

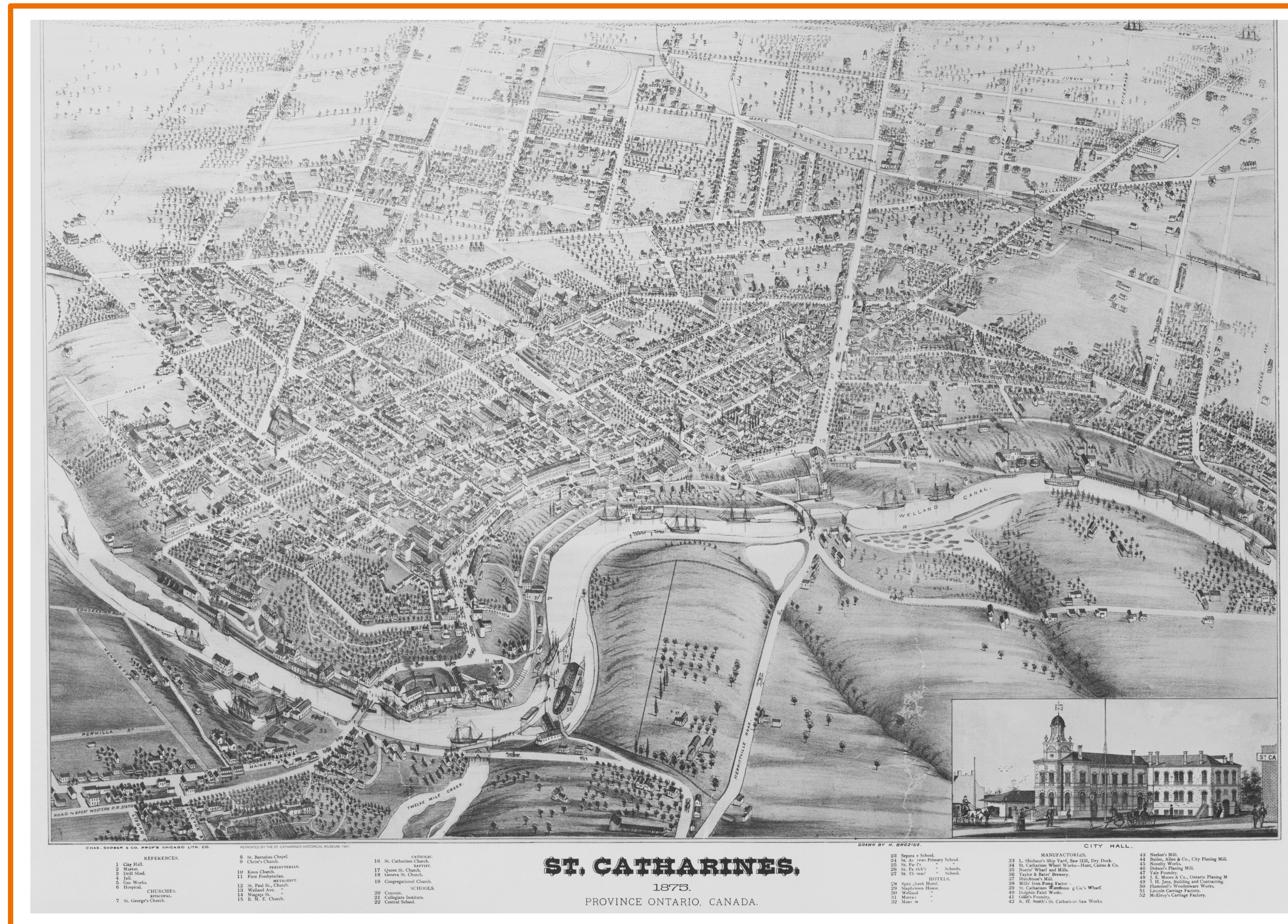
Welcome!

