

Weston (Phase II) Heritage Conservation District Study - Final Report

Date: November 18, 2024

To: Toronto Preservation Board

From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

Wards: Ward 5 - York South-Weston

SUMMARY

The purpose of this final report is to summarize the findings of the Weston (Phase II) Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study ("the Study") conducted by City staff, and to recommend that the Toronto Preservation Board endorse staff's recommendation that the Study not proceed to the Plan Phase because the study area does not meet the provincial criteria to merit Part V designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

On January 31, 2018, City Council adopted item PG25.4 directing that a Heritage Conservation District study be initiated for the Weston (Phase II) HCD Study Area as identified on the map in Attachment 1 to this report.

In June 2019, City staff initiated a study of the Weston (Phase II) study area to determine whether it merited designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). The study followed the Council-adopted *Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto: Procedures, Policies and Terms of Reference* and used the Provincial criteria (updated in 2023) required to determine if a district is of cultural heritage value or interest.

On January 1, 2023, the Province's proposed amendments to the OHA through the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) came into effect. For Heritage Conservation Districts, per Regulation 569/22 of the OHA, at least 25 per cent of the properties within the defined area must satisfy two or more of the nine criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest. City staff have determined that the Weston (Phase II) study area consisting of 254 properties does not meet the minimum threshold of 25 per cent of the properties meeting two or more of the nine criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, and therefore does not meet the Provincial criteria for determining a district's cultural heritage values.

Although City staff have concluded that the Weston (Phase II) study area does not merit conservation through an HCD Plan, staff identified 20 properties that merit further research and evaluation to determine their cultural heritage value or interest as

identified in Attachment 7 – Properties Recommended for Further Research and Evaluation. These properties were all constructed prior to 1910 and are contextually related to the early development history of the former Village of Weston. All the properties also have design or physical value as rare, unique, representative or early examples of an architectural style, and some have historical or associative value for their associations with a prominent former resident of Weston.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. The Toronto Preservation Board receive for information the report dated November 18, 2024 from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning, entitled Weston (Phase II) Heritage Conservation District Study - Final Report.
2. The Toronto Preservation Board endorse the list of heritage potential properties recommended for further research and evaluation in Attachment 7 – Properties with Potential Cultural Heritage Value Recommended for Further Research and that staff bring forward recommendations for any properties that merit inclusion on the City's Heritage Register.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

City Planning confirms there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

In May 2004, City Council authorized Weston (Phase II) for study as a potential Heritage Conservation District.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2004/agendas/council/cc040518/tw4rpt/cl005.pdf>

On January 31, 2018, City Council adopted item PG25.4 directing that a Heritage Conservation District study be initiated for the Weston Phase II Study Area.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.PG25.4>

Legislative Framework

Under Part V of the OHA municipalities are enabled to establish heritage conservation districts where their official plan contains provisions relating to the establishment of

such. The *City of Toronto's Official Plan* supports identification, evaluation, and designation of heritage conservation districts.

Section 41.1 of the OHA describes the requirements for the HCD Plan, including: a statement of objectives; a statement of district significance explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the HCD; a description of heritage attributes; policies, guidelines, and procedures for achieving the stated objectives; and a description of alterations that may be undertaken by property owners without obtaining a heritage permit.

On January 1, 2023, the Province's proposed amendments to the OHA through the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) came into effect. For HCDs, per Regulation 569/22 of the OHA, at least 25 per cent of the properties within the defined area must satisfy two or more of the nine criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest.

Further, the Bill 23 amendments to the OHA regarding Listed properties include provisions stating that properties will be removed from the City's Heritage Register two years after their listing date if no further action is taken by Council to designate them under Parts IV or V of the OHA. The original removal deadline of January 1, 2025, was extended through Bill 200, providing for an additional two years until January 1, 2027, for properties on the Register on or before January 1, 2023. Properties listed since January 2023 must still be removed on the original two-year timeline. Once removed, Council may not relist any property for a period of five years.

City of Toronto's Official Plan

The *City of Toronto's Official Plan* (the "Official Plan") contains several policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. Indicating the integral role that heritage conservation plays in successful city-building, Section 3.1.6 of the Official Plan states that, "Cultural heritage is an important component of sustainable development and place making. The preservation of our cultural heritage is essential to the character of this urban and liveable City that can contribute to other social, cultural, economic and environmental goals of the City."

Official Plan Policy 3.1.6.30 provides for the establishment of HCDs and their designation and conservation. It states, "Potential heritage conservation districts will be identified and evaluated to determine their significance and cultural heritage values, in a Heritage Conservation District study. Heritage Conservation Districts that have been evaluated to be significant for their heritage value will be designated and conserved."

