

CITY OF STRATFORD

HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STANDARDS

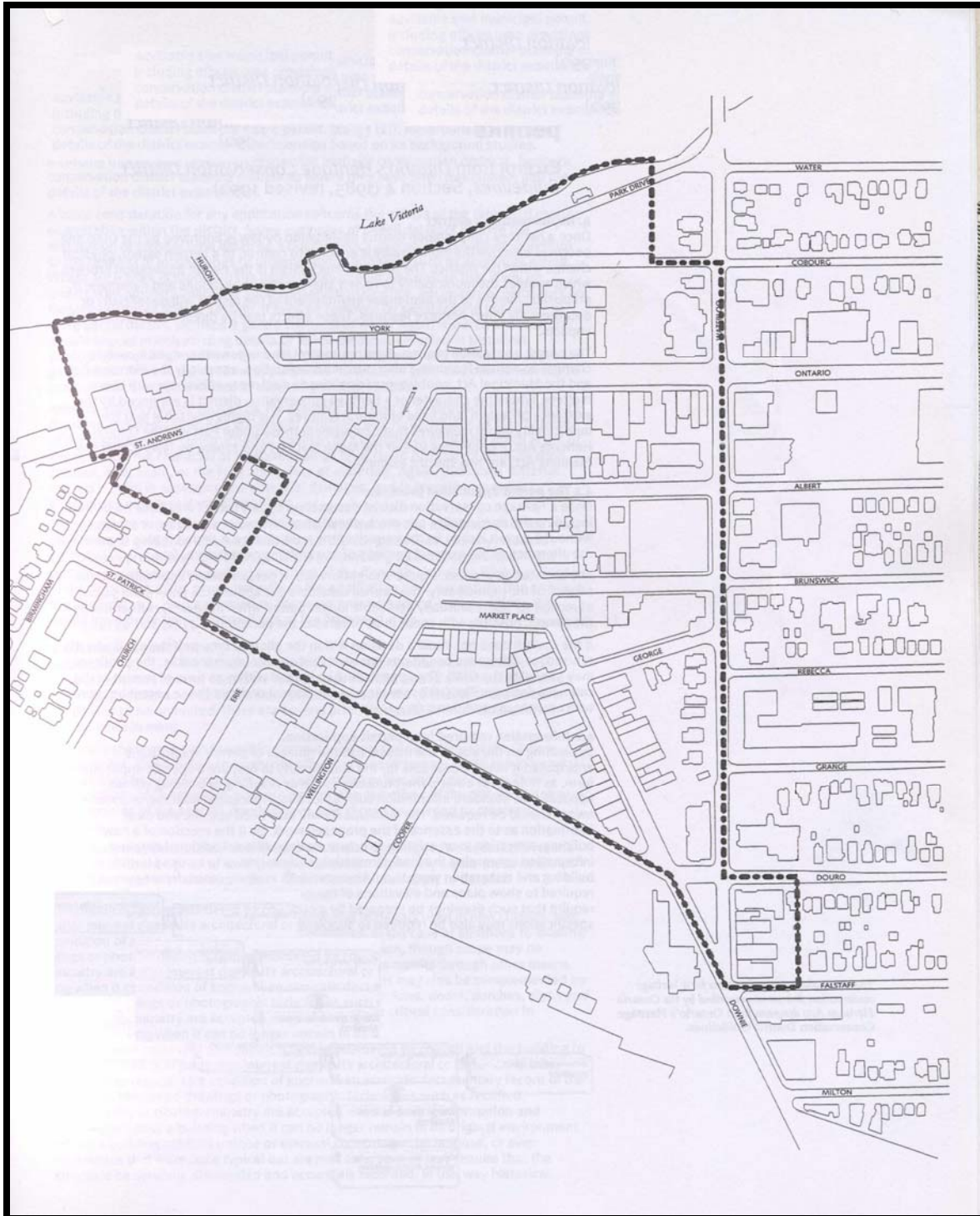


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OVERVIEW

What is a Heritage Conservation District?

