

Woodbridge

---

Heritage Conservation District  
Study and Plan



Final Document  
April, 2009

Prepared for: The City of Vaughan

Prepared by: **OfficeforUrbanism**  
Goldsmith Borgal and Company Architects (GBCA)

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was initiated by the City of Vaughan in response to the Woodbridge community's request, as well as the City's concerns, for the conservation of heritage buildings and landscapes within the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study and in Woodbridge as a whole. Through both the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study, and this study, the community voiced their opinions and concerns and provided valuable input in both study processes.

This study process brought about a realization of the many interests within the Woodbridge Community that are extremely willing to share their history and knowledge and increase the awareness of the heritage value of the Woodbridge neighbourhood. There are many families that have resided in this community for generations, and they have played a major role in understanding the history of this place. They have shared their knowledge through the public consultation process, stakeholder meetings, and several guided tours through the community and have brought a renewed perspective of the value of the Woodbridge neighbourhood. We are extremely grateful for this level of community contribution and interest which has resulted in a better plan for the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) and a more comprehensive and enlightened set of recommendations for the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study.

In particular, we would like to express our many thanks to:

All the Stakeholders that provided invaluable historic information

Tour Leaders: Ken Maynard, Jamie Maynard, Martha Bell, Stephen Robinson

Thank you.



**WOODBIDGE**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

i. Preface	9
ii. Introduction	11
<b>Part 1 - The Study</b>	
<b>1.0 Background and Context</b>	15
1.1 Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study	15
1.2 HCD Study	17
1.3 HCD Study Area	17
1.4 HCD Study Process	21
1.5 Policy Context	25
<b>2.0 District History</b>	29
2.1 Historic Villages in Vaughan	29
2.2 Development and Built Form	29
<b>3.0 Heritage Building Styles</b>	41
<b>4.0 Heritage Evaluation</b>	49
4.1 Building Inventory	49
4.2 Analysis of Inventory	53
<b>Part 2 - The Heritage Conservation District Plan</b>	
<b>5.0 Heritage Conservation District Plan</b>	63
5.1 Objectives	63
5.2 District Boundary	63
5.3 Heritage Character Statement	65
5.3.1 Woodbridge's history and function within Vaughan and surroundings	65
5.3.2 Woodbridge's unique sense of identity	67
5.3.3 Woodbridge's unique elements	67
5.4 Reasons for Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act	69
<b>6.0 Heritage Attributes and District Guidelines</b>	71
6.1 Heritage Character Areas	71
6.1.1 Woodbridge Avenue	71
6.1.2 Kipling Avenue North and South	71
6.1.3 Wallace Street	73
6.1.4 William Street and James Street	73
6.1.5 Clarence Street and Park Drive	75
6.1.6 The Fairgrounds Area	75
6.1.7 The Humber River Corridor	75
6.2 Approach: Conservation of Contributing Buildings	76
6.2.1 Standards and Guidelines for Conservation	76
6.2.2 Conservation Guidelines	76
6.2.3 Relocation of Contributing Buildings	77
6.2.4 Demolition of Contributing Buildings	77
6.2.5 Approach to Non-Contributing Buildings	77
6.2.6 Activities that are Subject to Review	77
6.2.7 Activities that are Exempt from Review	77
6.2.8 Appropriate Materials	78
6.2.9 Inappropriate Materials	78
6.3 Architectural Guidelines for New Buildings, Additions and Alterations	79
6.3.1 Replica / Reconstructed Buildings	79
6.3.2 Contemporary Design	80
6.3.3 Architectural Guidelines	81
6.4 Built Form Framework	83
6.4.1 Street Wall Setbacks	83
6.4.2 Street Wall Height and Scale	85