Policy 3.1.6.2 states that properties and HCDs of potential cultural heritage value or interest will be identified and evaluated consistent with provincial regulations and criteria and that the evaluation of HCDs may also consider additional criteria such as social, community, natural and scientific value. Policy 3.1.6.3 directs that HCDs will be protected by being designated under the OHA and included on the Heritage Register. Policy 3.1.6.4 states that properties on the Heritage Register (including those within HCDs) will be conserved and maintained consistent with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

COMMENTS

Background

In May 2004, City Council authorized Weston (Phase II) for study as a potential Heritage Conservation District.

On January 31, 2018, City Council adopted item PG25.4 directing that a Heritage Conservation District study be initiated for the Weston (Phase II) Study Area.

In June 2019, City Staff began a study of the potential for this area to be designated as a HCD under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. This study followed the Council-adopted *Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto: Procedures, Policies and Terms of Reference*. Heritage Planning suspended the study in Fall 2020 due to operational capacity related to the pandemic until resumption in Fall 2023.

Context

The Weston (Phase II) HCD Study area is a primarily residential neighbourhood located east of the Humber River and the railway tracks and is generally bounded by Rosemount Avenue, Church Street, Elm Street, and Macdonald Avenue. It is composed of predominantly single detached houses, with a small number of multi-unit residential buildings and a park.

Existing Heritage Protections

The study area contains four properties that are included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register; three of the properties are listed, and one is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. These properties represent the 19th century period of residential construction in the area when it was transitioning from a milling community along the Humber River to an industrial suburb after the coming of the railway.

History and Evolution

Research into the history and evolution of the study area was undertaken as part of the HCD Study Process. This research provided a foundational understanding of the history of land use and development that informed the subsequent character analysis and heritage evaluation. A detailed review of the History and Evolution of the Weston II study area is included as Attachment 2 to this report, and briefly summarized below.

The Weston (Phase II) HCD study area's history can be understood through five periods of development: Indigenous Communities (-Present), a Milling Community (1790s-1860s), Transition from River to Railway (1860s-1890s), an Industrial Suburb (1890s-1960s) and a Post-Industrial Amalgamated Community (1960s-Present). Today, the existing condition of the study area reflects its development as a residential neighbourhood from the 1850s to the present day.

For time immemorial, Toronto has been home to First Nations peoples. Following the retreat of glaciers approximately 13,000 years ago, small groups of First Nations peoples moved from place to place, hunting and gathering the food they needed according to the seasons. Over millennia, they adapted to dramatically changing environmental conditions, developing and acquiring new technologies as they did so. Waterways and the lake were vital sources of fresh water and nourishment, and shorelines and nearby areas were important sites for gathering, trading, hunting, fishing, and ceremonies. Long-distance trade moved valuable resources across the land.

After maize and squash were introduced to Southern Ontario, by approximately 500 CE, horticulture began to supplement food sources. By 1300 CE, villages focused on growing food became year-round settlements surrounded by crops. These villages were home to ancestors of the Huron-Wendat Nation, who would continue to occupy increasingly larger villages in the Toronto area and beyond. These villages were connected to well-established travel routes which were part of local and long-distance trail networks, including the Carrying Place trails on the Don, Rouge and Humber rivers that connected Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay.

By 1600, the Wendat had formed a confederation of individual nations, and had concentrated their villages away from Lake Ontario, in the Georgian Bay area. Following contact with French explorers and missionaries in Southern Ontario in the early 1600s, European diseases decimated First Nations. Competition for furs to trade with Europeans and the desire to replenish numbers through absorption of captives, among other factors, contributed to the Beaver Wars, which after 1640, saw the Haudenosaunee Confederacy expand into Southern Ontario, dispersing the Wendat.

Within the boundaries of today's Toronto, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy then occupied villages on the Carrying Place trails on the Humber and Rouge Rivers from approximately the 1660s to the 1680s. In the late 1680s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy chose to leave their villages in the Toronto area and returned to their homelands in upstate New York, although they did not relinquish their interest in the resources of the area. The 1701 Great Peace of Montreal, the 1701 Nanfan Treaty, and the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, demonstrate how the Haudenosaunee continue to identify the north shore of Lake Ontario as part of their traditional territory.

During this same period, the Mississaugas expanded their territory westward and moved into the vast territory which included the Toronto area. While the Wendat and Haudenosaunee people lived in year-round villages surrounded by crops, the Mississaugas continued to live primarily by seasonally moving across the land to hunt, fish and gather resources that were available at a specific time, including migrating birds and maple syrup. To the west of Toronto, the Anishinaabe people became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit. To the east, they became known as the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama and the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island.

