20th Century Modern style**

Photo 27 **70 James Street, example of Other 20th Century Modern style**

Photo 28 **60 James Street, example of Other 20th Century Modern style**

5.4.5.1 Brutalist

Brutalist architecture typically uses bulky and angular designs with dense massing to create heavy structures that sit imposingly on the landscape (McAlester 2022: 664). The style began to appear in the late 1940s and was commonly built until the 1970s (Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA] 2024a). Brutalist buildings are predominantly built out of reinforced concrete, often with a rough surface texture. The name of the style comes from the French term “breton brut” for raw concrete (McAlester 2022: 664). Brutalist designs typically use unusual forms to create contrasting structure compositions and often leave internal building service elements like duct work, plumbing pipes, and ventilation towers exposed (RIBA 2024a). Although the style was used in residential structures, it is more commonly found in civic, institutional, and office tower commercial structures (Photo 29 to Photo 31). While the percentage of brutalist structures in the study area is relatively low numerically (2%), many of the brutalist buildings have large massing, height, and heavy concrete materiality that gives them a distinct visual prominence, particularly at the area near the intersection of Church Street and James Street.

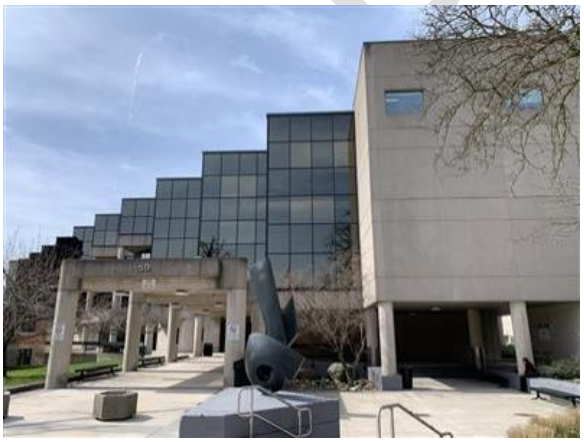

Photo 29 **59 Church Street, example of civic Brutalist style**

Photo 30 **54 Church Street, example of civic Brutalist style**

Photo 31 **63 King Street, example of commercial Brutalist style**

5.4.5.2 21st Century Architecture

Examples of 21st century modern architecture are also found in the Study Area. Also referred to as contemporary architecture, buildings from the late 20th and early 21st centuries share similarities with other modern architecture styles, such as large volumes and massing, the use of concrete, steel, and glass, and a general lack of ornamentation. However, the rise of computer design software in the architecture and design industries from the 1980s onward allowed designers a variety of new ways to approach building design (McAlester 2022: 673). Common elements associated with 21st century architecture include decoupage designs, the use of mixed external cladding (including concrete panels, brick, glass, metal, and wood), and clean façades with minimal decoration. The style is found in residential and commercial structures in the Study Area (Photo 32 and Photo 33).

Photo 32 **195 King Street, example of Modernist style**

Photo 33 **324 St. Paul Street, example of Modernist style**

5.5 Materials

Structures in the Study Area utilize a wide range of materials, including brick, stone, concrete, metal, glass, and mixed 21st century materials. While a property may have more than one type of building or cladding material, the focus of this category is to account for the dominant material that is visible from the public realm. Over time many of the buildings in the Study Area have been altered with the addition of siding or metal applied to the façades. Material observations have been made according to conditions at the time fieldwork was undertaken. For example, a brick structure that has been covered with vinyl siding such that the brickwork is hidden from view will have been recorded as having a vinyl siding exterior.

The dominant building or cladding material used in the Study Area is brick, accounting for the primary exterior of 59% of the buildings within the Study Area. The Study Area includes examples of red brick structures, buff brick structures, painted brick structures, and other brick types. The primary building material of mid-19th to early 20th century structures within the Study Area is red brick.

The prevalence of brick cladding or construction is generally associated with common building techniques of the mid-19th and early 20th century, with brick historically being the most commonly available material in the area. In general, brick was a typical building material frequently used in residential, commercial, and civic construction in the mid-19th to mid-20th century. Brick was also more fireproof than frame construction or cladding, and in 19th century Ontario was seen as a distinct advancement from frame and timber structures, helping to mark the transformation from a rudimentary settlement to a prosperous town.

Other 19th century building or cladding materials in the Study Area include stone and stucco. Stone is not a commonly used material in St. Catharines and only accounts for 3% of buildings in the Study Area. Within the Study Area, stone was more commonly used for building foundations. Stucco is a relatively uncommon historic cladding material within the Study Area and accounts for 10% of the buildings in the Study Area.

Vinyl and aluminum siding, along with concrete block, EIFS panels, pre-cast concrete panels, and late 20th and 21st century mixed materials account for 21% of the buildings within the Study Area. These cladding materials can be found on 19th century buildings that have been altered, as well as 20th and 21st century buildings.

The mix of building materials within the Study Area demonstrates the continual evolution of the Study Area, where changes are made to respond to changing stylistic trends and consideration of maintenance costs and economic realities. A summary of building materials within the Study Area are contained in Chart 7.

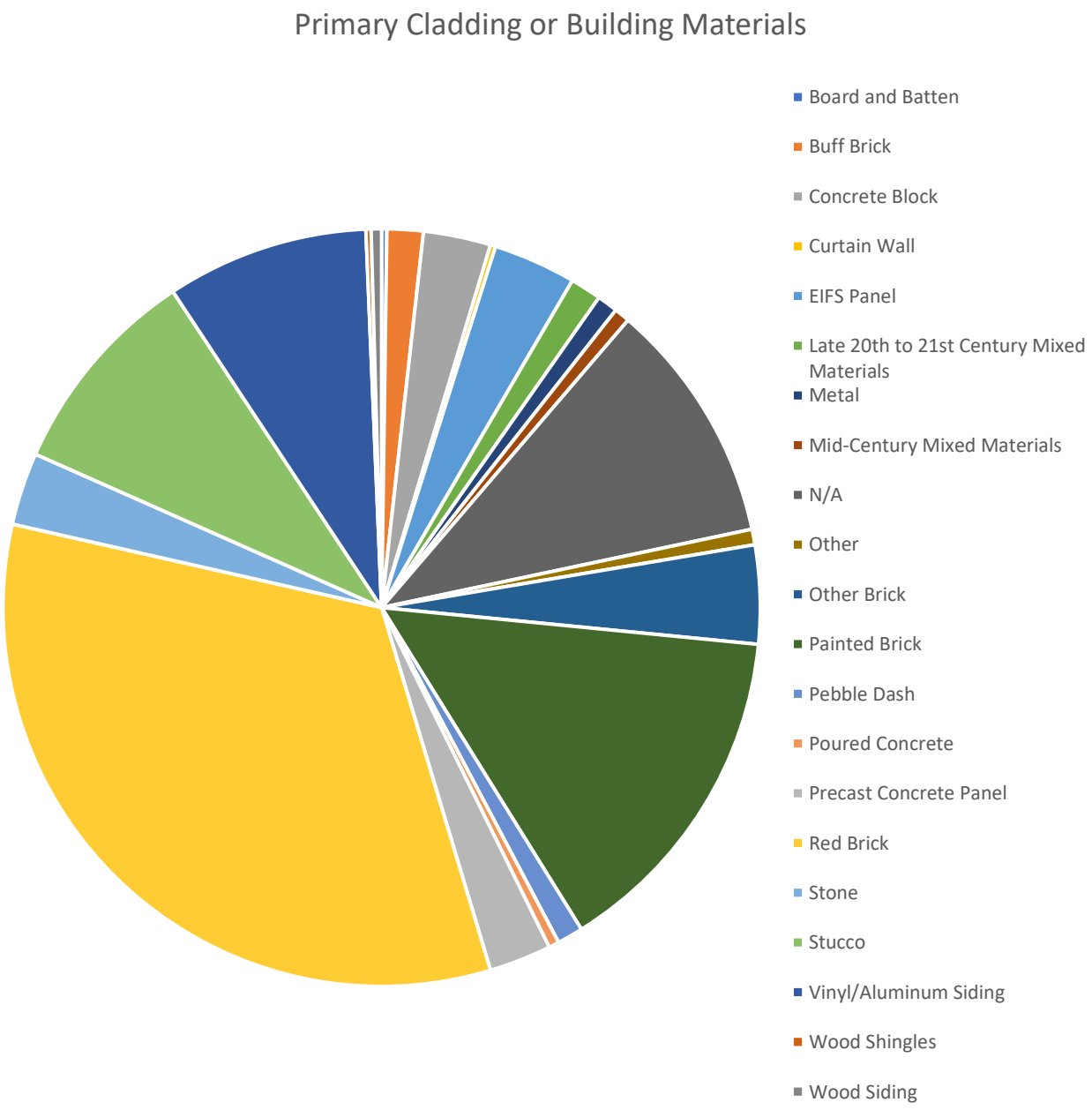

Chart 7 Primary Cladding or Building Materials

Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Cladding

- Board and Batten
- Buff Brick
- Concrete Block
- Curtain Wall
- EIFS Panel
- Late 20th to 21st Century Mixed Materials
- Metal
- Mid-Century Mixed Materials
- N/A
- Other
- Other Brick
- Painted Brick
- Pebble Dash
- Poured Concrete
- Precast Concrete Panel
- Red Brick
- Stone
- Stucco
- Vinyl/Aluminum Siding
- Wood Shingles
- Wood Siding

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Notes

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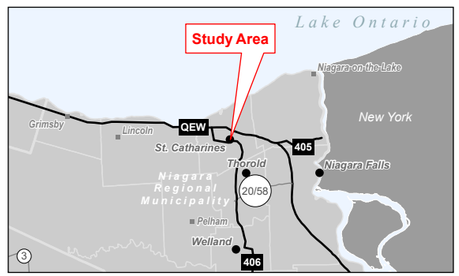

Project Location
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HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
13

Title
Building Materials

5.6 Building Height

The legibility, or the ease by which people can read and define a neighbourhood, is largely influenced by its layout and the form of the built environment. The alignment and grouping of buildings can contribute greatly to the character of a streetscape. Where buildings have a consistent setback, massing, and form, an uninterrupted rhythm is established along the street, creating a sense of unity and accord. Buildings that are close to the road create an enclosed and intimate streetscape, while large setbacks allow for broader views and an open streetscape character.

Buildings within the Study Area are predominantly between one and nine storeys in height, with the greatest number of the buildings being two storeys in height (45%), followed by two-and-one-half storeys (20%) (Chart 8). A summary of building height data for the Study Area by percentage is contained and presented in Figure 14. The “0/not applicable” category applies to parking lots, vacant lots, and parks/open space.

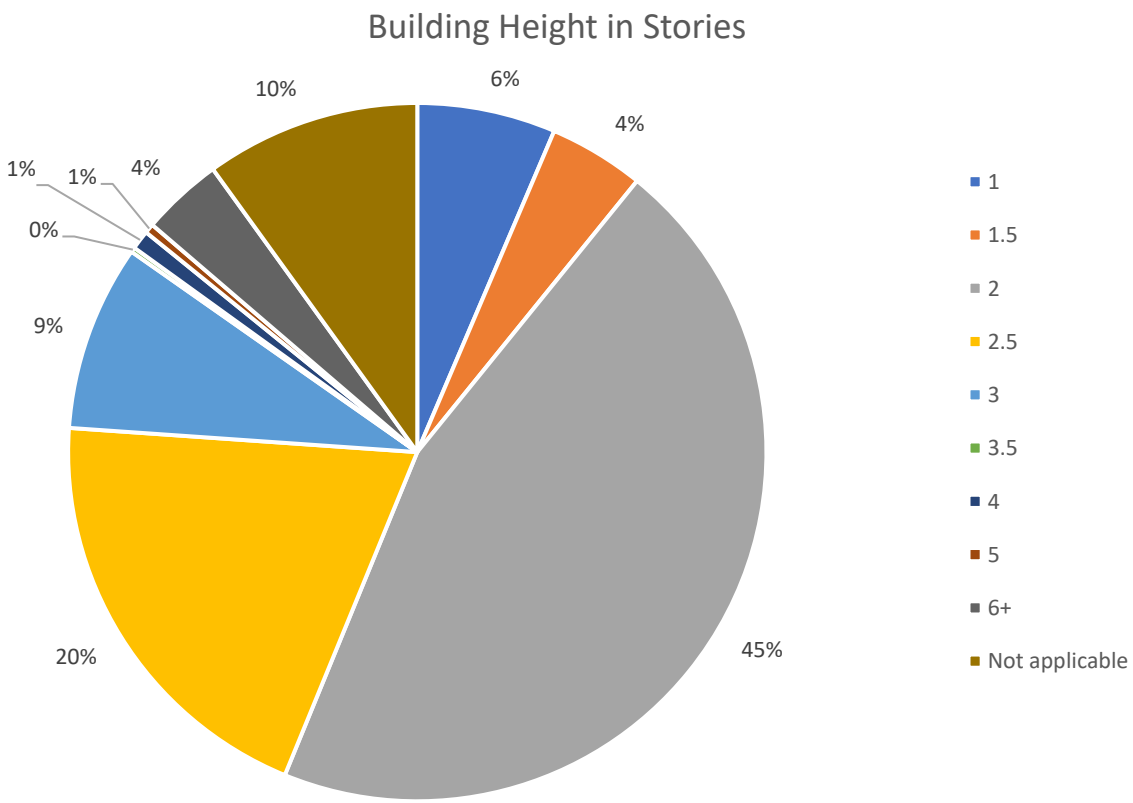

Chart 8 Building Heights in Storeys

Stantec

Legend

Study Area

Building Height

- 1
- 1.5
- 2
- 2.5
- 3
- 3.5
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10+

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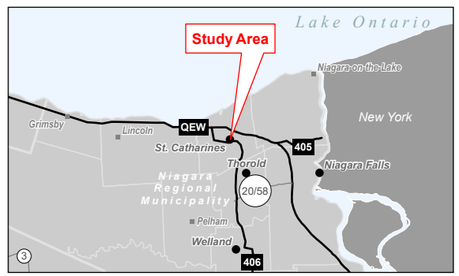

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
14

Title
Building Height

5.7 Summary

The Study Area consists of a variety of architectural character types consisting of typical 19th century commercial and residential structures; stately residences that reflected St Catharines' economic growth and success in the 19th and early 20th century; and residential and commercial construction typical to the post-Second World War period and contemporary architecture.

The architectural character of the downtown core of St Paul Street contains sections of street wall consisting of mostly mid-to-late 19th to early 20th century commercial and mixed-use structures of two to three storey heights, with no setback from the street. Much of this was constructed in the mid-to-late 19th century, due to the economic growth seen from the opening of the first, second, and third Welland Canals, as well as being linked by the Great Western Railway to the rest of Southern Ontario. In some places these mid-to-late 19th to early 20th century structures have been replaced with mid-to-late 20th century and contemporary buildings.

Residential architecture in the Study Area consists mostly of representative mid-to-late 19th to early 20th century, mid-20th century, and contemporary architectural styles. The Study Area contains popular 19th and 20th century styles such as Italianate, Queen Anne, and Edwardian, as well as a variety of designs classed as Ontario Vernacular Structures or Other Modern. Residences built during the mid-to-late 19th to early 20th century reflect the aesthetic values of Ontario during this period and the general prosperity of St Catharines during the late 19th to early 20th century.

The start of the 20th century saw economic growth in St Catharines through automotive manufacturing which was sustained through the First and Second World War and into the post-war period. This saw a rise in population density in the Study Area, and the construction of residential apartment blocks as well as commercial low-rise buildings. The late-20th century saw a period of decline in prosperity for St Catharines, as well as increased suburb growth, reflected in both a lower residential population and increase in office towers in the Study Area. While some buildings have been altered over the years, several have retained their historic features or have been restored. Some historic buildings have been demolished and replaced with 20th century structures, including former Carnagie Library that was replaced by the Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse in 1965. Some buildings, like the former Welland House Hotel at 26-30 Ontario Street have been destroyed by fire and are now vacant lots.

6 Streetscape, Landscape, Visual-Contextual Analysis

6.1 Introduction

As identified in Section 2.3.2, the Tool Kit identifies several components and characteristics that should be present within a study area as part of its consideration as an HCD. To identify the presence of these characteristics, the Project Team reviewed the streetscape, landscape, and visual aspects of the Study Area. This includes: gateways; circulation networks; setbacks and overall development patterns; hardscape elements; softscape elements; parks and open spaces; and visual considerations such as landmarks, views, vistas in the Study Area.

An understanding of the streetscape and landscape elements of the Study Area is also beneficial should the project proceed to the HCD Plan phase. HCD Plans typically include policies and guidelines for the public realm, to encourage a sense of consistency and coherence within the area and encourage landscape and streetscape treatments that are compatible to an HCD's character. Documenting the existing form can provide a baseline to manage changes moving forward.

6.2 Approaches and Gateways

The Project Team assessed potential approaches and gateways in the Study Area to help inform the analysis and evaluation of the Study Area. Approaches and gateways help identify whether a study area, or parts of it, have a distinguishable visual character. Approaches to or from a place can be characterized as either primary gateways or secondary gateways. Primary gateways are those which are emphasized by detectable approaches or other physical or visual signals that indicate the space or place is somehow different from its surroundings. This might include physical markers like notable buildings or structures, natural features, or changes in topography that highlight a sense of arrival.

Secondary gateways are entries into an area that are not clearly defined or readily discernible from the surrounding context. They may exist solely "on paper", where one side of a street is located within a Study Area and another is not, despite having a similar appearance. Secondary gateways do not have strongly detectable approaches or other key features that signal the entrance or arrival to a study area. Gateways are mapped in Figure 15.

6.2.1 Primary Gateways

Approaching the Study Area from the south the primary gateway is along St. Paul Street (Photo 34). Approaching the Study Area from the east the primary gateway is along Westchester Crescent (Photo 35). At the northeast and northwest corner of St. Paul Street and Westchester Crescent there are informational kiosks and decorative planting beds that create a gateway into the downtown core along St. Paul Street (Photo 36). Approaching the Study Area from the north, Niagara Street and Queenston Street merge into St. Paul Street as the Study Area begins (Photo 37). There are two elevated pedestrian

gateways between St. Paul Street and the Meridian Centre (Photo 38 and **Photo** 39).The gateways have concrete entrance piers, metal fencing, and one gateway, known as the Rankin Gateway, contains an entrance arch and signage.

Photo 34 **Primary gateway along St. Paul Street, looking north**

Photo 35 **Primary gateway along Westchester Crescent, looking east**

Photo 36 **Corner of St. Paul Street and Westchester Crescent, looking south**

Photo 37 **Merge of Niagara Street and Queenston Street, looking south**

Photo 38 **Rankin Gateway entrance from St. Paul Street**

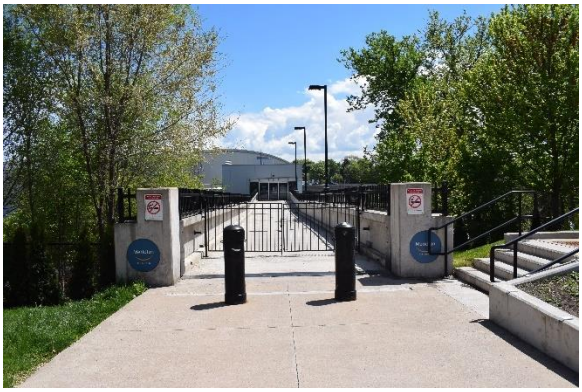
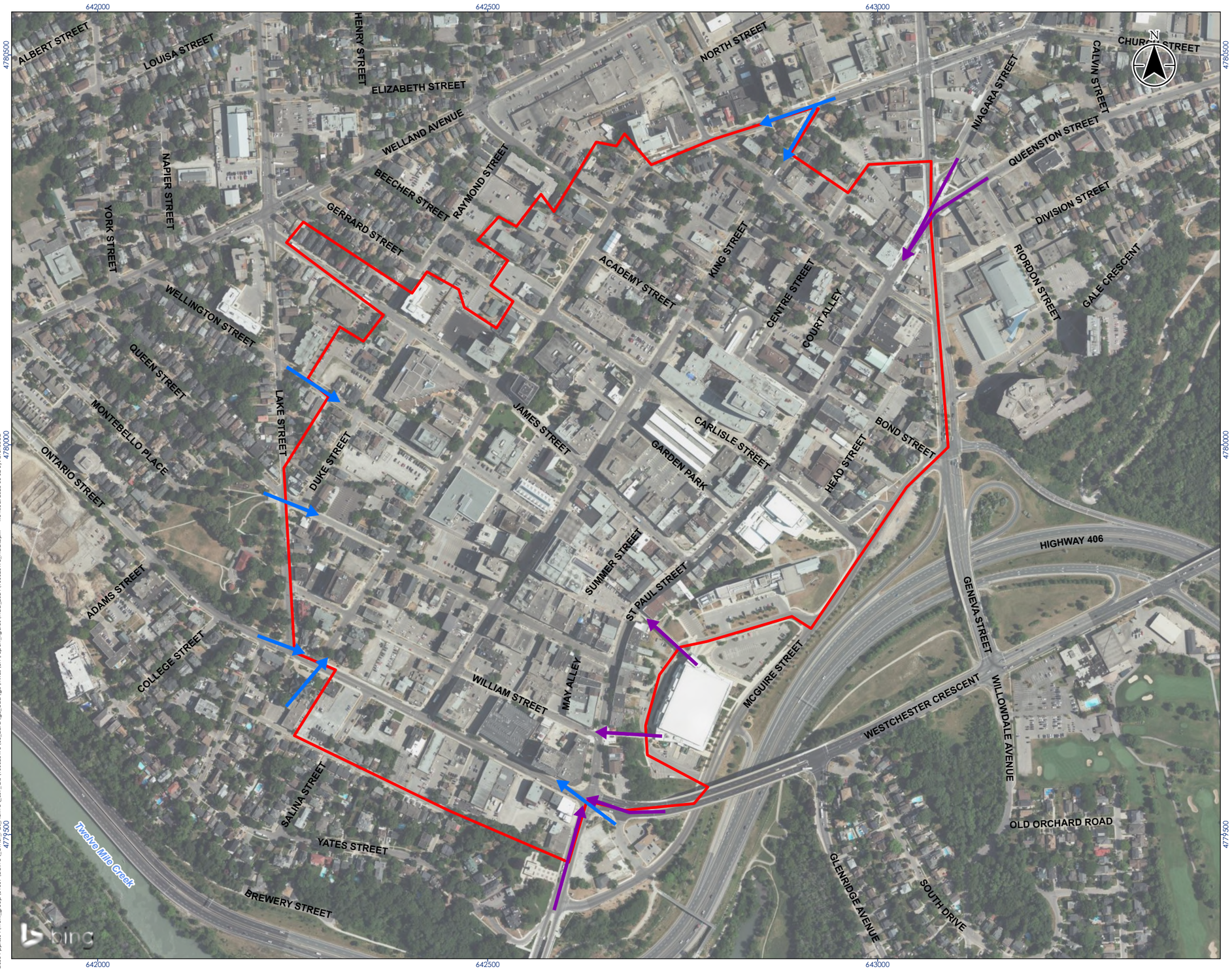


Photo 39 **Gateway entrance from St. Paul Street to Meridian Centre**

6.2.2 Secondary Gateways

The Study Area has multiple secondary gateways leading into it from various directions. These are considered secondary gateways as they do not have the same anticipation of arrival that is created from the physical features that define the primary gateways. The secondary gateways include:

- Ontario Street from St. Paul Street and Lake Street
- Church Street from Ontario Street and King Street
- Wellington Street from Lake Street
- King Street from Church Street
- Queen Street from Lake Street



Stantec

Legend
- Primary Gateway
- Secondary Gateway
- Study Area

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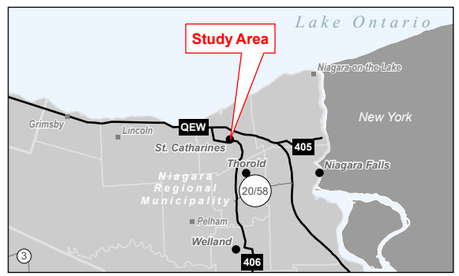

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Figure No.
15

Title
Gateways

6.3 Views and Vistas

The visual and contextual assessment of views and vistas in the Study Area is based on the analytic process called viewscape analysis. There are two basic components to the viewscape analysis process: the observer point and the viewscape itself. For the purpose of this HCD Study, the observer point is defined as the fixed vantage point from which a view is seen.

Viewscapes are defined by the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* as the visual relationship between the observer and landscape feature (Parks Canada 2010). Viewscapes may include scenes, panoramas, visual axes, and sight lines. They may include a foreground, middle ground, and background. The boundaries of viewscapes are usually high points in the landscape such as ridges and hills, or the built environment, such as buildings or landscape features that will obstruct, frame, or truncate the view. Viewscapes may also be influenced by seasons, such as mature deciduous trees before and after leaf drop.

Much like the built form, the identification of a viewscape does not necessarily suggest that it is a heritage viewscape. While a building may be old, it may not contain sufficient CHVI to merit protection under the OHA. The same can be said for viewscapes; while one may be identified, it does not necessarily equate to a heritage viewscape. There are two key types of viewscapes within the Study Area:

- Panoramic Views, which are defined by the Tool Kit as broader, non-enclosed views. They may contain a visual mosaic of varied features or broader “textual” patterns which have been created by past or existing land uses and other activities
- Vistas, which are defined in the Tool Kit as views enclosed by buildings/structures, landforms, and vegetation from a stationary vantage point

(MCM 2006)

The nature of the Study Area with its dense street network, concentrated built form, and limited areas of open space results primarily in vistas experiences along the Study Area streets. The curvature of St. Paul Street results in one of the most distinctive vistas in the Study Area, where the view is terminated by buildings along the curving alignment at various vantage points. The main panoramic view available from within the Study Area is obtained from David S. Howes Way and the pathway leading to the Marilyn Walker School of Fine Arts and Performing Arts, looking up at the back of commercial buildings along St. Paul Street. The view is unique within the Study Area, set within the former Welland canal route, and provides a distinct contrast from the remainder of the downtown core. Views of, or into the Study Area are also present from the Burgoyne Bridge on St. Paul Street West over Highway 406, and from Highway 406 itself, looking at the back of the buildings on St. Paul Street.

Photo 40 **View looking southwest along St. Paul Street from Geneva Street, truncated by road curvature**

Photo 41 **View looking north along St. Paul Street from Winchester Crescent**

6.4 Circulation Networks

The Study Area contains a network of streets that are historically centred around St. Paul Street and Twelve Mile Creek. St. Paul Street roughly follows an Indigenous trail near the shoreline of Lake Ontario while Ontario Street was laid out in the early 19th century and provided access to properties along Twelve Mile Creek. As a result, both these streets have a somewhat irregular alignment when compared to typical roads in southern Ontario, which tend to closely follow the road allowances of survey systems. As St. Catharines grew following the completion of the Welland Canal, additional roads were laid out between Ontario Street and St. Paul Street and by the mid-19th century much of the road network of the Study Area had been completed.