Thank you for attending the first Public Information Centre (PIC) for the City of St. Catharines Downtown Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study. The St. Catharines Downtown HCD Study was initiated in early 2024 when the City of St. Catharines retained Stantec Consulting Ltd. to prepare an HCD Study Report and Plan. This is the first of two public meetings that will be held as part of the Study Phase. If you have questions or comments, a member of the Project Team or City Staff will be happy to speak with you.

Open House Format

This open house presents an overview of the HCD process and the requirements of the Study Phase.

We also want to hear from you and have provided stations and forms for you to provide your insight and feedback.

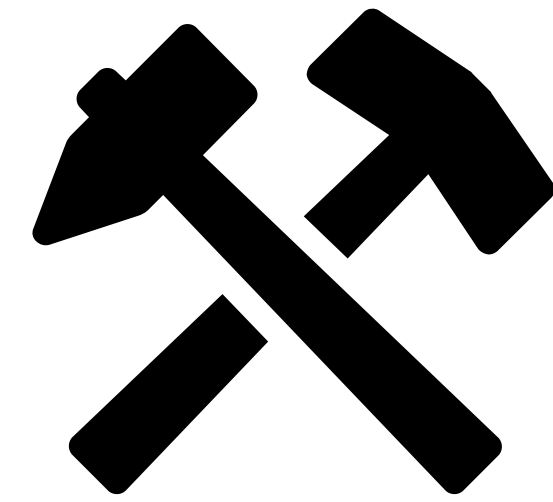


Stations to Explore

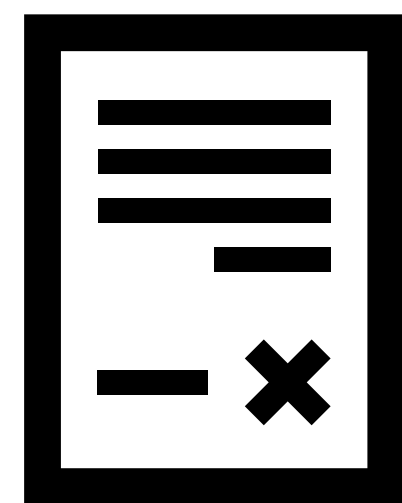
- What is an HCD?
- What do HCDs do?
- Frequently Asked questions
- Study background
- Map tables
- Next Steps
- How to Stay Involved

What is a Heritage Conservation District? What about the process?

HCD plans can be important tools for managing change in areas containing heritage buildings and landscapes

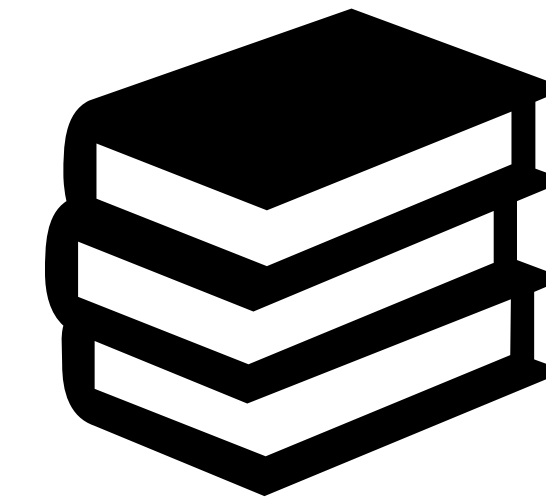


Should an area merit designation, it will be protected under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*