In 1787, as the British began to prepare for an influx of colonists following the American Revolution, the British Crown negotiated the Toronto Purchase with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to obtain title to the land. The flawed and poorly documented agreement was invalidated, and Treaty 13 was negotiated in 1805 for lands now

including much of the City of Toronto. In 1923, the Governments of Ontario and Canada signed the Williams Treaties for over 20,000 km², including portions of eastern Toronto, with seven First Nations of the Chippewa of Lake Simcoe (Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama) and the Mississauga of the north shore of Lake Ontario (Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha and Scugog Island).

For First Nations, treaties were based on the idea of sharing the land. The Mississaugas, Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, or the Wendat did not traditionally regard land as a commodity to be sold or owned. Following the Toronto Purchase, however, the British government quickly set out to survey the land into lots which were either sold or granted into private ownership of European settlers. During this time the Weston area was surveyed into lots, some of which contained valuable sites for water-powered mills. As forests were cleared and agriculture took root, sawmills were joined by grist mills, which ground grain into flour. Around the mills grew the community of Weston.

The Weston (Phase II) HCD study area was first subdivided for residential use with Plan No.5 in 1846. After a significant flood in 1850 that destroyed most of the buildings on the low banks of the west side of the river, the development of Weston in its current location on the higher east bank of the river began. This also coincided with the coming of the railway, which sparked an initial wave of early plans of subdivision during the 1850s and 60s. However, growth in Weston was gradual, and often these subdivision plans created residential parcels which were not built upon for many years. The community of Weston was incorporated as a village in 1881, and then as a Town in 1915.

The gradual growth of the Weston (Phase II) HCD study area as one of the Town's primary residential neighbourhoods is apparent in the built form of the area today. Only approximately 15% of the existing properties were constructed prior to 1904. A further 15% of the properties were constructed in the period between 1905 and 1914. From 1915 to 1934, approximately 23% of the properties were constructed and from 1935 to 1954, approximately 35% of the properties were constructed. By the end of the 1950s, the study area was largely built out - the result of over 100 years of gradual growth. This is reflected in the diversity of the streetscape, lot pattern and built form character in the neighbourhood.

In 1967, the Town of Weston was amalgamated with York Township and became the Borough of York. In 1974, GO Transit started a new service along their route between Union Station and Georgetown and included a stop in Weston. In the 1980s, Weston suffered serious decline with the loss of industry, related to larger trends across the Province of Ontario. In 1998, what was then the City of York was amalgamated into the City of Toronto. In 2005, the City of Toronto named Weston one of the City's 13 Priority Improvement Areas through its Neighbourhood Action Plan. In 2015, the Union Pearson Express was launched, with a stop in Weston.

Built Form and Landscape Survey

A built form and landscape survey was undertaken to inventory each property within the study area. Through the summer and fall of 2019, City Staff undertook multiple surveys

of each property within the study area from the public realm. The survey recorded information including the number of storeys, building material, architectural style, and roof types, supplemented with photographs. The total number of properties surveyed was 254. Following key changes to the OHA on January 1, 2023, staff conducted two additional field surveys in the winter of 2023 and another in the late summer of 2024.

Character Analysis

An analysis of the study area's character was undertaken to understand the defining features of the Weston (Phase II) neighbourhood, and to determine whether those features reflect and support an appreciation for the study area's periods of development. This analysis included the mapping of information collected through the built form and landscape survey, including dates of construction, architectural styles, building typologies and integrity. In this analysis, City staff were evaluating the extent to which there was an identifiable and cohesive character in Weston that could and should be conserved through the objectives, policies and guidelines of an HCD Plan.

An analysis of dates of construction of existing houses was also undertaken to determine whether portions of the study area primarily relate to a specific period of development to make a recommendation relating to a "period of significance." Mapping produced as part of the Study illustrated that there is no dominant period of construction related to when the study area was built (Attachment 4). Instead, the study area was developed slowly overtime from as early as the 1850s to as late as the 1950s, with the area being re-subdivided at least 14-times and containing a wide variety in its built form. Nearly the same percentage of properties were constructed in the periods following 1924 (47.26%) as were constructed pre-1924 (52.37%).