St. Paul Street remains the primary north to south road within the Study Area. Ontario Street remains the primary east to west road within the Study Area. However, both roads contain curvatures, resulting in directions that are not strictly north-south or east-west, though these are the terms primarily used in this report. Secondary and tertiary roads within the Study Area are generally laid out in a more traditional grid pattern. Secondary streets include Church Street, King Street, Queen Street, and James Street. The character of the Study Area's primary and secondary streets is discussed below.

6.4.1 St. Paul Street

St. Paul Street is the primary north to south thoroughfare through the Study Area and within the Study Area is approximately 910 metres in length. The road contains a gentle curvature between approximately William Street and James Street, resulting in a visual context that differs from much of the rest of the grid-based Study Area (See Section 6.4). Within the Study Area, St. Paul Street is a two-lane road paved with asphalt. Signalized intersections with turning lanes are located at intersections with Ontario Street and Geneva Street and a signalized intersection with no turning lane is located at the intersection with Carlisle Street. Additional traffic controls include all-way stops at the intersections of Queen Street, James Street, and Academy Street. In addition, a signalized pedestrian crossing is located at the intersection with Helliwell's Lane. On-street parking is located on both sides of the street between Court Street and Carlisle Street. The width of St. Paul Street narrows south of Carlisle Street and on-street parking south of that point is generally limited to one side of the road until St. Paul Street widens again south of Queen Street and once again contains on-street parking on both sides of the road. Within the Study Area, St. Paul Street is serviced by multiple Niagara Transit bus routes. Both sides of the road contain wide concrete sidewalks reflective of areas frequented by pedestrians (Photo 42 and Photo 43).

St. Paul Street contains much of St. Catharines' downtown commercial core and much of the road within the Study Area is comprised of a continuous streetwall of two to three storey commercial structures. In general, the streetwall south of Carlisle Street contains many mid-19th century to late 19th century buildings. North of Carlisle Street the streetwall contains more examples of early 20th century structures. The public realm contains a variety of hardscape and softscape elements discussed in Sections6.6 and 6.7.

Photo 42 **Signalized intersection at St. Paul Street and Geneva Street, looking south**

Photo 43 **St. Paul Street, looking south of Queen Street showing on-street parking and streetwall**

6.4.2 Ontario Street

Ontario Street is the primary east to west thoroughfare through the Study Area. Within the Study Area, Ontario Street is approximately 420 metres in length. Within the Study Area, Ontario Street is a two-lane asphalt paved road with a dedicated eastbound turning lane at intersections with Church Street, King Street, and St. Paul Street. Signalized intersections within the Study Area are located at the intersections with King Street and St. Paul Street. Ontario Street has concrete sidewalks and curbs. The road has limited on-street parking, although it provides access to the multi-storey Ontario Street parking garage. Ontario Street is also serviced by Niagara Transit bus routes (Photo 44 and Photo 45). Ontario Street is a Regional road, operated by Niagara Region.

The character of Ontario Street is mixed and contains a mix of 19th century residences converted to commercial use; purpose-built commercial structures; vacant lots; the Ontario Street parking garage; the tower entrance to 1 St. Paul Place; and mid-20th century commercial infill.

Photo 44 **North side of Ontario Street, looking west**

Photo 45 **South side of Ontario Street, looking west**

6.4.3 Church Street

Church Street is primarily a north-south road within the Study Area. The part of Church Street located within the Study Area is approximately 980 metres in length. Beginning approximately 65 metres north of the intersection of Clark Street and Church Street, the road turns northeast before continuing east outside of the Study Area. Within the Study Area, Church Street is a two-lane asphalt paved road with a dedicated northbound turning lane at Clark Street. Between Ontario Street and Clark Street, Church Street has a north-south alignment. Signalized intersections within the Study Area are located at the intersections of Queen Street, James Street, and Carlisle Street. Additional traffic controls include all-way stops at the intersections of Church Street with Court Street and King Street. The road contains sections of on-street parking along both sides of the street and concrete sidewalks and curbs. Church Street is serviced by Niagara Transit bus routes.

Church Street contains many examples of civic and institutional structures within the Study Area, including the Laura Secord Federal Building and City Hall, as well as several churches including the Royal House Redeemed Christian Church (95 Church Street), St. George's Anglican Church (83 Church Street), Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandria (3 Lyman Street), and Knox Presbyterian Church (53 Church Street). While located outside of the Study Area, the southern terminus of Church Street is framed by St. Thomas Anglican Church. Church Street also contains numerous examples of mid 20th to late 20th century office buildings and examples of late 19th century to early 20th century residences converted to commercial and mixed use (Photo 46 and Photo 47).

Photo 46 **Church Street, looking south at churches and residences**

Photo 47 **Church Street, looking north at office buildings**

6.4.4 King Street

King Street is a north-south road located entirely within the Study Area and is approximately 915 metres in length. Its southern terminus is located at Ontario Street and continues north to Church Street. It is a two-lane asphalt paved road with concrete sidewalks and concrete curbs. Signalized intersections with turning lanes are located at the intersections of Ontario Street, Queen Street, James Street, and Carlisle Street. Additional traffic controls include a turning lane at the intersections of Garden Park and King Street and all-way stops at the intersections of Court Street and Church Street. The road contains sections of on-street parking along both sides of the road. King Street is serviced by Niagara Transit bus routes.

King Street contains a mixed character consisting mostly of late 19th to early 20th century residences, commercial properties from the mid-20th to late 20th century, and mid-19th to late 19th century commercial structures. Civic buildings located along King Street include 91 King Street (St. Catharines Farmers' Market) and 101 King Street (Lincoln County Courthouse) (Photo 48and Photo 49).

Photo 48 **Residences along King Street, looking north**

Photo 49 **Mix of commercial properties, looking south**

6.4.5 James Street

James Street is an east-west road located entirely within the Study Area and is approximately 670 metres in length. Its eastern terminus is located at St. Paul Street and continues west to Lake Street. It is a two-lane asphalt paved road with concrete sidewalks, concrete curbs, and sections of on-street parking on both sides of the road. Signalized intersections with turning lanes are located at the intersections of King Street, Church Street, and Lake Street. Additional traffic control measures include an all-way stop at the intersection of St. Paul Street. James Street is serviced by Niagara Transit bus routes.

The character of James Street is mixed. Between St. Paul Street and King Street, James Street contains a streetwall similar in composition to St. Paul Street. West of King Street up to Duke Street, James Street takes on a civic and commercial character. West of Duke Street, James Street is mostly late 19th to early 20th century residential in character, including a row of matching mid-19th century Italianate residences from 146 to 186 James Street (Photo 50 and Photo 51).

Photo 50 **Streetwall similar to St. Paul Street, looking east**

Photo 51 **Italianate Residences, looking north**

6.4.6 Queen Street

Queen Street is an east-west road located partially within the Study Area. Within the Study Area, Queen Street is approximately 465 metres in length. The eastern terminus of the road is St. Paul Street, and it continues west to Welland Avenue, located outside of the Study Area. Queen Street is a two-lane asphalt paved road with concrete sidewalks, concrete curbs, and sections of on-street parking on both sides of the road. Signalized intersections are located at the intersections of King Street and Church Street. Additional traffic control measures include all-way stops at the intersections of St. Paul Street and Lake Street.

The character of Queen Street is mixed. Between St. Paul Street and King Street, Queen Street contains a streetwall consisting of a mix of mid-20th century and late 20th century infill and some examples of late 19th to early 20th century commercial structures. West of King Street, Queen Street mostly contains detached residences converted to commercial use (Photo 52 and Photo 53) and surface parking lots (Photo 54 and Photo 55).

Photo 52 **Streetwall along Queen Street, looking north**

Photo 53 **Residential part of Queen Street, looking west**

Photo 54 **Surface parking lot at 48 Queen Street, looking north**

Photo 55 **Surface parking lot at 49 Queen Street, looking south**

6.4.7 Tertiary Streets

The Study Area also contains numerous tertiary streets which are local roads generally shorter in length when compared to the previously discussed streets. They are not the principal routes frequented by motorists and pedestrians. Examples of these streets include Academy Street, Carlisle Street, Lyman Street, Bond Street, and William Street. Like much of downtown St. Catharines, these streets contain a mix of residential and commercial land uses (Photo 56 and Photo 57).

Photo 56 Head Street, looking south

Photo 57 Academy Street, looking east

6.4.8 Laneways

The Study Area contains several narrow laneways which are primarily located adjacent to the rear and side elevations of commercial properties within the Study Area west of St. Paul Street. Laneways located within the Study Area include May Alley, Helliwell's Lane, Summer Street, Garden Park, Ontario Lane, Lou Cahill Way, Market Street, and Court Alley. These laneways provide a service or secondary entrance to many of the commercial buildings located adjacent to them and connect to parking lots and garages (Photo 58 and Photo 59).

Photo 58 Summer Street, looking north

Photo 59 Helliwell's Lane, looking east

The Study Area also contains David S. Howes Way, a narrow road/laneway located along the former Welland Canal route that was gradually filled in during the mid-20th century. The lane provides access to the Meridian Centre, the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, and their respective parking areas. The lane is accessible to pedestrians from stairs at the Rankin Gateway on St. Paul Street and by vehicular traffic from McGuire Street. The lane also connects to pedestrian pathways that lead to the Marilyn I. Walker building and the Mann Raceway Plaza behind the FirstOntario Performing Arts

Centre. The lane provides a unique vantage point looking up to the rear facades of commercial buildings along St. Paul Street, which are constructed into the hillside above (Photo 60, Photo 61).

Photo 60 **View looking southwest along David S. Howes Way to the rear façades of St. Paul Street commercial buildings**

Photo 61 **View looking east along pedestrian walkway off David S. Howes Way**

6.5 Parking

The Study Area contains on-street parking, surface parking lots, and two parking garages. Most of the Study Area's roadways have sections of on-street metered parking. Surface parking lots, consisting of both municipally owned lots and private lots, are located throughout the Study Area. Some are the result of demolitions of previous structures, including lots on the south side of Ontario Street, William Street, and Queen Street, among others. The largest concentration of surface parking lots is located in the southern part of the Study Area, along William Street, Queen Street, and Wellington Street (Photo 62). Parking garages include the publicly accessible Ontario Street Garage and the permit holder only Garden Park/Carlisle Street Garage (Photo 63.

Photo 62 **On-street parking and commercial surface lot on Wellington Street, looking northwest**

Photo 63 **Ontario Street parking garage, looking north**

6.6 Hardscape Elements

Streets and sidewalks, and the streetscape fixtures contained within them, can help to tie the landscape together, linking people and places with one another. They are not only integral to transportation and movement, but also the conduits through which much of public life passes and can play a fundamental role in the vitality of communities. There are variations in sidewalk and boulevards, street lighting, street furniture, street signage, and building signage within the Study Area.

6.6.1 Sidewalks and Boulevards

The Study Area contains predominantly concrete sidewalks that are typically located along both sides of each street. In the commercial core, some sections of the Study Area contain decorative elements that highlight its distinct role as a main commercial corridor. Within the Study Area's downtown core there are concrete sidewalks with curbs that extend from the foot of the buildings to the street along St. Paul Street. Along St. Paul Street north of Academy Street, the sidewalks include various paving patterns. An example of a change in paving material is the strip of coloured concrete used to highlight the curb (Photo 64). There are street name plates located in the sidewalk at various intersections along St. Paul Street (Photo 65). This level of paving detail helps to create a sense of place within the downtown core.

Boulevards are typically defined as the area between the edge of pavement (or curb if present) and the sidewalk (or property line if no sidewalk exists). Boulevards can also be a strip within the road itself. In the Study Area, when corridors are grassed or planted, they often serve to break up what can sometimes be an expansive sea of pavement within a streetscape. Boulevards also offer opportunity for street tree growth when they afford adequate space. While boulevards fall within the public realm, they are most often maintained by private landowners, often resulting in varying levels of treatment and care.

There are several different boulevard treatments within the Study Area. Along St. Paul Street, the boulevards contain raised planting beds and street trees. Some street trees are planted within the raised planting beds and many directly planted along the boulevard.

North of Academy Street along St. Paul Street there are new planting beds comprised of concrete with built in benches. The planting beds have various types of perennials and street trees (Photo 66). Along this section of boulevard there are string lights and newly planted street trees.

South of Academy Street along St. Paul Street there are older concrete planting beds that vary in shape. The planting beds include curvature lines in their design with paving patterns that emphasize the design style (Photo 67. The planting beds include perennials, bulbs, and street trees.

In other areas outside of the downtown area but still within the Study Area, there are grassed boulevards (Photo 68). Some of the grassed boulevards contain municipal street trees, though the plantings are often irregular. Vegetation, including boulevard trees, is further discussed in Section 6.7.

Photo 64 **Example of street paving pattern, looking south**

Photo 65 **Example of street name in sidewalk, looking South**

Photo 66 **Planting bed north of Academy Street along St. Paul Street, looking south**

Photo 67 **Planting bed south of Academy Street along St. Paul Street, looking south**

Photo 68 **Example of grassed boulevard outside of the commercial core, looking north**

6.6.2 Municipal Lighting

The way in which a street is lit can be a defining feature within a streetscape, not only because night environments can be enhanced by the quality of light provided, but also because the character of a street during the day can be affected by the form of the light standard. Although in most cases it is not feasible to duplicate a form of lighting that may have once occurred along a length of street, installing standards that complement the historic fabric of the area can support an existing heritage character.

The Study Area's commercial core has continuity with municipal lighting design. Throughout this area there are black goose-neck styled lights (Photo 69), while outside of the downtown core the streetlights are more utilitarian (Photo 70). The contrast in design style distinguishes the commercial core from the rest of the Study Area. Light standards in the downtown area are seasonally dressed with banners and adorned with hanging flower baskets in the summer months.

Photo 69 **Example of gooseneck light**

Photo 70 **Example of utilitarian light**

6.6.3 Street Furniture

Much the same as streetlighting, street furniture can have a strongly unifying effect upon a streetscape if it is well co-coordinated. Streetscapes sometimes evolve without an over-arching plan for the co-ordination of such elements, and street furniture may not be synchronized, and as such can add to the visual noise of the streetscape, rather than providing a subtle unifying element. Placed in strategic areas, coordinated street furniture can be used to identify a space, set it apart from other neighbouring areas, and draw visitors into particular spaces.

The Study Area contains a variety of street furniture, with minimal continuity through design. Specifically, along St. Paul Street the seating areas vary from seating built into planter beds (Photo 71), to black metal street furniture in parkettes (Photo 72), to composite benches (Photo 73). There is also a mixture of design styles of garbage receptacles (Photo 74). In addition, bike racks (Photo 75 and Photo 76) are inconsistent in design and condition. There are also distinct structures that provide wayfinding signage and community notification boards located along St. Paul Street and wayfinding maps to local amenities (Photo 77and Photo 78).

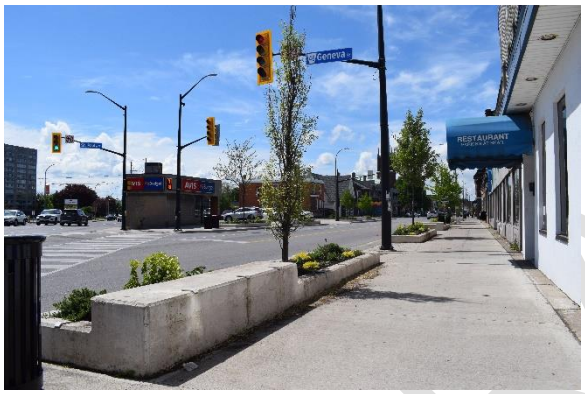


Photo 71 **Example of planter bed seating, looking south**

Photo 72 **Example of black metal seating, looking south**

Photo 73 **Example of composite bench, looking east**

Photo 74 **Example of garbage receptacle**

Photo 75 **Example of bike rack**

Photo 76 **Example of additional bike rack style**

Photo 77 **Wayfinding and community notice board, St. Paul Street and Westchester Crescent**

Photo 78 **Wayfinding and community signage board, St. Paul Street at Rankin Gateway**

6.6.4 Street Signage

Street signage is often referred to as a wayfinding tool; however, it can also serve as an identifying element within a streetscape. Given that street signs are common elements throughout a neighbourhood, they can be employed as tools to define areas of unique or special status. The appearance of directional and way-finding signs is governed by municipal standards.

Within the downtown core of the Study Area there are consistently styled street signs. The street signs are identified as the “Downtown Mercantile District”, with a maroon background and white writing with an acorn-shaped decorative element on top of the sign (Photo 79 and Photo 80). Outside of the downtown core the street signs do not use a consistent style.

Photo 79 Example of street signs

Photo 80 Example of street signage outside of the commercial core

6.6.5 Building Signage

Defining character within a community can be achieved by using consistent building façades, including building signage. Consistent design of storefront façades and signage can help to enhance streetscape elements and create a sense of place with a unique identity. There is currently no identifiable consistency in building signage within the Study Area. Signage for commercial properties includes a wide range of types like wood lettered signage, internally lit and neon signage, and freestanding signage blocks within landscaped areas on some properties with setbacks from the street Photo 81 to Photo 84.

Photo 81 **Various commercial signage along St. Paul Street, looking northwest**

Photo 82 **Details of building signage at 316 St. Paul Street**

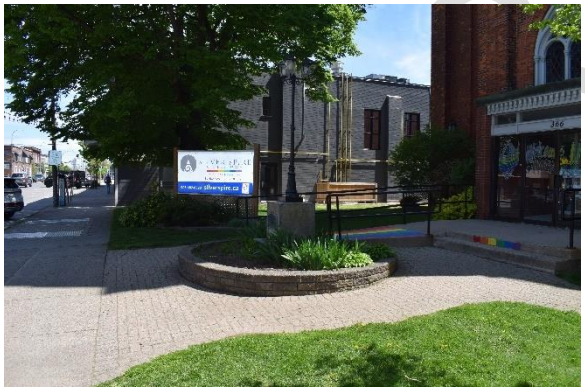


Photo 83 **Freestanding building signage at church along St. Paul Street, looking north.**

Photo 84 **Freestanding commercial sign at converted residence at 33 Church Street, looking northwest**

6.6.6 Commemoration and Interpretation

The Study Area contains various commemorative and interpretive elements. These elements include interpretive plaques, panels, and murals (Photo 85 and Photo 86). They contain a variety of information including historical content, wayfinding suggestions, and artistic interpretations. One art installation includes “Curtain Call,” which designed by artist Lilly Otasevic and unveiled at the FirstOntario Performing

Arts Centre in 2019 (City of St. Catharines n.d.a.) (Photo 87). This art piece was informed by the area's historical Indigenous presence and explores the wampum bead, and the weave of fabric used in the wampum belt (City of St Catharines n.d.a.). Commemorative and interpretive elements are located along St. Paul Street in the commercial core and scattered through other locations in the Study Area.

Photo 85 **An interpretive sign entitled "Industry Along The Canal" located near Rankin Gateway along St. Paul Street, looking northwest**

Photo 86 **Mural at the corner of Court Street and St. Paul Street, looking south**

Photo 87: Curtain Call installation on Carlisle Street at St. Paul Street

6.7 Vegetation and Landscaping (Softscape)

Cultural and natural landscapes can be living heritage resources and are in a continuous cycle of growth, decline, and regeneration. In general terms, unlike most built structures, vegetation such as trees and shrubs have finite lifespans. Landscape elements can provide an opportunity to unite a streetscape and harmonize fragmented or insensitive built elements. The umbrella-like canopies of mature street trees, for instance, can provide a strong unifying element throughout the residential streets where there are different building styles and uses.

Mature trees can be a strong defining characteristic of an established area; they can offer scale and visual continuity and provide a strong sense of place and pride in a community. Beyond the visual benefits of trees within our urban environments, trees are vital for carbon sequestration, filtering pollutants, providing oxygen, lowering the heat island effect through shading streets, and slowing evaporation from lawns and gardens. Mature trees located on both public and private property and within public view greatly contribute to defining the character of a neighbourhood. Where boulevard space is insufficient or nonexistent for public planting, these trees often compensate for gaps found in the streetscape canopy. By framing pleasant vistas and screening undesirable views, privately owned trees can play a significant role in the streetscape and enhance the visual aesthetics of the district. Mature trees located on private property are also a valuable resource to the property owner not only for the benefits provided in terms of shading homes in the summer and increasing property values, but also for the overall sense of wellbeing that trees can inspire.

Street trees also contribute to defining the character of an area. The presence of street trees within a downtown, for example, helps to visually divide the uses of hardscape elements creating a streetscape that is softer to the eye. Often street trees have limited life expectancy due to the harsh climatic conditions of a streetscape. Strong consideration of the planting regime, specifically root space and consideration of proper species selection, can help increase a street tree's life expectancy. Selecting a specific species palette can help to define the character of an area.

The Study Area consists of a variety of tree species (trees located on municipal property) with varying in age and health conditions. The St. Catharines Downtown Association completed a census of street trees within the Downtown BIA to identify existing urban street trees, their conditions, and offer recommendations for the future of street trees within the Downtown BIA (St. Catharines Downtown Association 2023). The Project team also inventoried the presence of mature vegetation on private property. During the inventory, 10 properties were noted as containing mature vegetation in their softscape descriptions. Tree species found within the Study Area include but are not limited to:

- Honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) (Photo 88)
- Columnar Oak (*Quercus* sp.)
- Ginkgo (*Ginkgo* sp.)
- Ornamental Pear (*Pyrus* sp.)
- Maple (*Acer* sp.)
- Lilac (*Syringa* sp.) (Photo 89)

Photo 88 Honey Locust street tree, looking east

Photo 89 Lilac street tree, looking south

The Study Area also contains several softscape elements that combine with hardscape elements in the streetscape, including seasonal flowers within the concrete planting beds along St. Paul Street, and seasonal hanging flower baskets on municipal light standards on St. Paul Street, Queen Street, and James Street.

6.8 Parks, Open Space, and Plazas

Historically, parks and open space provided areas of refuge within the rapid urban development of the industrial revolution. These green oases allowed for nature to be accessible to all city dwellers. Today, parks and open space still perform much the same function.

A well-designed park consists of an appropriate balance of planted and open space. Having both planted and open space areas allow for a variety of programming to occur. Planning a park and open space that already has established vegetation requires balance.

There are a few parkettes located within the Study Area. These include a seating area located in front of the Meridian Centre along St. Paul Street (42 St. Paul Street), the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) Park located at the intersection of Church Street and King Street, and a parkette located adjacent to Montebello Park called Hannelore Headley Chess Park (Photo 90). The parkettes contain seating areas and space for pedestrians to rest. A memorial to fallen firefighters is also under construction at the corner of Carlise Street and Race Street. The City is currently completing a study for the redevelopment of James Street between King Street and Church Street to create a civic square area. Concepts for the project have been presented, and the study is ongoing.

The Study Area is adjacent to Montebello Park, which is part of an existing HCD (the Queen Street HCD) and is an important resource for the St. Catharines community. The park provides many programmed elements and mature trees for ample shade. The Study Area is also located to Memorial Park, located at 6 St. Paul Street West, and Merritt Park, located at 9 St. Paul Street West. Memorial Park contains the City's cenotaph, and Merritt Park contains a statue and historical plaque honoring William Hamilton Merritt.

Some public or institutional properties within the Study Area, including the forecourt at 301 St. Paul Street, public library at 54 Church Street, City Hall at 50 Church Street (Photo 91), and the courthouse at 59 Church Street contain landscaped areas with seating, lighting, and public art sculptures or memorials. These spaces blend the line between parkette and plaza and provide publicly accessible spaces, and most are located within a centrally located cluster near Church and James Streets. City Hall hosts public events at times including the annual United Way croquet tournament on the front lawn each fall. The Mann Raceway Plaza is located behind the FirstOntario Performing Arts Center at 250 St. Paul Street, and contains interlock paved areas, lawn, public seating and landscaped areas. The plaza hosts outdoor events associated with the arts centre and local festivals.

Photo 90 Hannelore Headley Chess Park, looking southeast

Photo 91 City Hall plaza area, looking southeast

6.9 Building Setbacks

The legibility, or the ease by which people can read and define a neighbourhood, is largely influenced by its layout and the form of the built environment. The alignment and grouping of buildings can contribute greatly to the character of a streetscape. Where buildings have a consistent setback, massing, and form, an uninterrupted rhythm is established along the street, creating a sense of unity and accord. Buildings that are close to the road create an enclosed and intimate streetscape, while large setbacks allow for broader views and an open streetscape character.

Within the Study Area properties along the primary commercial corridors of St. Paul Street and sections of Queen Street and James Street that extend from St. Paul Street tend to have no setbacks from the public realm, having been constructed to the property limit. These properties typically consist of the historic structures with first storey commercial and residential units above, as well as 20th century infill. In the remainder of the Study Area, there are no consistent patterns in setbacks overall though patches of consistency can be found particularly when there are grouping of buildings of similar type and construction date. Some properties have generous setbacks from the street, and include landscaped lots and paved pathways or driveways, while others are set close to the street with limited setbacks and landscaped area. Typically, properties that were constructed with an original residential use tend to have greater setback than those that were constructed as commercial properties, though there are several

exceptions particularly along James Street and Church Street, where several commercial, civic, or institutional buildings have landscaped areas between the building façade and sidewalk.

6.10 Landmarks

The study team identified 21 landmarks within the Study Area based on a combination of the historical development, property inventory (Appendix C), and feedback received during public consultation (see Section 9). Landmarks were considered because of their architectural elements, important historical role in the community, contextual position within the Study Area, or a combination of those factors. The landmark structures and properties are included in Table 5 and depicted on Figure 16.

