

# CHO: Municipal Strategies for Designation

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OAKVILLE



How to cope...



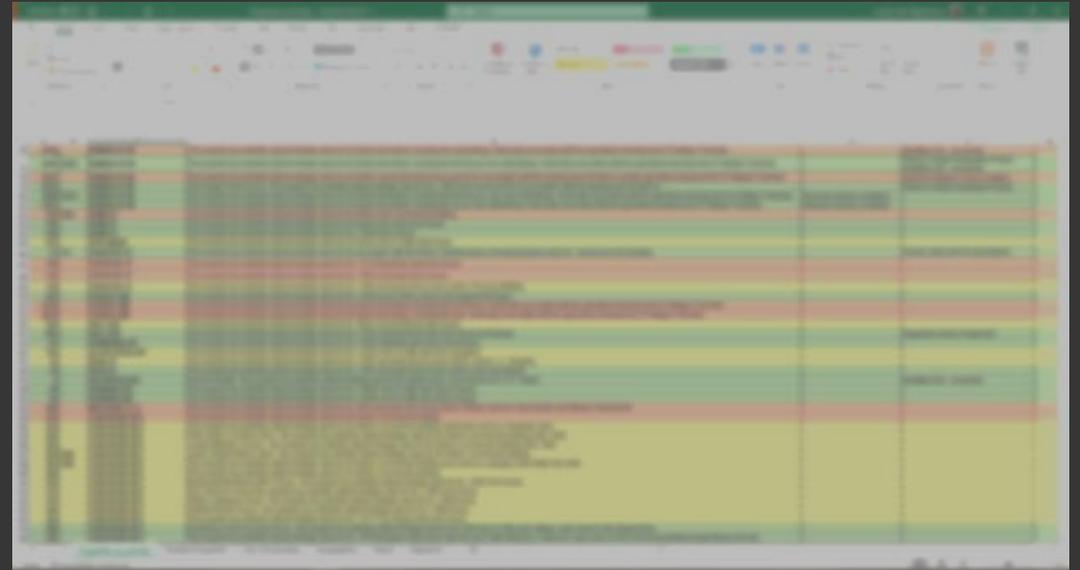
# What's worked for us

## Starting early

- November 2022 – Bill 23 passed
- November 2022 – staff did initial evaluation of listed properties
- January-March 2023 – hired 2 researchers
- May 2023 – took first NOID to MHC/Council

## Prioritizing properties

- Ranked 300 listed properties green (definitely designate), yellow (maybe), or red (don't designate)
- Ranked based on cursory review using 9/06:
  - **Design/physical value** – is it an obvious good representative example of a style?
  - **Historical/associative value** – are there known significant people/themes/ architects associated with the property?
  - **Contextual value** – is it physically important to the built fabric of the area, is it a landmark?
- Prioritized 80/300



The image shows a screenshot of a spreadsheet, likely Microsoft Excel, displaying a list of properties. The spreadsheet has several columns, with the first column containing property names or addresses. The subsequent columns are color-coded: green, yellow, and red, representing different ranking categories. The text in the spreadsheet is somewhat blurred, but the structure is clear, showing a table with multiple rows and columns of data.

# What's worked for us

## Using local resources

- Researchers from local historical societies help with research
- Created 'Research Checklist' to ensure all researchers are checking the same sources
- Provided 'Research Categories' to give direction for research

**Property Research Categories**

Town of Oakville Heritage Planning

Category	Details
Owners/Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Who lived there</li><li>- What was their significance/accomplishments/associations</li></ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What's the neighbourhood/subdivision and its history</li><li>- Is there a social community associated with it (i.e. church, organization)</li></ul>
Building Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What's the date of construction</li><li>- Who was the architect/designer</li><li>- Who was the builder</li></ul>
Photos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Are there any photos of the house or the people/community associated with the property</li></ul>



# What's worked for us

## Being flexible

- Writing NOIDs/by-laws with owners' input
- Being flexible on heritage attributes to get a positive designation
  - i.e. instead of including the historic wood windows, an attribute might be: "the presence of multipaned wood windows"
- Considering Heritage Easement Agreements in unique circumstances

## Changing course

- Switching to supported designations when we have too many unsupported ones in the queue
- Reaching out to 'yellow' properties to see if we can get a positive designation (if they merit it)