Similarly, mapping of architectural styles present in the study area illustrates the diversity present in the built form (Attachment 5). There are 18 architectural styles that have been identified in Weston, from traditionalist styles such as the Queen Anne Revival and Italianate to modernist styles such as 20th century vernacular. As a result, staff concluded that there is a lack of definable visual harmony or commonality within the study area which would have otherwise been present if there was a significant period of development.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

The Study process included two community consultation meetings (CCM) and four community advisory group meetings (CAG). Heritage Planning, in collaboration with Lura Consulting, a facilitator retained to assist with consultation, undertook public engagement to inform the Study with local expertise and community knowledge, views and ideas. Additionally, the Weston Historical Society and the Weston Heritage Conservation District organization have provided an extraordinary amount of research and information that assisted City staff through the Study phase. City staff acknowledge their dedication and commitment to preserving Weston's rich history.

The first CCM was held on November 4, 2019, and the second on January 18, 2020. Both were held at Artscape Weston Common and were an open house format. The first

meetings provided an opportunity for community members to meet the project team, ask questions regarding the study process and provide feedback to inform the Study.

The CAG meetings were held virtually on July 22, August 10, and November 10, 2020, with the final CAG meeting on September 11, 2024. During these meetings, City staff presented the findings from the built form and landscape analysis, an evaluation, and their conclusions and recommendations.

Following the analysis of the study area's history and evolution and its present-day character, staff evaluated the area against the Criteria for the Determination of Cultural Heritage Value within a Heritage Conservation District, established in *Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto: Procedures, Policies and Terms of Reference*. The evaluation determined that the study area:

- has historic and associative value as part of the ancestral lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples;
- has historical or associative value related to the development of the community of Weston, and to several prominent figures in the history of Weston who lived within the study area, including William Tyrrell;
- derives value from its orientation to the east of the Humber River and the layout of Rosemount Avenue parallel to the subway tracks, which yields information that contributes to an understanding of the area's historic development as a milling site along the Humber River and its subsequent transformation with the coming of the railway;
- maintains a diverse, pre-WWII residential character with predominantly single-detached house form buildings on varied lots, but the diversity in the streetscape and built form make it difficult to define any consistent contextual value and concentration of cultural heritage resources which is expected of a HCD;
- has social or community value as a largely intact neighbourhood within a former independent municipality, but this value is only generally associated with the existing residential buildings and is not exclusive to this area; and
- is diverse in its streetscapes, built form, dates of construction, and architectural styles, which makes it difficult to define any consistent design or physical value that applies to the study area and is expected of a HCD.

Despite the absence of a definable design to the built form, or a coherent set of physical values that could be conserved under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act, the Study did determine that there are properties within the study area that are rare, representative or early examples of styles that merit individual property conservation.

Recommendations

Staff have concluded that the Weston (Phase II) Study Area does not merit conservation through a HCD and are recommending that the Study does not proceed to the HCD Plan Phase. However, cultural heritage value is present in the study area as represented in individual properties.

Staff have identified a list of 20 properties with potential cultural heritage value that meet two or more criteria in O. Reg. 9/06 s.3 of the Ontario Heritage Act and will be undertaking research and evaluation on these properties (Attachment 7).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of an HCD study, City staff recommend against Weston (Phase II) proceeding to the HCD Plan Phase. In staff's opinion, it does not meet the provincial criteria required to merit designation as a HCD under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

However, staff have identified 20 properties with heritage potential dispersed across the HCD study area that were all constructed prior to 1910 and are contextually related to the early settlement history of the former Village of Weston. Some of these properties also have historical or associative value for their associations with a prominent former resident of Weston. All the properties have design or physical value as rare, unique, representative or early examples of an architectural style.