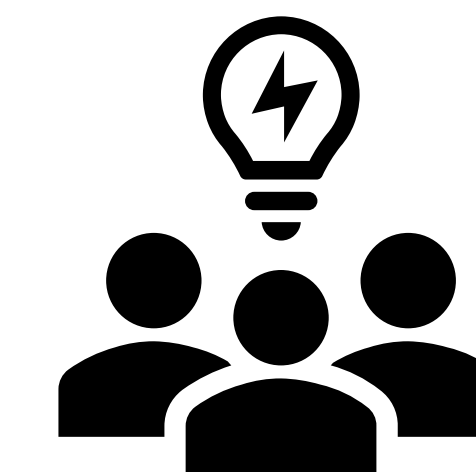


An HCD is a place where history is **embraced**, and **heritage resources** have been **preserved**. It brings to mind pioneer villages and picturesque streetscapes. In reality, an HCD is so much more. From **mid-century modern historic buildings** to **pre-confederation landscapes** to **active historic industries**, HCDs represent places where **planning tools are employed to maintain the specific character of a place and facilitate its retention for generations to come**. With 134 of these districts spanning the province, municipalities have embraced the HCD as a **means to very important ends**.

Two phases to designate: the study and the plan (not all studies lead to plans) – this is the study phase



Ultimately, in Ontario, the onus is on the community to decide how to proceed and conserve their heritage



HCDs Do...

- **Create** a planning process that respects a community's history and identity
- **Manage** change with a process of heritage alteration permits for certain renovations, restorations, and new construction
- **Foster** an appreciation of a community's heritage resources
- **Protect** the integrity of buildings, streetscapes, structures, landforms and natural features
- **Promote** cultural tourism and maintain/contribute to the downtown "brand"



HCDs Do Not...

- Prohibit new construction or redevelopment
- Lower property values
- Cause owners to lose all property rights
- Require all new construction to match a specific historical style
- Make owners require permits for minor alterations



Common HCD Questions

- **Will an HCD decrease property values?**

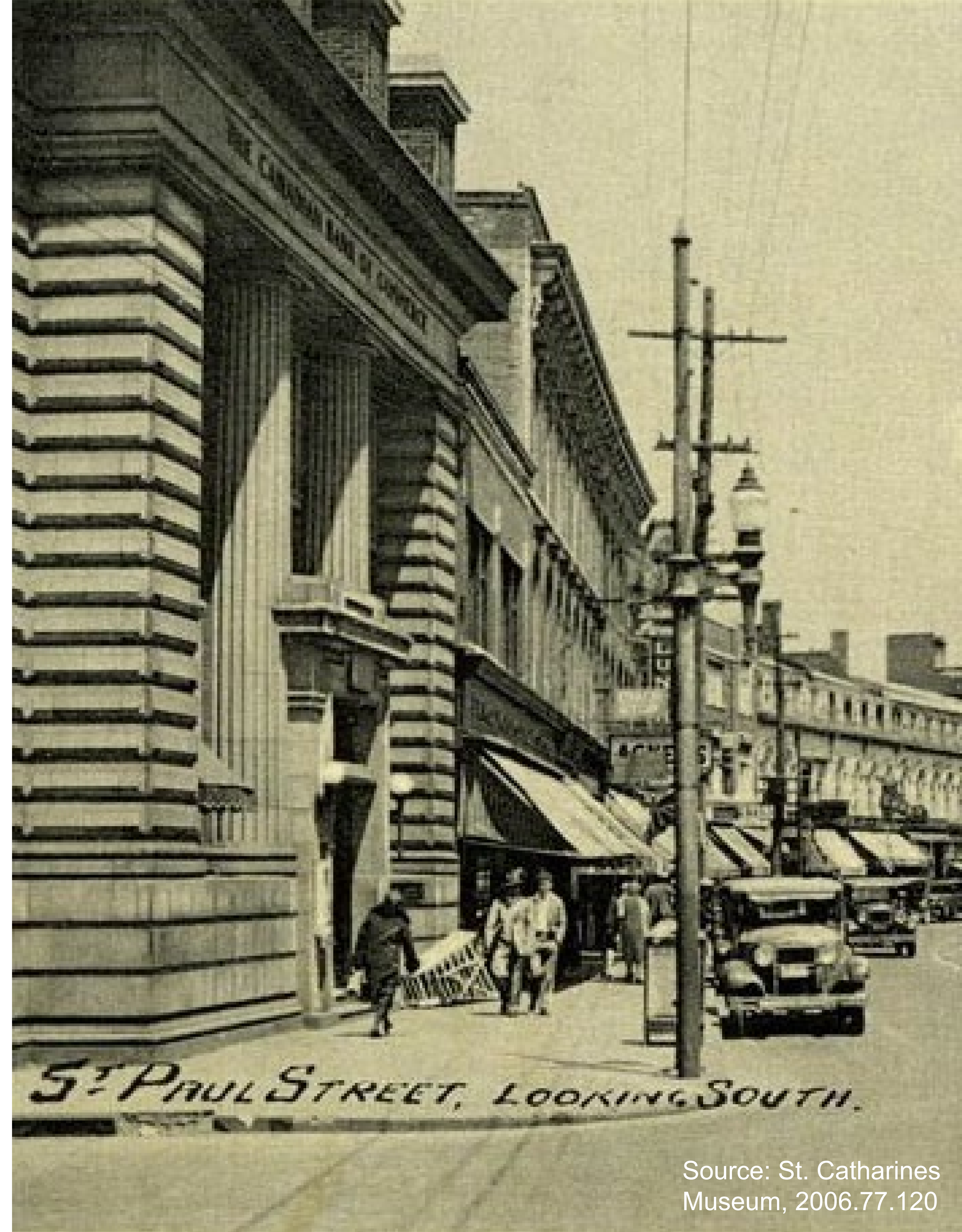
Research suggests values typically remain stable or improve