Table 5 Landmark Structures and Properties within the Study Area

Address/Name	Current Status	Photograph
1 St. Paul Street	Under Study	
101 King Street Formerly Town Hall and Market House	Designated	

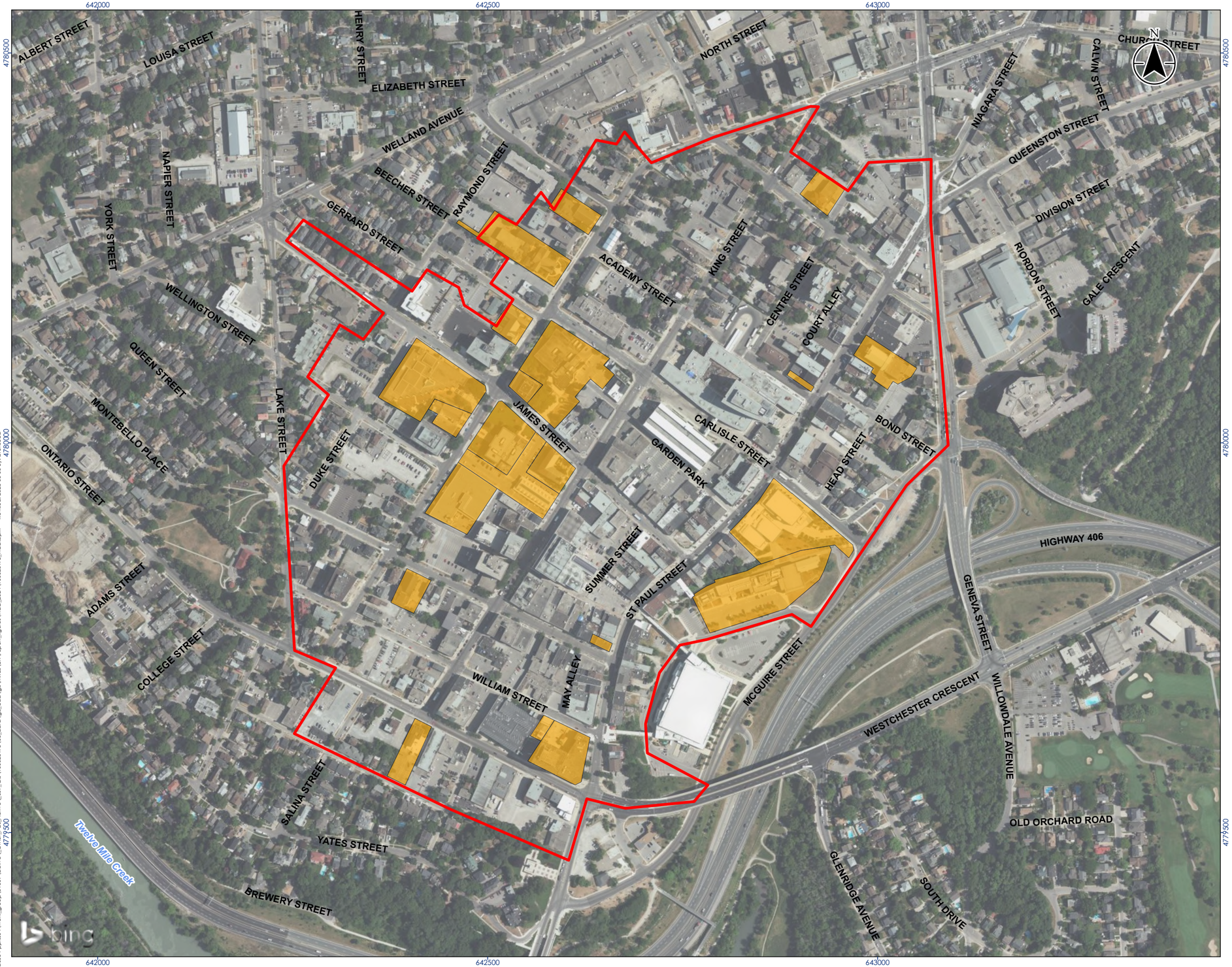
Address/Name	Current Status	Photograph
101 St. Paul Street Patrick Sheehan's Irish Pub/Formerly Canadian Bank of Commerce	Listed	
15 Artists' Common Brock University Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts/Formerly Canada Hair Cloth Company Factory	Listed	
23 Centre Street Niagara Conservatory of Music/Formerly Court Street School then Masonic Hall	Listed	
250 St. Paul Street First Ontario Performing Arts Centre	Under Study	

Address/Name	Current Status	Photograph
32 Church Street Laura Secord Building	Under Study	
321 St. Paul Street Pony Mart	Designated	
366 St. Paul Street St. Paul Street United Church	Designated	
50 Church Street St. Catharines City Hall	Designated	

Address/Name	Current Status	Photograph
53 Church Street Knox Presbyterian Church/Formerly Canadian Presbyterian Church	Listed	
54 Church Street St. Catharines Centennial Public Library	Under Study	
57 Queen Street Queen Street Baptist Church	Under Study	
59 Church Street St. Catharines Courthouse	Under Study	

Address/Name	Current Status	Photograph
67 Church Street St. Catherine of Alexandria Cathedral	Listed	
77 Ontario Street St. Catharines Club	Listed	
83 Church Street St. George's Anglican Church	Listed	
91 King Street Market Square	Under Study	

Address/Name	Current Status	Photograph
95 Church Street Royal House Redeemed Christian Church of God/Formerly First United Church	Designated	
5 William Street The Mansion House	Listed	
110 James Street	Under Study	



Stantec

Legend
- Study Area
- Landmark

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Notes
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
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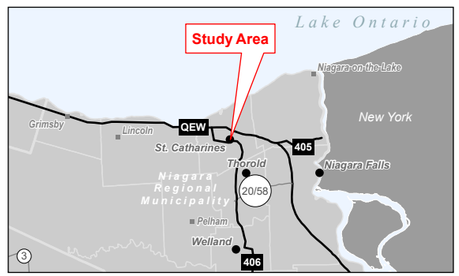


Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV3
Prepared by BF on 2025-03-03
Technical Review by AW on 2025-01-02

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
16

Title
Landmark

7 Identification of Subareas

Three distinct subareas have been identified within the Study Area based on the historical development of downtown St. Catharines, the existing architectural characteristics of the Study Area, and an analysis of the existing streetscape and landscape of the Study Area. While the entire Study Area is generally recognizable as a downtown core, the following three distinct subareas within the proposed downtown HCD have been identified and are discussed in the following sections. These subareas are mapped on Figure 17.

7.1 St. Paul Subarea

The St. Paul Subarea contains 138 properties and is centred around the historic streetwall encompassing much of St. Paul Street. This streetwall is comprised mostly of mid-19th to early 20th century attached structures with examples of mostly sympathetic mid-20th to late 20th century infill. Many of these structures share a similar massing, setback, and design that supports a definable context. The impetus for the growth of this area was the opening of the Welland Canal and St. Paul Street gently curves to follow the former canal route that was also historically established by an Indigenous trail and Dicks Creek. To the east of St. Paul Street is a valley formerly part of the Welland Canal. While the canal is no longer extant, the area retains a strong historical and visual connection with St. Paul Street as many of the rear façades of structures along St. Paul Street are visible. Many of these buildings are built into the former canal valley which reinforces the visual and physical relationship between St. Paul Street and the former Welland Canal. The commercial streetwall continues in sections branching off St. Paul Streeton parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street, albeit with a higher amount of infill.

7.2 Civic Centre Subarea

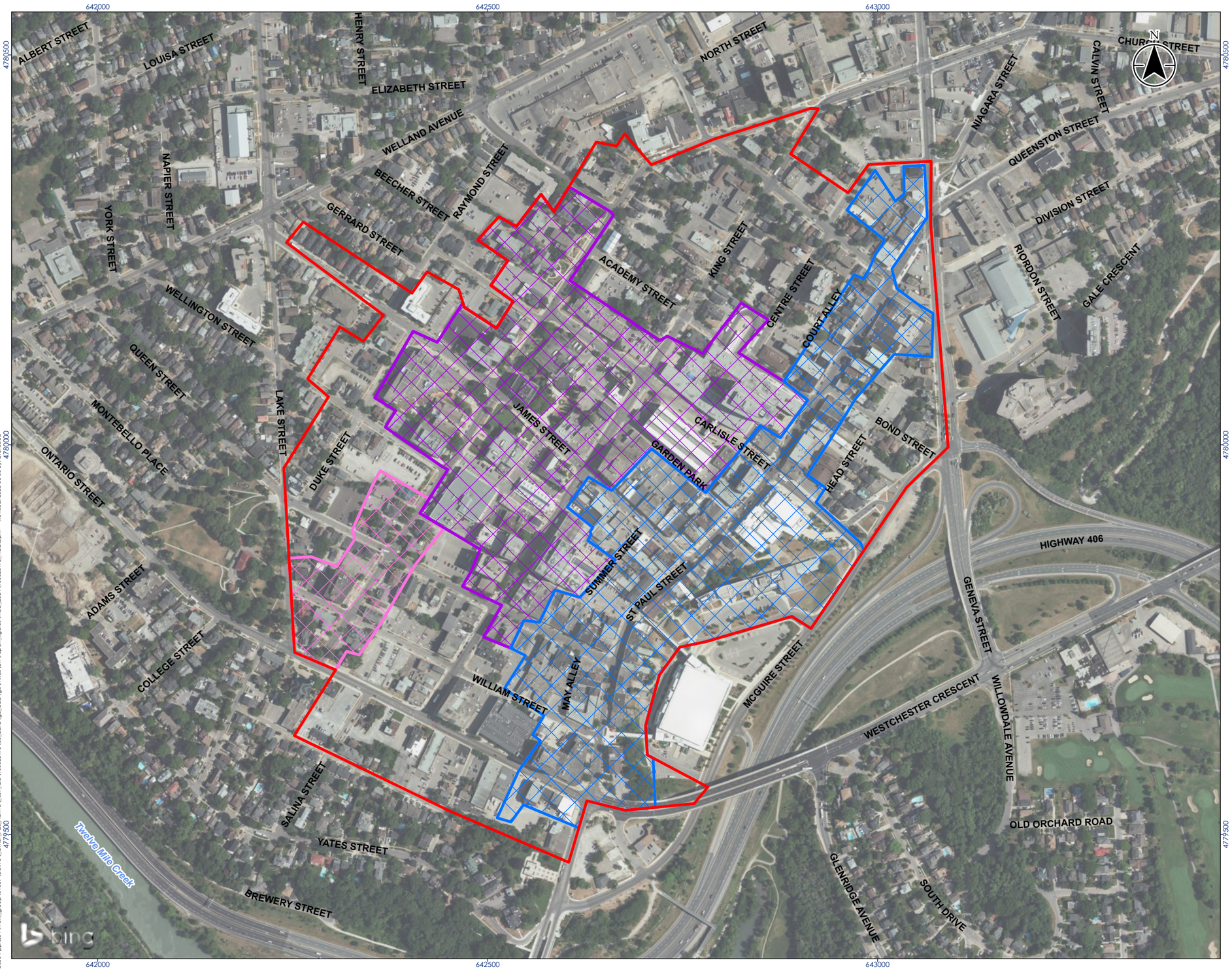
The Civic Centre Subarea contains 40 properties, and includes many of the Study Area's civic, institutional, and mid-rise office properties. These structures are mostly located on Church Street and King Street between Queen Street and Academy Street. Together, these properties reflect the importance of St. Catharines as the Niagara Region's social and economic centre. Important civic buildings include the St. Catharines Municipal Building (50 Church Street), the Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse (59 Church Street), the St. Catharines Centennial Public Library (54 Church Street), the former Region of Niagara Police Headquarters (68 Church Street), the Laura Secord Building (32 Church Street), and the original Lincoln County Courthouse (101 King Street). While the original Lincoln County Courthouse dates to the mid-19th century and the Municipal Building dates to the early 20th century, the remainder of these aforementioned buildings date to the mid-20th century. This reflects the rapid growth of St. Catharines and North America during this period of time and the corresponding need for expanded services. This subarea also contains a concentration of large churches including Knox Presbyterian Church (53 Church Street), the Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria (67 Church Street), St. George's Church (83 Church Street), and First United Church (95 Church Street).

The mid-rise commercial structures that are also prevalent in the Civic Centre Subarea reflect the broader reorientation of downtown St. Catharines beginning in the late 20th century. During this time, many shoppers were drawn away from the downtown, land use pivoted towards office space and many of the Study Area's mid-rise commercial buildings were completed. Examples of these mid-rise structures include 63 Church Street, 110 James Street, 43 Church Street, 55 King Street, 40 Queen Street, and 80 King Street.

This concentration of prominent civic, institutional, and commercial structures gives this subarea a distinct character that is anchored around St. Catharines' role as the social and economic centre of the Niagara Region and the evolving nature of the community's downtown in the mid to late 20th century.

7.3 South Church Street Subarea

The South Church Street Subarea contains 31 properties and is located south of the Laura Secord Building to the termination of Church Street at Ontario Street. This area contains a concentration of mostly residential properties, many of which have been converted to commercial or mixed use. This concentration of converted properties is likely linked to the heavily commercial and civic character of the Civic Centre Subarea which abuts this subarea. In addition, this subarea also contains examples early 20th century multi-unit residences, including 3 Church Street (Avalon/Melrose Apartments) and 4-10 Lake Street, which supports the idea of St. Catharines as a prosperous regional centre at this time. Located in close proximity to Montebello Park, this subarea serves as a transitional area between the more urbanized downtown core and lower density residential neighbourhoods to the west.



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Character Area

- Church Street South Subarea
- Civic Centre Subarea
- St. Paul Subarea

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Notes

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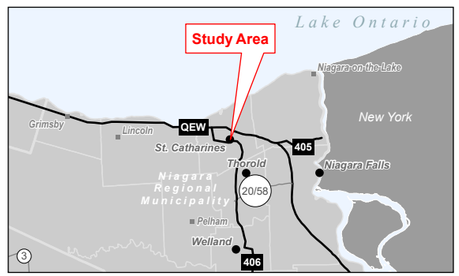

Project Location
City of St. Catharines

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Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
17

Title
Identified Subareas

8 Existing Regional and Municipal Policy Framework

Official Plans (OP), at the regional and local level, are the primary vehicle for implementing provincial land use policy as outlined in Section 2.2 of this report. With OPs being updated regularly to reflect provincial interests, these documents are used as a tool to guide the integration of matters that impact land use decisions, such as infrastructure, housing, economic development, and cultural heritage. In addition, zoning is a tool enabled through the *Planning Act* and guided by municipal plans. Zoning further regulates the characteristics of the use of land within municipalities.

Together, the provincial and local policies and plans provide the framework for protection of built and cultural heritage resources. The following sections outline the existing policy framework within the City of St. Catharines.

8.1 Niagara Official Plan

The Niagara Official Plan (NOP) was adopted by Regional Council in June 2022, and the most recent consolidation was approved by the Province of Ontario in November 2022. The NOP sets out several policies that encourage the identification, conservation, and management of cultural heritage resources as they contribute to a sense of identity while providing important social and economic benefits.

Section 6.5 “Cultural Heritage” highlights how the distinctive cultural heritage resources in the Niagara Region contribute to a strong sense of identity and help to understand Niagara’s history offering a unique sense of place. These resources also provide significant social and economic benefits, including tourism opportunities and long-term economic prosperity in the region. The section emphasizes the importance of identifying, conserving, promoting, and effectively managing cultural heritage resources. It also recognizes and supports the role of Local Area Municipalities in identifying and designating properties of CHVI under the OHA. The following policies are outlined in this section:

- Significant cultural heritage resources shall be conserved to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, including First Nations and Métis communities. (6.5.1.1)
- The Region encourages Local Area Municipalities to designate properties of cultural heritage value or interest, either individually or as part of a larger area or Heritage Conservation District, under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. (6.5.1.2)
- Local Area Municipalities shall advise the Region of properties of cultural heritage value or interest that have been designated or listed on the register under the Ontario Heritage Act. (6.5.1.3)
- Local Area Municipalities are encouraged to develop and use cultural master plans to inform decision-making. (6.5.1.4)

- Development and site alteration on protected heritage property or adjacent lands shall not be permitted, except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated through a heritage impact assessment and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved. (6.5.1.5)
- The Region shall maintain cultural asset mapping of fixed resources including cemeteries, designated or listed built heritage resources, historic sites, and the historic Welland Canal to assist in the review of development applications. (6.5.1.6)
- Local Area Municipalities are encouraged to consider the use of heritage impact assessment in conserving cultural heritage resources on a community planning basis. (6.5.1.7)
- The Region supports the Niagara Parks Commission in the continued identification and protection of cultural heritage resources including heritage structures, properties and cultural heritage landscapes along the Niagara River corridor. (6.5.1.8)

(Niagara Region 2022)

The NOP outlines policies for managing urban growth, strategic intensification, economic prosperity, and excellence in urban design to support the conservation of cultural heritage resources, as detailed below:

- Development in urban areas will integrate land use planning and infrastructure planning to responsibly manage forecasted growth and to support the conservation or reuse of cultural heritage resources pursuant to Section 6.5. (2.2.1.1. j)
- Local intensification strategies shall be implemented through Local official plans, secondary plans, zoning by-laws, and other supporting documents that identify the location and boundaries of local growth centres and corridors, that revitalize and, where appropriate, preserve cultural heritage resources within areas that reflect local heritage, character, and streetscapes pursuant to Section 6.5. (2.2.2.10 b vi)
- Section 4.5 consolidates policy direction on economic prosperity, recognizing opportunities to support tourism through the protection of the region's natural environment system, parks and trails network and geological and cultural heritage resources. (4.5)
- The Region will endeavour to support opportunities for nature and culture-based tourism by:
  i. protecting the Regional natural environment system and supporting the provision of parks, trails and open space for recreation and ecotourism;
  ii. supporting efforts to designate Niagara region as a UNESCO Global Geopark to foster conservation, education and sustainable economic development;
  iii. recognizing the importance of the Niagara Escarpment as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve;
  iv. promoting excellence in urban design and requiring conservation of significant cultural heritage resources to foster a sense of place;
  v. promoting the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape as a multi-faceted cultural heritage destination; and
  vi. promoting revitalization and redevelopment within downtown and community cores to enhance their existing character. (4.5.2.1.e)

- The Region shall promote the integration of views of built and cultural heritage features, landmarks, and significant natural heritage features to enhance a sense of place. (6.2.1.8)

(Niagara Region 2022)

Additionally, the NOP supports the establishment of municipal tools such as HCDs to encourage cultural heritage preservation across the region.

As part of the 2024 *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Home Act*, Niagara Region will become an upper-tier municipality without planning responsibilities as of March 31, 2025, with most land use matters being transferred to lower-tier municipalities. The NOP, recently approved by the province, will guide local municipalities during the transition, requiring them to align their municipal OPs to incorporate the applicable NOP policies. The NOP will be considered an OP of the city until the municipal and regional plans are consolidated.

8.2 St. Catharines Official Plan (The Garden City Plan)

The GCP, was adopted on August 23, 2010, and the most recent consolidation was approved on December 28, 2018. The GCP sets out several policies related to preserving heritage resources.

Generally, the cultural heritage policies of the GCP, as noted in Section 3.1 of the GCP, are:

- The City shall identify cultural heritage resources through a continuing process of inventory, survey, and evaluation.
- The City shall foster awareness and appreciation of the city's cultural heritage and encourage public and private stewardship.
- The City shall support the continuing use, reuse, care, and conservation of cultural heritage resources and properties. All development/redevelopment shall have regard for identified cultural heritage resources and shall wherever feasible, incorporate these resources into any development plan.
- The City may require a cultural heritage impact assessment where a proposed development/redevelopment or site alteration of lands, or on adjacent lands, has the potential to adversely affect cultural heritage resources.
- The City shall develop guidelines for the preparation of cultural impact assessments.
- Development/redevelopment and site alteration may be permitted on adjacent lands to protected heritage property pursuant to Part IV and V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, where the proposed development or site alteration has been evaluated, and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.
- Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches may be required in order to conserve the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property affected.
- All new development/redevelopment in established areas of cultural heritage value or interest shall also be subject to the City's Urban Design Guidelines to ensure development is in keeping with the overall character of these areas.

- All City-owned cultural heritage resources shall be conserved and maintained in a state of good repair. When a City-owned heritage property is sold, leased, or transferred to another owner, where possible a heritage easement agreement will be secured and barrier free public access maintained to areas with heritage value.
- The City shall encourage the adaptive reuse of heritage properties. Any permitted redevelopment shall ensure, where possible, that the original building fabric and architectural features are retained and restored and that any new additions will complement the existing building.

Regarding the accommodation of growth, the GCP states that growth will be accommodated by design initiatives to support enhanced natural and cultural heritage protection, preservation and conservation (2.3.3 vii).

The GCP outlines general land use policies that encourage compact and innovative design to manage development. For context-sensitive development, it specifies that the development and redevelopment within the Urban Area shall be evaluated having regard for the preservation, conservation, enhancement and integration of natural and cultural heritage features, landscapes and identities (7.1 d).

Additionally, the GCP highlights that Downtown St. Catharines, as one of the city's oldest areas, best reflects its cultural heritage, identity, and sense of place. Having played a significant role in the city's development, the GCP aims to ensure that downtown continues to evolve as a key activity centre and multifunctional hub for government, civic, commercial, cultural, and residential activities, while also attracting investment and infrastructure (11 a) (City of St. Catharines 2018).

8.2.1 Heritage Conservation District Policies

Section 3.2 of the St. Catharines GCP outlines the criteria to determine the CHVI of individual properties and designate them as heritage properties, pursuant to Part IV of the OHA. The City currently has five designated HCDs: the Queen Street District, the Yates Street District, the Port Dalhousie District, Port Dalhousie Commercial Core and Harbour Area, and the Power Glen District. With regards to designating HCDs, the GCP notes the following:

- The City, in consultation with the Heritage Committee, may designate Heritage Conservation Districts, pursuant to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, where it has been determined that the district possesses one or more of the following attributes:
    a) The area contains a group of buildings or features that reflect an aspect of local history through association with a person, group, or activity.
    b) The area is characterized by buildings and structures that are of cultural heritage value or interest.
    c) The area contains other important physical and aesthetic characteristics that alone would not be sufficient to warrant designation but provides an important context or association including such matters as landscape features or archaeological sites.

- Prior to designating a Heritage Conservation District, the City will:
  a) By by-law define an area to be examined for future designation
  b) Undertake a study pursuant to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act and any other applicable statutes and regulations
  c) Prepare and adopt a Heritage Conservation District Plan pursuant to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act and any other applicable statutes and regulations
  d) Establish for each district a "district committee" that will advise Council on matters pertaining to the designated district where appropriate
  e) Be guided by the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- Within a designated district, it is the intent of the City to conserve and enhance its unique heritage character. The City, in consultation with the district committee, will encourage property owners to maintain, repair and restore heritage buildings and seek government grants, loans and other incentive programs for eligible conservation work.
- In reviewing proposals for the construction, demolition, or removal of buildings and structures or the alteration of existing buildings, the City shall be guided by the applicable heritage district plan and the following general principles where there is potential to impact any cultural heritage resources:
  a) Heritage buildings, associated landscape features and archaeological site including their surroundings shall be protected from any adverse effects of change
  b) Original building fabric and architectural features should be retained, repaired, or restored rather than replaced wherever possible
  c) New additions and features should generally be no higher than the existing building and wherever possible be placed to the rear of the building or set back substantially from the principal façade
  d) New construction and/or infilling should be compatible with surrounding buildings and streetscapes by being generally of the same height, width and orientation as adjacent buildings; being of similar setback; and using similarly proportioned windows, doors, and roof shape
  e) Design, style, materials and colours for new construction will be considered on an individual basis on the premise that contemporary styles can be more appropriate in certain cases than using design styles and motifs from previous periods
  f) Public works and landscaping within a designated district should ensure that existing roads and streetscapes are maintained or enhanced and that proposed changes respect and are complementary to the identified heritage character of the district
  g) The City shall have regard for cultural heritage resources in undertaking public works. When necessary, the City will require measures to mitigate any negative impacts on significant cultural heritage resources

h) The City shall encourage local utility providers to place equipment and devices in locations which do not detract from the visual character of cultural resources, and which do not have a negative impact on the architectural integrity of those resources, where feasible

i) Required road rights-of-way indicated elsewhere in the Official Plan, will be required in designated districts but every effort shall be made to ensure that existing pavement widths, especially where they are major contributors to the character of the streetscapes, will be retained

j) The City shall have regard for cultural heritage resources especially in terms of the character of landscapes and streetscapes, tree lines, bridges and the prevailing pattern of settlement in considering the construction of new roads and road improvements including realignment and road widening. When necessary, the City will require measures to mitigate any negative impacts on significant cultural heritage resources.

- The City may accept easements on real property designated under the OHA.

Section 3.2 of the GCP outlines the policies that guide the maintenance of a Register of Property of CHVI, containing lands that have been designated under Part IV and Part V of the OHA, as well as properties considered to be eligible for future designation.

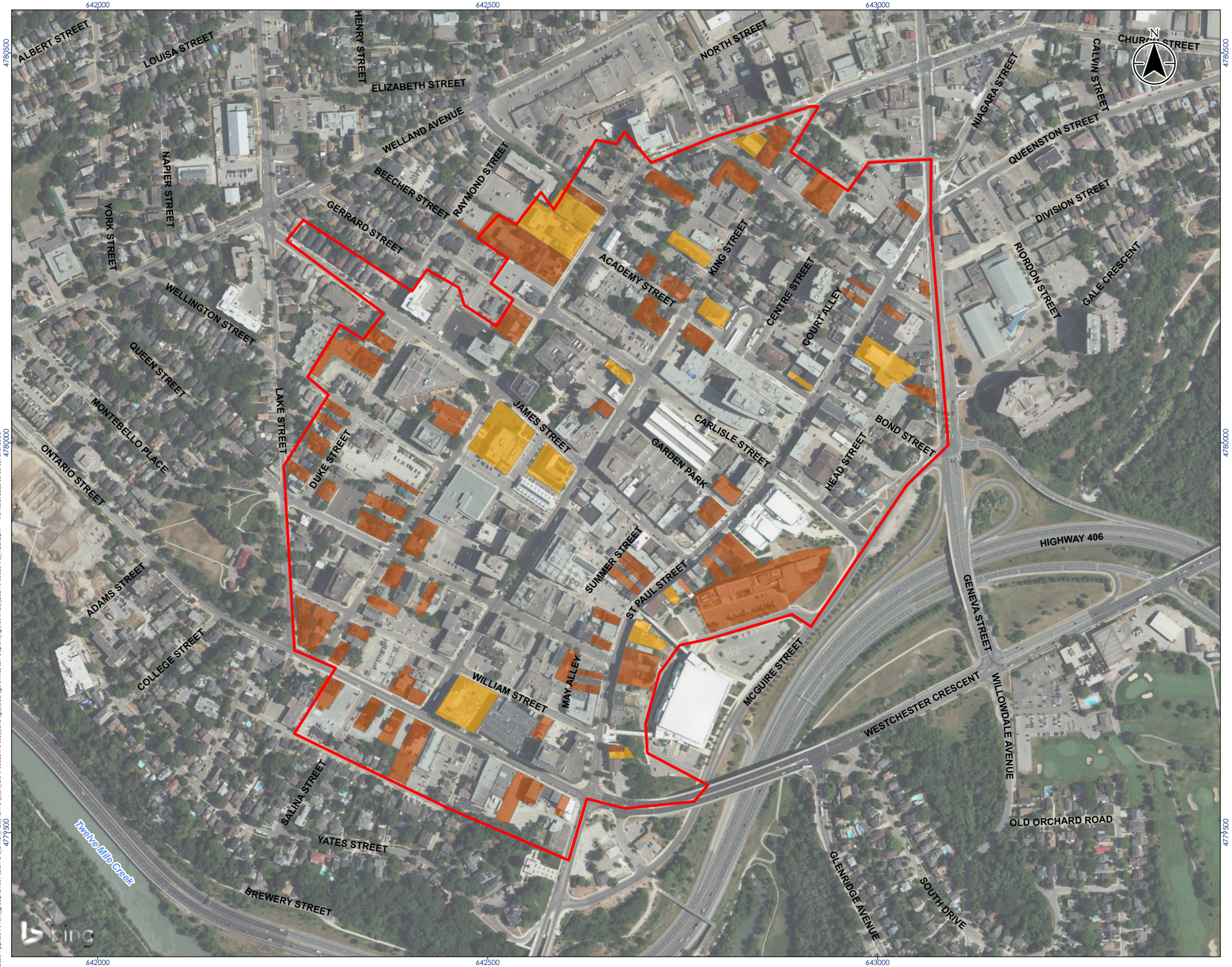
Section 3.5 of the GCP notes that Cultural Heritage Landscapes "may include but are not limited to designated heritage conservation districts, urban streetscapes and main streets, industrial complexes, neighbourhoods, and designed landscapes such as parks, cemeteries, gardens and rural landscapes" (City of St. Catharines 2018). With respect to Cultural Heritage Landscapes, the GCP notes that "the City shall prepare an inventory of Cultural Heritage Landscapes which may be included in the Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, or may be considered for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and shall be protected in the carrying out of any undertaking subject to the Environmental Assessment Act or the Planning Act" (City of St. Catharines 2018).