CONTACT

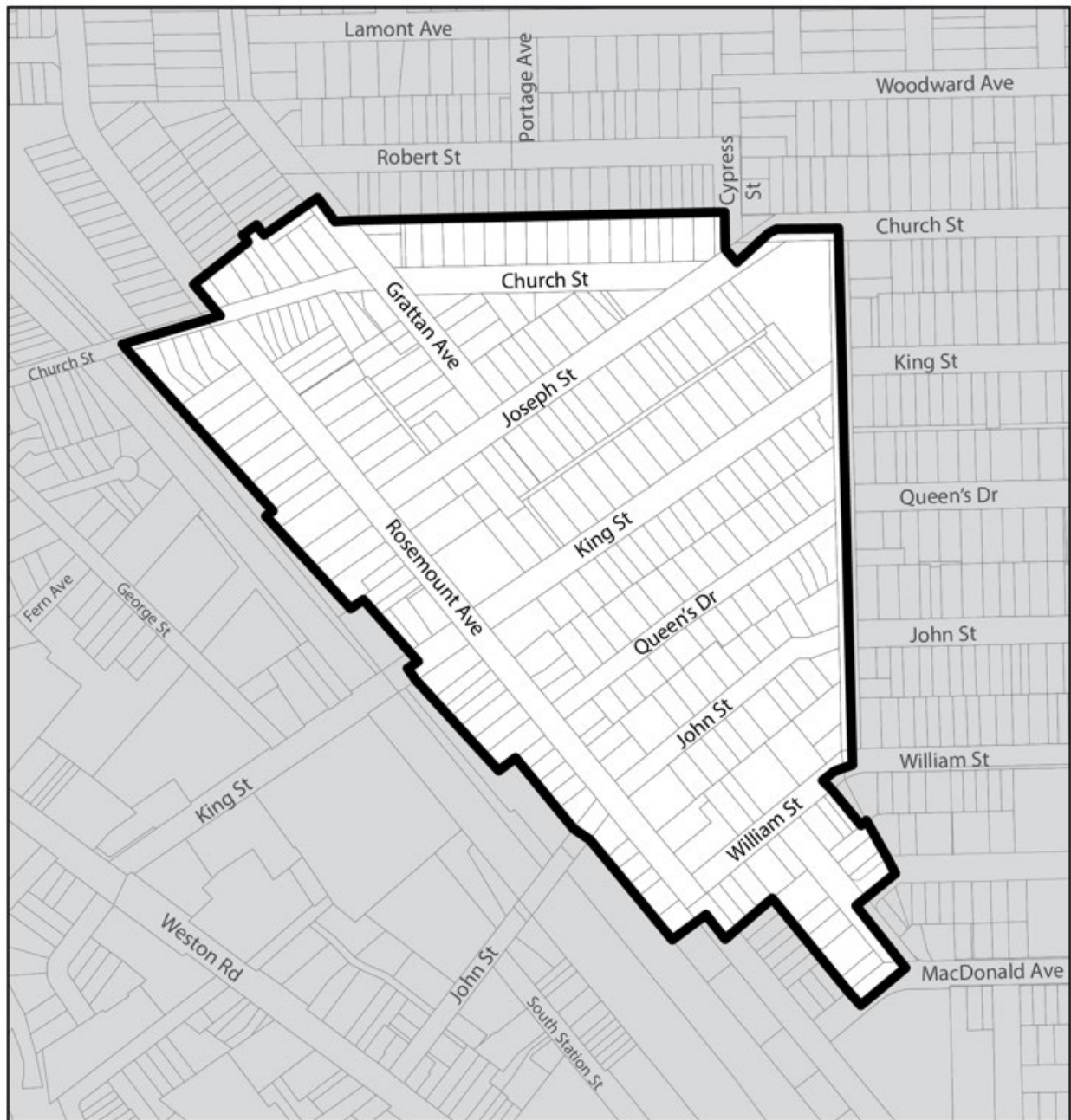
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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Weston (Phase II) HCD Study Area Boundary
- Attachment 2 – Evaluation of Significance
- Attachment 3 – The History and Evolution of the Weston (Phase II) Study Area
- Attachment 4 – Weston (Phase II) Approximate Year of Construction
- Attachment 5 – Weston (Phase II) Architectural Styles
- Attachment 6 – Weston (Phase II) Cultural Heritage Resources
- Attachment 7 – Properties Recommended for Further Research and Evaluation
- Attachment 8 – Visual Resources



HCD Study Boundary

Weston Phase II Heritage Conservation
District Study Area



HCD Study Boundary



Not to Scale
10/17/2024

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

Historical and Associative Value

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community | Yes | <p>The Study Area has value as part of the ancestral lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. Evidence of traditional Indigenous lifeways would be found in extant archaeological resources and the City's Archaeological Management Plan currently provides appropriate direction and conservation measures.</p> <p>The Study Area has value related to the development of the community of Weston, and a number of prominent figures in the history of Weston lived here William Tyrell and his family. However, this does not apply to the entire study area and it is not consistent enough to merit conservation through a HCD.</p> |
| Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of the history of a community or area | Yes | <p>The Study Area's orientation to the east of the Humber River and the layout of Rosemount Avenue parallel to the subway tracks yields information that contributes to an understanding of the area's historic development as a milling site along the Humber and its subsequent transformation with the coming of the railway.</p> |
| Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of a planner, architect, landscape architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community | No | <p>The Study Area does not reflect the work or ideas of a planner, architect, landscape architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.</p> |