## Benefits of designation

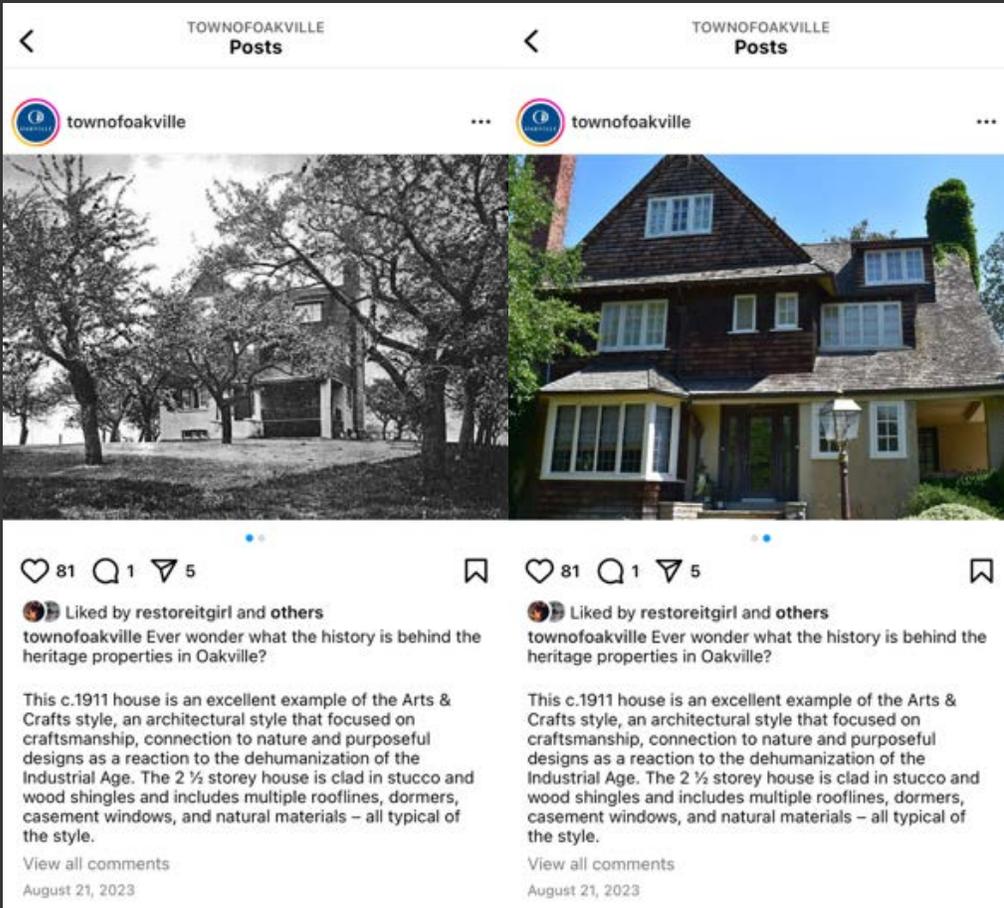
- Annual heritage grant program funding restoration projects
- Free bronze plaque
- Free/quick heritage permit



