

Bulletin: Kelowna's Heritage Conservation Areas

Created: September 2025

This information is summarized for convenience. Please refer to the applicable bylaw for the complete regulation.

Properties must satisfy all applicable Bylaws/ Regulations of the City of Kelowna and conform to the B.C. Building Code.

What is a Heritage Conservation Area (HCA)?

A Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) is a [conservation tool/policy](#) for a distinct and identifiable neighbourhood, characterized by its historical value.

HCAs exist to manage change, not to prevent change.

The purpose of the HCAs is to conserve the neighbourhoods' unique character and sense of place by balancing development and preservation, ensuring that change and density are managed thoughtfully and are informed by the areas' unique character and historical significance.

Properties in the HCA are categorized as Contributory or Non-Contributory. The [HCA Conservation & Development Guidelines](#) offer instructions on what is encouraged and permitted for making changes to both types of properties. The Guidelines do not apply to the interior or rear of buildings. General maintenance, painting, re-roofing (with similar materials), and landscaping are not restricted.

What is the heritage value of Kelowna's Heritage Conservation Areas?

The Abbott & Marshall Streets Heritage Conservation Areas are located on the traditional territory of the syilx/Okanagan people on the eastern shore of kłúsxnítkw (Okanagan Lake), an important and sacred syilx place, invaluable resource and traditional transportation route since time immemorial.

The historic settler residential neighbourhood that was established here has been recognized as a historic place for its evident built and scenic character since 1983 and established as two Heritage Conservation Areas in 1998.

This residential area is valued as a representation of the early and evolving character of Kelowna's settler inhabitancy pattern along the shores of Okanagan Lake. Its house styles offer a diverse variety of residential architecture dating from the early 1900s right up until today often constructed in pleasantly consistent groupings.

The curved or diagonal alignments of certain streets and lanes in the neighbourhood, such as Abbott, Knox, Pandosy and Riverside, were laid out this way due to the proximity and natural shapes of Mill Creek and Lake Okanagan, a unique characteristic of this neighbourhood. The natural, scenic aspects of the area, have given the neighbourhood an identity as a recreational and tourist destination for visitors and residents alike.

The neighbourhood is valued for the way it conveys a unique sense of time and place and for its strong sense of community. The sense of an established, older neighbourhood comes from the collective

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presence of extensive, mature landscaping on many properties and along the streets, as well as from the abundance of traditional house styles and property configurations prioritizing pedestrian entrances facing the street, front porches, and inviting, open front yards.

To read the full neighbourhood Statement of Significance and the Desired Future Character Statements, visit pages 12 and 15 of the [HCA Conservation & Development Guidelines](#).

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How does the HCA policy affect my property?

Each property in the HCA is assigned to a category:

1. Contributory Properties

These include all properties:

- listed on the 1983 Heritage Resources Inventory or the Heritage Register
- Identified as having heritage significance
- Constructed before or in 1959
- Exhibit character-contributing built form and elements
- Exhibit character-contributing siting and landscaping

A [Heritage Alteration Permit \(HAP\)](#) is required for any changes to the exterior front, sides or roof and for any additions to the house or property, to ensure the conservation of the contributory aspects of the property and to ensure new buildings and additions are compatible to, distinguishable from and subordinate to the historic property.

These properties are prioritized for retention, so demolition or a transformation that obscures historic form and character is discouraged. To incentivize their conservation, the HCA Guidelines allow for discretion to development regulations when the features of a contributory property are retained. These adjustments may include modifications to setback requirements, parking standards, use flexibility, and density increases.

2. Non-Contributory Properties

These include all properties:

- Built in 1960 or later
- Not identified as having heritage value
- Don't exhibit character-contributing form, elements, siting or landscaping

A Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) is required for any changes to the exterior front, sides or roof and for any additions to the house or property, to ensure that renovations, new buildings and additions are

compatible with, distinguishable from and subordinate to the historic context of the neighbourhood and the immediate properties.

The [HCA Conservation & Development Guidelines](#) are intended to help applicants understand the heritage value and historic context of the neighbourhood and their specific property to inform repairs, renovations and changes.



Can the category of my property in the HCA be changed?

Requests to be added or removed from the HCAs Contributory Properties List can be submitted to the City to be reviewed using a consistent evaluation criteria by a Registered Heritage Professional. Additions and removals from the Contributory and Non-Contributory lists are considered on a case-by-case basis.