Contextual Value

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Possesses a character that defines, maintains or supports the area's history and sense of time and place | No | The Study Area maintains a pre-WWII residential character with predominantly single-detached house form buildings. However, the area was re-subdivided at least 14-times resulting in a diversity in the streetscapes and built form in this area. Nor was it feasible to recommend a smaller HCD boundary as the Study Area lacks a concentration of cultural heritage value which makes it difficult to define any consistent context that merits conservation through an HCD. |
| Contains resources that are interrelated by design, history, use and/or setting | No | While there are certain properties that were constructed during the same period or contain the same architectural detailing, this does not apply to the Study Area as a whole. |
| Is defined by, planned around, or is a landmark | No | The Study Area is not defined by, planned around, or is a landmark. |

Design and Physical Value

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Has a rare, unique, representative or early collection of a style, type, expression, materials, or construction method | No | The Study Area was built out over 100 years in numerous architectural styles, so there is no consistent collection of properties in a particular style, type, expression, material or construction method. While there are particular properties within the Study Area that are rare or early examples of styles, this does not apply to the area as a whole. |

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Has a rare, unique, or representative layout, plan, landscape, or spatial organization | No | The Study Area layout is the result of many subdivision plans instead of a single period of development. This has created a remarkably diverse in its streetscapes, in its built form, in its dates of construction, and in its architectural styles, which makes it difficult to define any consistent design or physical value that applies to the whole area and merit conservation as a district. |
| Displays a consistently high degree of overall craftsmanship or artistic merit | No | The Study Area does not display a consistently high degree of overall craftsmanship or artistic merit. |

Social and Community Value

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Yields information that contributes to the understanding of, supports, or maintains a community, culture or identity within the district | No | The Study Area has value as a largely intact residential neighbourhood within a former independent municipality, but this value is only generally associated with the residential buildings and is not exclusive to the area. |
| Is historically and/or functionally linked to a cultural group, or organized movement or ideology that is significant to a community plays a historic or ongoing role in the practice of recognition of religious, spiritual or sacred beliefs of a defined group of people that is significant to a community | No | The Study Area is not historically and/or functionally linked to a cultural group, or organized movement or ideology that is significant to a community plays a historic or ongoing role in the practice of recognition of religious, spiritual or sacred beliefs of a defined group of people that is significant to a community. |

Natural and Scientific Value

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Has a rare, unique or representative collection of significant natural resources | No | The Study Area does not have a rare, unique or representative collection of significant natural resources. |
| Represents, or is a result of, a significant technical or scientific achievement | No | The Study Area does not represent, or is the result of, a significant technical or scientific achievement. |

Visual, Functional, or Historical Coherence

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Reflected in the consistency or resource related to the cultural heritage values and character of the district. It can be determined by analyzing resources in a district to understand if there are common thematic, architectural or associative characteristics that unify, relate to, and communicate the cultural heritage values of the district | No | Weston contains diversity in its streetscapes, in its built form, in its dates of construction, and in its architectural styles, which makes it difficult to define any consistency or coherent character that applies to the whole area and merit conservation through an HCD. |

Authenticity

| Criterion | Response (Yes/No) | Significance |
|---|-------------------|--|
| A district should retain most of its original or appropriate materials, layout and structures related to its identified values. Where alterations and infills exist they are generally sensitive, compatible and reinforce the cultural heritage values of the district | No | The Study Area contains some authentic features in some of the lot sizes, building heights, and the architectural features of certain homes, however, the properties range in age from the 19th century to as late as the 21st century and there are 18 architectural styles present, and more a high percent of infills (post 1945) does not show strong authenticity as a district as revealed in the dates of construction. |

THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF WESTON (PHASE II) ATTACHMENT 3

STUDY AREA

Introduction

Within the Weston II HCD Study area are buildings and landscapes that reflect its evolution as a residential neighbourhood through the founding and development of Town of Weston into the present day. The area's history can be understood through five periods of human development.

Indigenous Communities (- present)
A Milling Community (1790s-1860s)
Transition from River to Railway (1860s-1890s)
An Industrial Suburb (1890s-1960s)
A Post-Industrial Amalgamated Community. (1960s-present)

Indigenous Communities (- present)

For time immemorial, Toronto has been home to First Nations peoples. Ojibway oral histories speak of Ice People, who lived at a time when ice covered the land.¹ Following the retreat of glaciers approximately 13,000 years ago, small groups of First Nations peoples moved from place to place, hunting and gathering the food they needed according to the seasons. Over millennia, they adapted to dramatically changing environmental conditions, developing and acquiring new technologies as they did so. Waterways and the lake were vital sources of fresh water and nourishment, and shorelines and nearby areas were important sites for gathering, trading, hunting, fishing, and ceremonies. Long-distance trade moved valuable resources across the land.