A heritage conservation district is an aggregate of buildings, streets, and open spaces that, as a whole, is a collective asset to a community. It has a special character that distinguishes it from its surroundings. By establishing a heritage conservation district, a municipality can protect the character of the area through the course of change.

When and why was the Heritage Conservation District Established?

The City of Stratford established the Heritage Conservation District on October 27th, 1997, through Municipal By-law 173-97. The intent of this by-law was to conserve significant elements of City's heritage character through future development.

How does the Heritage Conservation District affect a property owner?

The Heritage Conservation District designation enables the community to embark on several courses for the district's improvement and conservation, including the possibility of funds to assist in improvements.

Council will control alterations and proposed demolitions plus the compatibility and design of new construction will be reviewed.

When do I need approval?

Under the *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O 1980*, any new construction or alteration in the Heritage Conservation District requires a Heritage Permit from the City of Stratford. Heritage permits are issued through the City of Stratford Building and Planning Department and may require Council approval.

The *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O 1980*, defines "alter" or "alteration" as:

"to change in any manner and includes to restore, renovate, repair or disturb."

General maintenance of an existing structure is permitted providing it is not altering the appearance of the building.

How does a citizen obtain more information?

The City of Stratford Building & Planning Department can provide complete information on the Heritage Conservation District Polices and the Heritage Permit Process:

Building & Planning Department
City of Stratford
1 Wellington Street P.O. Box 818
Stratford, ON N5A 6W1
Tel: (519) 271-0250 ext. 218 or 266
Fax: (519) 271-5966
www.city.stratford.on.ca

Historical information may be researched and obtained at the Stratford-Perth Archives:

Stratford-Perth Archives
24 St. Andrew Street
Stratford, Ontario N5A 1A3
Phone: (519) 273-0399
Fax: (519) 273-5746
www.stratfordpertharchives.on.ca

The Heritage Permit approval process

Prior to the granting of any building permit or site plan approval in the HCD, the owner/applicant will be required to obtain a heritage permit from the City of Stratford.

The application/approval process for Heritage Permits is as follows:

1. Applicant submits a complete Heritage Permit Application along with all of the required documentation.
2. Staff reviews the application and applies the standards contained in the attached guidelines.
3. Based on a review of the heritage permit application, staff determines if the proposed alteration is significant enough to require Municipal Heritage Committee and/or Council review of the application.
4. If proposed alterations are determined to comply with the standards and are minor in nature Staff may issue a Heritage Permit.
5. If Municipal Heritage Committee review is required, and the Municipal Heritage Committee recommends approval, Staff may issue a Heritage Permit.
6. If staff determines that the application is significant enough to warrant Council review or if the Municipal Heritage Committee does not recommend approval, the Heritage Permit application is referred to Council for approval.

1.0 HERITAGE DISTRICT CONSERVATION STANDARDS

Good design is achieved through expertise and sensitivity. Following all the recommendations and suggestions in these standards will not necessarily result in good design, nor does it automatically provide a basis for obtaining a building permit. Each proposal will be evaluated on its own merit. It is possible that an excellent design solution may even disregard some of the recommendations usually appropriate to such renovations. However, following the recommendations outlined in these standards should serve as a good basis for property development and maintenance in the Heritage Conservation District.

1.1 General Standards for Frontages and Rear Facades

Owners of buildings in the Heritage Conservation District are encouraged to rehabilitate and restore the front facades of buildings, in accordance with the detailed conservation guidelines in the Ontario Heritage Foundation's manual, *Well Preserved* and in the *Stratford Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan*.

Baird, G. and Fram, M. *Stratford Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan*
Polymath&Thaumaturge Inc. and Baird/Sampson Architects, 1994

Fram, Mark. *Well-Preserved: the Ontario Heritage Foundation's manual of principles and practice for architectural conservation*. Revised edition. Erin: Boston Mills Press, 1992

There are numerous and longstanding examples of second frontages to existing stores (for instance, behind Downie and Ontario at the Albert Street parking lot), as well as the York Street frontages of Ontario Street buildings. So far, these frontages have been treated in a less formal way than the front facades, and this should continue. Preservation and enhancement of this kind of resource must have regard for the inherent "industrial" character of Stratford.