6.5	Transitions of New Buildings in Relation to Heritage Resources	86
6.6	Open Space Framework	89
6.6.1.	Public Open Spaces, Parks, and Public Streets	89
6.6.2.	Pedestrian Circulation	91
6.6.3.	Tree Canopy and Vegetation	91
6.6.4.	Views and Landmarks	93
6.7	Urban Design	95
6.7.1	Roads, Curbs, Sidewalks and Streetscape	95
6.7.2	Street Furniture and Pedestrian Amenities	96
6.7.3	Street Trees	96
6.7.4	Signage	97
6.7.5	Street Lighting	97
6.7.6	Parking	97
6.7.7	Bridges	97
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Heritage Building</b>	<b>99</b>
7.1	A Conservation Plan	99
7.1.1	Brick Masonry	99
7.1.2	Stone Masonry	102
7.1.3	Foundation	104
7.1.4	Stucco Siding	105
7.1.5	Wood Siding	106
7.1.6	Roofing	107
7.1.7	Gable Ends and Dormer Windows	109
7.1.8	Windows and Shutters	111
7.1.9	Doors	114
7.1.10	Porches	116
7.1.11	Projections	118
7.1.12	Paint	119
7.1.13	Gutters and Rain Water Leaders	120
7.1.14	Fences	121
7.1.15	Commercial Signage	122
7.1.16	Storefront	124
	Bibliography	126
<b>Part 3 - Implementation</b>		<b>127</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Administration of the District</b>	<b>129</b>
8.1	Overview	129
8.2	Required Permits	129
8.2.1	Demolition Control	129
8.2.2	Heritage Easements	129
8.3	Streamlining the Process	129
8.3.1	The Heritage Permit	130
8.3.2	Heritage Permit with Building Permit	131
8.3.3	Heritage Permit with Site Plan Approval	131
8.3.4	Review of Zoning Amendment and Committee of Adjustment Applications	132
8.4	Application Checklists	132
8.4.1	Heritage Permit Checklist	132
8.4.2	Heritage Permit with Building Permit Checklist	133
8.4.3	Heritage Permit with Site Plan Review Checklist	133
8.5	Resolving Issues and Appeals	133
8.6	Financial Incentives for Conservation	134
8.6.1	Tax Measures	134
8.6.2	Grants and Loans	134
8.7	Public Awareness	134
8.8	Plan Renewal	134
8.8.1	Reviewing Bodies	135
8.8.2	Regular Review	135

8.8.3	Amendments	135
8.9	Enforcement	135
8.10	Additional Recommendations for Improvements	135
8.10.1	Community Improvement Area	135
8.10.2	Comprehensive Streetscape Master Plan	135
8.10.3	Landscape, Views and Natural Features Inventory	135
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Properties Recommended for a Part IV Study</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Updates to Existing Policy</b>	<b>138</b>
	<b>Appendix</b>	<b>139</b>
	<b>List of Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings</b>	<b>141</b>
	<b>Building Inventory Maps</b>	<b>146</b>

## **Woodbridge**

**A lovely little village  
Nestled in among the hills;  
Where flows the graceful Humber  
Which twists and turns and thrills.**

**To pioneers who founded it  
We lift our hats off high;  
They trusted in its future  
And hoped 'twould never die.**

**They left to us the heritage  
Of every pioneer,  
To guard, develop, love it  
Throughout each passing year.**

**Some of us were born here,  
Others came from distant lands;  
But we can be real brothers,  
So let us all join hands.**

**May we pass on a heritage  
To those who follow after,  
Of perfect love and brotherhood,  
Not shame but shouts of laughter.**

**To Woodbridge and community,  
To each and every one,  
May this place be much better  
For the good that we have done.**

**May sin and want and envy,  
Ne'er dwell within this place.  
But peace and joy and unity,  
Endear it to our race.**

**Composed by Mrs. Robert Goodwill (Edna Whitworth) ,  
Woodbridge News, circa 30 years ago.**



# i. PREFACE

## The Importance of this Plan to the City of Vaughan

The *Ontario Heritage Act* enables municipal councils to designate a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) “through adoption of a district plan with policies and guidelines for conservation, protection and enhancement of the area’s special character”. Woodbridge is currently the only historic village within the City of Vaughan without a Heritage Conservation District.

This is a unique tool that is set forth with the belief that “the value of the district as a whole is always greater than the sum of its parts”. This premise allows the City of Vaughan to recognize, in an area such as Woodbridge, that in addition to a collection of historic buildings, it is the cumulative character of the buildings, streetscape, landscape, and other cultural and urban features that define the character of place and achieve a sense of identity.