After maize and squash were introduced to Southern Ontario, by approximately 500 CE, horticulture began to supplement food sources. By 1300 CE, villages focused on growing food became year-round settlements surrounded by crops. These villages were home to ancestors of the Huron-Wendat Nation, who would continue to occupy increasingly larger villages in the Toronto area and beyond. These villages were connected to well-established travel routes which were part of local and long-distance trail networks, including the Carrying Place trails on the Don, Rouge and Humber rivers that connected Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay. Beads made from sea shells from the eastern seaboard were found at the Alexandra site in North York, which was a community of 800-1000 people in approximately 1350.²

By 1600, the Wendat had formed a confederation of individual nations, and had concentrated their villages away from Lake Ontario, in the Georgian Bay area. Following contact with French explorers and missionaries in Southern Ontario in the early 1600s, European diseases decimated First Nations. Competition for furs to trade with

1 With thanks to Philip Cote for the reference to Benton-Banai, Edward, *The Mishomis book : the voice of the Ojibway*. (Indian Country Press, 1985), 26.

2 Information drawn from various Archaeology reports, including "Stage 1 Archaeological Resource Assessment of the Frank Faubert Woodlot Park Improvements, 165 Borough Drive", prepared by ASI (17 May 2021).

Europeans and the desire to replenish numbers through absorption of captives, among other factors³, contributed to the Beaver Wars, which after 1640, saw the Haudenosaunee Confederacy expand into Southern Ontario, dispersing the Wendat. Within the boundaries of today's Toronto, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy then occupied villages on the Carrying Place trails on the Humber and Rouge Rivers from approximately the 1660s to the 1680s. Teiaiagon, the village on the Humber, was a Haudenosaunee village with a particularly strong presence of people from the Seneca Nation.

In the late 1680s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy chose to leave their villages in the Toronto area and returned to their homelands in upstate New York, although they did not relinquish their interest in the resources of the area. The 1701 Great Peace of Montreal, the 1701 Nanfan Treaty, and the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Haudenosaunee continue to identify the north shore of Lake Ontario as part of their traditional territory.

During this same period, the Mississaugas, having recently joined other Anishinaabe peoples of the Upper Great Lakes in the Three Fires Confederacy, expanded their territory westward and moved into the vast territory which included the Toronto area. While the Wendat and Haudenosaunee people lived in year-round villages surrounded by crops, the Mississaugas continued to live primarily by seasonally moving across the land to hunt, fish and gather resources that were available at a specific time, including migrating birds and maple syrup. To the west of Toronto, the Anishinaabe people became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit. To the east, they became known as the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama and the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island.⁴

In 1784, following the loss of their ally, Britain, in the American Revolution, many of the Haudenosaunee left the United States and settled on lands along the Grand River in Ontario, granted to them as the Haldimand Tract.

In 1787, as the British began to prepare for an influx of colonists into the area following the American Revolution, the British Crown negotiated the Toronto Purchase with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to obtain title to the land. The flawed and poorly documented agreement was invalidated, and Treaty 13 was negotiated in 1805 for lands now including much of the City of Toronto. In 1923, the Governments of Ontario and Canada signed the Williams Treaties for over 20,000 km², including portions of eastern Toronto, with seven First Nations of the Chippewa of Lake Simcoe (Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama) and the Mississauga of the north shore of Lake Ontario (Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha and Scugog Island).

3 <https://histindigenouspeoples.pressbooks.tru.ca/chapter/chapter-5-colonial-wars-looking-east>; Warrick, Gary. "The Aboriginal Population of Ontario in Late Pre-history," in Munson and Jamieson, eds., *Before Ontario: The Archaeology of a Province*. (McGill-Queens University Press, 2013), 72.

4 Mississaugas of the Credit, "The History of Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation." ND.

For First Nations, treaties were based on the idea of sharing the land. The Mississaugas, Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, or the Wendat did not traditionally regard land as a commodity to be sold or owned.

Following the Toronto Purchase, however, the British government quickly set out to survey the land into lots which were either sold or granted into private ownership of settlers. In 2010, the Government of Canada settled the Toronto Purchase Claim with the Mississaugas of the Credit after agreeing that the Mississaugas were originally unfairly compensated. In 2018, the Williams Treaties First Nations settled litigation about land surrenders and harvesting rights with the Governments of Canada and Ontario.