- **Will an HCD stop development?**

No! HCDs encourage compatible development

- **How is change managed?**

Guidelines on alterations (windows, doors, materials, etc), additions, demolition, landscaping, public works with separate guidelines for contributing/non-contributing properties and new constructions



- **Can I still make changes to my property?**

Yes! Changes should just be compatible with the HCD's character, and may need a heritage permit

- **Will the process involve “red tape”?**

Minor changes do not require a heritage permit. Larger alterations can be approved by staff, sometimes with input from the Heritage Committee. Note that demolitions are subject to council approval.

Staff work with applicants towards a successful application. For example, the City approved 30 out of 31 heritage permit applications in 2022!



•What are the benefits of an HCD?

- 1) Protecting and conserving an area's special and distinct cultural heritage resources
- 2) Revitalization of an area
- 3) Potential for economic spin offs and tourism generation
- 4) Enhancement of community identity, pride, and involvement
- 5) A legacy for future generations

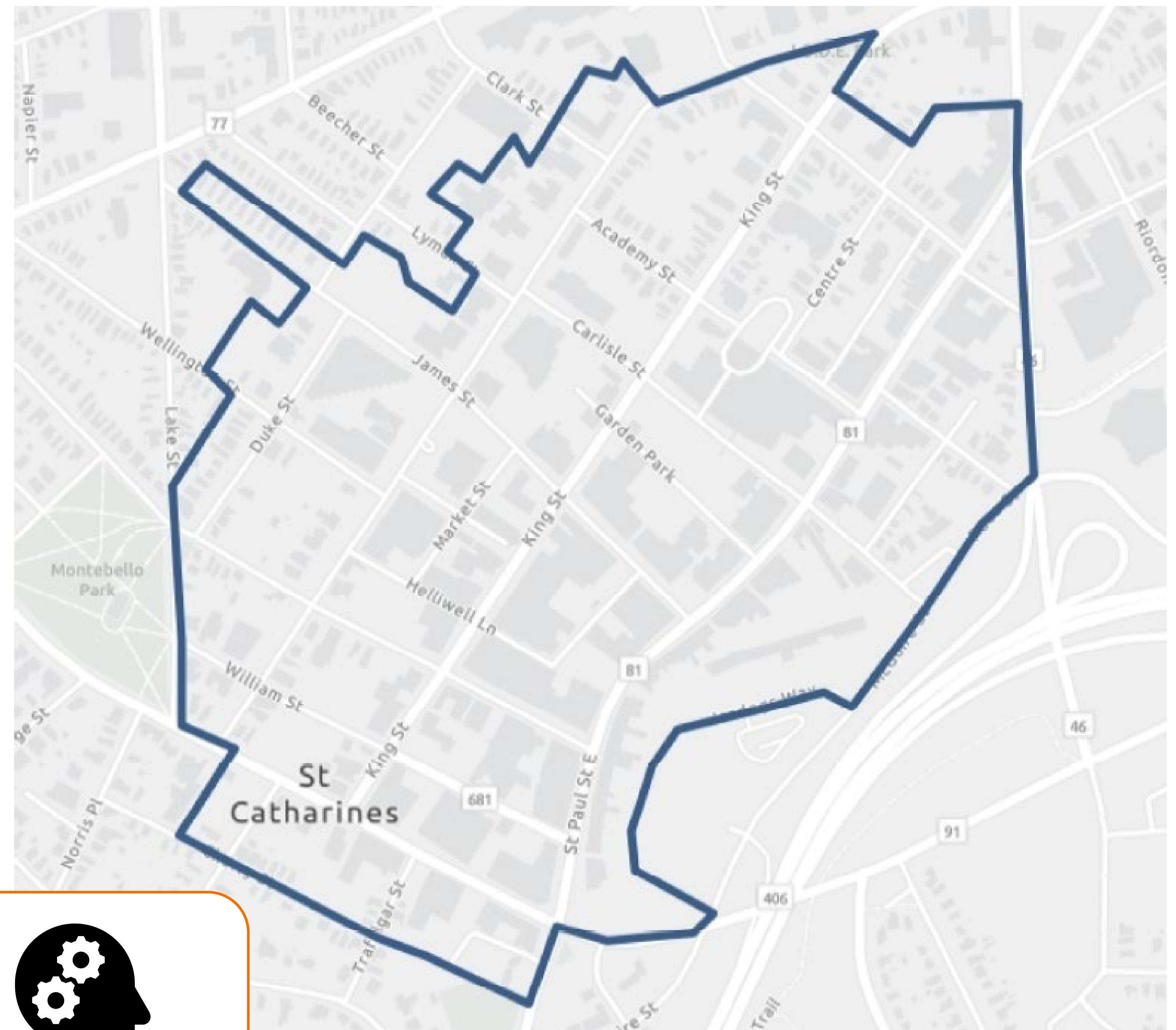
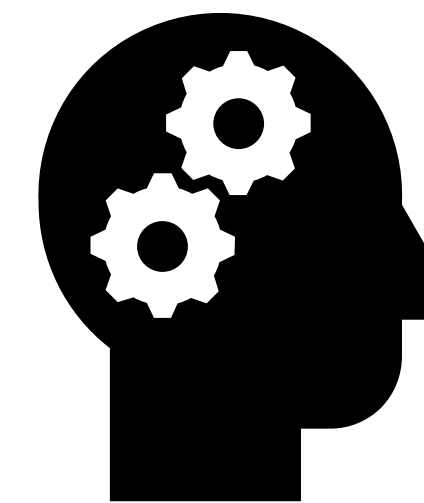


Study Background

Key Facts:

- The Study Area is approximately **920 metres** in length north to south and **848 metres** in width east to west.
- The Study Area includes approximately **475 properties** comprising a mix of residential, commercial, and civic structures such as:
 - Market Square
 - St. Catharines Public Library Central Branch
 - Robert SK Welch Courthouse
 - FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre
 - Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre
- The Study Area **includes the historic downtown core** of St. Catharines, with present-day St. Paul Street developing from a main transportation route used during the township's early settlement and a 19th century commercial core

The St. Catharines Downtown HCD Study will include a Comprehensive property inventory, historical research, character analysis, evaluation of the area's heritage value, and review of the area's existing planning framework.