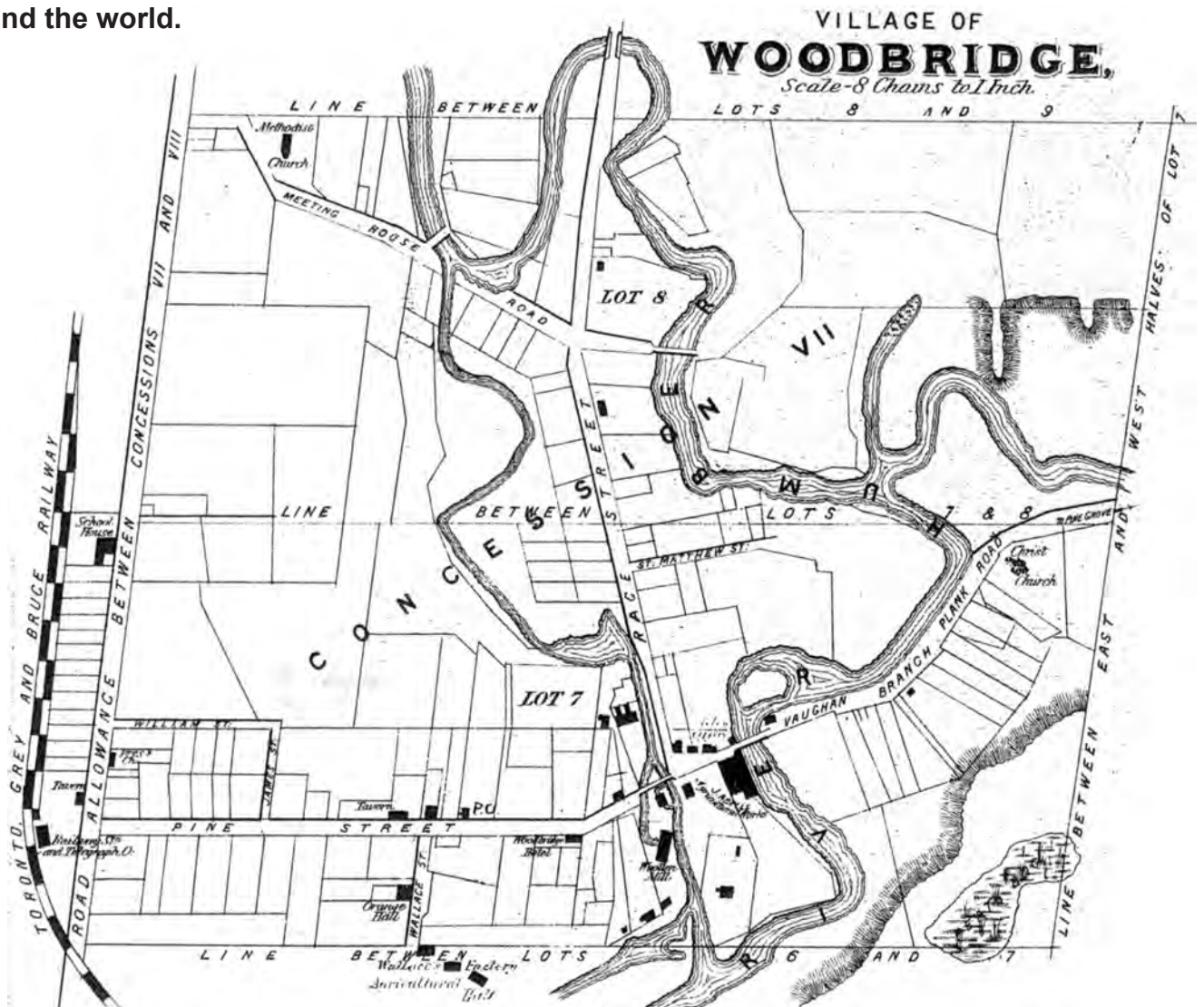
As Woodbridge undergoes a wave of development, the HCD Study provides an opportunity to spell out the aspects of the area that are valued and cherished as well as the things that are inappropriate for development, and to identify policies to encourage more of what is desirable to enhance Woodbridges’ special character.

The Woodbridge HCD Study was encouraged through the undertaking of the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study in which key stakeholders such as residents, businesses, property owners, and local heritage groups voiced the concern that the heritage character that is indicative of Woodbridge should not be lost in the current and future wave of development. All of the recommendations and guidelines set forth in the Plan have been amply discussed with the public through the Kipling Avenue Corridor and the HCD study’s public consultation processes. As a result, the process has not only increased awareness of the diversity of heritage resources (cultural and physical) of Woodbridge above and beyond the built form, but has brought about an awareness that the continued deterioration of any of the parts has a grave effect on the value of the district as a whole.