Direction regarding Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments and their implementation is also provided within Sections 3.6 and 3.7 of the GCP.

8.3 Municipal Heritage Properties

Several properties within the Study Area have been designated under Part IV of the OHA and several are listed on the City's Heritage Register. In accordance with Section 3.3 of the City's GCP and Section 27(1), Part IV of the OHA, a municipality may maintain a register of properties that contain or have the potential to contain cultural heritage value or interest. Originally, the Register focused primarily on properties constructed prior to the establishment of St. Catharines as a city and had gaps for resources outside of this period. The City subsequently added more properties over time, but many existing properties on the Register and Part IV designations are reflective of the earlier time period and may not necessarily reflect the breadth of history in St. Catharines.

With amendments to the OHA in 2023, a Part IV designated property is now required to meet two or more criteria under O. Reg. 9/06. In addition, listed properties can only remain on a register for two years before a municipality must decide to designate or de-list the property. Properties cannot be re-listed within five years from their date of removal. As a result, municipalities are facing pressures to update their registered prior to January 1, 2027, to designate properties before they must be removed from the register. The Study Area contains 97 properties currently included on the City's register. The location of current listed and designated properties within the HCD are depicted on Figure 18 and a list is located in Appendix B.



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Legend

- Study Area

Current Heritage Status

- Designated Part IV
- Listed

0 100 200 m

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Notes

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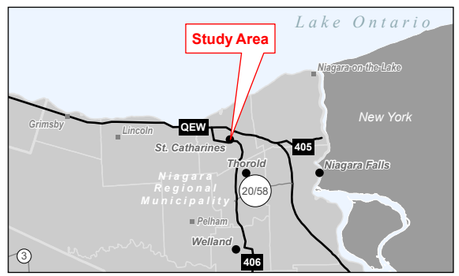

Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV3
Prepared by BF on 2025-03-03
Technical Review by AW on 2024-12-20

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
18

Title
Municipal Heritage Properties

8.4 Land Use Policies

The NOP identifies Downtown St. Catharines as an Urban Growth Centre (UGC). This has been defined as:

> *"Existing or emerging downtown areas shown in Schedule 4 of A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Horseshoe and as further identified by the Minister on April 2, 2008 (A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020)."*

This designation aimed to support minimum density targets and other applicable policies established in the Provincial Growth Plan, with the goal of providing the highest concentration, density, range, and mix of residential, office, commercial, entertainment, civic, government, institutional, recreational, creative, and cultural employment uses. However, the new PPS, 2024, which came into effect on October 20, 2024, replaced both the PPS, (2020) and *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (2020). Regarding UGCs, the PPS 2024 eliminates this policy framework, no longer requiring planning authorities to meet specific density targets in key locations, such as downtown areas. Instead, a greater focus is now placed on major transit station areas (MTSAs) as primary Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs), while encouraging the identification of other strategic growth areas. These areas are defined in the PPS 2024 as follows:

> *"within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher density mixed uses in a more compact built form. Strategic growth areas include major transit station areas, existing and emerging downtowns, lands in close proximity to publicly-assisted post secondary institutions and other areas where growth or development will be focused, that may include infill, redevelopment (e.g., underutilized shopping malls and plazas), brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas (A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020)."*

The revision of this definition to include "existing and emerging downtowns, and land adjacent to publicly assisted post-secondary institutions" may be an attempt to reconcile the removal of UGCs. However, the mandatory minimum density targets have not been carried over to the SGAs. The PPS 2024 grants all municipalities, particularly those previously subject to the Growth Plan, considerable discretion to plan for growth based on local conditions. Municipalities are now responsible for forecasting their own growth targets, which may be more tailored than the previously mandated provincial targets. As the only UGC identified in the Region, Downtown St. Catharines was intended to be the primary area for major development. While this goal may still be pursued, the shift in policy now allows for more flexible planning strategies based on local conditions.

Section 11.3 of the NOP outlines general policies for land use designations within Downtown. These encourage residential development, redevelopment and intensification; sustainable transportation; the provision of public realm infrastructure and amenities; public art and cultural expression; façade and streetscape improvements; natural and heritage conservation and restoration; adaptive reuse of buildings; business enterprise; and transit accessibility within Downtown (City of St. Catharines 2018).

The Study Area, as shown in Figure 19, includes areas designated “Commercial Core,” “Mixed Medium High Density Residential/Commercial,” “Mixed High Density Residential/Commercial,” “Low Density Residential”, “Medium Density Residential,” and “Medium High Density Residential”. The permitted uses in each of the zones and applicable zoning provisions are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6 Land Uses Within the Study Area

Land Use	Relevant Policies
Commercial Core	Permitted uses include retail and service commercial uses, institutional, education, civic, government, office, finance, indoor recreation, creative and cultural uses, hospitality, restaurants, entertainment, and residential apartment units. Auto related service uses or dealerships and adult-oriented uses are not permitted. To foster a vibrant, connected, contiguous, walkable, and bikeable retail and commercial environment: i) ground floor residential dwelling units should not be permitted to front on St. Paul Street from Ontario Street to Carlisle Street, on James Street from St. Paul Street to King Street, on Queen Street and William Street generally east of May Alley, and on Ontario Street east of Trafalgar Road. ii) local office uses that do not generate a significant amount of pedestrian traffic or require a ground floor location are encouraged to locate on upper floors. iii) retail functions will only be permitted on upper floors where in conjunction with a ground floor commercial use. b) To support mixed use development, efficiency and increased density, buildings will be a minimum 2 storeys, and generally not less than 7.5 metres in height. c) To protect and enhance the heritage landscape, building height on St. Paul Street between William Street and Garden Park shall generally be restricted to 11 metres at the street front, and any additional height should be appropriately terraced away from the street to maintain the historical landscape.
Mixed High Density Residential/Commercial	Permitted uses include triplex, fourplex, townhouse, and apartment dwellings at a density of generally 85 units per hectare of land or greater. Additional permitted uses include institutional; small scale retail commercial uses only on the ground floor of a building containing dwelling units; small scale service commercial, office, indoor recreation, and creative and cultural uses intended primarily to serve the local neighbourhood. Auto related service and dealerships are not permitted.
Mixed Medium High Density Residential/Commercial	Permitted uses include detached, semi-detached, duplex, triplex, quadruplex, fourplex, townhouse, and apartment dwellings at a density range generally between 60 and 198 units per hectare of land. Additional permitted land uses include institutional; small scale retail commercial uses only on the ground floor of a building containing dwelling units; small scale service commercial, office, indoor recreation, and creative and cultural uses intended primarily to serve the local neighbourhood. Auto related service and dealerships are not permitted.

Land Use	Relevant Policies
Medium High Density Residential	Permitted uses include triplex, quadruplex, fourplex, townhouse, and apartment dwellings at a density generally between 60 and 198 units per hectare of land.
Medium Density Residential	Permitted uses include detached, semi-detached, duplex, triplex, quadruplex, fourplex, townhouse, and apartment dwellings at a density range generally between 25 and 99 units per hectare of land. Height of buildings will generally not exceed 20 metres.
Low Density Residential	Permitted uses include detached, semi-detached, duplex, triplex, quadruplex, fourplex and townhouse dwellings at a density range generally between 20 and 32 units per hectare of land. Height of buildings will generally not exceed 11 metres.

Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Land Use

- Commercial Core
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Mixed High Density Residential / Commercial
- Mixed Medium High Density Residential / Commercial
- Parkland and Open Space
- N/A

0 100 200 m

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Notes

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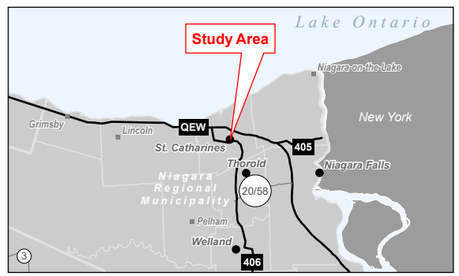


Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV3
Prepared by BF on 2025-03-03
Technical Review by AW on 2025-01-02

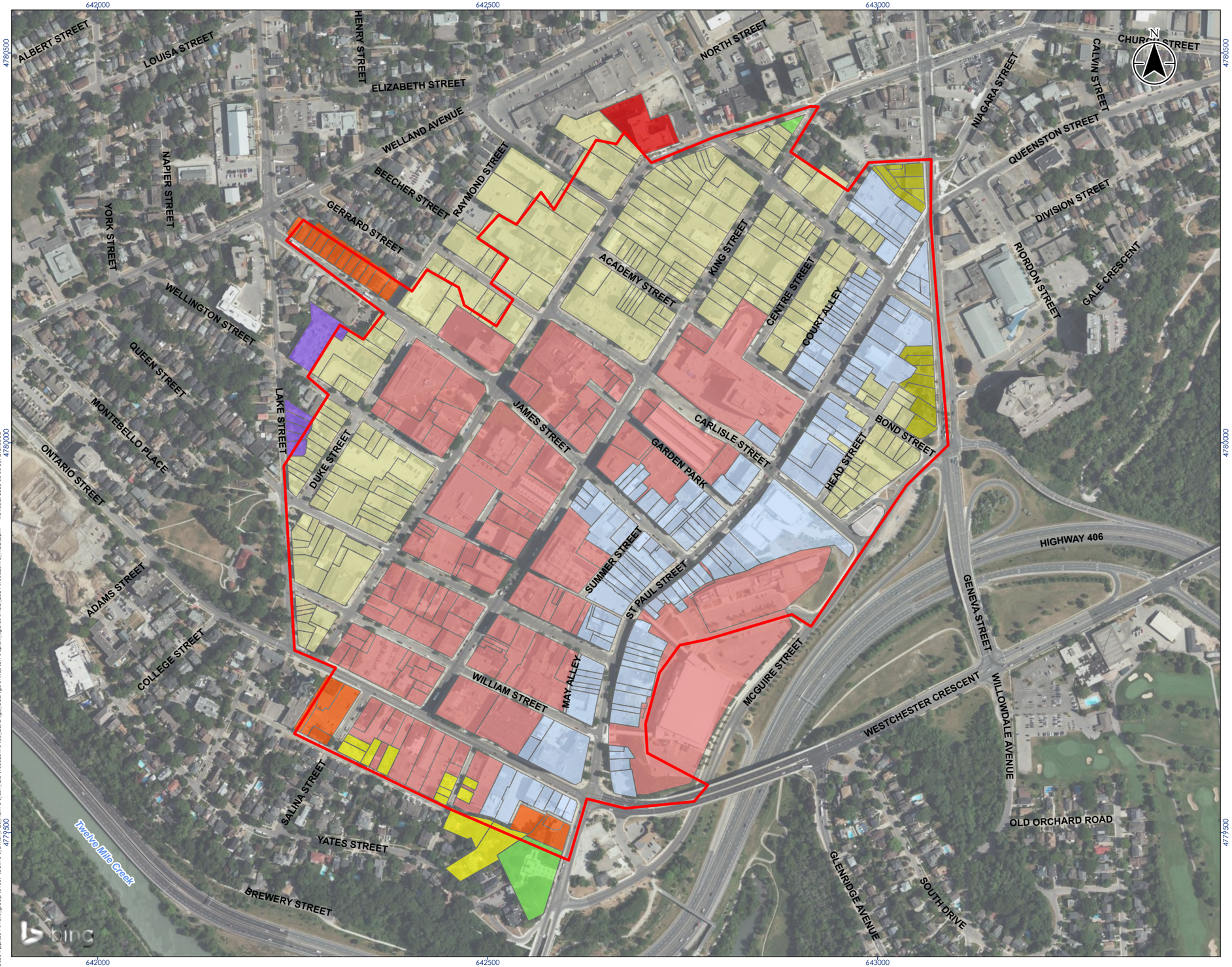
Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
19

Title
Land Use

8.5 Zoning By-Law

The City of St. Catharines Zoning By-law was adopted on December 16, 2013 (City of St. Catharines 2013). As shown in Figure 20, a majority of the Downtown St. Catharines Study Area comprises three zones: Downtown Commercial Core (C5), Downtown Traditional Main Street (C6), and Medium/High Density Mixed use (M2). In addition, there are a few lots within the Study Area zoned as Medium Density Mixed use (M1), Local Convenience Commercial (C1), and Low Density Residential (R2) – Traditional Neighbourhood. The IODE Parkette has a zoning of G2. Zoning is mapped in Figure 20. In general, zoning is reflective of the existing character of the downtown area, setting a maximum height of 11 metres along much of St. Paul and James Streets. Where additional height is permitted, upper storeys are to be set back from the street.



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Zoning

- C1 - Local Convenience Commercial
- C5 - Downtown Commercial Core
- C6 - Downtown Traditional Main Street
- G2 - Minor Green Space
- M1 - Medium Density Mixed Use
- M2 - Medium / High Density Mixed Use
- M3 - High Density Mixed Use
- R2 - Low Density Residential - Traditional Neighbourhood
- R3 - Medium Density Residential
- N/A

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Notes

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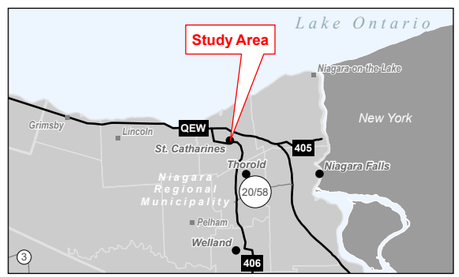


Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV3
Prepared by BF on 2025-03-03
Technical Review by AW on 2025-01-02

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
20

Title
Zoning

8.6 Municipal Policies

8.6.1 City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan 2023-2027

The City adopted a Strategic Plan for the period 2023 to 2027 to serve as a guide for the City's goals and directions, outlining the City's vision, strategic directions, and priority initiatives (City of St. Catharines 2023). One of the five main goals of this plan is "Cultural Vibrancy" which notes that *"*The rich culture, heritage, and vibrancy of St. Catharines communities will be communicated and celebrated by the City*."* (City of St. Catharines 2023c) Strategic directions of this goal include supporting and protecting the City's heritage assets, providing exceptional venues, and providing programming related to the arts and heritage of the City that is accessible to community groups. As a priority initiative, the Strategic Plan identifies a targeted Downtown Heritage Preservation Study as a priority initiative.

8.6.2 Downtown Urban Design Guidelines

The City of St. Catharines Downtown Urban Design Guidelines ("the Guidelines") were adopted in 2012 to guide site, building, and streetscape design within the public and private sector development within Downtown. The design guidelines are intended to meet several objectives, one of which is to "preserve and build upon Downtown's significant human-scaled built and cultural heritage resources" (City of St. Catharines 2012a). Part 1 "Built Heritage Resources" provides the following guidelines for the preservation of heritage resources:

- **Traditional character:** The Downtown contains a number of historic buildings that express the area's development traditions and support sense of place. Historic buildings should be conserved and should remain visually distinguishable from new construction. The use of existing building stock may evolve, but these heritage resources will continue to define the Downtown's special character and the cultural identity of the City. Traditional building forms rather than traditional materials and finishes can be used as an effective mechanism to balance new with old. Colours and materials should be selected that enhance or harmonize with the historic buildings. (1.2.23)
- **Alterations:** The distinctive qualities of existing building stock should be retained wherever possible. This includes architectural details such as windows, doors, bulkheads, cornices, parapets, mouldings, decorative masonry, and various other façade accessories. The removal of steps may however be appropriate as a means of improving accessibility. Historic façade materials, particularly brick and stone, should also be preserved and exposed where possible. (1.2.24)
- **Additions:** New construction adjacent to or atop heritage buildings should be visually distinguishable from and subordinate to the heritage resource. The heritage building should be identifiable as a landmark, with new construction forming the background. Modifications or additions to historic buildings should not diminish the building's cultural value. (1.2.25)
- **Demolition & Salvage:** Where demolition occurs, the use of salvaged building materials for use in landscaping, public art and/or new building construction is encouraged, where appropriate. (1.2.26)

- **Designated Buildings:** Where a building located with the Downtown is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, the provisions of the Act and any associated reasons for designation shall prevail over any contrary provisions within this guideline document. (1.2.27)

(City of St. Catharines 2012a)

Additionally, Part 3 Streetscape Design briefly notes that commercial signage in Downtown should be designed to accommodate the existing scale, architectural features, streetscape design objectives, and heritage character of Downtown.

8.6.3 City Of St. Catharines Sign By-Law 2012-154

All signage within the HCD study area is subject to the City of St. Catharines By-law Number 2012-154 (City of St. Catharines 2012b). This By-law, adopted by the City on May 28, 2012, regulates the erection, installation, and maintenance of signs and other advertising devices. The following regulations are applicable for portable, development, and third-party signs on lands in a Heritage Conservation District:

> *4.3 (a): No person shall erect, install, or maintain a Portable Sign on Residential Lands, Lands in a Heritage Conservation District or on vacant land except as provided for in Sections 4.3 (b), 4.3 (o) and 5.2 (d).*
>
> *4.3 (b): Notwithstanding Sections 4.3 (a), 5.1 (b), 5.1 (c), 5.3 and 5.4, a person may erect, install, or maintain one (1) Portable Sign on a property designated as Residential Lands and used for non-residential use.*
>
> *4.3 (o): Notwithstanding Sections 4.3 (a) and 5.4 (a), a person may erect, install, or maintain one (1) Portable Sign on a property designated as Residential Lands and used as an Apartment Building subject to the regulations.*
>
> *5.2 (d): Notwithstanding Sections 4.1 (c), 4.2 (g), 4.3 (a), 4.4 (f) and 4.5 (b), a Development Sign may be located on Residential Lands.*
>
> *4.3 (q): Notwithstanding the provisions Sections 4.3 (I) and 4.3 (c), a charitable or non-profit organization may obtain a permit and erect, install or maintain a Third-Party Portable Sign on any property other than property zoned residential and used as Residential, Lands in a Heritage Conservation District or on vacant land, advertising a special event. Subject to the regulations, permits issued under this Section shall be valid for twenty (20) days and no charitable or non-profit organization shall receive more than two (2) such permits per twelve (12) month period.*
>
> *5.5 (e): No person shall erect a Third-Party Sign on Residential Lands or upon any lands zoned Greenbelt, Agricultural or Environmental Protection Area or in a Heritage Conservation District.*

(City of St. Catharines 2012b)

8.6.4 Community Improvement Plan

Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) are a tool under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* which provides a significant opportunity to support and encourage improvements to private properties that enhance the heritage character of the area through financial incentives and municipal leadership initiatives (Government of Ontario 1990).

The City of St. Catharines adopted a new CIP in 2020 that maintained six Priority Neighbourhoods for redevelopment and community renewal initiatives within the Urban Area Community Improvement Plan Area (CIPA). Neighbourhood CIPA properties are eligible for the tax incentive and grant programs offered through the CIP, if qualified under the project evaluation if system.

Heritage Restoration/Conservation is a key component of the evaluation system for the **Tax Increment Finance Program** and the **Brownfield Tax Increment Finance Program**. In the Downtown Priority Neighbourhood, the evaluation offers three points for the reuse of a historically significant portion of buildings/structures located on non-designated (OHA) properties and 10 points for the reuse of entire buildings/structures located on (Ontario Heritage Act) designated Part IV or V properties.

The **Façade Improvement Program (FIP)** is a grant program that offers a one-time grant that helps offset project costs for building façade improvement intended to support key GCP initiatives of community renewal, rejuvenation, and revitalization. Most streets in the Downtown Core Area are eligible for this program. Under the FIP, properties designated under Part IV or V of the OHA, or listed on the City's Heritage Register, and undertaking heritage restoration works as part of a building façade improvement, are eligible for a **Heritage FIP (HFIP)** grant value up to 50% of eligible project costs incurred, to a maximum of $15,000 per building façade. The CIP notes that eligible projects are required to meet the minimum project criteria components and satisfy all the heritage restoration criteria which includes materials, windows, storefront, and character-defining elements, to qualify for the HFIP (City of St. Catharines 2020).

8.6.5 Designated Property Grant Guidelines

The City of St. Catharines Designated Property Grant Guidelines serve as a guide for properties designated under Part IV or Part V of the OHA, that may be eligible for one grant each calendar year toward the conservation, reconstruction, and/or restoration of significant heritage and architectural features. The grant amount is one half of the eligible project costs, up to a maximum grant limit of $5,000. The grants are awarded by the City upon completion of the project, subject to verification of the actual expenditures incurred by the owner. The eligible projects fall into three main categories:

a) The conservation of existing architectural elements which are significant. This would include, for instance, repair of deteriorated original elements such as doors and windows, siding and roofing materials, and other significant features.
b) The reconstruction of significant architectural features which still exist, but which are beyond conservation or repair. This would include only accurate reconstructions of the original features, using materials, sizes and configurations which match the original.

c) The restoration of significant architectural features which have been lost, but for which the appearance can be clearly determined from documentary sources. These documentary sources must pertain to the particular property for which funding is requested. The documentation should be in the form of historic drawings or photographs clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored.

(City of St. Catharines n.d.b)

8.6.6 St. Catharines Culture Plan

The City developed a Culture Plan in 2024. The plan identifies strategies to guide municipal support for arts and culture within a five hear horizon. The plan outlines three primary goals for culture in the city: recognize and revitalize, connect and cultivate, and make space. Each goal contains associated objectives and actions to help achieve the overall goal. The plan also highlights the variety of cultural assets within the city such as heritage properties and numerous artistic venues within the Study Area, including the Niagara Artists Centre and the NAC Studio, Silver Spire United Church (which houses Carousel Players and the Willow Arts Community), Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, Suitcase In Point's Studio "The Green," and the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre (City of St. Catharines 2024).

8.6.7 Public Art

In accordance with the City's Public Art Policy, which seeks to encourage participating, collecting, and commissioning art, the City has initiated the Downtown Storefront Public Art Project. The project aims to transform public spaces into platforms for self-expression and storytelling by transforming temporarily vacant storefront windows into art displays by local artists (City of St. Catharines 2023d).

8.6.8 Parks Policy Plan

The City's Parks Policy Plan, prepared in 2005, provides strategies for planning, maintaining, and managing the City's park, open spaces, trails and related facilities. The Parks Plan considers cultural heritage in addition to natural heritage, including principals such as:

- Preserving, protecting and enhancing unique natural features and heritage resources
- Designing and implementing way-finding systems that promote the City's canal heritage and parks and trails

City of St. Catharines 2005

As part of its action plan, the Parks Policy recommends improving the City's canal heritage, identifying opportunities to promote and highlight historical remnants of the old canal system, and encouraging the City's heritage committee to assess the need for policy development to manage heritage assets (City of St. Catharines 2005). The Parks Plan is expected to be updated in 2025-2026.

8.7 Development Activity

Development in the Study Area has occurred in waves throughout its history. Recent developments in the Study Area have been in response to the anticipated growth of the area, the housing crisis and the City's goals of providing 11,000 housing units over the next decade. Staff at the City provided information on recent and current planning applications. The following planning applications have been identified within the Study Area:

- **14 Queen Street:** The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing unoccupied two-storey building and redevelop the land into a thirty-one-storey building providing three hundred apartment units. The tower design comprises of ground floor commercial and an above-grade podium for parking. The City has received a Site Plan Application in support of this redevelopment.
- **201 St. Paul Street:** The City has approved an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment for the purposes of developing a seven-storey commercial building comprising of ground floor retail and office space above. A previously existing three-storey hotel building was demolished in 1996, and the subject site is currently vacant.
- **88 James Street:** The City has received a Site Plan Application for a thirty-storey tower providing 276 apartment units. The tower design comprises of ground and second floor commercial space, a six-storey podium for parking and a floor for amenity space. The property is currently vacant.
- **7 St. Paul Street West:** The City has received a Planning Application to construct a 37-story mixed-use tower. The building will include 423 new dwelling units and 1,129 square metres of non-residential space. The tower design comprises of ground floor and second floor commercial space within an above-grade podium for parking.
- **57 Carlisle Street:** The City has approved applications to permit construction for a nineteen-storey tower known as Carlisle Suites, that includes 228 residential units. The site will also include 500 square metres of non-residential space on the ground floor.
- **111 Church Street**: The construction of an eight-storey apartment building has been completed at this site. The tower includes 127 new dwelling units, 406 square metres of non-residential space, and a daycare at the rear of the property.
- **68 Church Street:** The City has approved a Zoning By-law and Official Plan Amendment to permit a 27-storey tower at the corner of Carlisle Street and King Street. The tower includes 305 new dwelling units and 4,620 square metres of non-residential space. The Planning Application comprises three buildings total, including this 27-storey tower as well as a 12-storey building at the corner of Carlisle Street and Church Street, and a four-storey building along Academy Street.
- **59 Niagara Street:** The City has received a Planning Application for a three-storey residential building. The building will in include twelve new dwelling units.
- **75 Niagara Street:** The City has received a Planning Application for an eight-storey mixed-use building. The building will include 28 new dwelling units and 178 square metres of non-residential space.
- **155 Ontario Street:** A six-storey retirement home has been constructed on this site. The building includes 143 new dwelling units.

- **37 Ontario Street and 3 Ontario Lane:** The City has received a Planning Application to permit a 33-storey mixed use tower. The building will include 305 new dwelling units and 1,140 square metres of non-residential space. The building will be used as residential, retail, and office space. The existing building on site is proposed to be retained and integrated into the development.
- **162A Ontario Street:** The City has approved applications for a three-storey townhouse development. The site will be developed into 8 new dwelling units with a private road access.
- **355 St. Paul Street:** The City has approved applications for a five-storey residential development that include 62 new dwelling units. The building will also have 45 square metres of non-residential space.
- **77 Yates Street:** A six-storey apartment building has been constructed on this site. The building includes 37 new dwelling units.
- **James Street Civic Square:** The City has identified James Street and the surrounding public spaces (including the Central Library Plaza, the City Hall lawns and parking lots, Market Square and the old courthouse) as a unique opportunity to create a cohesive outdoor public space. Redevelopment at the Civic Square is intended to be an inclusive and dynamic outdoor pedestrian space that will serve the growing downtown community and could host a range of special events, festivals, markets, and year-round activities. To date, staff have developed three design options for the corridor, requiring input from the public prior to moving forward with a preferred concept. It is anticipated that a final design will be developed in 2025.