Approximate boundary of the HCD Study

Map Your Perspective

We want your opinion! Please mark up the maps or use the online mapping tool with your thoughts on the following:

Potential Character Areas or HCD Boundaries → Do you think that the Study Area (or portions of it) merit consideration as an HCD? Are there any definable or unique character areas within that?

Built Heritage Resources → What buildings are important to you? Which ones capture the heritage character of the area?

Cultural Heritage Landscapes and Public Realm → Are there any landscapes or sections of the public realm that are special and should be noted?

Significant Views → Are there any significant views that should be identified?

Landmarks or Gateways → What buildings or landscape elements act as landmarks within the Study Area, or Gateways to it?



Study Process and Next Steps

Work Completed to Date

We have initiated the first steps in the St. Catharines Downtown HCD Study, including preparing drafts of the background history, policy framework, and starting the property inventory.



What are the next steps?

Our next steps are to analyze the character of the St. Catharines Downtown Study Area, examine the relevant planning policy context, and carry out the heritage evaluation of the area.

We also need to hear from you! The next **Public Information Centre is scheduled for Fall 2024.**

Meeting details will be released closer to the date.

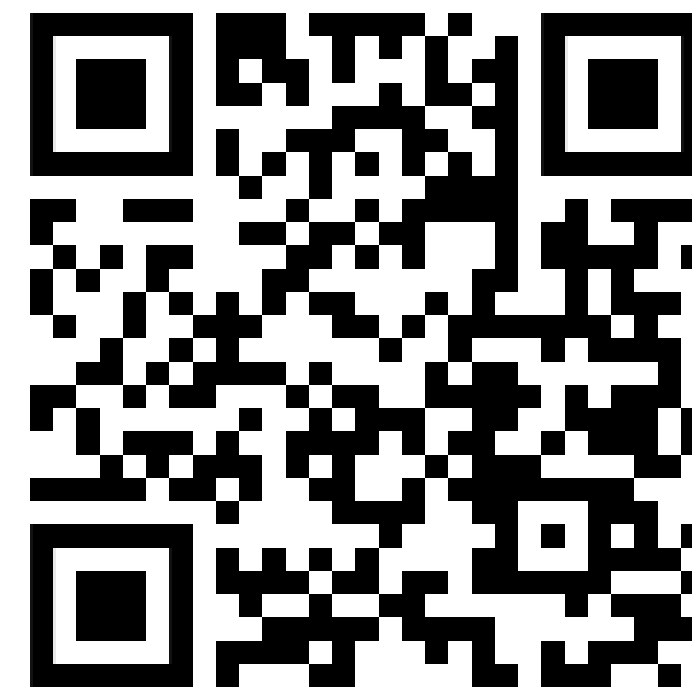
We will present the draft findings of the St. Catharines HCD Study and hope to get your feedback at that time.

How to Stay Involved

Give us your feedback!

There are a few ways for you to send us feedback on the St. Catharines Downtown HCD Study:

1. Hand in your comment sheet
2. Scan the QR code or head to www.stcatharines.ca/DowntownHCD and fill out an online survey.
3. Contact:



Nancy Reid, MES, MCIP, RPP

Urban Planning Team Lead

Stantec Consulting Ltd.