It is recommended that such owners be encouraged not to create false impressions of high-style "main-street" frontages on the "backs" where they never existed, but rather to keep the "backs" of buildings in good repair. When renovating, keep in mind the tradition that was the first historical form of visual appreciation the "backs" ever received.

1.2 General Standards for Architectural Details

1.2.1 Repair

Much of the visual appeal of Stratford's buildings is in large part due to the decorative wood detail, for example: cornices, canopies and brackets. Where possible, existing work is to be repaired rather than replaced.

1.2.2 Replacement

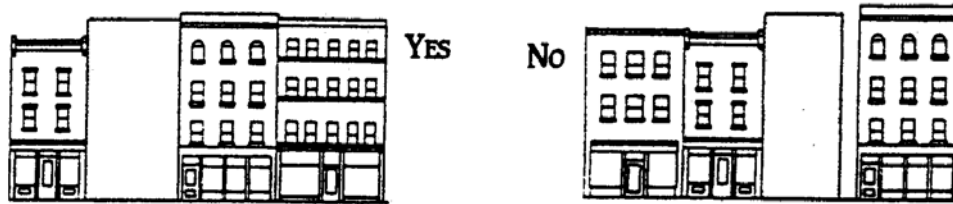
If replacement is necessary, making an exact copy of the original is preferable. Investigate using other types of materials if it is impossible to make a copy using original materials. Replacing missing elements with a contemporary design might be acceptable if it is in harmony with the building as a whole.

2.0 POLICES FOR ADDITONS AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

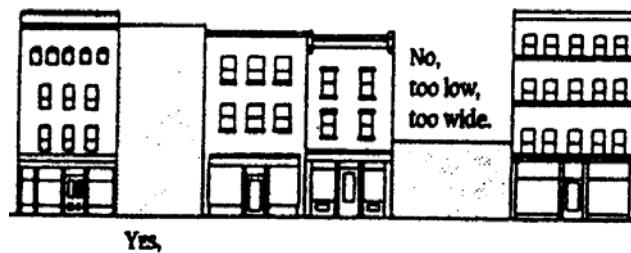
2.1 Location and Massing

2.1.1 All new construction and additions are to be designed with the pedestrian as the primary focus at the street level.

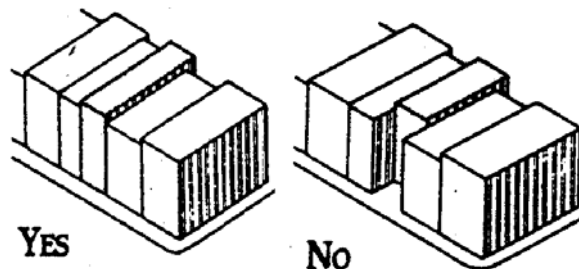
2.1.2 The side yard on each side of a development must be the same as the side yards on the rest of the street.



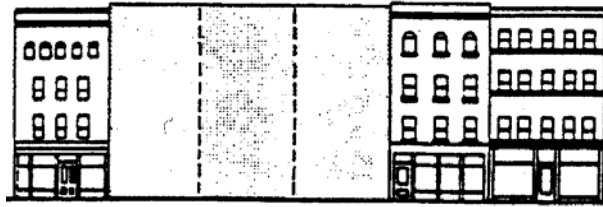
2.1.3 The ratio of the height to the width of the façade of a building must be within 10% of the ratio of the height to the width of the facades of nearby buildings.



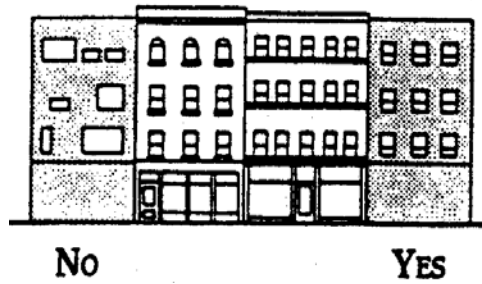
2.1.4 Where all buildings are on the same line, new buildings must do the same. If other buildings are different distances back from the street, the setback of the new building must be the same as the building on one side or the other. Refer to *page 14 of Stratford Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan*.