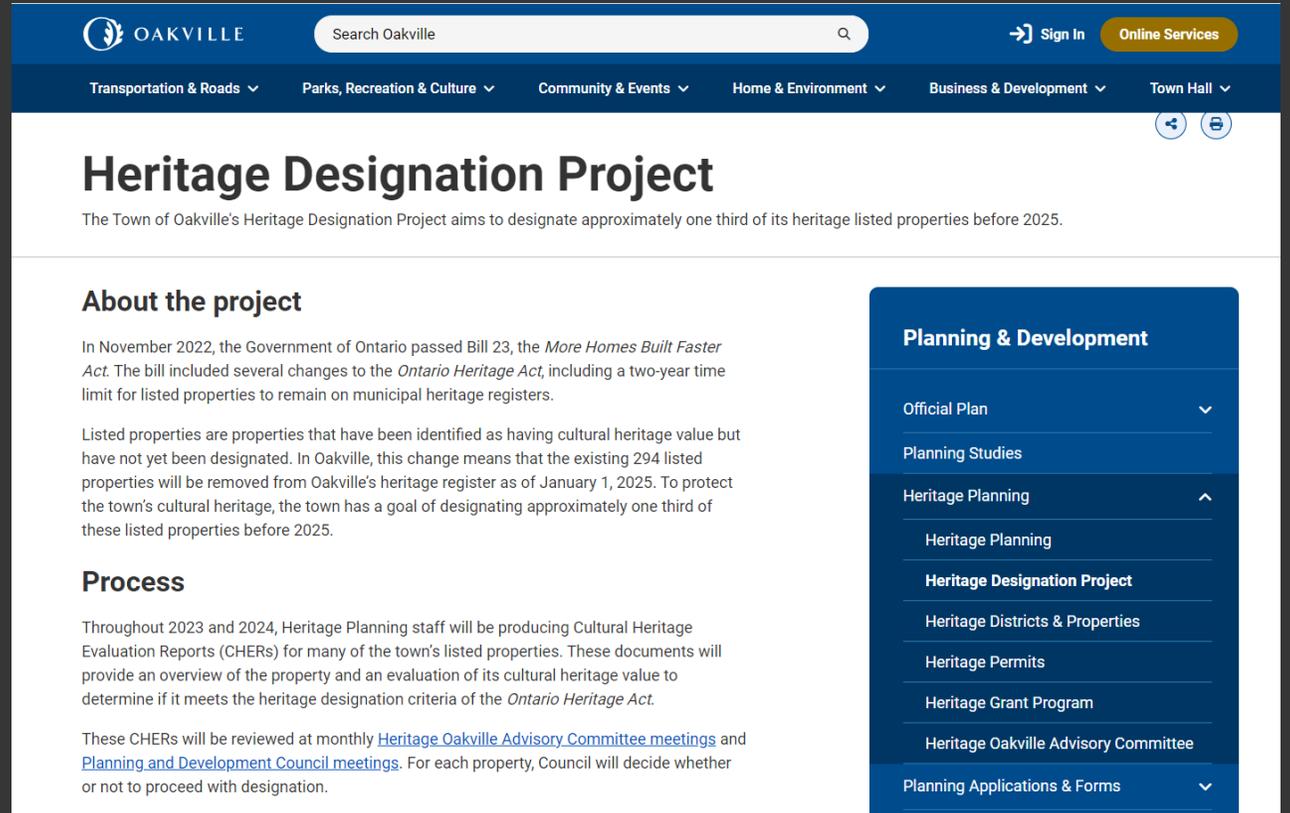
# What's worked for us

## Communications Strategy

### Social media posts



### Municipal webpage



# What's worked for us

## Communications Strategy cont'd...

### Next steps:

- Social media testimonials with happy owners
- Social media video tours of heritage properties
- 2025 newsletter featuring grant program, restoration projects, designations, etc.

### Designation Info Sheet

## Heritage Designation



**What is designation?**

Each individual heritage property is designated through a designation bylaw that is approved by Town Council. This bylaw outlines what elements of the property are considered to be heritage and which are not.

After approval from Town Council, the designation bylaw is registered on the title of the property.

Designation ensures that heritage properties are managed for future generations and protects the Town's cultural and heritage landscapes. It provides the Town a role in helping guide owners through alterations that help to conserve heritage elements. Designation enhances quality of life and sense of community. It employs local crafts and tradespeople and can add neighbourhood character. Designation helps sustainability by reducing waste and lessening the demand for energy.



## Heritage Designation

**What does designation not do?**

- Heritage designation does not prevent change
- Designation very rarely includes interior spaces
- Heritage designation does not place additional requirements on the insurer and should not affect premiums
- Does not obligate the property owner to replicate buildings in the case of total loss
- Does not prevent introduction of modern utilities and appliances
- Does not prevent development of property, but does give Town an opportunity to guide change
- Does not require approval for regular maintenance

**Heritage permit process**

- Required when proposing change to protected heritage elements on the property; contact Town staff to determine what needs a permit
- No fees for heritage permits
- Most alterations only require a minor heritage permit, which is processed within several business days
- Friendly and helpful staff will guide you through the process, share resources, and give tips on heritage conservation practices
- Staff have a list of contractors and specialists who regularly work on heritage properties to share with property owners