400-2100 Derry Road West

Mississauga, ON, N6K 0J5

☎ Phone: (416) 414-9263

✉ Email: Nancy.Reid@stantec.com

Or

James Neilson, MES, CAHP, RPP

Heritage Planner

City of St. Catharines

50 Church Street

St. Catharines, ON L2R 7C2

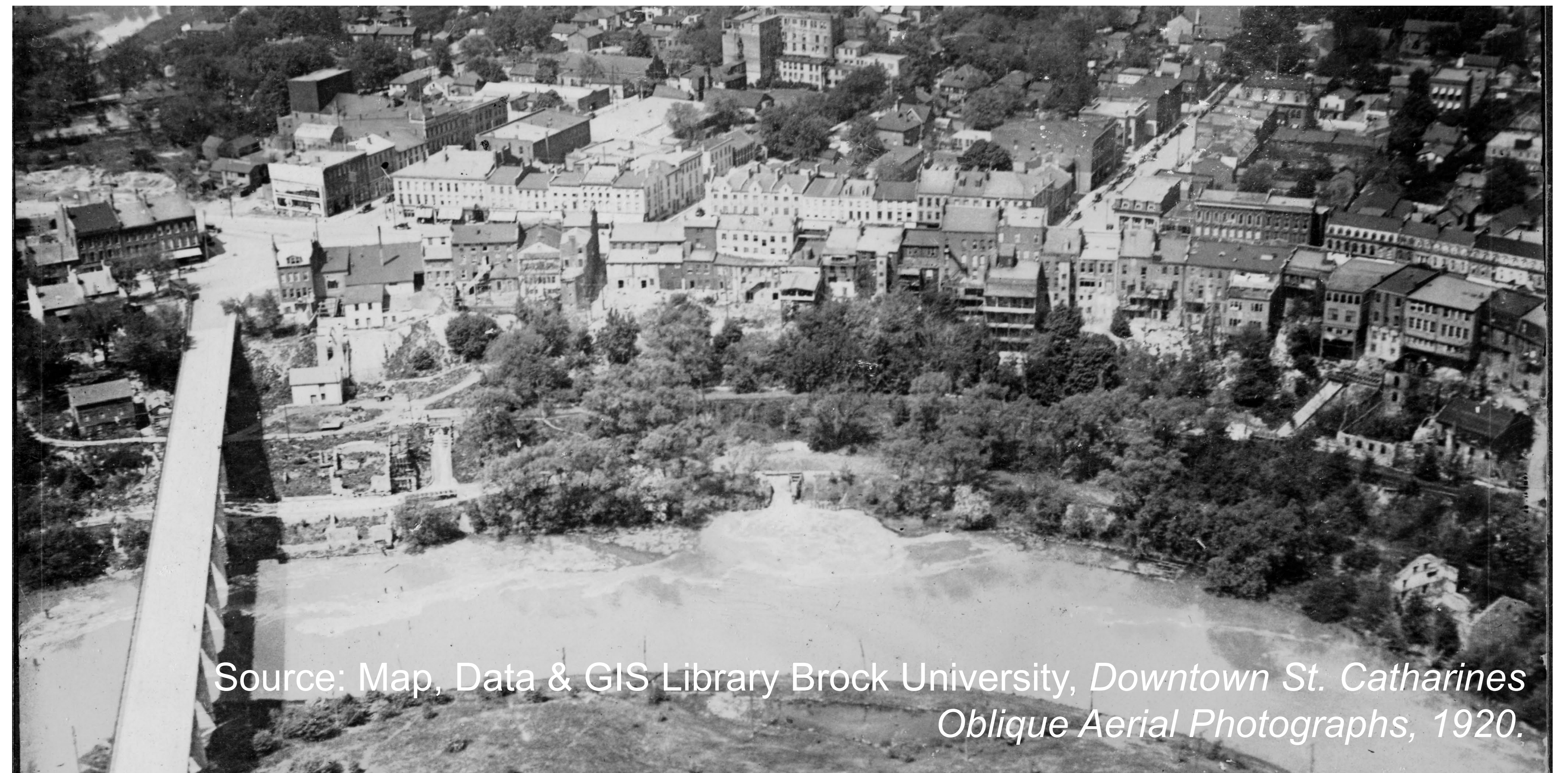
☎ Phone: (905) 688-5601 ext. 1752

✉ Email: jneilson@stcatharines.ca

Keep up-to-date with the HCD Study

Want to stay involved? Provide your contact information at the sign-in table to receive notification of future meetings and reports.

We are accepting feedback from this PIC until May 15, 2024. There will be additional opportunities for input throughout the HCD process.



Source: Map, Data & GIS Library Brock University, *Downtown St. Catharines Oblique Aerial Photographs, 1920.*