8.8 Opportunities and Constraints

The HCD Study Area contains a mix of uses that together create a rich and vibrant environment for the local community and seasonal tourists. A desktop review of the policy framework and guiding documents for the City of St. Catharines provides the following opportunities and constraints to heritage preservation in the Study Area:

Opportunities

- The NOP and the GCP contain a number of policies that support and guide the identification and preservation of heritage resources.
- The City has a CIP in place to help facilitate the preservation, conservation, and restoration of heritage resources through financial and municipal incentive programs. The Study Area forms part of the Downtown Priority Neighbourhood, which can help provide financial incentives to commercial property owners to restore their building façades and provide specific design guidelines to be followed through this process so that façade restoration or alterations continue to contribute to the character of the area.
- In the review of existing land use designations and other relevant policies, the planning framework generally supports a vibrant, mixed-use character within the Study Area while maintaining compatibility with the overall heritage character.

- The C6 zone allows for a conditional height increase, setting a maximum height of 11 metres along much of St. Paul and James Streets. Additional height is permitted only where upper storeys are set back from the street. This approach helps preserve the heritage character and facilitates an appropriate transition from old to new within the surrounding heritage area.
- Additional guiding frameworks such as the *Downtown Urban Design Guidelines* and the *City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan 2023-2027* encourage heritage preservation, restoration, and compatibility with adjacent land uses.
- Identified as an UGC in the NOP, the Study Area is required to support minimum density targets to provide the highest concentration, density, range, and mix of uses. However, with the repeal of the Growth Plan and the removal of mandatory minimum density targets, development can now be carefully managed to balance the conservation of heritage properties and their attributes with the need for higher concentration and density.
- A majority of zones within the Study Area permit greater heights that may not be compatible with the surrounding heritage attributes. There is an opportunity to review the City's existing zoning provisions such as height, setbacks and streetscape interface to enhance and highlight the City's heritage resources.

Constraints

- A majority of zones within the Study Area permit greater heights than are found along much of the historic streetwall. The M1 Zone allows a maximum height of 20 metres, while the M2 Zone imposes no height limit for apartment buildings and long-term care facilities. Similarly, the C5 zone lacks a maximum height limit. While future development should demonstrate compatibility with neighboring land uses and focus on a transition from old to new, finding the balance between required new height and heritage building can sometimes be challenging. Design guidelines or policy measures found in HCD Plans or other planning frameworks can provide guidance on striking a balance that is compatible with heritage character.
- The 2023 Bill 23 changes to the OHA limit the protections for non-designated heritage structures within the municipality. Listing a potential heritage resource on a municipal heritage register will no longer offer protections to the structure or allow the City to manage change as effectively, there will be fewer opportunities to consider listed properties within or adjacent to new development if they are removed from the heritage register. Buildings must be designated under Part IV or V of the OHA to trigger policies to consider their conservation.

9 Public Consultation

Note to Draft: This section will continue to be updated to reflect the results of ongoing public consultation.

9.1 Introduction

As outlined in Section 1.3.2, Public Consultation is an important part of the HCD Study process, to gather input from the community on what they value in the Study Area, provide information on HCDs and how they function, and seek feedback on potential HCD boundaries, landmarks, statements of heritage value and attributes. The HCD Study included a variety of forms of public consultation and input as described in the following sections. Consultation included public meetings, presentations, task force meetings, and surveys. Members of the general public provided input, and the City and project team also sought direct input from property owners and business owners in the Study Area. Meetings and presentations were also held with the Downtown BIA, Heritage Committee, and HCD Task Force.

9.2 Results of Public Consultation

The questions from the comment sheet and surveys discussed in the following sections are included in Appendix D.

9.2.1 Public Information Centre 1

PIC 1 was an in-person open house held on April 24, 2024, from 6 to 8 pm at Market Square which is located within the Study Area. Local residents and community members were notified of the event through mailouts to property owners, the City's Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study webpage, social media postings, and an article in *The St. Catharines Standard*. A total of 46 local residents, property owners, and community members added their names to the PIC sign-in sheet.

The Project Team and City Staff were available to answer questions and provide information about the HCD process, HCD objectives, tasks of the HCD Study, and a historical review of the HCD Study Area. Information boards were located throughout the open house area. The Stantec team encouraged attendees to provide comments related to the HCD Study Area, including identifying key elements of its history, important built or landscape features, significant views, and landmarks or gateways. Copies of the comment sheets provided at the PIC are included in Appendix D and the feedback received is discussed below in Section 9.2.2.1.

9.2.2 Surveys

Two public surveys were conducted for this HCD Study. The first collected feedback from respondents city-wide, and the second survey focussed on collecting feedback from property and business owners in the Downtown. The questions from both of these surveys are included in Appendix D. Section 9.2.2.1 outlines the feedback provided via the city-wide survey, Section 9.2.2.2 outlines the feedback from the Property and Business Owner Survey, and Section 9.2.2.3 provides a summary of the key survey findings and a comparison between the two surveys.

9.2.2.1 Community Survey – City-wide

Nine participants who attended PIC 1 provided feedback for the city-wide community survey via the hard-copy comment sheet available at the meeting. The questions from the comment sheet were also posted in an online survey to collect feedback from residents across the City. The online community survey was open to the public from April 11 to May 21, 2024, and 125 submissions were received. The survey was re-opened for one day on July 27, 2024, to allow members of the public attending the in-person Downtown Block Party to provide feedback. An additional 7 surveys were collected at the Downtown Block Party for a total of 141 responses.

Of the 141 respondents, 5 indicated that they do not live in St. Catharines (3%), 33 indicated that they live Downtown (23%), 19 indicated that they operate a business downtown (13%), and 31 indicated that they own property downtown (22%). The remaining 39% of the respondents do not reside, own property, or operate a business within the Study Area or chose not to answer these questions.

A summary of the responses regarding which features make downtown St. Catharines unique or special is presented below in Chart 9. Only five respondents chose to skip this question with 136 people providing answers. Respondents were able to select more than one option. The most common feature identified as being unique or special to the downtown was its historical architecture, followed by landscape features, historical associations, and building types.

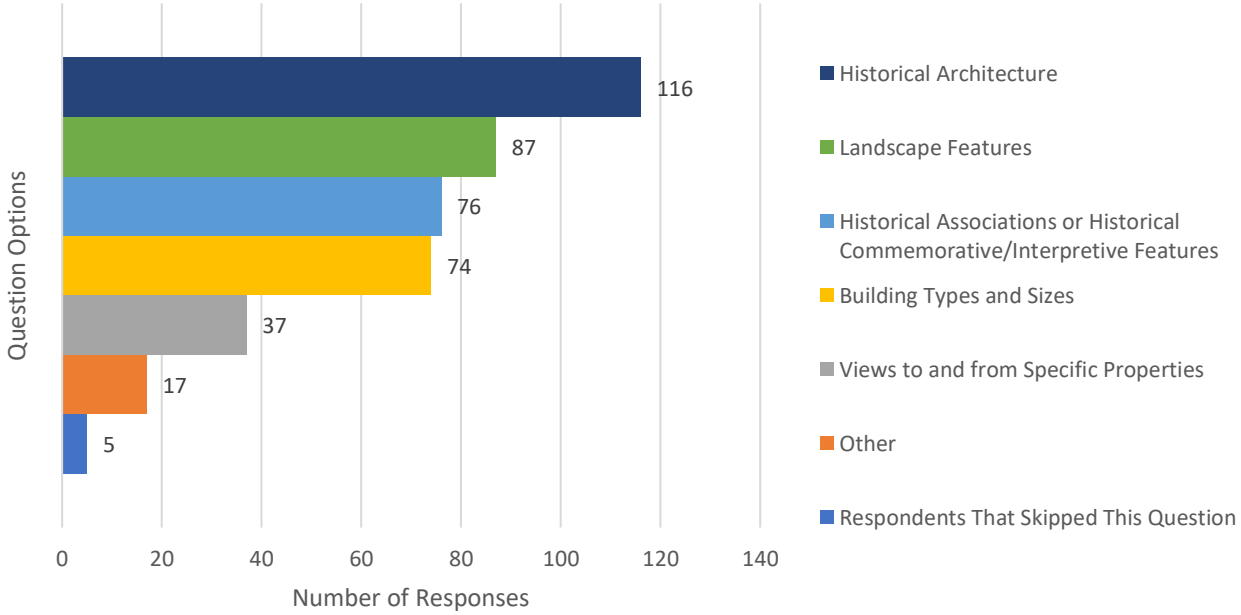


Chart 9 Survey Question: Generally, What Features of the Downtown do You Find Unique or Special?

Of the 141 respondents, 115 respondents (82%) provided additional responses to the open-ended question about what they think is unique or special about downtown St. Catharines. The answers contained a variety of features, with popular responses including:

- St. Paul Street (both its architecture and its curved alignment)
- The history of downtown
- The historical architecture/architectural diversity
- Market Square (91 King Street)
- Charm and walkability of the neighbourhood
- The variety of businesses, restaurants, events, and performance spaces

Potential landmarks or buildings of importance identified within the HCD Study Area by the respondents included:

- City Hall (50 Church Street)
- Market Square (91 King Street)
- The Mansion House (5 William Street)
- The Ollie Fountain (located on the corner of King and James Streets)
- Former Town Hall, Lincoln County Courthouse, and Market House (101 King Street)
- Churches located in the Downtown

- Historic residences, particularly those over 100 years old
- TD Bank (31 Queen Street)
- St. Catharines Public Library Central Branch (54 Church Street)
- Former Coy Brothers Store (14 James Street)
- Pony Mini Mart (321 St. Paul Street)
- The downtown's historic stores
- Former Standard Bank of Canada building (194 St. Paul Street)
- Buildings with stilts along the original canal
- The former St. Catharines Club building (77 Ontario Street)
- The former Canada Haircloth building (now part of Brock University, 15 Artists' Common)
- Government buildings
- Italianate townhouses along James Street between Raymond Street and Welland Avenue
- The Watson Monument (located on the City Hall grounds at the corner of James and Church Streets)
- Former offices and printshop of *The St. Catharines Standard* (17 Queen Street)

Responses stating that all or many of the buildings downtown were important or, conversely, stating that none were potential landmarks or important buildings, were repeated by numerous respondents. Thirty-six respondents (26%) chose to skip this question.

Most of the respondents indicated that they were concerned about adequate protection of the City's older buildings and that maintaining the history and character of the downtown was important: 116 respondents (82%) indicated that yes, they were concerned that without adequate protect the City might lose some of its older buildings and 105 respondents (74%) indicated that maintaining the history and character of downtown was very important. Despite being optional, only two of the respondents skipped these questions.

Regarding appropriate boundaries for a potential HCD, a wide variety of perspectives were provided while 41 respondents (29%) chose to skip this question. The feedback provided included making the district as large as possible, general agreement with the Study Area as a potential boundary, limiting the boundary to St. Paul Street, limiting the boundary to only public properties or properties owned by the City, or using the historical city limits of St. Catharines from the late 19th century. Among respondents who suggested larger boundaries, Burgoyne Bridge, Welland Avenue, the former canal, Twelve Mile Creek, Rodman Hall, and the St. Catharines historical Black community (located north of the Study Area and centered around Henry Street) were popular suggestions of historic places currently outside the Study Area the respondents felt should be included. The Merrit House, the Yates residential neighbourhood,

Montebello Park, and the historic residences along Queen Street were also repeatedly suggested for inclusion within the HCD[3],

Responses regarding the reuse of existing or potential heritage buildings into developments supporting urban growth in support of the current housing crisis indicated general support for this idea, with 89 respondents answering "yes" (68%), 22 respondents answering maybe (17%), and 20 respondents answering "no" (15%). Only one respondent skipped this question (Chart 10).

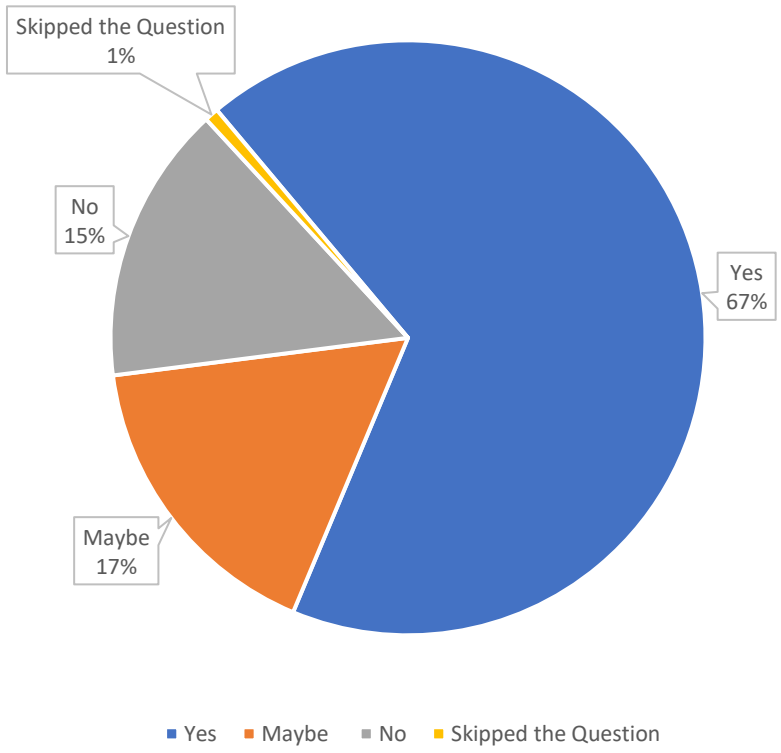


Chart 10 Survey Question: Should Heritage Buildings Be Incorporated into New Developments?

The survey provided respondents an opportunity to identify additional comments or concerns in an open-ended question. Of the 132 respondents, 80 provided additional comments or concerns (61%) and 52 chose to skip this question (39%). The responses to this open-ended question contained a wide spectrum of answers within varying levels of detail. The following list summarizes repeated themes expressed in these responses:

[3] These properties already have heritage designations under Part V of the *OHA* as part of the Yates Street HCD and Queen Street HCD.

- Opposition to the creation of a heritage district (due to cost, impacts on development/growth, concerns about other priorities, etc.)
- Concerns that important pieces of the City's heritage/downtown character have already been lost or that previous attempts at heritage preservation have been unsuccessful
- A desire to see the character of the downtown preserved
- Concerns that HCD policies will limit development/growth or infringe on the rights of property owners
- Support for repurposing heritage buildings, especially those that are vacant, to create additional housing
- A desire to see development occur in existing empty lots or parking lots instead of reusing and/or demolishing heritage buildings
- Concerns that an HCD would add unnecessary oversight to development
- A desire to see the downtown revitalized/cleaned or buildings and public areas maintained/restored
- Support for incorporation of heritage façades into new development
- Concerns regarding safety/drug use/homelessness in the downtown core
- A desire for affordability and walkability – for housing, but also for amenities, shops/restaurants, parking, etc. easily accessible by foot in downtown
- Support for balancing development with heritage preservation
- Support for preservation of old trees or addition of green space
- Support for making the downtown attractive for both residents and tourists

9.2.2.2 Community Survey – Property and Business Owners

Following the first round of surveys, a second survey was prepared to seek additional feedback from property and business owners from within the Study Area. The intent of the survey was to gather feedback on what property or business owners valued about the Downtown, their perceptions of HCDs in general, and their level of concerns related to heritage conservation and HCD permit processes. The survey was available digitally or could be printed and submitted to the Planning Department at City Hall from August 1 to October 31, 2024.

Forty-six respondents provided feedback for this survey. Of these, 6 respondents operate a business in the downtown (13%), 18 respondents own a property in the downtown (39%), and 22 respondents operate a business and/or own property in the downtown (48%).

The first question of the survey asked respondents to rank their level of agreement with statements related to the architectural character/appearance of buildings in the downtown. Responses varied on whether the architectural character or style influenced their decision to purchase their building but generally indicated that architectural character and the historical character of Downtown were not highly valued factors in choosing the location of their property or business. Respondents indicated that they

value maintaining the appearance of their properties or businesses and that they think the appearance of surrounding buildings impacts their properties or businesses. Most respondents did not feel that the architectural character/appearance of their building or the historical character of Downtown contribute to their business' brand, the success of their business, or the types of tenants they attract.

The second question asked respondents to rank their level of agreement with statements related to the prospect of an HCD Plan in the Study Area. Most respondents generally disagreed with the idea of implementing guidelines or restrictions regarding heritage properties, demolition, and construction of new buildings. Of the statements related to this theme, respondents indicated their preference for no restrictions at all, permitting property owners to alter and demolish their property as they wish. Maintaining interesting historical architectural features without any restrictions on changes to storefronts received more varied responses than the other statements related to this theme, with a nearly equal number of respondents agreeing and disagreeing with it.

The third question asked respondents to identify their level of concern related to a variety of topics including potential heritage approval processes, property values and sales, ability to receive bank financing or insurance, and heritage conservation measures in the downtown area. The most pressing concerns from respondents included approvals to make changes to façades, restrictions on future development, decreasing property values, the ability to sell properties, and getting insurance or financing. Property and business owners were generally not concerned about their property value increasing. Views on the City's current heritage conservation measure in the downtown were mixed.

The survey also contained an open-ended question looking to identify general concerns not previously considered from respondents. Respondents' concerns included:

- Additional permitting requirements and/or additional government involvement will result in additional costs, extended timelines, stalled developments, and unused vacant/derelict buildings
- The need to address more pressing priorities like economic development/recovery, safety, homelessness, drug use, cleanliness, etc.
- Prevention of investment and/or development in the Downtown as a result of an HCD
- Limited financing options, increased property taxes, and/or increased insurance, development and maintenance costs will result from an HCD
- The viability of owning/operating a business within the HCD
- A preference for voluntary (individual) designation

The survey also asked respondents to identify their level of agreement with statements related to available (or future) municipal financial incentive programs for heritage properties. Most of the respondents indicated that they agreed with current or suggested grants and tax incentives. Of the 46 respondents, 26 (56%) had not applied for a grant in the past. Of the 17 who had previously applied for a grant, responses were mixed but 11 respondents did not find the process to be easy. Responses were mixed on whether streamlining the process would make respondents more likely to apply for a grant.

When asked for an overall opinion, nearly half of the respondents (21 people or 48%) indicated that they think protecting heritage buildings will hurt the Downtown, one third (16 people or 36%) indicated that

they think it will help, and 7 people (or 16%) indicated that they think it will have no impact. The survey also included an open-ended question asking respondents to elaborate on why they felt a heritage district would help, hurt, or have no impact on the downtown. The following list summarizes repeated themes expressed in these responses:

- An HCD may help: deter demolition by neglect; value the City's history; improve the Downtown if the City provides incentives for property owners; potentially attract tourism; provide a means to prevent further loss of historical buildings, provided guidelines/restrictions are reasonable; and preserve what is unique about St. Catharines
- An HCD will: create barriers to development and investment interest in Downtown; make approvals/permitting more complicated when the system is already a slow or broken; result in guidelines/restrictions and cost implications; make it more difficult and costly to acquire insurance and financing; increase costs of owning or developing properties downtown (insurance, maintenance, permitting, etc.); come at the expense of other priorities/the bigger picture (like improving homelessness, cleanliness, safety, existing abandoned/vacant buildings, etc.); and will result in a heritage approvals process that is costly and feels unpredictable and subjective.

9.2.2.3 Summary of Survey Results

The majority of the responses received during the community-wide survey were from St. Catharines residents who do not live in the downtown, own property there, or operate a business downtown. The overall results of the city-wide survey indicated that the broader City has a strong interest in the historical architecture of the City's downtown and is concerned about both adequate protection of heritage buildings and maintaining the history and character of the downtown.

Given the relatively small proportion of downtown property and business owners who responded to the city-wide survey, the second survey focussed on collecting feedback from this group. Unlike the results of the city-wide survey, only about half of the property and business owners indicated an interest in the historical architecture of their properties or businesses. Overall, the second survey identified concerns from business and property owners about an HCD. The majority of the respondents disagreed with the idea of implementing guidelines or restrictions regarding heritage properties and nearly half of the respondents indicated that they think protecting heritage buildings will hurt the Downtown.

9.2.3 Downtown Business Improvement Area Heritage Panel Event

An in-person heritage panel event was held at the Central branch of the St. Catharines Public Library on September 26, 2024, for members of the Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA). The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for property and business owners from the Study Area to ask questions of panel members who have previous experience with heritage properties in St. Catharines. The panelists for the meeting included Marc Lefebvre, Underwriting Coordinator at the Insurance Bureau of Canada, Michael Mazzolino, Broker at the Mazzolino Real Estate Team at Re/Max Garden City Realty Inc., Michael Mirynech, Principal and Senior Architect at 2M Architects Inc, and Andrew Humeniuk, Executive Director at The Brown Homestead, with Michael Ripmeester, Professor for the Department of

Geography and Tourism Studies at Brock University, as the moderator. The meeting was recorded and made available online following the event.

9.2.4 Community Mapping Project

An interactive map was created to provide members of the public with an additional avenue for giving feedback about the HCD Study. Launched April 23, 2024, the interactive map allowed members of the public to provide comments about things they value or things they would like to change within the HCD Study Area. It also provided members of the public with the ability to provide boundary recommendations for a potential HCD using a drawing tool. This drawing tool provided the option to add written comments with the shape or lines, but comments were not required.

Comment points on the map were added to:

- Robertson Hall (the present-day Niagara Folks Arts Multicultural Centre located at 85 Church Street which housed various educations institutions in the 19th and 20th centuries)
- The intersection of King and Carlisle Streets
- The Standard Bank of Canada (194 St. Paul Street)
- 40 Queen Street
- Former offices and printshop of *The St. Catharines Standard* (17 Queen Street)
- The shipyard plaque and anchor located at the corner of St. Paul Street and Westchester Avenue
- The Merritt Park plaque
- 7 McGuire Street (the comment inquired if this was a heritage building, stories suggest it was a staff residence associated with Merrit House across the street)
- Twelve Mile Creek trailhead which connects Downtown to Twelve Mile Creek (noted as part of St. Catharines natural and cultural heritage)

Boundary modification suggestions made using the drawing tool included:

- Expansion of the district to include Twelve Mile Creek and the old canal
- The use of Church Street as a boundary.
- Creation of a district around the Lake Street Armoury (81 Lake Street) and some of the historic residences on Elizabeth, Louisa, and Albert Streets

Additional areas outside the Study Area were drawn as polygons in the interactive map, including lands north of the Study Area and the Alexandra School, St. Catharines Collegiate, and the residential area that surrounds them (including George, Henry, Beech, and Edmund Streets). Comments were not included with these polygons to indicated what the respondents identified

The map will remain active during the HCD Study and will be available for use for public consultation on the draft HCD Study. Additional comments received, if any, will be incorporated into the final HCD Study report.

9.2.5 Public Information Centre 2

Note to Draft: The second PIC meeting is anticipated for Marchin 2025. Results and feedback from PIC 2 will be incorporated into the Study before it is finalized.

9.2.6 Direct Correspondence

In addition to the public consultation measures described above, City staff and/or the Project Team received correspondence via emails related to the project. These included:

- An email from a downtown business owner with a letter attached addressed to the mayor and St. Catharines City Council objecting to the project and a second email chain from the same sender with questions regarding the Downtown HCD Task Force and questions regarding the results of public surveys
- An email chain from a downtown business/property owner expressing opposition to the creation of an HCD, a desire for voluntary individual designations and concerns about the impacts an HCD will have on Downtown businesses and property owners (including concerns about impacts to insurance, maintenance costs, and loans).
- An email from a property owner suggesting that their home on Church Street, which is designated under Part IV of the OHA, as well as two adjacent homes on Church and King, should be included in the boundaries for the proposed HCD because as were built and owned by Stephen Parnell, a member of the Dragoons in 1837-8 during the MacKenzie Rebellion.
- An email chain with a business owner advocating for voluntary individual designations and expressing concerns about impacts of a district approach on business and property owners.
- Phone calls to the Project Manager with requests for additional information on HCDs, questions about the HCD process, expressions of concern over the prospect of an HCD with respect to property rights and the ability to alter properties, concerns of increased costs and application processes that could come with an HCD, and concerns over property insurance and bank financing if an HCD were in place.

9.3 Downtown Heritage Conservation District Task Force

As part of the City's efforts to hear and respond to the perspectives of local businesses and property owners, the City started a Downtown Heritage Conservation District Task Force made up of representatives from the Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA), Council and the Heritage Committee. The Task Force held its first meeting on June 27, 2024. Much of the feedback received during the Task Force meeting echoed comments and concerns outlined in the Property and Business owner survey, with business owners and property owners expressing concerns about the ability to make alterations to buildings, receive bank loans or property insurance, and potential increased costs if an HCD were to be implemented.

The date of the next Task Force meeting is to be determined.

9.3.1 Summary of Consultation

It is understood through the public consultation undertaken to date that there are a variety of responses to the prospect of an HCD in the downtown. Many respondents of the survey following the PIC noted that they value the historical and architectural character of the downtown, its landscape character, and the historical associations of the downtown. Many noted that they were concerned about historic buildings in the downtown having adequate protection and worried that older buildings would be lost. The majority of respondents indicated they would want to see historic buildings integrated into new developments. These responses overall point to an HCD being a useful tool to address public values and concerns. It should be noted that most respondents to the PIC survey indicated they did not live in, own property, or operate a business within the Study Area. The responses speak to broader community perception of the downtown and Study Area.

The consultation that focused directly on property and business owners in the Study Area indicated a different set of opinions. Some property and business owners within the Study Area have concerns that an HCD would result in increased costs to maintain, repair, or restore their properties. Concern has also been expressed that an HCD would restrict the ability to alter or develop property. Members of the public also cited concerns that they would face difficulty obtaining insurance or bank loans if an HCD were in effect, or that these would come at additional costs. These concerns are not unusual during an HCD Study or Plan and are sometimes rooted in misunderstanding or misinterpretation about HCDs. Nevertheless, public concerns should be noted and considered by the City in making their recommendations.

10 Evaluation

10.1 Introduction

Evaluation of the Study Area follows the methodology and criteria outlined in Section 2.3 of this report. The evaluation criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 were applied to 452 properties within the Study Area to determine if 25% of properties satisfied two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 as it relates to Section 41(1)(b) of the act. When sub-areas were evaluated (see Sections 10.3, 10.4, and 10.5) only properties within that sub-area were considered. Each property was individually considered based on the field program, historical research, and its surrounding context. In addition, the Tool Kit's HCD characteristics provide a helpful balance to the numerical threshold of value identified by the O. Reg. 9/06 evaluation. The Tool Kit's HCD characteristics have also been used to supplement the O. Reg. 9/06 evaluation and provide a broader contextual understanding of the Study Area, as they do not have legislative authority like the OHA.

