

CITY OF BRAMPTON GUIDELINES FOR SECURING VACANT BUILT HERITAGE RESOURCES

(version: 2010)

1.0 Overview

1.1 Purpose of Guidelines

Occupancy of heritage buildings is the best means to ensure on-going care, maintenance and site security. However, when heritage buildings must be 'mothballed' for a period of time certain measures are required to ensure security.

The City of Brampton, in order to encourage protection of heritage resources, has adopted the following guidelines to ensure a basic level of protection for vacant heritage buildings, structures and other resources.

These guidelines are intended to assist private property owners as they secure and protect heritage buildings, structures and other resources that, for certain reasons, must remain vacant for a period of time.

These guidelines exist to minimize the risk of arson, un-authorized entry and trespassing, vandalism, fire hazards, dangers to public health and to promote public safety. Rigorous and on-going due diligence is expected of all property owners with respect to site and building security.

These guidelines also exist to help ensure the integrity and stability of all existing heritage attributes and character defining elements on these properties against weather damage, theft, loss, deterioration and neglect.

The City of Brampton promotes the on-going preservation and adaptive re-use of all significant heritage resources. 'Demolition by neglect' scenarios are not acceptable.

It is the responsibility of all landowners to maintain any standing structures on their properties at all times, whether vacant or occupied. Property owner's shall protect any standing structures against the risk of accident or intentional damage to the property, or such damage as may be caused to other properties, arising from the entry of unauthorized persons to the building, by effectively preventing entrance by unauthorized persons.

1.2 Scope of Guidelines

The following classes of heritage buildings, structures and other resources are subject to these guidelines, as listed below:

- a) resources designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- b) resources subject to heritage easements as registered on title;

c) resources listed in the *Municipal Inventory of Heritage Resources*;

d) any other building, structure and other resources deemed potentially significant and possibly worthy of retention.

1.3 Authority

These guidelines are framed and shall be enforced through by certain legislation, regulations and standards of practice including: the Ontario Fire Code (sub-section 2.4.7), Minimum Maintenance By-law of the City of Brampton (104-96), the *Ontario Building Code Act*, the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the *Ontario Municipal Act* (regulations 171 and 173), the federal Standards for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and section 2.6.1 of the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement which pertains to land use planning issues, which states that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved".

The development of these guidelines is authorized under Brampton Heritage Board resolution HB060-2004, which recommended: "the development of guidelines to be provided to developers and property owners outlining standards for securing vacant heritage resources" and as approved by City Council on February 14, 2005 (resolution: PDD023-2005).

1.4 Definitions

"Vacant Building": means any building or structure that is not occupied and that, by reason of its unfinished, vacated or dilapidated condition, may be open to the elements or is in a state such that there is no control over unauthorized entry to the building or structure.

"Built Heritage Resource": Buildings, structures, monuments, installations, remains or other resources possessing architectural, aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or cultural value to the community, province and/or nation. These values are embodied in the building and its associated heritage attributes such as architectural fabric and detailing, uses, historical associations, setting and geographical context, related objects and features. Such resources may also possess a range of emotional, symbolic or spiritual values for different individuals, groups or the community at large.

2.0 Structural Considerations

2.1 Whenever possible, **maintain hydro** service to the building(s) so that heat can be provided in winter months and air circulation in summer. These services also help maintain building fabric and finishes and minimizes mould growth.

2.2 Ensure that all supply plumbing lines are drained and empty; where a functioning fire protection system is in place this provision should not be implemented;

2.3 Add anti-freeze to plumbing lines and appliances where necessary;

2.4 Support internal framing with 4" x 4" posts wedged to support ceilings. This is for possible snow loads that may accumulate when the heritage building is not heated;

2.5 Ensure that all roof drain equipment is operational;

2.6 Ensure at all times that exterior foundations, walls and roof surfaces are free of holes, breaks, loose or rotting boards or timbers and any other conditions which may permit the entry of insects, birds, rodents or other pests, along with wind, rain and snow to the interior of the building;

