

# Municipal Historic Resource Designation and Incentive Programs

## Greenfield Tool Box

DESIGN

PROCESS

✓ IMPLEMENTATION..... Land Use



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### TOOL DESCRIPTION

Alberta's *Historical Resources Act* defines a historic resource as "any work of nature or of humans that is primarily of value for its palaeontological, archaeological, prehistoric, historic, cultural, natural, scientific or esthetic interest including, but not limited to, a palaeontological, archaeological, prehistoric, historic or natural site, structure, or object." Greenfields may contain valuable historic resources such as a particular landscape, an important vista, or farming buildings. It is the conservation of these assets that makes the greater contribution to a place identity. Municipalities have access to tools to help in the conservation of historic resources, including municipal historic resource designations and incentive programs.

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#### Municipal historic resource designation

Municipalities are empowered by the *Historical Resources Act* to designate historic places through the passage of a municipal bylaw that legally protects designated resources from demolition or alteration that would remove its heritage value. This designation process includes four main steps:

1. Notification of intention
2. Designation bylaw
3. Registration of the designation bylaw in the land title
4. Listing on the Alberta Register of historic places (not required)

#### Municipal incentive programs

- › **Property tax deferrals and exemptions:** Property tax deferrals and exemptions reduce or eliminate increases in property taxes resulting from conservation. These municipal tax incentives can be applied to an entire neighbourhoods or land use district, certain classes of heritage buildings, or on a case-by-case basis for individual properties.
- › **Density transfers and bonuses:** A density transfer allows a heritage property owner to transfer or sell unused density or development potential to another property or property owner for another site. A density bonus gives a developer additional development rights or density on the same property in return for conserving certain historic features of that property.

### Tool Intent

To encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic places.

Alberta's Historic Places are:

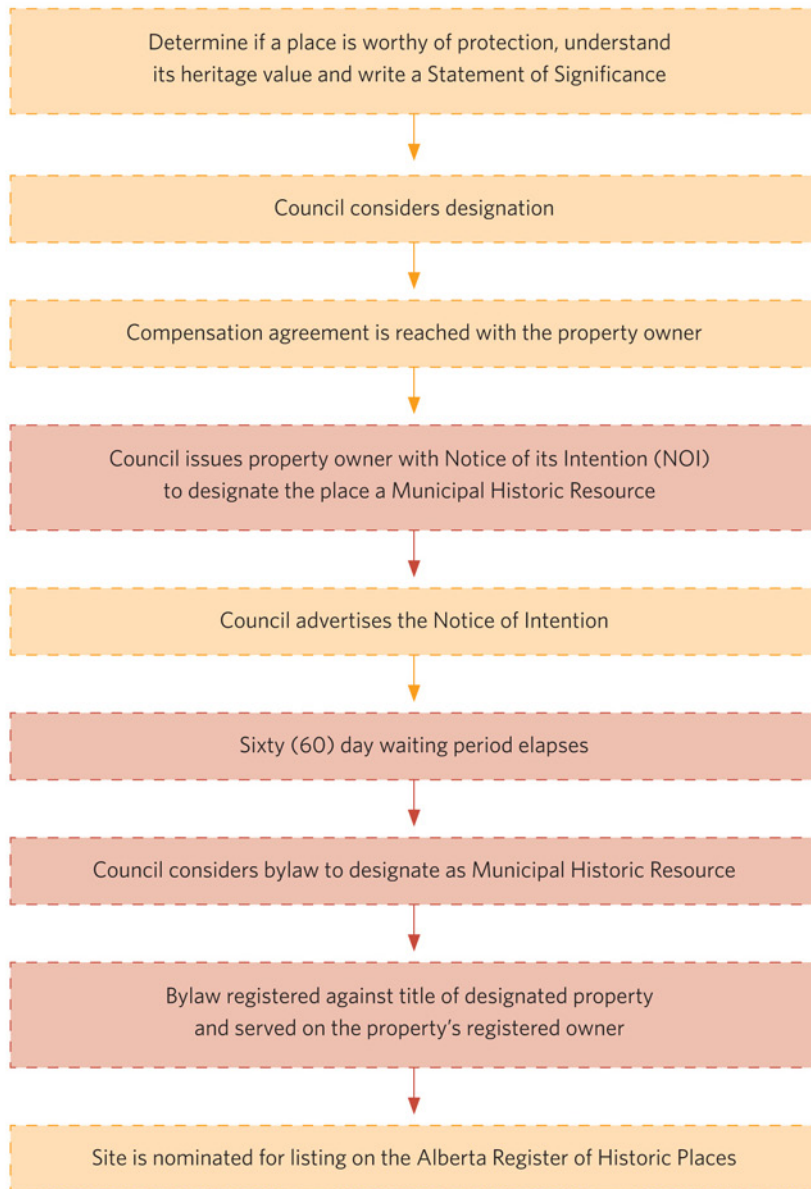
- › Places directly associated with themes, activities or events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of cultural history;
- › Places directly associated with significant institutions or the lives of significant people;
- › Places embodying distinctive characteristics of design, style, architecture or construction;
- › Places that offer, or have the potential to offer, information important to Alberta's history, prehistory or natural history; or
- › Places that are landmarks or that have acquired symbolic value.