10.2 Study Area Evaluation

10.2.1 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Table 7 O. Reg. 9/06 Evaluation of the Study Area

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
1. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method.	58%	Yes	A total of 265 properties were found to meet criterion i. The Study Area contains structures that are representative of various architectural styles from the mid-19th century to the late 20th century. Predominant representative architectural styles in the Study Area include: • 30 representative Italianate structures (11%) • 24 representative Queen Anne structures (9%) • 35 representative Edwardian structures (13%) • 29 representative 20th century modern structures, including Brutalist, International, and Modernist (11%) • 91 Ontario vernacular structures (35%)
2. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	3%	No	A total of 14 properties within the Study Area were found to contain a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit (see Appendix C for detailed entries).
3. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
4. The properties have historical value or associative value because they have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	12%	No	A total of 55 properties were found to meet this criterion. This includes properties directly associated with key themes in the Study Area, including: • 28 properties associated with the Welland Canal (51%) • 4 properties associated with the role of St. Catharines as a regional manufacturing centre (7%) • 15 properties associated with the role of St. Catharines as the social and economic centre of the Niagara Region (27%) • 8 properties are directly associated with another theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution significant to a community such as prominent business owners, religious denominations, and schools (15%).
5. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
6. The properties have historical or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community.	2%	No	A total of 11 properties were found to meet this criterion for their association with significant architects, including Arthur E. Nicholson, Robert MacBeth, James Dougan, George J. Metzger, Johnson Rae, Samuel G. Dolson, Lionel Hesson, and Kivas Tully. See Appendix C for detailed entries.
7. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain, or support the character of an area.	40%	Yes	A total of 179 properties were found to meet this criterion. This includes: • 93 properties which support and maintain the character of the streetwall and streetscape on St. Paul Street and sections of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street (51%) • 25 properties that maintain and support the civic and institutional character of the Study Area along King Street, Church Street, and surrounding areas (14%) • 24 properties that maintain and support the residential character of Church Street south of the Laura Secord Building (14%) • 37 properties that maintain and support smaller pockets within the Study Area that have a definable character (21%)

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
8. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to each other.	39%	Yes	A total of 178 properties were found to meet this criterion. This includes: • 113 properties which are physically and visually linked to the streetscape and streetwall of St. Paul Street and sections of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street (63%) • 65 properties that contain other physical and visual links, mostly consisting of rowhouses, other semi-detached structures, and residential areas with a shared massing and style (37%)
9. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark.	4%	No	A total of 20 properties were found to meet this criterion. This mostly consists of visually prominent civic and institutional structures within the Study Area which can be used for wayfinding within the downtown.

10.2.2 Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

Table 8 The Tool Kit's HCD Characteristics Evaluation for Study Area

Characteristic	Yes/No	Discussion
A concentration of heritage resources	Yes	The Study Area contains three distinct concentrations of heritage resources that are linked by a shared aesthetic and historical contexts. This first includes heritage resources connected with the historic streetscape and streetwall of St. Paul Street and parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street. The second includes heritage resources consisting of commercial, civic, and institutional structures along Church Street and King Street that are connected with St. Catharines' role as a regional social and economic centre. The third includes heritage resources on Church Street that consist mostly of residences, including residences converted to mixed use or commercial use, that support St. Catharines' role as a regional social and economic centre. Generally, parts of the Study Area outside of these three areas do not contain large concentrations of heritage resources. Much of the Study Area's south and west ends contain infill and surface parking lots. Much of the north part of the Study Area contains a mixed streetscape that contains a variety of massing, setback, and styles.
A framework of structured elements	Yes	St. Paul Street and the former route of the Welland Canal provide a structured element that has influenced the development of the Study Area. St. Paul Street's route approximately follows an Indigenous trail and was an important route for early colonial settlers. The completion of the Welland Canal assured the role of St. Paul Street as the commercial centre of St. Catharines. As a result, the route of St. Paul Street curved to follow the canal's contours. While the Welland Canal was rerouted away from St. Paul Street, the topography and landform of St. Paul Street and the former canal route remain heavily influenced by this former waterway into the present-day. The street network of the remainder of the Study Area follows a rough grid beyond St. Paul Street, typical of many urban core areas in Ontario.
A sense of visual coherence	No	The Study Area as a whole does not have a unified sense of scale, mass, height, or materials that visually unites the entire Study Area. However, the Study Area contains visually distinct and coherent sub-areas that are united by shared scales and massings that convey a distinct sense of time and place. The streetwall of St. Paul Street and parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street contain a visual coherence centred around a mostly continuous streetwall of mid-19th to early 20th century structures and sympathetic infill which share a similar massing, setback, and scale. The commercial, civic, and institutional structures along Church Street and King Street contain a visual coherence centred around the growth of St. Catharines as the social and economic centre of the Niagara Region beginning in the mid-19th century and into the present-day. This is visually demonstrated by the high concentration of civic structures and mid-20th century to late 20th century office towers which together convey a distinct sense of place. Church Street south of Helliwell's Lane contains mostly residential structures. These structures include residences that have been converted to commercial use or more substantial multi-unit apartment buildings. Together, these properties create a visually coherent area.
A distinctiveness	Yes	Generally, the entire Study Area contains a recognizable distinctiveness as St. Catharines' downtown core. However, the Study Area contains three distinct sub-areas which are readily distinguishable from their surroundings within the broader downtown core. The streetwall of St. Paul Street and parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street are visually distinct from surrounding areas due to a mostly continuous streetwall of mid-19th to early 20th century structures and sympathetic infill which share a similar massing, setback, and scale. The commercial, civic, and institutional structures along Church Street and King Street contain a visual distinctness centred around the high concentration of civic structures and mid-20th century to late 20th century office towers. Church Street south of Helliwell's Lane contains mostly residential structures. These structures include residences that have been converted to commercial use or more substantial multi-unit apartment buildings. Together, these properties create a distinct area.

10.3 St. Paul Subarea

10.3.1 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Table 9 O. Reg. 9/06 Evaluation of the St. Paul Sub-Area

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
1. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method.	62%	Yes	The St. Paul Sub-Area contains 86 properties that are representative examples of an architectural style. Predominant representative architectural styles in the sub-area include: • 16 representative Edwardian structures (19%) • 13 representative Renaissance Revival structures (15%) • 7 representative Second Empire structure (8%) • 5 representative 20th century modern structures (6%) • 39 representative Ontario vernacular structures (45%)
2. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	4%	No	The St. Paul Sub-Area contains six properties which demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
4. The properties have historical value or associative value because they have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	22%	No	A total of 17 properties were found to meet this criterion. This includes properties directly associated with key themes in the Study Area, including: • 6 properties associated with the Welland Canal (35%) • 2 properties associated with the role of St. Catharines as a regional manufacturing centre (12%) • 1 property associated with the role of St. Catharines as the social and economic centre of the Niagara Region (6%) • 8 properties are directly associated with another theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution significant to a community such as prominent business owners, religious denominations, and schools (47%)
5. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
6. The properties have historical or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community.	1%	No	One property was found to meet this criterion. The property at 80-88 St. Paul Street was designed by the prominent architect George J. Metzger of Buffalo, New York.
7. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain, or support the character of an area.	66%	Yes	A total of 93 properties support and maintain the character of the streetwall and streetscape within this sub-area.
8. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to each other.	82%	Yes	A total of 113 properties contain a historical, visual, physical, or functional link to the streetwall or streetscape within this sub-area.

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
9. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark.	4%	No	Seven landmarks were identified within this sub-area, including: • 1 St. Paul Street • 101 St. Paul Street (Patrick Sheehan's) • 15 Artists' Commons (Brock University) • 250 St. Paul Street (First Ontario PAC) • 321 St. Paul Street (Pony Mini Mart) • 366 St. Paul Street (Silver Spire United Church) • 5 William Street (Mansion House)

10.3.2 Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

Table 10 The Tool Kit's HCD Characteristics Evaluation for the St. Paul Sub-Area

Characteristic	Yes/No	Discussion
A concentration of heritage resources	Yes	The heritage resources connected with the historic streetscape and streetwall of St. Paul Street and parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street form a concentration of resources linked to the city's physiography and historical development.
A framework of structured elements	Yes	St. Paul Street and the former route of the Welland Canal provide a structured element that has influenced the development of the Study Area. St. Paul Street's route approximately follows an Indigenous trail and was an important route for early colonial settlers. The completion of the Welland Canal assured the role of St. Paul Street as the commercial centre of St. Catharines. As a result, the route of St. Paul Street curves to approximately follow the canal's contours that was also historically established by an Indigenous trail and Dicks Creek.
A sense of visual coherence	Yes	The streetwall of St. Paul Street and parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street contain a visual coherence centred around a mostly continuous streetwall of mid-19th to early 20th century structures and sympathetic infill which share a similar massing, setback, and scale.
A distinctiveness	Yes	The streetwall of St. Paul Street and parts of Ontario Street, Queen Street, and James Street east of King Street are visually distinct from surrounding areas due to a mostly continuous streetwall of mid-19th to early 20th century structures and sympathetic infill which share a similar massing, setback, and scale.

10.4 Civic Centre Sub-Area

10.4.1 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Table 11 O. Reg. 9/06 Evaluation of the Civic Centre Sub-Area

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
1. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method.	55%	Yes	The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains 22 properties that are representative examples of an architectural style. Predominant representative architectural styles in the sub-area include: • 4 representative Gothic Revival structures (18%) • 5 representative Brutalist structures (22%) • 5 representative Modernist structures (22%) • 3 Ontario vernacular structures (14%)
2. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	8%	No	Three properties were identified as containing a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, including: • 67 Church Street (Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria) • 83 Church Street (St. George's Church) • 95 Church Street (First United Church)
3. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
4. The properties have historical value or associative value because they have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	43%	Yes	A total of 17 properties were found to meet this criterion. This includes properties directly associated with key themes in the Study Area, including: • 1 property associated with the Welland Canal (6%) • 2 properties associated with the role of St. Catharines as a regional manufacturing centre (12%) • 8 properties associated with the role of St. Catharines as the social and economic centre of the Niagara Region (47%) • 6 properties are directly associated with another theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution significant to a community such as prominent business owners, religious denominations, and schools (35%)
5. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
6. The properties have historical or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community.	5%	No	Three properties were found to meet this criterion. The building at 95 Church Street (First United Church) was designed by the prominent architect Johnson Rae. The structure at 145 King Street is associated with the prominent architect Lionel Hesson. The building at 101 King Street was designed by Kivas Tully.
7. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain, or support the character of an area.	63%	Yes	A total of 25 properties support, define, or maintain the civic and institutional character of the sub-area.
8. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to each other.	10%	No	A total of four properties have a physical, visual, or historical link with their surroundings. Many of the properties in this sub-area are detached structures which serve specific institutional and civic functions and have no common physical, functional, visual, or historical links.

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
9. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark.	36%	Yes	11 landmarks were identified within this sub-area, including: • 101 King Street (Old Lincon County Courthouse) • 32 Church Street (Laura Secord Building) • 50 Church Street (St. Catharines Municipal Building) • 53 Church Street (Knox Presbyterian Church) • 54 Church Street (St. Catharines Centennial Library) • 59 Church Street (Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse) • 67 Church Street (Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria) • 83 Church Street (St. George's Church) • 91 King Street (St. Catharines Farmers' Market) • 95 King Street (First United Church) • 110 James Street

10.4.2 Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

Table 12 The Tool Kit's Evaluation of Civic Centre Sub-Area

Criteria	Yes/No	Discussion
A concentration of heritage resources	Yes	This sub-area includes a concentration of heritage resources consisting of commercial, civic, and institutional structures along Church Street and King Street that are connected with St. Catharines' role as a regional social and economic centre.
A framework of structured elements	No	This sub-area contains no major natural features or built forms that provide a unifying framework. It is located within a typical urban street grid.
A sense of visual coherence	Yes	The commercial, civic, and institutional structures within this sub-area contain a visual coherence centred around the growth of St. Catharines as the social and economic centre of the Niagara Region beginning in the mid-19th century and into the present-day. This is visually demonstrated by the high concentration of churches, civic structures and mid-20th century to late 20th century office towers which together convey a distinct sense of place.
A distinctiveness	Yes	The commercial, civic, and institutional properties within this sub-area contain a visual distinctness centred around the high concentration of churches, civic structures, institutional structures, and mid-20th century to late 20th century office towers.

10.5 South Church Street Sub-Area

10.5.1 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Table 13 O. Reg. 9/06 Evaluation of the South Church Street Sub-Area

Criteria of O. Reg. 9/06	Percent Met	Yes/No	Discussion
1. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method.	74%	Yes	The South Church Street Sub-Area contains 23 properties that are representative of an architectural style. Representative architectural styles in the sub-area include: • 3 representative Gothic Revival structures (13%) • 4 representative Italianate structures (17%) • 9 representative Queen Anne structures (39%) • 3 representative Edwardian structures (13%)
2. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
3. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
4. The properties have historical value or associative value because they have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	6%	No	Two properties were found to meet this criterion. The residence at 64 Queen Street was home to Chauncey Yale, a prominent American manufacturer, and 12 Lake Street is the former St. Andrews School.
5. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.
6. The properties have historical or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community.	10%	No	Three properties were found to meet this criterion. The structures at 1 Church Street, 2 Lake Street, and 4 Lake Street are associated with the prominent architect Arthur E. Nicholson.
7. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain, or support the character of an area.	77%	Yes	A total of 24 properties define, maintain, and support the residential character of this sub-area, including its evolution from a residential to a mixed-use area.
8. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to each other.	45%	Yes	A total of 14 properties have a physical, visual, or historical link with their surroundings. This mostly includes row housing and semi-detached housing.
9. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark.	0%	No	No properties were found to meet this criterion.

10.5.2 Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

Table 14 The Tool Kit's Evaluation for South Church Street Sub-Area

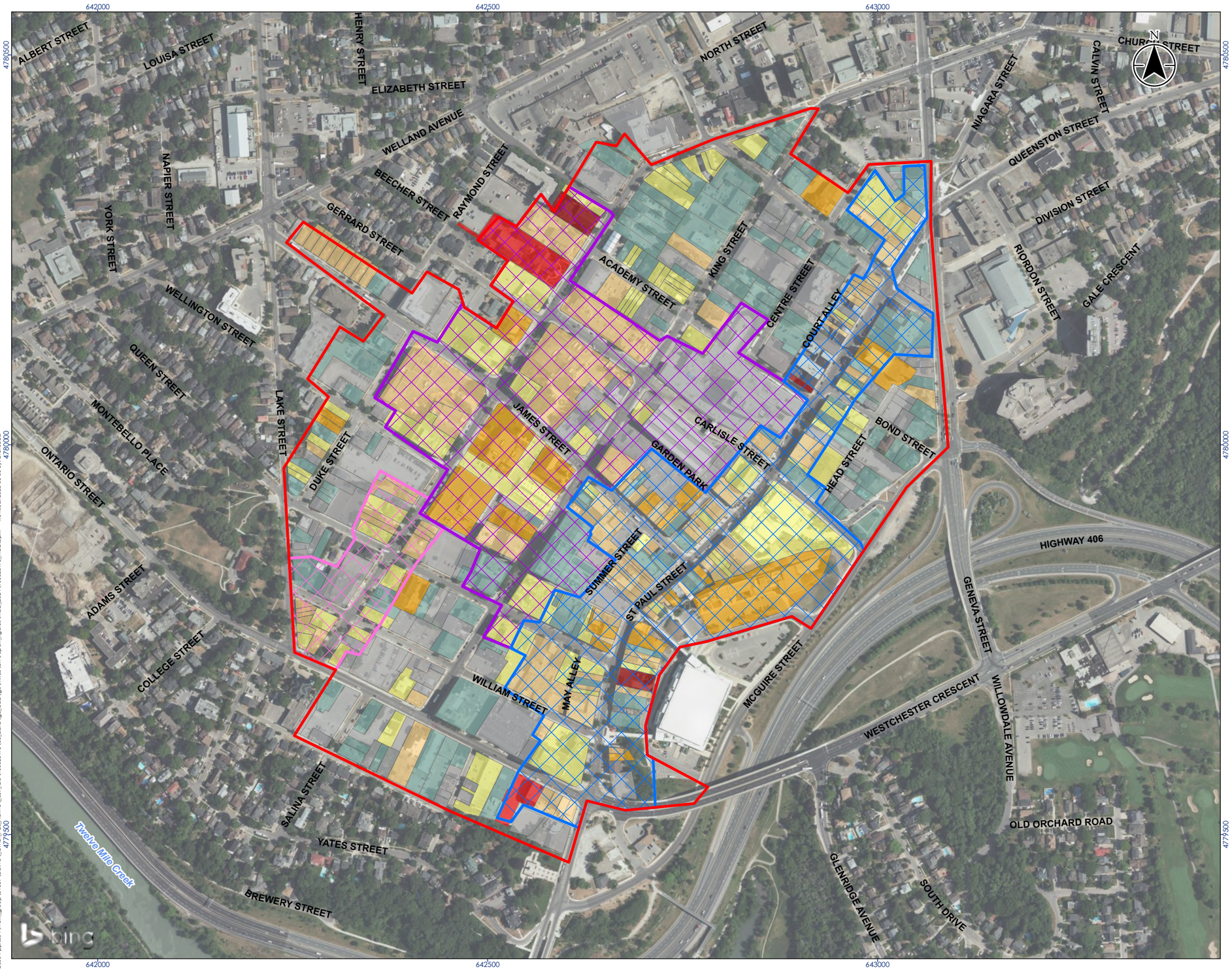
Criteria	Yes/No	Discussion
A concentration of heritage resources	Yes	The South Church Street Sub-Area contains a concentration of representative architectural styles that also share contextual value as they support and maintain the residential character of this sub-area, including its evolution from a residential to a mixed-use area.
A framework of structured elements	No	This sub-area contains no major natural features or built forms that provide a unifying framework. It is located within a typical urban street grid.
A sense of visual coherence	Yes	Church Street south of Helliwell's Lane contains mostly residential structures. These structures include residences that have been converted to commercial use or more substantial multi-unit apartment buildings. Together, these properties create a visually coherent area.
A distinctiveness	Yes	Church Street south of Helliwell's Lane contains mostly residential structures. These structures include residences that have been converted to commercial use or more substantial multi-unit apartment buildings. Together, these properties have a distinctiveness from the surrounding parts of the Study Area that are more commercial in nature

10.6 Evaluation Conclusion

The evaluation of the Study Area and the three identified sub-areas according to O. Reg. 9/06 determined that over 25% of the entire Study Area and each of the three sub-areas met two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 as it relates to Section 41 of the OHA. The results of these evaluations are illustrated in Figure 21. Together, the entire Study Area and its identified sub-areas present a narrative of the development of St. Catharines from its founding along St. Paul Street and the construction of the Welland Canal in the early 19th century, into the commercial intensification of the downtown core in the late 20th century evidenced by the prevalence of late 20th century mid-rise office buildings. As a result, the identified sub-areas contain distinct heritage resources with differing physical, historical, and contextual significances reflective of different phases in St. Catharines' development. Collectively, these sub-areas are historically and thematically connected to the development of St. Catharines into the Niagara Region's economic and social centre from the mid-19th century to the present-day. A summary of the evaluation for the Study Area and sub-areas is contained in Table 15.

Table 15 Evaluation Summary

Location	% of Properties Where Two or More O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria Are Met	Tool Kit Characteristics Met
Study Area	51%	A concentration of heritage resources, a framework of structured elements, and a distinctiveness
St. Paul Sub-Area	74%	A concentration of heritage resources, a framework of structured elements, a visual coherence, and a distinctiveness
Civic Centre Sub-Area	65%	A concentration of heritage resources, a visual coherence, and a distinctiveness
South Church Street Sub-Area	61%	A concentration of heritage resources, a visual coherence, and a distinctiveness



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Character Area

- Church Street South Subarea
- Civic Centre Subarea
- St. Paul Subarea

Number of O. Reg. 9/06 Evaluation Criteria Met

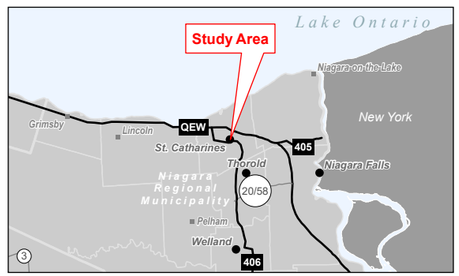
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

0 100 200 m

1:5,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Base features produced under license with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry © King's Printer for Ontario, 2024.
3. Orthoimagery: © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV2
Prepared by BF on 2025-03-03
Technical Review by AW on 2024-12-20

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
21

Title
Evaluation Results

11 Potential HCD Boundaries and Alternatives

11.1 Introduction

Based on the evaluations contained in Section 10, more than 25% of properties within the Study Area and the identified sub-areas met two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06. The sub-areas also met at least three of the HCD characteristics provided in the Tool Kit, which tie together the individual resources and their context. Given that all evaluations meet both the regulatory requirements and the Tool Kit guidelines, the Project Team has prepared a series of recommendations that aim to provide the flexibility that was clearly expressed by the community as paramount. It is understood that HCD designation comes with challenges and opportunities which is why, in part, municipal council holds the decision-making authority.

Recommendations have been prepared to consider potential HCD boundaries and the planning, commemorative, and conservation options available as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, an HCD. The recommendations consider the results of the evaluation in Section 10, but also the ability of each option to conserve heritage resources (including properties listed on the City's Heritage Register) and public input received to date.

11.2 Potential HCD Boundaries

11.2.1 Introduction

Three options have been prepared to provide a flexible approach to the HCD designation process. Potential boundaries and existing listed and designated properties are shown on Figure 22. The potential boundary (or boundaries) should reflect community input and the community's identified priorities regarding heritage conservation. Input is anticipated through PIC 2, which will occur in Spring 2025. This report will be updated to capture feedback received.

11.2.2 Designate the Entire Study Area as an HCD

The entire Study Area for the Downtown St. Catharines HCD meets the threshold for designation under Part V of the OHA. An HCD based on the entire Study Area would contain over 450 properties, including 97 properties listed on the City's Heritage Register. Designation of the entire Study Area would conserve the highest number of heritage properties and provide a mechanism to manage change in the broader downtown area.

While designating the entire Study Area as an HCD would protect the largest number of heritage properties, the result would be a district that contains several distinct concentrations of heritage buildings sharing a distinctiveness centred around their position within the downtown core of St. Catharines. From a design and physical perspective, this district would be divided into an area consisting of a mostly intact streetwall on and around St. Paul Street and a civic and institutional area along King Street and

Church Street north of Helliwell's Lane. This proposed boundary would also capture the residential streetscape along Church Street south of Helliwell's Lane.

However, this proposed boundary would also include numerous areas of mixed character and notably less cohesion or overall heritage integrity of the various streetscapes. These areas contain some heritage resources and properties that contribute to the heritage character of the Study Area overall, but they do not all strongly correlate with the key themes identified. In other cases, there are pockets of the Study Area with several properties that meet one criterion as representative examples of a particular architectural style or type, but the overall streetscape contains a wide variety of property types, styles, materials and architectural details that make it difficult to identify a cohesive character or context.

Many different types of buildings meet two or more criteria based on their specific relationship to their context or sub-area. For example, in the Civic subarea there are office, civic, or institutional buildings built in contemporary architectural styles and are important in defining, supporting, or maintaining the character of the Civic subarea. These buildings are physical reflections of the 20th century chapter in the narrative of St. Catharines as a Regional Centre. An HCD Plan for the entire Study Area would likely need to consider a flexible approach to policies and guidelines that reflects the different built form and concentrations of heritage resources within the different subareas.

While the field of heritage conservation is increasingly turning its attention to the conservation of modernist buildings, there can sometimes be a challenge in communicating these values to the public. The treatment of contemporary contributing buildings in an HCD would require consultation with the community to consider the most appropriate policies and guidelines that support the history and context of the HCD and provide opportunities for change and growth. An HCD is required to have policies for contributing and non-contributing buildings, but an HCD with such varied character may require multiple layers of policy and guidelines for different types of contributing buildings (i.e. contributing modern, contributing historic, etc.).

11.2.3 Designate All Sub-Areas as a Single HCD

Designating all sub-areas as a single HCD would create an HCD that includes 209 properties and remains divided into sub-areas but removes the areas with lower heritage integrity resulting in sub-areas which contain differing architectural styles, periods of construction, and use. Pursuing this option would result in the inclusion of 62 listed properties within the potential HCD boundary. In this option, 75% of properties in the combined sub-areas would meet two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 (154 properties).

Many of the contributing resources in this boundary alternative would be thematically linked to the overall narrative of the development of St. Catharines as a city of regional significance. The result would be a district of distinct areas that support and illustrate the differing chapters of St. Catharines development. Like the previous option, an HCD Plan including all sub-areas would likely need to consider different types of policies and guidelines for the variety of contributing resources in the HCD. Consultation with the community and stakeholders would be essential to prepare a Plan that provides the appropriate balance of heritage conservation and the need for the Downtown to accommodate the anticipated change as an UGC.

This alternative would also mean that some properties from the overall Study Area that met two or more criteria would be outside the HCD boundary, and would require additional conservation, commemoration, or planning tools to conserve their potential CHVI. These options are further discussed in Section 11.3.

11.2.4 Designate Sub-Areas as Individual HCDs

Designating the sub-areas as separate HCDs, could create three distinct HCDs that collectively illustrate the different chapters in the history of St. Catharines' role as a city of regional significance. Much like the previous option, if all three sub-areas were designated (either concurrently or phased), it would result in the eventual designation of 62 properties currently listed on the City's register: 36 listed properties within the St. Paul subarea, 5 properties in the civic subarea, and 21 in the Church Street subarea.

sub-area

The designation of three separate HCDs could address potential clarity concerns that may arise from having heritage resources of different ages, styles, and types in a single district. The HCD Plans could likely be more focused and less complex but may still benefit from different levels of policy and guidelines that reflect community value and input and the nature of the resources within the sub-area.

This option could result in separate districts implemented either separately or concurrently. If implemented separately, there is potential that properties in each of the sub-areas currently on the Register may be removed from it given the January 1, 2027, deadline. Once removed from the Register, properties may not be listed again for a period of five years and there is potential for demolition to occur before the properties become part of an HCD or are individually designated under Part IV. While potentially posing some risk to listed properties, designation of separate HCDs at staggered times could allow the City to focus their implementation efforts on smaller areas, with Staff and budgetary resources spread over a longer timeframe.

11.3 Alternative Conservation, Planning, and Commemoration Approaches

11.3.1 Introduction

As outlined in Section 7, the City's existing policy framework can support the conservation of heritage resources in the Study Area through various means while encouraging the retention and restoration of heritage properties and compatible development incorporating and/or adjacent to heritage properties. In the event that an HCD is not pursued for all or part of the Study Area, there are approaches within the existing policy framework (as well as additional options) that could be considered in order to manage, conserve, and commemorate the CHVI, and heritage resources identified through the evaluation process.