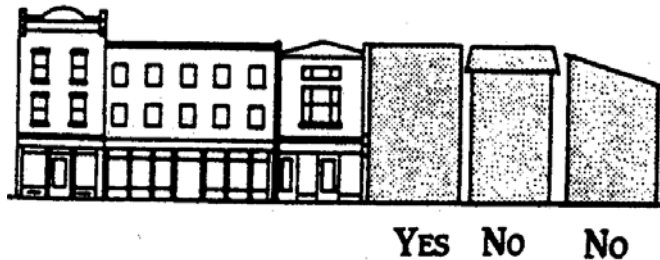
2.1.5 In the case of very wide lots, the façade needs to be divided to look like separate buildings.



2.1.6 The amount of window area in the front of a building and size of windows must be the same as nearby buildings (within 10%).



2.1.7 The direction, pitch and arrangement of a roof must be the same as the predominant streetscape of the downtown core.



2.1.8 The height of a development cannot be less than 80% and not more than 120% of the average height of the 2 highest buildings in the block.



- 2.1.9 Additions shall apply site line techniques to determine the degree of visibility of the addition or extension to the public eye. This is especially important where the new building is proposed to be of a greater height than the original building.
- 2.1.10 Additions shall be to the rear or on a less significant elevation. In some instances it may be found that each elevation has a carefully considered design element, making additions and extensions more difficult to include. In these cases an understanding of the significance of the place, including the design philosophy approach, shall be considered.

2.2 Architecture

- 2.2.1 Any new parking structures created in the Heritage Conservation District are subject to these standards.
- 2.2.2 Previous additions, which obscure part of the original building, should be removed where evidence of the original is sufficient to enable accurate reconstruction.
- 2.2.3 Whether the relation of the addition/new construction to the original building is deferential or assertive, new work must acknowledge either the original or the predominant streetscape of the downtown core. Historic details and patterns must be addressed in the design of new work. New elements or configurations must not clash with or trivialize the old.



- 2.2.4 New work shall maintain the rhythm, orientation and proportions of either the original or the predominant streetscape of the downtown core, especially where visible from the street.
- 2.2.5 An addition shall not damage significant fabric or intrude on nearby historic buildings or the area as a whole. An addition shall complement either the original or the predominant streetscape of the downtown core. It is acceptable for additions to look like they have been added to the building.
- 2.2.6 The amount of demolition permitted shall be limited to the amount essential to the feasibility of the proposal. Fabric that is identified to be of significance shall not be removed or demolished. Consideration shall be given to the setting and views from the surrounding streets and laneways.

- 2.2.7 Additions to facades shall be avoided.
- 2.2.8 New additions and infill construction shall be compatible (able to co-exist) in terms of materials, size, proportions, mass, height, setback, texture, color, plan configuration, surface configuration and other details to adjoining and/or surrounding significant buildings.
- 2.2.9 Care shall be taken when considering additions and extensions to a heritage structure. New work shall be distinguishable from the old. New work shall be harmonious and sympathetic with the significant features of the structure. This can be achieved by making the new material slightly recessed, a different material to the old, a different texture, surface treatment or by aging the new. The contrast shall not be harsh or visually obtrusive.
- 2.2.10 Design shall consider the relationship between openings such as windows, doors and solid walls and the continuation of horizontals such as string courses and plinths. Design shall pick up on shapes, mass, scale, heights above the ground of cornices, key moldings, materials, colors and other details.
- 2.2.11 Existing openings shall be used to facilitate access between the old and the new to minimize the amount of demolition required.
- 2.2.12 New roofs shall relate to the existing roof form or follow traditional options for additions.
- 2.2.13 Previous additions shall be retained where they have attained a degree of significance in their own right.
- 2.2.14 Additions may be removed if they are a great deal less significant than other work, or if they have a negative impact on the understanding of the significance of the structure.