2.7 Spray building against any destructive insects or rodents as necessary;

2.8 Provide a low level of heat in winter and air circulation in summer by maintaining a functioning furnace system;

2.9 Close fireplace and/or flue dampers and cap off all chimneys;

2.10 The exterior walls must be free of graffiti - at all times.

2.11 All roofs, including fascia boards, soffits, cornices, flashing, eaves troughs and downspouts must be maintained in a stable, sound and watertight condition - at all times, in accordance with the Minimum Maintenance ;

3.0 Safety Considerations

3.1 Hydro and other necessary utility services are not to be cut off whenever possible, so that fire protection systems, alarm system and security lighting can be installed and/or maintained;

3.2 Where they are not necessary to maintain fire protection systems or fire alarms, electricity, natural gas and water services are to be cut off in a manner satisfactory to the City of Brampton;

3.4 Cap off exterior heating oil filler lines and notify oil company as necessary;

3.5 Cap of all wells using appropriate standards and practices;

3.5 Advise the City of Brampton Fire and Emergency Services.

4.0 Security Considerations

4.1 Lock all doors and windows;

4.2 Close all basement hatches, openings, walkways and windows;

4.3 Board all doors, windows and other openings with solid sheets of plywood (see section 5.0 for specifications) and cross-braced wherever possible;

4.4 Remove ladders, tools, equipment and other materials that might be used to gain interior access;

4.5 All floors above the first floor must be rendered inaccessible to entry by raising fire escapes and ladders to a height of at least four meters or guarding them in some other manner acceptable to the City of Brampton;

4.5 Post "No Trespassing" signs on all exterior elevations and on gates and property fencing;

4.6 Post heritage notice indicating:

HERITAGE NOTICE

The heritage building on this property has been identified for possible retention and re-use.

Please help conserve our heritage.

For more information contact [property owner name/contact information].

4.7 Chain-off or adequately block driveways and all other direct means of vehicular access to the property, while still permitted authorized vehicular access when necessary; the chain should be no greater than 10mm (3/8 inch) in diameter and of a grade 30 or comparable;

4.9 Snow fencing (4m in height) shall be erected around the entire perimeter of each heritage building or structure; wooden hording may be required in certain circumstances;

4.9 Owner to advise Peel Regional Police that the heritage building is vacant;

5.0 Materials for Securing a Building or Structure

5.1 Plywood Sheet Specifications: Boarding must completely cover all exterior openings. Boarding must be weatherproofed sheet plywood with a thickness of no less than 12.7mm (0.5 inches). The boarding must be securely fastened to openings using wood screws only (**no nails**). Screws must be at least #8 - 3 inch. Each screw shall be spaced not more than 4 inches apart around the entire perimeter of each board.

5.3 Where plywood is applied to openings, it shall be installed from the exterior, fitted flush, within the frames in a watertight manner, and protected from the elements with black paint or other complimentary colour in a manner that does not detract from the value of other properties in the immediate vicinity;

5.4 Where boarding alone is not sufficient to ensure a tight and secure installation of boards (such as where there is irregular or unusually large window openings or structural barriers), additional measures shall be required to adequately secure structural openings, such as cross-bracing;

5.5 If the building is likely to be 'boarded' for a considerable length of time (i.e. longer than one year), caulk all window and door opening boards to ensure some degree of weather-proofing.

5.7 If measures as outlined in this section prove insufficient to secure openings then additional augmentation measures shall be required, consisting of the installation of steel mesh enclosures or steel panels over all boarded ground floor openings, bolted into the walls.

6.0 Grounds

6.1 Without restricting the general obligation outlined in these guidelines, yards and grounds surrounding a vacant heritage building, structure and other resources must be maintained so as to prevent the accumulation of:

- (a) rubbish, garbage, junk and other debris;
- (b) wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled, inoperative, discarded, abandoned or unused vehicles, trailers and other machinery or any parts thereof;
- (c) objects and conditions, including holes and excavations, that pose health, fire or accident hazards.

6.2 Plants, grass, bushes, vines and other vegetation on grounds surrounding vacant heritage buildings, structures and other resources must be kept trimmed at all times, in compliance with the City of Brampton Minimum Maintenance By-law provisions.