11.3.2 Part IV Designations

If an HCD is not pursued, or for properties that meet two or more criteria and fall outside of one of the potential HCD boundaries it is recommended that the City explore the potential for individual designation under Part IV of that OHA. To determine if these properties demonstrate CHVI, the City should complete evaluations using the criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 in a *Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report* (CHER), which would contain more detailed historical research, site descriptions, and comparative analysis than is completed in the scope of an HCD Study. Properties listed on the Heritage Register should be prioritized.

Part IV designations cannot protect an overall character of an area and would focus only on the singular property and its associated heritage attributes. They have the potential to be more prescriptive than HCDs, given the need to focus on individual features of the property that typically include architectural details, building materials, form, and massing of a building. It should be noted that undertaking Part IV designations for properties can be time consuming and have budgetary implications. Some municipalities approach individual designations by creating a dedicated internal role and hiring additional staff to complete the research, evaluation, designation reports, and consultation with property owners. Other municipalities prepare RFPs for external heritage professionals. Each Part IV notice of intention to designate would be subject to its own appeal process.

The inventory identified several properties that meet two or more criteria but are located outside of the sub-area or meet one criteria (usually design/physical value) and have the potential to meet additional criteria based on more detailed historical research to identify potential historical/associative values. These properties may not meet criteria for contextual value according to O. Reg. 9/06 as applied to the HCD but may meet in when considered individually. The following properties are recommended for consideration by the City for Part IV designation, subject to a subsequent evaluation process:

Church Street Sub-Area:

- 1 Church Street
- 3 Church Street
- 64 Queen Street
- 25 Church Street
- 27 Church Street
- 29 Church Street
- 31 Church Street
- 35 and 37 Church Street
- 74 Queen Street
- 2 Lake Street
- 4 Lake Street
- 4-10 Lake Street

St. Paul Sub-Area:

- 5 William Street
- 88 St. Paul Street
- 194 St. Paul Street
- 15 Artists Common
- 3 Bond Street
- 77 Ontario Street
- 83 Ontario Street
- 87 Ontario Street
- 93 Ontario Street
- 46 Ontario Street

Civic Centre Sub-area:

- 97 Church Street

No sub-area:

- 3 Geneva Street
- 1 Geneva Street
- 11 Race Street
- 23 Centre Street
- 7 Centre Street
- 210 King Street
- 164 King Street
- 173-177 King Street
- 171 King Street
- 26-28 Academy Street
- 30-32 Academy Street
- 104 Church Street
- 21 Duke Street
- 23 Duke Street
- 25 Duke Street
- 33 Duke Street

11.3.3 Urban Design Guidelines

The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines encourage retention of heritage resources and provide design guidelines that support compatible design for new construction. The Urban Design Guidelines also identify “Area Specific Guidelines” that share some similarity to the St. Paul and Civic Centre sub-areas identified in this report. In the absence of an HCD, the Urban Design Guidelines perform some of the role that HCD Plan policies and guidelines would play, though they are limited to new construction or façade improvement grants through the CIP process. Urban Design Guidelines would not manage alterations to existing buildings outside of those processes. Recent changes to the *Planning Act* also limit the ability to implement the guidelines and site plan control for developments under 10 units, which could result in inconsistent design approaches in the Downtown area.

This policy tool is already in effect within the Downtown. In the absence of an HCD, it would remain in effect but would not apply to properties that may fall off the register by January 1, 2027. Its effectiveness would be limited to properties designated under Part IV of the OHA (either presently designated, or those designated in the future).

11.3.4 CIP Incentives and Heritage Property Grants

The City’s existing CIP incentive framework provides additional funding (to a maximum of $15,000) for façade improvement grants for properties designated under Part IV or V of the OHA, compared to a grant of up to $10,000 for non-designated properties. The additional CIP grant funding can be a helpful tool in restoring heritage properties but is only applicable to properties that are protected under the OHA. In the absence of an HCD, fewer properties will be eligible to apply for this grant, unless additional Part IV designations are enacted in the Study Area. Similarly, the Heritage Property Grants would remain applicable only for Part IV designated properties in the absence of an HCD in the Study Area. The City's CIP also includes a tax increment finance program. As part of this program, evaluation points are given for conserving heritage properties. The tax increment finance program is intended to help offset project costs during a development project.

There could be opportunity to enhance the City's existing CIP framework, either in conjunction with, or in the absence of an HCD. This may include expanding CIP funding eligibility to non-designated historic properties to reflect costs that often occur in restoring or renovating older properties that implement a heritage-based design. The City could also explore additional opportunities for CIP incentives related to heritage interpretation, commemoration, and public art (such as murals or sculpture) that support the heritage values identified for the Study Area.

11.3.5 Community Planning Permit Systems

A Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) – sometimes referred to as a Development Permit System (DPS)– is a tool established under the *Planning Act* that guides planning and development in a defined area through implementing a development permit by-law and issuing development permits that are used as planning approvals. The CPPS streamlines the planning process in an area by replacing existing zoning, site plan by-laws, and minor variance processes. Instead of applying for all these separate applications, under a CPPS a single development permit would be issued by the City that would allow a development to proceed.

Issuing permits would be done in accordance with the vision, goals, and policy requirements that would be identified for the area. These policy requirements would be established early in the CPPS process in consultation with the local community. They would form the basis of the development permit by-law that would outline permitted land uses, where building and structures can be located, what types of buildings are allowed, and details such as permitted lot sizes and dimensions, parking requirements, building heights, and setbacks. The CPPS can also set requirements for heritage properties, streetscaping improvements that are part of development sites, and regulating tree-cutting and vegetation removal.

To establish a CPPS, the City would be required to prepare an OP Amendment that identifies:

- The recommended CPPS area
- The scope of authority that may be delegated to implement the CPPS
- The goals, objectives, and policies for using the CPPS
- The conditions that may be included in the development permit by-law
- The additional requirements, exemptions, or flexibility that may occur within the CPPS (if applicable)
- The criteria for evaluating development permit applications

A CPPS is an alternative that could be considered by Council should they determine not to proceed with an HCD. It should be noted that a CPPS is a separate planning process that would not occur as part of this HCD Study although some aspects of the HCD Study could inform the CPPS with respect to heritage value in the CPPS area. Council would need to provide direction to their Planning department to undertake a CPPS and allocate a separate budget. A CPPS would have its own separate consultation events to establish the OP Amendment and the components of the CPPS outlined above.

11.3.6 Special Policy Areas or Secondary Plans

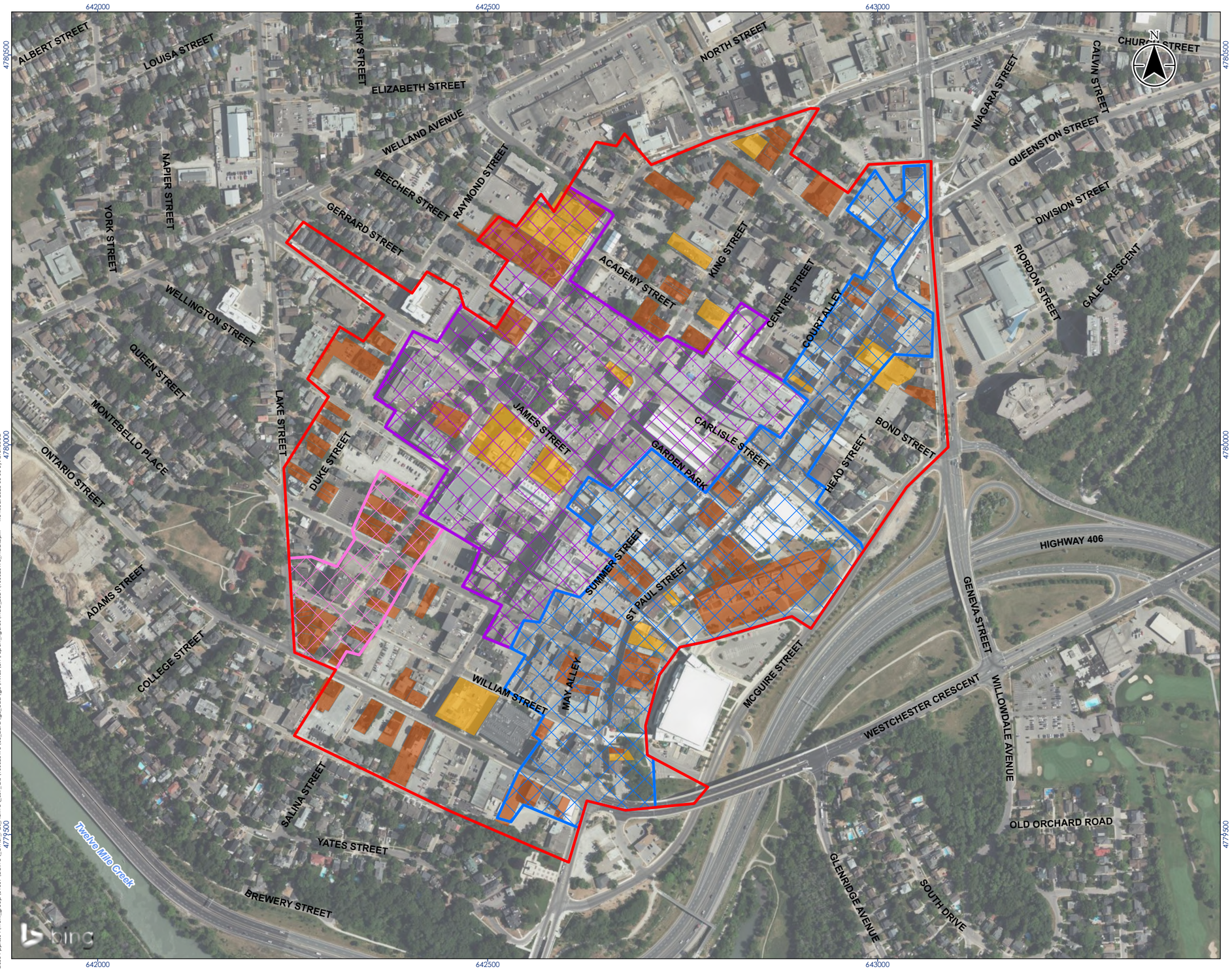
The planning framework generally supports a vibrant, mixed-use character within the downtown which is compatible with the overall heritage character of the Study Area. It should be noted however that St. Catharines is identified as an area slated for intensification and is required to support minimum density targets to provide the highest concentration, density, range, and mix of uses. Portions of the St. Paul sub-area are currently zoned for higher density, with permitted heights of up to 30.5m (approximately 10 storeys).

The Study Area and downtown core is not currently part of a secondary plan or special policy area in the GCP, outside of the CIP already discussed. Should Council decide not to pursue an HCD but still wish to implement a planning policy framework for the Study Area or part of it, the City could consider the feasibility of identifying some or all the Study Area as a "Downtown Specific Policy Area". This would set forth a policy context for future development and could include a review of existing zoning provisions for height, front yard setback, side yard setback, and distance between buildings. The GCP text for the Downtown policy area may refer to the character-defining elements that characterize the area to be included in the policy, so that the elements can be protected through various zoning and planning mechanisms.

The City could also consider creating a Secondary Plan for all or part of the Study Area, should an HCD not progress. A Secondary Plan is an amendment to the GCP for a particular area that provides more detailed policies than what is in the existing GCP. Secondary Plans are typically focused on implementing specific policies regarding land uses, building heights, density, design requirements, and detailed public realm requirements. Given that the City already has specific land use provisions, zoning, and Urban Design Guidelines that apply to the Study Area, a Secondary Plan may not be an effective tool.

11.3.7 Commemoration, Interpretation, and Public Art

Regardless of whether or not Council decides to pursue an HCD for all or part of the Study Area, the City should consider preparing an Interpretation and CommemorationPlan for the Study Area to link other HCDs, heritage sites, and commemorative and public art resources and city policy direction on art and heritage interpretation. The plan should include a variety of methods of identifying, interpreting, and celebrating the City's unique heritage and narrative, considering themes identified in this HCD Study as well as those in the City's Museum Interpretive Plan, which include the City's socio-political landscape, physical landscape, community and cultural landscape, the various sub-themes that are relevant to the Study Area. It could include a combination of more traditional commemoration and interpretation measures such as historical plaques, panels, or signage with interactive and contemporary approaches including self-guided walking tours through QR Codes, pop-up commemoration displays featuring reproductions of materials from the local museum and archives, or inclusion of "Hear, Here" sites that tell the stories of different places and people in the community. The Plan could also coincide with additional CIP incentives noted previously.



Stantec

Legend

- Study Area

Character Area

- Church Street South Subarea
- Civic Centre Subarea
- St. Paul Subarea

Current Heritage Status

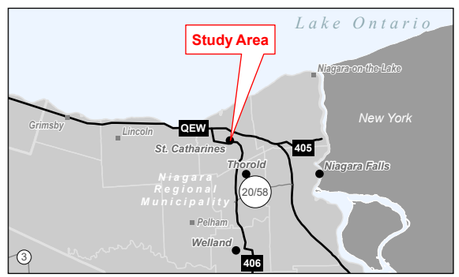
- Designated Part IV
- Listed

0 100 200 m

1:5,000 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
2. Base features produced under license with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry © King's Printer for Ontario, 2024.
3. Orthoimagery: © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS.



Project Location
City of St. Catharines

160623198 REV2
Prepared by BF on 2025-03-03
Technical Review by AW on 2024-12-20

Client/Project
CITY OF ST. CATHARINES
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Figure No.
22

Title
Listed and Designated Properties within HCD Boundary and Subareas

11.4 Draft Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

11.4.1 Introduction

A draft statement of cultural heritage value or interest has been prepared for the Study Area. This statement is modular in formatting and is written to encompass the entire Study Area and each sub-area. These components will be presented to the public, including Council, for feedback. It is anticipated that some, not all, will be incorporated into a final statement of cultural heritage value or interest.

11.4.2 Description of Historic Place

11.4.2.1 Study Area

The Downtown St. Catharines HCD is located in the City of St. Catharines, Regional Municipality of Niagara. The HCD consists of an irregular shape approximately bounded by Church Street to the north, Cherry Street to the south, Lake Street to the west, and David S. Howe Way on the east. It consists of varied streetscapes with representative concentrations of primarily mid-19th century to mid-20th century heritage resources that are historically and contextually linked to the role St. Catharines has played as the regional economic and social centre of the Niagara Region.

11.4.2.2 St. Paul Sub-Area

The St. Paul Sub-Area, within the broader proposed Downtown St. Catharines HCD is located in the City of St. Catharines, Regional Municipality of Niagara. The proposed sub-area is centred around heritage resources associated with St. Paul Street's streetwall between Regional Road 46 and Ontario Street and stretches east towards the former alignment of the Welland Canal and west to capture sections of representative mid-19th century to early 20th century streetwall on James Street, Queen Street, and Ontario Street. These heritage resources are historically and contextually linked to the prosperity brought to St. Catharines by the Welland Canal in the mid-19th century.

11.4.2.3 Civic Centre Sub-Area

The Civic Centre Sub-Area, within the broader Downtown St. Catharines HCD is located in the City of St. Catharines, Regional Municipality of Niagara. The sub-area is located Church Street and King Street between Clark Street and Queen Street. The proposed sub-area is centred around a collection of representative civic, institutional, and commercial resources associated with the development of St. Catharines as a regional economic and social centre from the mid-19th century to mid-20th century.

11.4.2.4 South Church Street Sub-Area

The South Church Street Sub-area, within the broader Downtown St. Catharines HCD, is located in the City of St. Catharines, Regional Municipality of Niagara. The sub-area is located on Church Street between Ontario Street and Helliwell's Lane. The proposed sub-area contains a collection of representative heritage resources that are primarily residences, including multi-unit residences, many of

which have been converted to commercial use. These residences are historically and contextually associated with the growth of St. Catharines as a regional economic and social centre in the mid-19th century to early 20th century.

11.4.3 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

11.4.3.1 Study Area

The Downtown St. Catharines HCD contains design value for its representative collection of mid-19th century to mid-20th century residential, commercial, civic, and institutional properties which illustrate the different chapters of St. Catharines' role as the Niagara Region's economic and social centre. The HCD contains distinct areas of structures characterized by sections of intact mid-19th century to early 20th century street walls, detached residences, 19th century churches, and early to mid-20th century civic and institutional structures, and mid-20th century to mid-20th century office buildings. Styles included within the HCD include Italianate, Queen Anne, Edwardian, Ontario vernacular, and 20th century modern structures such as Brutalist and International Style buildings.

The Downtown St. Catharines HCD contains design value for its representative structures which also display a high degree of craftsmanship. This mostly includes properties which contain a structure that demonstrates design elements such as brickwork, stonework, fenestration patterns, woodwork, or a general façade arrangement that exceeds the typical industry standard design at the time of the structure's completion.

The Downtown St. Catharines HCD contains historical and associative value as it is historically associated with its significant geographical location between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment along an important east to west conduit through the Niagara Peninsula. St. Paul Street follows the approximate alignment of an Indigenous trail through this area. Early Loyalist settlers, who played a significant role in the establishment of St. Catharines, used this trail and the community of St. Catharines was founded where this trail crossed Twelve Mile Creek.

St. Catharines began its transformation into a historically significant regional centre on the Niagara Peninsula when the Welland Canal was completed in 1829. The canal brought economic prosperity to St. Catharines and much of the streetwall along St. Paul Street was developed in the decades following the opening of the canal. As a result of its geographical advantages and proximity to the Welland Canal, St. Catharines developed into the economic, social, and political centre of the Niagara Region by the mid-19th century. As a result, numerous civic, institutional, and large commercial structures were located within downtown St. Catharines. This trend was further strengthened in the mid-20th century as government expanded in the postwar years. The Downtown St. Catharines HCD contains associative value for its association with several prominent architects who designed some of the buildings within the HCD.

The Downtown St. Catharines HCD contains contextual value for its representative collections of residential, commercial, civic, and institutional properties that form a series of distinct areas that share a common character through consistent massing, height, setbacks, and materials. Many of these structures also share contextual links with each other through their physical, visual, and historical connection as components of a streetwall. The HCD also contains several landmark buildings, many of which reflect the historical significance of St. Catharines as an important regional centre.

11.4.3.2 St. Paul Sub-Area

The St. Paul Sub-Area contains design value for its representative collection of mid-19th century to mid-20th century properties, many of which contribute to a mid-19th century to mid-20th century streetwall that first developed adjacent to the Welland Canal and has continued to evolve over time with many examples of sympathetic infill. Styles included with the St. Paul Sub-Area include Edwardian, Renaissance Revival, Ontario vernacular, Second Empire, and mid-to-late 20th century modern structures.

The St. Paul Sub-Area contains design value for its representative properties which demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship. This includes structures that demonstrate design elements such as brickwork, stonework, fenestration patterns, woodwork, or a general façade arrangement that exceeds the typical industry standard design at the time of the structure's completion.

The St. Paul Sub-Area is historically associated with its significant geographical location between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment along an important east to west conduit through the Niagara Peninsula. St. Paul Street follows the approximate alignment of an Indigenous trail through this area. Early Loyalist settlers, who played a significant role in the establishment of St. Catharines, used this trail and the community of St. Catharines was founded where this trail crossed Twelve Mile Creek.

St. Catharines began its transformation into a historically significant regional centre on the Niagara Peninsula when the Welland Canal was completed in 1829. The canal brought economic prosperity to St. Catharines and much of the streetwall along St. Paul Street was developed in the decades following the opening of the canal. As a result of its geographical advantages and proximity to the Welland Canal, St. Catharines developed into the economic, social, and political centre of the Niagara Region by the mid-19th century. The St. Paul Sub-Area contains associative value for its association with several prominent architects who designed some of the buildings within the HCD.

The St. Paul Sub-Area contains contextual value for its mostly intact streetwall which defines the character of the area through its shared massing, height, setbacks, and materials. The St. Paul Sub-Area also contains contextual value for its landmark structures which support the character of the city as place of regional significance.

11.4.3.3 Civic Centre Sub-Area

The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains design value for its representative collection of churches and mid-19th century to mid-20th century commercial and civic/institutional properties, many of which were built during the prosperity following the Second World War. Styles included within the Civic Centre Sub-Area include Brutalist, Gothic Revival, Modernist, and Ontario vernacular.

The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains design value for its properties which contain a structure that demonstrates design elements such as brickwork, stonework, fenestration patterns, woodwork, or a general façade arrangement that exceeds the typical industry standard design at the time of the structure's completion.

The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains historical value as it contains numerous civic, institutional, and large commercial structures that reflect the role of the City as a regional centre beginning in the mid-19th century. This concentration within the sub-area was further strengthened in the mid-20th century as government expanded in the postwar years and office development flourished in the sub-area. The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains associative value for some of its buildings designed by the prominent architects Johnson Rae and Lionel Hesson.

The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains contextual value as it contains a streetscape of civic, institutional, and commercial properties which define the character of the area through its higher density when compared to other parts of downtown St. Catharines. The sub-area also contains contextual value for its landmark structures which reinforce the civic and institutional character of the area. This also includes many of the prominent churches.

11.4.3.4 South Church Street Sub-Area

The South Church Street Sub-Area contains design value for its representative collection of mid-19th century to early 20th century residences. Styles within the South Church Street Sub-Area include Queen Anne, Italianate, Gothic Revival, and Edwardian.

The South Church Street Sub-Area contains historical value as two of the sub-area's residences are directly associated with a person and institution significant to the community. The residence at 64 Queen Street was home to a prominent manufacturer and 12 Lake Street is the location of the former St. Andrews School. Three properties within this sub-area contain associative value for buildings designed by prominent architects Arthur E. Nicholson.

The Civic Centre Sub-Area contains contextual value as it contains a streetscape of residential properties which define the mid-19th to early 20th century character of the area through its collection of detached and semi-attached residential structures, including examples of multi-unit residential construction. These semi-attached structures contain contextual value as they share a physical and visual link with each other.

11.4.4 Heritage Attributes

11.4.4.1 Study Area

The following heritage attributes have been identified as reflective of the CHVI of the proposed Downtown St. Catharines Heritage Conservation District:

- Concentrations of mid-19th century to mid-20th century commercial structures, including:
    - Representative attached and semi-detached structures along St. Paul Street, part of Ontario Street, part of Queen Street, and part of James Street comprising predominantly of low-rise two to three storey structures which form a cohesive commercial streetwall through shared setbacks, similar materials, fenestration, and massing
    - Representative mid-rise commercial structures along King Street and Church Street which share modern design elements that reflect the importance of St. Catharines as a regional centre
- Concentrations of mid-19th century to early 20th century residences, including detached residences, semi-detached residences, and rowhouses:
- Concentrations of mid-19th century to late 19th century churches, civic buildings, and institutional structures along Church Street and King Street that reflect the importance of St. Catharines as a regional centre
- The curve of St. Paul Street which follows a former Indigenous trail and the layout of the former Welland Canal
- The valley east of St. Paul Street encompassing land formerly associated with the Welland Canal and hydraulic raceways
- Landmark structures within the Study Area

11.4.4.2 St. Paul Sub-Area

The following heritage attributes have been identified as reflective of the CHVI of the St. Paul Sub-Area:

- Representative attached and semi-detached structures along St. Paul Street, part of Ontario Street, part of Queen Street, and part of James Street containing predominantly low-rise two to three storey structures which form a cohesive commercial streetwall through shared setbacks, similar materials, fenestration patterns, and massing
- The curve of St. Paul Street which follows a former Indigenous trail and the layout of the former Welland Canal
- The valley east of St. Paul Street encompassing land formerly associated with the Welland Canal and hydraulic raceways
- Landmark structures within the sub-area, including:
    - 1 St. Paul Street
    - 101 St. Paul Street (Patrick Sheehan's, formerly Canadian Bank of Commerce)

- 15 Artists' Commons (Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, formerly Canada Hair Cloth Company)
- 250 St. Paul Street (First Ontario Performing Arts Centre)
- 321 St. Paul Street (Pony Mart)
- 366 St. Paul Street (St. Paul Street United Church)
- 5 William Street (The Mansion House)

11.4.4.3 Civic Centre Sub-Area

The following heritage attributes have been identified as reflective of the CHVI of the Civic Centre Sub-Area:

- Representative mid-rise commercial structures primarily containing Modernist, Brutalist, International, and other 20th century modern design influences along King Street and Church Street which reflect the role of St. Catharines as a regional economic centre
- Representative civic and institutional structures dating from the mid-19th century to mid-20th century which reflect the role of St. Catharines as a regional social and economic centre
- Representative churches along Church Street which support the institutional character of the sub-area and its role as a social centre
- Landmark structures within the subarea, including:
    - 101 King Street (Former Town Hall and Market House)
    - 32 Church Street (Laura Secord Building)
    - 50 Church Street (City Hall)
    - 53 Church Street (Knox Presbyterian Church)
    - 54 Church Street (St. Catharines Centennial Public Library)
    - 59 Church Street (Robert S.K. Welch Courthouse)
    - 67 Church Street (St. Catherine of Alexandria Cathedral)
    - 83 Church Street (St. George's Anglican Church)
    - 91 King Street (Market Square)
    - 95 Church Street (First United Church)
    - 110 James Street

11.4.4.4 South Church Street Subarea

The following heritage attributes have been identified as reflective of the CHVI of the South Church Street Subarea:

- Representative concentrations of mid-19th century to early 20th century residences, including residences converted to mixed or commercial use, consisting of detached residences, semi-detached residences, rowhouses, multi-unit residences, and a low-rise apartment building:

12 Conclusions and Recommendations

The Downtown St. Catharines Study Area contains a unique collection of resources which reflect distinct chapters of the development of downtown St. Catharines over the course of nearly two centuries. Together, these properties are united by common themes that reflect the evolution of downtown St. Catharines as a centre of regional significance beginning with the construction of the Welland Canal in the early 19th century and continuing into the present-day. This wide variety of resources is as varied as an intact Victorian streetwall along St. Paul Street and a collection of modernist civic, commercial, and institutional buildings along Church Street. In addition, the Study Area contains numerous places of worship, cultural centres, office buildings, and parks and open spaces which serve residents, visitors, and workers in downtown St. Catharines.

While great variety exists within the Study Area, three sub-areas were identified that demonstrate concentrations of resources that share similar building types, styles, themes or contexts. Some of the resources in the Study Area – particularly mid to late 20th century office or institutional buildings- are not typically what comes to mind when thinking of "heritage". However, when viewed together as part of a broader look at the downtown's development, they function as different chapters within the same story. Their interconnection becomes clear and contributes to a greater understanding of how downtown St. Catharines became and continues to be the heart of the Niagara Region.

The HCD Study reviewed the historical background of the Study Area and analyzed evaluation data to determine that the Study Area meets the threshold of over 25% of properties meeting two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06. As a result, the Study Area merits consideration as an HCD. Within the Study Area, the three subareas were also identified to meet the threshold of over 25% of properties meeting two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06. These subareas could form a combined HCD or be considered as stand-alone HCDs.