3.0 STANDARDS FOR RENOVATIONS

3.1 Masonry Walls

- 3.1.1 The original masonry must be retained wherever possible. If repair and/or reconstruction is necessary, the new brick or stone work shall match the appearance of the original as closely as possible, in color, shape and/or pattern.
- 3.1.2 The original mortar shall be retained whenever possible. Repoint only when necessary to preserve the wall or to reduce water penetration. Repointing shall be done with mortar of the same color and with joints of the same size, tooling and profile of the original.

- 3.1.3 The use of modern techniques and materials is often inappropriate for renovations, for example the use of hard, pure Portland cement mortar with relatively soft older bricks can lead to disintegration of the brick as walls shift or moisture escapes.
- 3.1.4 Similarly, to prevent damage to brick, the use of electric saws or chipping hammers to remove old mortar shall be avoided; manual removal of mortar is preferable.
- 3.1.5 Cracks are to be found in nearly every old building. Since movement in the structure causes most cracking, the cause of the movement shall be determined before corrective repairs are undertaken. If structural movement has ceased, simple repointing may be all that is required, but, if the crack is still active, it is essential that the structural problems be resolved before repointing is attempted.
- 3.1.6 Parging or stucco of existing brick or stone cladding shall only be considered where the masonry façade is in a state of serious disrepair.

3.2 Masonry Wall Cleaning

- 3.2.1 To clean masonry, it is wise to use the gentlest means, preferably water with addition of detergent or special chemicals applied with soft bristle brushes and washed off with a gentle spray of water. Choose an inconspicuous sample area to test a cleaning method.
- 3.2.2 Sand blasting is not permitted as it damages the surface of stone and removes the hard outer layer of brick, which leads to rapid deterioration. Sand blasting also severely damages the mortar joints.
- 3.2.3 Unless there is serious accumulation of surface dirt which is damaging to the masonry, it is often better not to clean, leaving the weathered patina.

3.3 Masonry Wall Painting

- 3.3.1 Unpainted stone and brick shall remain unpainted. An already painted brick wall may be repainted, but only with a masonry paint that breathes. Many types of paint and silicone can create a surface coating on masonry that traps moisture and can result in the outer surface of brick spalling off.
- 3.3.2 Painting of previously unpainted brick or stone work shall only be considered where the masonry façade is in a serious state of disrepair.
- 3.3.3 When repainting, it is best to match the original color of the masonry or apply a neutral color (i.e. natural tones of red, beige, grey or white).

3.4 Cladding

- 3.4.1 The application of new surfaces or coatings that alter the appearance and character of the heritage building's original cladding shall not be utilized. The use of metal and synthetic sidings such as vinyl is not supported.
- 3.4.2 The removal of siding considered to be unsympathetic to the District is encouraged (i.e. aluminum and vinyl siding, asbestos tile, angelstone, etc.) Once removed, the heritage building should be restored to its original state using available physical and archival evidence. If the original cladding material is unknown, a siding material appropriate to the style of the building and commonly used in the District shall be introduced.
- 3.4.3 Wood siding shall only be replaced when it has lost its material integrity and its ability to hold a surface coating.
- 3.4.4 Wood siding shall be sealed and protected, not stripped bare.

3.5 Building Openings (Windows & Doors)

3.5.1 Repairs

Original doors and windows shall be retained particularly those with decorative woodwork, leaded or curved windowpanes, or stained glass. Old wood doors and windows can often be repaired at modest cost and continue to serve better than some replacements. Rotted portions can be replaced and weather-stripping will make doors and windows weather tight. If only a few windows are beyond repair, it is advisable to replace those and repair the rest.

3.5.2 Replacement

In order to preserve the visual quality of the facade, replacement windows and doors shall be made to fit the original masonry openings. Changing the size of the openings to accommodate standard size windows or dropped ceilings shall be avoided. The trim elements surrounding the frames, the sill, lintel and cap shall be retained. The new windows and doors shall match the original proportions, divisions, depth of inset into the wall, and detail of framing elements.

3.6 Roofs

- 3.6.1 The roof is the part of the building most exposed to the weather and the easiest to neglect. Undetected leaks can cause very serious damage in a matter of hours. Regular inspection and maintenance is essential, including annual cleaning of gutters and drainpipes, as well as inspection of flashing, chimneys and other parts. If a roof is damaged in only a few spots, simple repairs may be possible, but recurring leaks usually mean that the entire roof needs replacing.