**Heritage grant program**

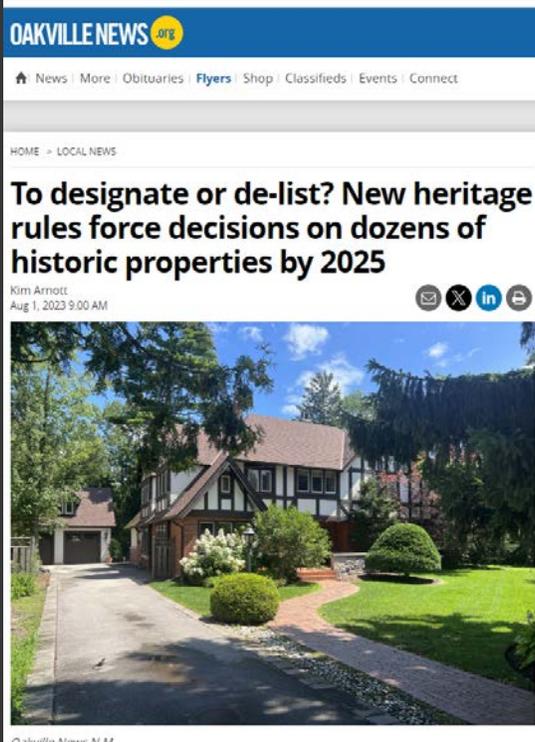
- A matching grant program for work not yet started (with some exceptions), covering up to half the cost of eligible conservation work
- Owners can apply for up to \$15,000 per year
- Applies to conservation work on the property that appropriately restores, and/or enhances heritage attributes
- Goal of the program is to help cover the costs of extra maintenance that many heritage properties require

**Contact us for more information**

[heritage@oakville.ca](mailto:heritage@oakville.ca) or scan the QR code below for our website




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## To designate or de-list? New heritage rules force decisions on dozens of historic properties by 2025

Kim Arnett  
Aug 1, 2023 9:00 AM

By Ted McIntyre

*As historic restorations become more commonplace, are you focusing on the nuisance or the opportunity?*

So you've acquired a chunk of land with a heritage property on it. Barring an earthquake, meteorite or some other random occurrence wiping the thing from the face of the earth, there are legal constraints to the situation.

Oakville News N.M.

### THE HEAVEN & HELL OF HERITAGE HOMES



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# What's been a challenge

## Hand-holding

- 1) Send letter and Designation Info Sheet to owner
  - Describe heritage designation project
  - Inform that their property has been prioritized for assessment/potential designation
  - Ask to come to the property and discuss
- 2) If a response from the owner, arrange site visit
  - Take photos
  - Discuss designation
- 3) If no response from the owner, drop by property
  - If possible, chat with owners, take photos
- 4) Complete CHER
- 5) Send CHER to owners
  - By email if we've had contact with owners, or by mail if no contact with owners
  - Provide MHC/Council date details



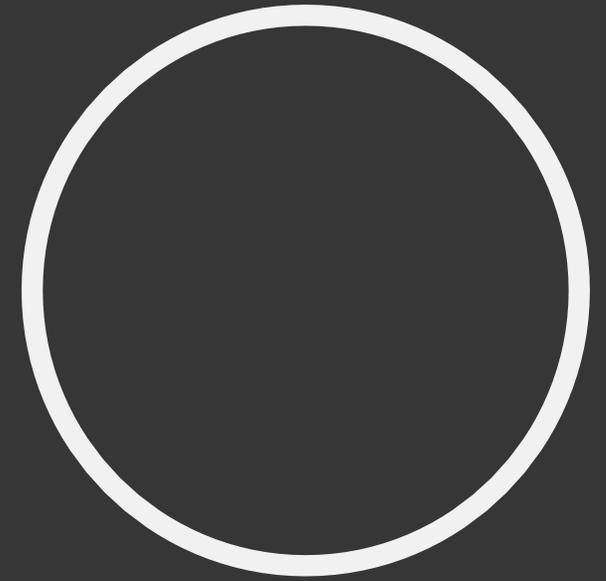
# What's been a challenge

## Hand-holding cont'd

- Council desire for staff to work with owners and provide communications beyond OHA requirements
- Requires increased time, energy, effort
- Letters, going door-to-door, site visits, phone calls, emails
- Re-writing CHERs, NOIDs, by-laws

## Quantity vs. quality

- Balance between hitting our target numbers and 'getting it right'
  - Extra communications = fewer OLT hearings, better press
  - Extra research = better prepared for Council, OLT hearings
  - Consistent CHERs/NOIDs/by-laws = better prepared, fewer surprises
- **Bigger picture** – can we maintain our positive heritage image *after* Bill 23 – are all designations worth pursuing if they lead to negative image of heritage in a municipality?



# Key Points

- **Quantity and Quality**
  - Moving quickly/efficiently but doing it right the first time
- **All Hands on Deck**
  - Communications, historical societies, local residents, councillors, MHC members
- **Bigger Picture**
  - Finding a balance between pushing for designations but maintaining a positive image of heritage
- **Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not get bent out of shape**
  - Change course, let go, breathe

**Thank you!**

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