6.3 Grounds immediately surrounding vacant heritage buildings, structures and other resources must be:

- (a) covered with sufficient ground cover to prevent erosion; and
- (b) graded in such a manner so as to prevent:
 - (i) excessive or reoccurring ponding of water; or
 - (ii) excessive dampness from occurring in buildings on or adjacent to the yard; or
 - (iii) any hazardous condition from being created on any private or public walkway.

6.4 Yards surrounding vacant heritage buildings, structures and other resources must be maintained so as to prevent:

- (a) the depreciation of property values in the immediate neighbourhood as a result of the vacant heritage buildings, structures and other resources;
- (b) drainage of water that negatively affects neighbouring properties or creates hazardous conditions.

7.0 Other Considerations

7.1 Maintain **fire insurance and public liability insurance** on the property at all times;

7.2 **Notify the City** of Brampton of any problems or concerns that may place any vacant heritage buildings, structures and other resources in jeopardy as they are discovered;

7.3 Property Owner must **inspect the vacant property at least once per month** to ensure on-going compliance with these guidelines and with pertinent by-laws, codes and legislation;

7.4 **Owner(s) shall at all times maintain vacant heritage buildings** (including exterior painting of wood elements and other painted surfaces, masonry, roof shingles and other roofing materials, soffits, fascia and the like), structures, surrounding grounds and landscaping and other resources in as good and as sound a state of repair as any prudent owner would with an occupied property, so that no deterioration shall take place. Maintenance must be in accordance with the City of Brampton Minimum Maintenance By-law and other provisions. These provisions shall be enforced by the City as required;

7.5 **Failure to maintain** any property, buildings and structures (vacant or occupied) in as good and as sound a state of repair as any prudent owner would, may result in action being taken against the owner(s) by the City of Brampton, Brampton Fire and Emergency Services and/or by other departments and regulatory agencies.

7.6 All heritage attributes and character defining elements on any vacant heritage building, structure and other resources designated under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* should be **maintained in a good and sound state of repair at all times to ensure preservation.**

7.7 Where there are valuable fixtures and fittings in a building, a proper **photographic survey** (security marking/photographic record) should be made of architectural items of interest such as:

- Traditional doors
- Fireplaces
- Chimney pieces
- Balustrades
- Panelling etc.
- Decorative cornice detail/ceiling rose

The photo survey should be completed by City Heritage staff or a heritage consultant retained by the property owner.

7.8 **Building ventilation** is also critical to ensure adequate exchange of air through the building and to help prevent interior deterioration through excess humidity. Pre-formed louvers or sturdy metal mesh screens shall be installed into

the plywood sheets covering certain upper storey openings. The size of each louver should represent approximately 30% of the overall size of the opening. Louvers should be installed on only as many windows as is sufficient to ensure an efficient degree of cross ventilation. All interior doors should be fixed ajar at least 4" (10cm) to allow air to circulate throughout.

7.9 Circulate letters or information flyers to all nearby homes and businesses stressing the cultural value of the subject property, discouraging acts of vandalism and encouraging neighbours to notify police or fire services if they observe acts of trespass, vandalism or if they suspect fire.

8.0 Inspection

As soon as any listed or designated heritage resource is known to be vacant, the Property owner is to contact the City of Brampton Heritage Coordinators, outlining proposed security provisions.

The property owner must also notify the Fire Services and Building Department staff.

Where vacant heritage buildings are to be retained in plans of subdivision, and with concurrence of Planning Department staff, the adoption of these guidelines shall be included as a condition of draft plan approval.

Adoption of these guidelines may also be stipulated as an approval requirement for other planning applications where necessary.

9.0 Enforcement

These guidelines shall be monitored by the City and where necessary, enforced through municipal by-laws and provincial legislation including: the Ontario Fire Code (sub-section 2.4.7), Minimum Maintenance By-law of the City of Brampton (104-96), the *Ontario Building Code Act*, the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the *Ontario Municipal Act* (regulations 171 and 173).

Care and maintenance must be guided by the Standards for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and section 2.6.1 of the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement which pertains to land use planning issues, which states that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved".

10.0 Further Information

City of Brampton Fire and Emergency Services
City of Brampton Property Standards Department
City of Brampton Building Department
Peel Regional Police
City of Brampton Heritage Coordinators