- 3.6.2 Original roof forms shall be conserved and maintained. Elements such as the original roof configuration, roofing material and associated architectural details shall be maintained.
- 3.6.3 Roofs visible from the ground shall be repaired wherever possible to preserve the original materials, color and texture. If replacement becomes necessary then the same material or as close a match as possible shall be used.
- 3.6.4 Functional and decorative metalwork including but not necessarily limited to eaves trough, soffits, fascia, flashings and downspouts, shall be repaired or restored if possible and original materials maintained. If the components need to be replaced then comparable profiles and colors shall be used.

3.7 Roof Repairs

The restoration of a roof and any associated details to their original state is encouraged and shall be undertaken using available physical and archival evidence. Cornices, brackets, cresting, gables, eaves and chimneys shall be preserved and not covered.

3.8 Roof Replacement

The restoration of original roofing material is preferred. An alternative that enhances the architectural style of the building, such as a good quality composition shingle (asphalt), is acceptable.

3.9 Roof Top Structures

- 3.9.1 The installation of roof top structures, including but not limited to dormers, solar panels, skylights, satellite dishes, radio beacons, ventilation systems and vents, plumbing stacks, mechanical equipment, roof decks, railings and visual screens, shall be carefully considered so that their visual impact is reduced. The structures shall not detract from or dominate the appearance of the roofline. Where possible they shall be installed in the rear or side elevations, while taking into account the silhouette of the roof. In some instances skylights might be preferred to dormers or attic windows and this will depend upon the elevation and the roof pitch.
- 3.9.2 Original chimneys shall be retained and conserved. Repairs to chimneys shall use materials that match the original. Where a chimney is missing it shall be reconstructed if detailed evidence exists of its material, design, scale etc. Where little or no evidence exists, a simply designed chimney that takes its material, design and scale from that of the building shall be constructed.

4.0 STREETS CAPES:

4.1 Landscaping

- 4.1.1 Flowerbeds are shall be placed so that they do not hinder pedestrians from exiting their vehicles.
- 4.1.2 New plantings are encouraged. Plant material introduced to the District's streetscape shall be indigenous. New street trees shall be deciduous specimens such as maple (sugar and silver), chestnut and linden.
- 4.1.3 Existing mature trees and other vegetative amenities shall be retained and preserved. Where removal is being considered refer to the Stratford Urban Tree Policy.
- 4.1.4 Trees shall be planted at appropriate locations that avoid screening architecturally significant facades and important views.
- 4.1.5 Plantings shall contribute to screening less attractive sites in the District. Screening of above ground utilities shall allow for proper operation and maintenance.
- 4.1.6 Care shall be taken to maintain an appropriate distance from the face of the building so that plantings do not have an adverse affect on the buildings' exterior.
- 4.1.7 The shaping of street tree canopies shall be undertaken in a sensitive manner so as not to disfigure the tree.

4.2 Awnings

- 4.2.1 Retractable awnings are encouraged to provide shade in the HCD.
- 4.2.2 Awnings shall complement and not obscure the architectural details of the building. Plastic and sheet metal awnings are unsuitable.

4.3 Out Door Furniture

- 4.3.1 Street furniture (which includes but is not limited to, newspaper stands, benches, Bell booths, bike racks and garbage cans) shall be of a heritage style and shall be placed at appropriate intervals so as not to obstruct the regular movement of traffic, pedestrians and/or egress from vehicles.
- 4.3.2 Sitting areas are encouraged in the core area.

4.4 Lighting

- 4.4.1 Replacement lighting maintained by private property owners in the core area must be consistent with the heritage style used by the City of Stratford when placed in an area affecting the streetscape.

4.5 Signs

- 4.5.1 When street signs in the Heritage Conservation District are replaced, they are to be replaced with heritage style street signs that compliment the light standards and that the heritage style signs state ‘Heritage District’ under the street name.
- 4.5.2 When Provincial highway signs are to be removed, they shall be replaced with heritage style directional signs.