The following recommendations have been broken down into different categories based on findings of the HCD Study, existing legislative framework, and public consultation. All recommendations will require additional public consultation as they progress.

Recommendations that consider prioritizing conservation of the largest number of heritage resources, including 97 listed properties within the Study Area:

- Proceed with an HCD Plan for the entire Study Area.
    - Prepare an HCD Plan to consider a range of policies and guidelines for different types of contributing properties and the identified subareas. This may include distinguishing between different types of contributing properties, perhaps based on building age, type, and/or location.

- Provide explicit guidance on new development in the downtown and how it can conserve heritage resources while balancing municipal goals and provincial direction for intensification. Supplement the HCD plan with enhanced CIP incentives, property tax incentives and commemorative/interpretive measures
    - All development within the Study Area would be subject to policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan, allowing for management of change over a larger area
- One appeal period will be in effect following adoption of the by-law after Phase 2 of the HCD process

Recommendations that consider prioritizing conservation of heritage resources within concentrated areas, and include 62 listed resources within the Study Area:

- Designate the three sub-areas as a single HCD.
    - Prepare one HCD Plan to consider a range of policies and guidelines for different types of contributing properties and the identified sub-areas. This may include distinguishing between different types of contributing properties, perhaps based on building age, type, and/or location
- Provide explicit guidance on new development in the downtown and how it can conserve heritage resources while balancing municipal goals and provincial direction for intensification. Only development within the HCD boundary will be subject to the policies and guidelines of the plan. Development outside the subareas would not be subject to HCD policies
    - Supplement the HCD plan with enhanced CIP incentives and commemorative/interpretive measures
- Designate the subareas as separate HCDs, concurrently
    - Prepare three separate HCD Plans to address the unique resources and characteristics of each subarea
    - Tailor each HCD Plan to the resources, community input, and relevant considerations for directing development and intensification
    - Conduct three separate public consultation processes, one for each HCD
    - Secure additional financial resources to complete the plans by January 1, 2027
- Designate the subareas as separate HCDs, at staggered times
    - Prepare three separate HCD plans to address the unique resources and characteristics of each sub-area
    - Tailor each HCD Plan to the resources, community input, and relevant considerations for directing development and intensification

- Conduct three separate public consultation processes, one for each HCD
- Secure additional financial resources to complete the plans at staggered timeframes. If staggered timeframes are not completed by January 1, 2027, listed properties within the HCDs not completed will be removed from the City's register.

Recommendations that do not consider an HCD as the outcome of this process:

- Prepare CHERs for the 97 properties listed on the register and pursue Part IV designation for all those meeting two or more criteria of O. Reg. 9/06
- Explore the feasibility of a CPPS or Secondary Plan for the Study Area as a tool to guide redevelopment
- Maintain and enhance CIP policies for heritage properties
- Explore property tax increment finance programs as a potential incentive for designated properties
- Supplement the desired approach with commemorative/interpretive measures for the Study Area

The alternatives outlined in the previous sections could support the celebration and conservation of the Study Area's unique history either in conjunction with, or in lieu of, an HCD. It is important to note that in terms of conserving heritage resources and managing change, HCDs are currently the only tool that provides the robust framework to manage alterations, additions, and demolition for all properties within the Study Area. The other tools outlined above can provide guidance on new development and manage change on properties designated under Part IV of the OHA but have less ability to conserve the heritage value of the Study Area or subareas as a whole. Each have their own benefits and potential drawbacks, much as an HCD does.

It is important to acknowledge that when undertaking separate HCDs and Part IV designations, the OHA process must be followed. For each HCD by-law or notice of intention to designate a Part IV property, there will be a 30-day period where property owners may register their objection, potentially resulting in appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Multiple Ontario Land Tribunal appeals can become time consuming and costly for municipalities.

It is recommended that Staff and Council review the various HCD boundaries and alternative tools provided, examine the feasibility of their various implementations, and consider public input provided through the HCD Study process in making their decision for next steps.

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Appendices

Appendix A Glossary

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms contained within the HCD Study report have been derived from the *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit,* the *Standards for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada,* the *Provincial Policy Statement* and architectural reference books listed in Section 12 of the report. Where terms are referenced in the glossary, the reference is contained within the body of the report. Many of the terms have been paraphrased and are combinations of definitions found in multiple sources, particularly those related to architectural styles and features. Where definitions are derived from their original form, their source is noted.

Adjacent: Real properties or sites that are contiguous or separated by a laneway, easement, right-of-way or roadway.

Alteration: To change in any manner

Bargeboard: Boards or other decorative woodwork fixed to the edges or projecting rafters of a gabled roof. Sometimes called gingerbread or vergeboard.

Brutalism: Brutalist architecture typically uses bulky and angular designs with dense massing to create heavy structures that sit imposingly on the landscape. The style began to appear in the late 1940s and was commonly built until the 1970s.

Cladding: The external, non-structural material that protects the structural wall or frame from the weather.

Classical Revival: An architectural style popular between 1830 and 1860 that evoked Ancient Greek and Roman architecture. Common architectural features include columns, and pediments.

Contemporary: Refers to modern structures built after 1980.

Conservation: All actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the heritage attributes of a place so that it retains its heritage value and extends its physical life. This may involve preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, or a combination of these actions or processes.

Contributing Resource: Those properties that directly support the statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and Heritage Attributes of the HCD.

Cultural Heritage Landscape: a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. This area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites, or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning, or association.

Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (CHVI): As outlined in *Ontario Regulation 9/06* of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, an individual property may be determined to have CHVI if it demonstrated design/physical value, historic/associative value, or contextual value. In the context of HCDs, the *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit* outlined that CHVI within an HCD may be expressed broadly as an area that demonstrates natural, historic, aesthetic, architectural, scenic, scientific, cultural, social, or spiritual value.

Dormer: A window that projects from a sloping rood with a small roof of its own.

Edwardian: An architectural style popular between 1900 and 1930 with understated classical detailing and modern proportions. Typical features include stone lintels and sills, pilasters and columns, and hipped roofs.

Finial: An ornament added to the top of a gable or spire. Commonly used in Gothic Revival architecture.

Gable: The triangular portion of the wall beneath the end of a gabled roof.

Gabled Roof: A roof that slops on two sides.

Gambrel Roof: A roof that has a double slope, with the lower slope steeper and longer than the upper one. A mansard roof is an example of this roof type.

Gateway: A significant vantage point defined by a key feature or features framing or marking the entry to an area.

Georgian: An architectural style popular from the late 18th century to about 1860. Typical features include gable roofs with prominent chimneys, a symmetrical front façade, and centred entrance with sidelights or transom.

Gothic Revival: An architectural style popular between 1830 and 1890 and found in many forms. Typical features include steep gables, bargeboard, drip mouldings, finials, and pointed arch windows.

Guideline: A recommended action that may be taken in a given situation. A guideline arises from a policy and is facilitated by a procedure.

Heritage Attribute: The physical characteristics of a property or resource that contribute to its cultural heritage value or interest.

Heritage Conservation District (HCD): An area or grouping of properties collectively designated pursuant to Part V, Section 41, of the *Ontario Heritage Act.*

Heritage Resource: A property or place of cultural heritage value or interest.

Italianate: An architectural style popular between 1850 and 1900. Typical features include round arched or segmental arch window openings, window hood moulds, dichromatic brick, decorative cornices, and brackets.

Landmark: A prominent structure because of architectural elements, historical importance to community, or contextual position.

Lintel: A horizontal support usually made of brick, stone, or concrete that supports the weight above it, usually seen above windows.

Maintenance: The routine cyclical, non-destructive actions necessary for the long-term conservation of a protected heritage resource and its heritage attributes.

Mansard Roof: A roof that has a double slope with the lower steeper and longer than the upper one.

Mid-Century Modern: An architectural style popular between 1950 and 1970, typical features include low-pitched roofs, large rectangular windows, full length fixed pane windows, and contemporary materials such as siding, paneling, and modern use of brick and stone.

Non-Contributing Resource: Properties that do not directly support the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and Heritage Attributes of the proposed HCD.

Ontario Vernacular Structures: A broad category of architecture, Ontario Vernacular Structures use local forms and materials and show architectural influence from one or more styles. Materials and style may represent a regional trend or history.

Other 20th Century Modern: An architectural typology that encompasses a variety of 20th century architecture styles, including: Organic architecture, A-frame structures, New Formalism, Post-Modernism, and Deconstructivism. Within the Study Area, it can also refer to 20th century vernacular buildings that do not have a defined architectural style or influence but are contemporary and distinct from 19th and early 20th century vernacular structures. Each style holds different and unique identifiers in form, massing, and influence. Structures in this typology are typically built in the post-war period, and typical materials include concrete, brick, stone, vinyl, EIFS, and metal.

Panoramic Views: Broad, non-enclosed views that may contain a visual mosaic of varied features, or broader 'textual' patterns of activities.

Part IV Designation: In reference to real property designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by municipal by-law. The designation by-law for an individual designation should include a description of the property, a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest, and a description of the heritage attributes.

Period Revival: A style of architecture popular from about 1900 to 1940 and was a revival of late medieval and early modern French and English country house styles. Commonly expressed in Ontario through Tudor Revival architecture. Typical elements of Tudor-Revival include half timbering, steep gables, and the use of brick and stucco.

Policy: A statement or position that is adopted that provides the framework for a course of action.

Preservation: The action or process of protecting, maintaining, and/or stabilizing the existing materials form, and integrity of an historic place, or of an individual component, while protecting its heritage value.

Procedure: A course of action developed to implement and support a policy. Example: Heritage Alteration Permit Application.

Protected Heritage Property: Real property protected under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (including Part II – Section 22; Part IV- Section 27, 29, 34.5, 37; Part V, or Part V).

Queen Anne: An architectural style popular between 1890 and 1910. Typical features include irregular plans, multiple rooflines, large porches, elaborate decorative detail, including shingles, brackets, bargeboard, spindlework, and stained-glass windows.

Rehabilitation: The actions or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of an historic place, or an individual component while protecting its heritage value.

Renaissance Revival: A style of architecture popular from about 1870 to 1910 and was a revival of Italian renaissance era structures. Typical characteristics include flat roofs, segmental arch windows, columns, cornices, and pilasters. Commonly used in Ontario for commercial architecture.

Restoration: The action or process of accurately revealing, recovering, or representing the state of a historic place, or of an individual component, as it appeared at a particular period in its history, while protecting its heritage value.

Romanesque Revival: An architectural style popular between 1880 and 1900. Typical features include prominent round arches, the use of rusticated stone on foundations and trim, short columns, and recessed entrances.

Second Empire: An architectural style popular between 1865 and 1880. Typical features include mansard roofs, dormer windows, hood mounds, decorative cornices, and brackets.

Segmental Arch Window/Opening: A window or opening with a circular arc of less than 180 degrees.

Sidelight: A window beside a door, forming part of the door unit.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest: As outlined in the *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit*, this is a statement that describes the heritage values of the HCD, or why the area is considered to have merit as an HCD and includes a list of heritage attributes.

Significant: Resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people.

Terminating Corridor: The vista is of streetscape confined by buildings on either side of the road and terminated by buildings at end of street ('T' intersection) or other features. The vista is experienced primarily by vehicular, pedestrian and cycling modality.

Transom: A window located above a doorway, forming part of the door unit.

Vernacular: Built form that reflects local or regional materials, influences, patterns or themes. Vernacular properties typically have less ornamentation or different characteristics than buildings of an architectural style.

Vistas: Views enclosed by buildings/structures, landforms, and vegetation from a stationary vantage point.

Voussoir: A series of wedge shaped or tapered blocks, usually made of brick or stone and forming an arch. Often utilized above windows.

Appendix B Designated and Listed Properties

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DESIGNATED AND LISTED PROPERTIES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

The following are the designated and listed properties in the Downtown St Catharines HCD Study Area. Information is taken from the City's Municipal Heritage Register.

Address	Building Name	Heritage Status	Date of Designation (if applicable)
22 Academy Street	Winchester-Larkin House	Designated	2003
27 Academy Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
30 Academy Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
23 Centre Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
1 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
3 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
4 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
12 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
25 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
26 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
27 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
28 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
29 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
30 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
31 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
37 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
50 Church Street	City Hall	Designated	1978
53 Church Street	Knox Presbyterian Church	Listed	n/a
67 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
83 Church Street	St George's Anglican Church	Listed	n/a
85 Church Street	Robertson School	Designated	1978
95 Church Street	First United Church	Designated	1991
97 Church Street	Former United Church Manse	Listed	n/a
104 Church Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
38 Court Street	YWCA Epworth Terrace	Designated	1986
39 Court Street	Patrick Darte Funeral Chapel	Listed	n/a
5 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
7 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
10 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
12 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a

Address	Building Name	Heritage Status	Date of Designation (if applicable)
13 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
14 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
15 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
21 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
25 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
33 Duke Street	Butler Funeral Chapel	Listed	n/a
37 Duke Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
3 Geneva Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
19 Geneva Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
101 King Street	Oille Fountain	Designated	1978
127 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
145 King Street	Former Grantham Town Hall	Designated	1997
163 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
164 King Street	Former Machan Gallery	Listed	n/a
165 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
171 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
173 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
175 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
183 King Street	Mills Memorial Home	Designated	2003
211 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
213 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
217 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
219 King Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
2 Lake Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
4 Lake Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
4 ½ Lake Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
8 Lake Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
10 Lake Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
6 Lake Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
23 Ontario Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
26 Ontario Street	n/a	Designated	
37 Ontario Street	Former Peninsula Press	Listed	n/a
44 Ontario Street	Former Lincoln County Registry Office	Listed	n/a
46 Ontario Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
58 Ontario Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
77 Ontario Street	St Catharines Club	Listed	n/a

Address	Building Name	Heritage Status	Date of Designation (if applicable)
83 Ontario Street	Alexandra Hall	Listed	n/a
87 Ontario Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
93 Ontario Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
9 Queen Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
53 Queen Street	Former Penners Jewelers	Listed	n/a
59 Queen Street	Former Queen Street Baptist Church Manse	Listed	n/a
64 Queen Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
20-24 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
28 St Paul Street	n/a	Designated	2014
32 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
67 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
73 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
81 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
80-88 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
90 St Paul Street 0065	n/a	Listed	n/a
98 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
101 St Paul Street	Former Bank of Commerce	Listed	n/a
104 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
114 St Paul Street	n/a	Designated	
117 St Paul Street	Former Diana Sweets	Listed	n/a
145 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
157 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
160 St Paul Street	n/a	Designated	1986
163 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
165 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
170-174 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
176 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
15 Artists' Common	n/a	Listed	n/a
200 St Paul Street 0204	n/a	Listed	n/a
214 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
216 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
220 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
227 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
233 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
235 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
241 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a

Address	Building Name	Heritage Status	Date of Designation (if applicable)
321 St Paul Street	n/a	Designated	2014
366 St Paul Street	St Paul Street United Church	Designated	1990
373-375 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
393 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
405 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
406 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
412-414 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
459 St Paul Street	n/a	Listed	n/a
5 William Street	Mansion House	Listed	n/a

Appendix C Inventory

For the complete inventory please see separate PDF File.

For data collection purposes, buildings were assigned a construction date range based on available historical mapping and aerial images. The construction period legend is as follows:

1. Before 1852
2. 1853-1875
3. 1876-1913
4. 1914-1939
5. 1940-1969
6. 1970-1999
7. 2000 to present

Properties without structures such as parking lots or vacant lots have N/A listed for construction period.

Appendix D Comment Sheets and Surveys

St. Catharines Downtown Heritage Conservation District – Comment Sheet

Public Consultation Event #1

April 24, 2024 ⋮ Market Square, St. Catharines

1. First Name (Optional):	2. Last Name (Optional):
3. Email (Optional):	4. Phone Number (Optional):

5. Do you live in St. Catharines?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

6. Do you live in the Downtown?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

7. Do you operate a business in the Downtown?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

8. Do you own property in the Downtown?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

9. Generally, what features of the Downtown do you find unique or special?
   - ☐ Historical Architecture
   - ☐ Building Types and Sizes
   - ☐ Landscape Features (plants, parks, sidewalks and street paving, widths, etc.)
   - ☐ Historical associations or historical commemorative/interpretive features
   - ☐ Views to and from specific properties
   - ☐ Other (please specify)

10. More specifically, what do you think makes the Downtown unique or special?

_____
_____
_____
_____

11. Are there any particular buildings or landmarks that you feel are important to the Downtown?

_____
_____
_____
_____

12. Are you concerned that without adequate protection, the City might loose some of its older buildings?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

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13. How important to you is maintaining the history and character of the Downtown?
    - ☐ Very important
    - ☐ Somewhat important
    - ☐ Not important

14. If a Heritage Conservation District were to be established in the Downtown, what might be appropriate boundaries? Are there any local markers we should use?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

15. The housing crisis is an important issue facing City residents. The downtown has been identified as an urban growth area and we expect new development to be part of the downtown's future.
    Would you want to see existing or potential heritage buildings reused or incorporated into these developments?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Maybe (please specify if there are criteria for when you think heritage buildings should be reused/incorporated)

16. Do you have a family or personal history in the Study Area? Are there any special stories, photos or clippings about the history of the Study Area or particular locations within it that you would like to share? (If you would like to share any photos or clippings, please email James Neilson at jneilson@stcatharines.ca)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

17. Do you have any additional comments, concerns, or information that you would like to provide?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

Thank you! Please leave your input in the comment box, or submit to:

James Neilson, MES, CAHP, RPP
Heritage Planner
City of St. Catharines
50 Church Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7C2
Phone: **(905) 688-5601 ext. 1752**
Email: **jneilson@stcatharines.ca**

Lashia Jones, MA, CAHP
Cultural Heritage Specialist
Stantec Consulting Ltd.
400-1305 Riverbend Road
London, ON, N6K 0J5
Phone: **(226) 268-5392**
Email: **Lashia.Jones@stantec.com**

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Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study

Property and Business Owner Survey

Thank you for filling out the survey! When completed, please drop it off at the City Hall Planning Department Counter.

If you have any questions, please contact James Neilson, Senior Project Manager at jneilson@stcatharines.ca

You can also keep up to date on the Study by visiting our website: www.engagestc.ca/DowntownHCD

Name _____ **Email Address** _____

Which of the following applies to you?

(Choose any one option) (Required)

- ☐ I own a property in the downtown
- ☐ I operate a business in the downtown
- ☐ I own a property and operate a business in the downtown

If you own a downtown business, what type of business do you operate?

(Choose all that apply)

- ☐ Restaurant/Bar/Cafe
- ☐ Commercial Retail
- ☐ Commercial Office
- ☐ Personal Services (ie. Hair/Nail Salon, tattoo shop, spa/relaxation, etc)
- ☐ Medical Services (ie. dentist, doctors office, physiotherapy etc)
- ☐ Hospitality
- ☐ None (I own the property but do not operate a business from it)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

At the end of 2026, approximately 100 downtown heritage properties will lose their current level of protection due to changes to the Heritage Act. This level of protection prevented demolitions of buildings but allowed owners to make alterations. Does it concern you that these properties will lose their protection?

(Choose any one option)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

> Note: The heritage district study is a response to these changes to the Heritage Act. The only way to prevent the demolition of historic buildings is through the Heritage Act, and a heritage district is the most efficient way of protecting buildings within a defined area. It is also a public process that allows the City to get feedback and input from people like yourself. We view this as your chance to help guide the future of the downtown.

Please provide your thoughts on the following statements:

Questions	Definitely agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Definitely disagree	Not Applicable
As a downtown property owner, the architectural character/appearance of the building was part of the reason I bought it.						
As a downtown property owner, I enjoy the architectural character/appearance of my building.						
As a downtown property owner, the architectural character/appearance of my building is something that I actively try to maintain.						
As a downtown business owner, the architectural character/appearance of the building was part of the reason I chose my location						
As a downtown business owner, the historical character of downtown was one of the reasons I wanted to be located downtown						
As a downtown business owner, I feel that the architectural character of my property contributes to the success of my business.						
As a downtown business owner, I wanted the historical character of my building to be part of my business' brand.						
As a downtown property owner who rents to commercial tenants, I feel that the architectural character/appearance of my building is a factor in the tenants that I attract.						
As a downtown business or property owner, I think that the character/appearance of surrounding buildings impacts my business or property.						

If a heritage district was in place for the downtown, a "District Plan" would provide policies and guidelines for property owners to follow. The Plan will only be pursued if Council chooses to proceed with the Plan following the Study. Which of the following ideas about what a potential plan could look like appeal to you?

Questions	Definitely agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Definitely disagree
Properties identified during the Study to have heritage value would have guidelines to follow to avoid negative impacts to historical features.					
Properties identified during the Study to have heritage value should not be allowed to be demolished.					
There should be few restrictions on what property owners do with their property except for restrictions on demolitions to properties identified to have heritage value					
There should be no restrictions at all. Property owners should be permitted to alter and demolish their property as they wish.					
Interesting historical architectural features should be maintained but there should be no restrictions on changes to storefronts					
The plan should just prevent demolitions and provide guidance for new buildings					

On a scale of 1-5, how concerned are you about the following:

Questions	1 - Not very concerned	2	3	4	5 - Very concerned	Not applicable
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about getting approval to make changes to my facade						
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about getting approval to develop my property						
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about my property value increasing						
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about my property value decreasing						
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about the ability to sell my property						
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about getting Insurance for my property						
If a heritage district was in place, I am concerned about getting financing from a bank						
I am concerned that the City has a history of historic buildings being torn down and not replaced.						
I am concerned that a large historic section of downtown (ie. St. Paul Street) could be purchased and demolished for development purposes						
I am concerned that one of the City's most significant landmarks (churches, prominent heritage buildings) could be torn down without adequate heritage protection or an appropriate public process.						
I want to see more development and investment in the downtown, but I would like the historic character to remain as well.						

Do you have any other concerns? (if you require more room, please use the back of the sheet.)

Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study

EngageSTC.ca/DowntownHCD

How do the following questions affect your perception of a heritage district?

Questions	Yes, greatly	Yes, slightly	No	No, it makes my concerns worse	Not Applicable or I had no concerns before
Does it help to know that not all properties are treated the same? Properties would be divided into "contributing" and "non-contributing" status based on their heritage significance as determined by the Study.					
If you have concerns about the timeline for receiving approvals for alterations, does it help to know that the City has recently revamped their heritage approval process so that most simple alterations can be approved in a few days, while complex applications can be dealt with in a few weeks?					
If you only needed to get approval from the City to change historic exterior features on the facade of your building, but all other changes could be made without requiring approval, would that be an appealing system to manage change in the downtown??					
Would it help if there was a clearly written list of changes that can be made to a property without requiring city approval?					
Does it help to know that while there might be some guidelines for alterations that you may need to follow, your neighbours would also have to follow those guidelines, and that it could prevent your neighbours from making negative changes that might affect your property/business?					
The City does not require specialized contractors to do work on heritage buildings. It is typically in a property owner's best interest to work with experienced professionals, but it is not a requirement. Does knowing that you don't need to find specialized labour ease your concerns?					
Does it help to know that an HCD would not require a property owner to make improvements to their property or restore their property.					
The City wants to see development in the downtown, and wants to actively work with property owners to find solutions for their property. Does it help to know that a heritage district would not restrict all development from happening?					
A recent study on commercial heritage districts in Calgary showed that buildings within commercial heritage districts added an average value of $36.60 per square foot when compared to similar, non-heritage properties. Does a demonstrated positive impact on property values elsewhere ease your concerns about property values?					
That same study in Calgary found that heritage provided an added economic benefit of more than $44M to the City's economy, and the lift to surrounding non-heritage properties (Heritage Halo) was found to be more than $57M. Does this ease your concerns about the economic impact that heritage can have on a downtown?					
One of the most common calls that the City's Heritage Planner receives is from realtors who have clients wanting to buy heritage buildings. Does this ease your concerns about the ability to sell your property?					
The insurance industry sometimes has concerns about insuring heritage properties. Typically these concerns are based on myths about heritage and the City provides a letter to insurers to dispel myths in the rare case that an insurer is concerned. Does this ease your concerns about insurance?					
Given the large quantity of commercial heritage buildings in Niagara, we know that there are insurance providers who will provide insurance to heritage property owners, but you may need to shop around if your current provider has concerns. Does this concern you?					
Similarly, occasionally some banks have concerns about financing heritage buildings. Given the large quantity of commercial heritage buildings in Niagara, we know that there are banks who will work with heritage property owners, but you may need to shop around. Does this concern you?					
The City has a dedicated heritage planner who is there to provide support, connect you with contractors, and work on your behalf to find solutions to your issues. Odes it help to know you would have a dedicated City staff member there to help you with any issues that might pop up?					
The City has 5 heritage districts in place (Yates Street. Queen Street, Power Glen, Port Dalhousie and the Port Dalhousie Commercial Core). All of these HCDs have been successful at conserving the character of the area. Does it help knowing that the City has a proven track record with HCDs?					
There are approximately 25 commercial heritage districts in Ontario including similar mid-size cities to St. Catharines like Oakville, Kitchener, Cambridge and London. Does it help to know that this is a common tool used in downtowns across Ontario?					

On a scale of 1-5, how do you feel about the following grant and tax Incentives?

Questions	1 - Definitely disagree	2	3	4	5 - Definitely agree	Not Applicable
The City currently offers a grant of up to $15,000 for heritage building facades and $5,000 under the City's Heritage Committee program. Would you find these grants helpful?						
Do you think a larger grant amount would help you and your business/property?						
If you have applied for grants in the past, did you find the process to be easy?						

Would a more streamlined grant program make it more likely for you to apply for a grant?						
The city is currently studying the ability to provide designated property owners with property tax rebates (between 0-40%). Would this incentive be useful to you?						
The city is also interested in learning more about other grants that are being offered to heritage property owners in communities across the country. Do you think additional grant opportunities would help property owners in the downtown?						

The City conducted a City-wide survey and found that 86% of people surveyed felt that the historical architecture of downtown is unique or special, does this change how you look at the downtown?

(Choose any one option)

- ☐ Yes, I am surprised that many people feel strongly about the downtown's historic character
- ☐ I already feel that the downtown's historical architect is unique or special
- ☐ No, despite what others think, this information does not change how I look at the downtown

Overall, do you think that protecting heritage buildings will help, hurt or have no impact on the downtown?

(Choose any one option)

- ☐ Help
- ☐ Hurt
- ☐ No Impact

Please let us know why you feel that a heritage district will help, hurt or have no impact on the downtown (if you require more room, please use the back of the sheet.).

Are there any downtowns in other communities in Ontario or elsewhere where you have had a positive experience? We can look into whether there are any special policies or initiatives that have been undertaken in those communities that might be worth pursuing in St. Catharines. (if you require more room, please use the back of the sheet.)

Please provide the postal code of your downtown business or property

Please let us know if you have any additional feedback, concerns, questions, etc. (if you require more room, please use the back of the sheet.)