(Municipal Heritage Partnership Program)

### USERS

- ✓ Municipal Officials
- ✓ Municipal Planning Staff
- ✓ Planning + Design Professionals
- Engineers
- ✓ Land Developers
- ✓ Landowners
- Community Members

## Designation Process



Municipal Heritage Partnership Program

Required by the *Historical Resources Act*.  
 Strongly recommended by the Municipal Heritage Partnership Program.

- › **Regulatory relaxations and variances:** Municipal governments can relax bylaw requirements during the development approval process, such as land use, parking, and setbacks.
- › **Municipal grants:** Municipalities may develop grant programs to provide direct financial support with one-time or renewing grants to homeowners or heritage property developers.

### WHEN IN THE PROCESS IT IS USED?

Local municipalities should designate historic places within a greenfield development before projects are started or at the early stages of development to ensure that requirements are known up front. Appropriate incentives should be provided during the approvals step to ensure that these resources are considered in the process.

## POLICY SUPPORT

### Calgary Municipal Development Plan Heritage Policies

- a. The City will identify and help to protect and manage Calgary's historic resources.
- b. Ensure that the protection and enhancement of historic assets in Calgary is based on an understanding of their special character and form part of the wider design and urban development agenda.
- c. Identify districts, public spaces and buildings of special historic quality and character, and adopt policies for their protection and enhancement.
- d. Encourage owners to conserve and/or enhance Calgary's historic resources, including historic structures, streetscapes, landmarks and viewpoints, parks and gardens, landscapes, topographical and natural features, archaeological sites and artifacts.
- e. The City will be a leader in preserving and enlivening historic resources using all tools and mechanisms currently available to a municipality.
- f. The City will be a role model for the creative use and adaptive reuse of City-owned heritage buildings, including excellence in maintenance and restoration.
- g. Incorporate local history interpretive elements in public realm improvements in communities and historic districts.

### 120 The Town of Cochrane Municipal Development Plan 12.3.2 Heritage Preservation

#### Provincial Recognition

- (a) The Town shall encourage and work with landowners to register historically significant buildings as identified in the Cochrane Heritage Register and Heritage Management Plan.

#### Partnerships

- (b) The Town will cooperate with other levels of government, private agencies, and individuals in the preservation of historic buildings and sites.

#### Historic Resources Preservation

- (c) The Town will encourage preservation initiatives by using heritage designation bylaws and other preservation instruments available to local government.
- (d) Historic resources preservation shall conform to the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

#### Heritage Incentives

- (g) The Town will determine appropriate incentives to owners of municipal historic resources for application towards restoration and preservation.

### Okotoks Municipal Development Plan Policies – land Use/Urban Design

## CASE STUDIES | BEST PRACTICES

### The City of Calgary Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, Bonus Earning Items for Municipal Historic Resource Designation



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#### Bonus Earning Items

1203 Any of the following items, or combination thereof, may be used to earn a density bonus:

- (d) Municipal Historic Resource designation by bylaw, registered covenant or equivalent agreement pursuant to the provisions set out in the Alberta Historical Resources Act, and restoration, on the development site;
- (g) heritage density transfer from a site other than the development site designated by bylaw as a Municipal Historic Resource.

# Municipal Historic Resource Designation and Incentive Programs

The following principles will guide land/use and urban design practice in the Town of Okotoks:

- › preservation and restoration of sites, buildings and artifacts important to the historic development and identity of Okotoks will be encouraged

## Canmore Municipal Development Plan Healthy Community Services Policies

### Historical Resources

l) Ensure the retention of significant historical resources through initiatives such as:

- › prepare an inventory of significant municipal historical resources;
- › cooperate with other levels of government, organizations and individuals to protect significant historical resources;
- › provide parking relaxations where appropriate to encourage the re-use of significant historical buildings;
- › require a Historical Resources Impact Assessment where new development is proposed on sites containing significant historical resources [GMP-adapted].



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## The Town of Crossfield Municipal Development Plan 3.0 Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability Policies

3.3.23 The Town of Crossfield shall cooperate to take advantage of funding opportunities and to exercise the legislative authority granted to municipalities under the MGA, the Historical Resources Act, and other provincial and federal legislation and programs, to conserve and protect historic buildings and sites as well as prehistoric and palaeontological features of significant heritage value to the Crossfield area.

### 10.0 Heritage Policies

10.3.7 In order to ensure the long-term economic viability of heritage buildings, the Town of Crossfield shall encourage building owners to use them in creative ways. A wide range of incentives including flexible parking and development standards may be utilized in order to preserve heritage buildings.

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## RELATED TOOLS

LEED ND Rating System

Transfer of Development Credits

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Municipal Heritage Partnership Program: (<http://www.mhpp.ab.ca/publications.html>)

Historical Resources Act (<http://www.canlii.org/en/ab/laws/stat/rsa-2000-c-h-9/latest/rsa-2000-c-h-9.html>)