

## Criteria for Assessing Heritage Merit

The Heritage Advisory Panel looks at six criteria when assessing heritage merit:

### Architecture/Landscaping

Is the style notable, rare or unique; where many survive, is it a good example?

Is its age significant?

Is the design noteworthy due to excellence or artistic merit?

### History

Person/event – how closely associated with house/site?

Special social or lifestyle significance?

### Environment

Importance in establishing character of area or continuity of the street?

Do the setting, landscaping or views contribute to character of street?

Does the house/site have significance as a landmark?

### Usability

Can Stewardship of the building/site be assured?

### Integrity

Is the site original or has it had alterations?

What is the structural condition of the house?

### Vulnerability

Is there an imminent potential threat of demolition, substantial alteration or redevelopment?

Does the threat arise from the value of the land, condition of the structure, zoning of the site or adjacent land, or other factors?



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## How to designate your house as Heritage



## Heritage Oak Bay



## **How to Designate a House**

### **How do I get my house designated “heritage”?**

You write a letter to the Mayor and Council requesting that your house be designated a municipal heritage structure. When your letter comes before Council, it will be referred to the Heritage Advisory Panel. Following a set of pre-determined criteria, the Panel will determine whether or not to recommend designation. This process will involve a site inspection by the Panel.

If the Panel recommends that Council designate your house as a heritage structure, Council will instruct staff to draft a bylaw to that effect. Once the bylaw is drafted, it will come before Council for the first two readings. If it has been read twice without any issue being raised, a public hearing will be called. At the public hearing, your neighbours, and members of the public will have a chance to either support or not. Following the public hearing, at the Council meeting held that same night, Council will decide whether to read the bylaw a third time and adopt it.

Should the bylaw be adopted, staff will send the appropriate forms to the Provincial Government.

### **Do I have to designate the interior of my house?**

No. However, you may wish to have certain portions of the interior designated. You should notify the Heritage Steering Committee if you want to do this.

### **What are the advantages of having my house designated?**

There are at least four advantages: Designated houses are eligible for grants from the BC Heritage Trust; Oak Bay provides the owner with a plaque recognizing the property as a heritage site; the property is listed in the Heritage Register of Oak Bay; and the owner may apply to the Oak Bay Heritage Foundation for cost sharing grants to update and maintain the exterior of the house to heritage standards.

### **What am I allowed to do to the house if it is designated heritage?**

You may work on the interior of the house, as it is not included in the bylaw, as long as you get the proper permits. For exterior work, you are required to make an application to the Heritage Advisory Panel which will approve or reject the work.

If you want to demolish the house, your request is brought before Council, which will refer it to the Heritage Steering Committee. The Committee will report back to Council with its recommendations within 30 days.

### **Is there any funding available to help pay for any work done on the house after it is designated?**

Funding may be available through the Oak Bay Heritage Foundation; You would have to apply directly to that body.

### **Is it possible that my house could be designated even if I don't want it done?**

It is rare, but possible. There are 18 homes designated as “municipal heritage sites” in Oak Bay. In only one case did Council take the initiative. That was because a demolition permit

had been sought for a portion of a house, and when it went to the Steering Committee it was discovered that this house played a significant part in the Municipality's history. Normally, Council waits for the owners to submit an application for designation.

### **How long does the process to designate my house heritage take?**

Two or three months. The request must go through two Council meetings, a Heritage Advisory Panel meeting and a public hearing.

### **How do I get my house put on the Registry?**

Submit a letter to the Mayor and Council stating you would like your house added to the Voluntary Heritage Registry. Council must pass a resolution to this effect. The entire process takes approximately two weeks.