The importance of the HCD Plan cannot be overstated. For the City of Vaughan and the Woodbridge Community, this is a unique opportunity to appreciate the past, understand the present, and enable a successful future.

## Did you know?...

- The Village of Woodbridge was originally known as **Burwick**.
- The area was renamed “Woodbridge” partly because of the **numerous wooden bridges** that were built to traverse the many Humber River streams and tributaries within the area.
- The first railway, **the Toronto Grey and Bruce Rail line** ran special excursions from the Toronto Union Station to Woodbridge Village during the Woodbridge Agricultural Fair time for 25 cents each way.
- There were **six Village Hotels** in Woodbridge that welcomed dignitaries from Toronto and around the world.
- The Woodbridge Agricultural Fair brought **the elite of Toronto society** to Woodbridge travelling by impressive teams of horse drawn carriages.
- The original location of the Toronto Grey and Bruce Rail line and Station is located where **the existing fire hall** sits today.
- Woodbridge Avenue was originally called **Pine Street**, Clarence was called **Race Street** and Kipling Avenue was known as **the Eighth Avenue**.
- John Abell was **the first Mayor** of Woodbridge and a key agricultural industrialist.



## ii. INTRODUCTION

### A Heritage Conservation District for Woodbridge

#### The Value of a Heritage Conservation District

The ability of municipalities to designate areas as Heritage Conservation Districts is an important tool to assist in the conservation of unique neighbourhoods, streetscapes, and architectural features that are emblematic of specific eras and locales.

During the creation of Heritage Conservation Districts, the City of Vaughan requires that the public be engaged in the legislative process. A wide range of stakeholders, community members, and City representatives are involved throughout the research and policy formulation phase, giving input on what heritage characteristics are valued in the district, and what set of guidelines can be put in place to guide the evolution of the district in support of the heritage character.

The benefits of designation through Heritage Conservation Districts are many. Members of the community can preserve local values through the heritage resources, ensuring that treasured elements within the community are protected over the long term. Home owners, business owners, and the municipality itself all stand to enjoy economic and historic benefits from the preservation of a vibrant heritage district, whose unique cultural value attracts additional investment and visitors to the area. Importantly, designation can ensure that a District's heritage attributes are not degraded by growth and change; but rather maintained, managed, preserved and promoted effectively over time.

For Woodbridge, the process of undertaking a Heritage Conservation District Study and the subsequent creation of an HCD has had the benefit of:

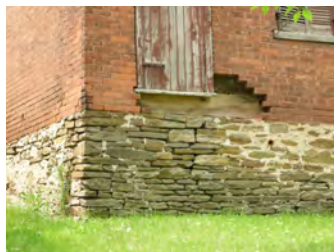
- ensuring that members of the community became engaged in the planning process;
- developing an understanding and appreciation of the heritage

- resources within Woodbridge;
- recognizing and commemorating the values that can sustain a sense of place for Woodbridge into the future;
- contributing, through enhanced awareness and defined policy, towards the development of a rich physical and cultural environment;
- providing clarity and certainty regarding future developments of the conservation of heritage resources for property owners, businesses and residents alike; and
- providing a framework to manage change.

#### The Unique Nature of Woodbridge

Woodbridge is best defined by the historic nature of its quaint and diverse buildings and the expansive rich landscapes of the Humber River corridor that provide a unique topography and infrastructure. Woodbridge is known for the Fairgrounds, its village character; diversity of period architecture; and the village scale Woodbridge Commercial Core. These are all unique attractions that create a place for economic opportunities for businesses, and have a long history of drawing tourists to the area.

Woodbridge is experiencing growth pressures because of its continued popularity through history as an attractive place to live and work. Once it is designated as a Heritage Conservation District, the management and preservation of the heritage attributes of the buildings, the public realm and district open space assets that form the character of place will take priority, but this does not inhibit the opportunity for property owners and businesses to benefit from change and investment. Under the HCD, development change will be carefully managed in order to protect and maintain the existing heritage resources.





Woodbridge United Church