A Milling Community (1790s-1860s)

Quickly following the first signing of Treaty 13 in 1787, surveyors began to divide the land into legal lots to be granted or sold by the Crown to European settlers. The Weston area was first surveyed into lots in 1793.⁵ Those lots were considered attractive for at least two reasons. First, the Humber River in the Weston area hosted a number of excellent sites for water-powered mills, and the surrounding lands were reported to have excellent stands of timber which water-powered saw mills could turn into valuable lumber. Second, access to the area was facilitated by important Indigenous trails, including the Toronto Carrying Place trail, with connections to a trail leading to Fort York.⁶ The trail was widened into a road, providing a direct linkage to the centre of European settlement to the south which is now Toronto. A sign of the area's desirability, in 1796, John Graves Simcoe, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, deeded to himself about 1200 acres of land, inclusive of lots 8 to 12, part of which included the north end of what would become the village of Weston.⁷ Benjamin Davis, a blacksmith, gained title to lots 6 and 7 (largely containing the future village of Weston) by Simcoe at the same time, and became the first permanent resident of the area. Notably, Lot 22 in Etobicoke on the west side of the river was reserved by surveyors as a mill site. The milling history of Weston was launched.

In early-19th century Ontario, communities were founded around flowing rivers providing water-power to mills. The Humber River was a significant source of water power, and where its banks were low and its currents strong, water-powered mills were quickly established. What would become the Village of Weston began with a cluster of good mill sites, and the first saw mills were built on them shortly after 1800.⁸ In the same years, what would become known as Scarlett Road was built to connect mills on the west side of the Humber, just south of today's Weston, to Dundas Street.⁹ As forests were cleared, and agriculture took root, saw mills were joined by grist mills, which ground grain into flour. Around the mills grew villages that supported them and surrounding agricultural communities, and which benefitted from the commercial activity the mills generated.

5 Aitken and Jones, *Township of York*. 1797. Map with reference to survey notes from 1793.

6 Archaeological Services Inc., "Technical Report, Appendix B., Humber River Corridor Historical Overview", B4.

7 Simcoe left for England before occupying the lots.

8 Fisher, 144.

9 Fisher, 49.

In Weston, the first mills took advantage of the river flats on the west side of the river, in what was Etobicoke Township. Michael Miller constructed a saw mill at today's Raymore Park circa 1803. By 1819, Joseph Holley built a mill complex on Lot 22 on the west bank.¹⁰ The lease to that complex was quickly acquired by the James and John Farr. In 1828, the lease for the part of that mill complex including a grist mill and store was acquired by Charles and William Wadsworth, and the skilled brothers turned it into an economic engine that was a key attraction for the first community of Weston. Since the Farr family came from Weston, Hertfordshire and the Wadsworths from Weston-super-Mare, both in England, either family may have named the growing mill community "Weston."¹¹

The small community grew as water-powered mills continued to be erected on both sides of the Humber River. In 1821, the first church was established at the corner of today's King Street and Weston Road. A school followed in 1833, as did a post-office in the early 1840s.¹² Prominent milling families, including the Holleys and Wadsworths, became the social and financial leaders of the community.

The improvements made to transportation networks and the surveying of land into residential lots during the 1840s and 50s fuelled a gradual increase in commercial activity and residential settlement throughout the remainder of the 19th century. In the early 1840s, the rough path of today's Weston Road was changed to the Weston Plank Road, a toll road. The original Weston Plank Road office (c.1845) at 2371 Weston Road still remains today. Shortly after the Plank Road was constructed, the first subdivision plan for Weston, Plan No. 5, was registered, setting out lots parallel to Weston Road.

Plan No. 5 signalled the early development of the community in what is now the Weston II HCD Study area. Prepared for Woodberry Card,¹³ a tanner, the plan also indicated the importance of millers and their families to the development of the area. The plan was prepared in 1846 by John Stoughton Dennis, P.L.S., a descendant of an important local milling family whose prominent career would lead him to become Canada's first surveyor general, and eventually, Deputy Minister of the Interior in the Government of Canada.¹⁴ The plan revealed a remarkable feature of the community of Weston – that it was primarily laid out as a thin line of lots stretching back from Weston Road. In Plan No. 5, the community's first plan of subdivision, only one street, Church Street, intersected with Weston Road and ran perpendicular from it. Church Street extended into the Weston II HCD Study area, where large irregular lots - as opposed to the regular lots along Weston Road - were indicated on this plan of subdivision. Most of the land in the Weston II HCD study area on Plan No. 5 was owned by John Porter, Rowland Burr, and William Tyrrell. Tyrrell was an architect and builder who established his career, in part, by designing and building mills, including for Rowland Burr, his father-in-law.

¹⁰ Fisher, 146.

¹¹ Documentation provided by Weston Historical Society.

¹² ARA report, 17.

¹³ Fisher, 161.

¹⁴ Colin Frederick Read, "DENNIS, JOHN STOUGHTON (1820-1885)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed March 6, 2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dennis_john_stoughton_1820_85_11E.html.

Within a few short years, the development of Weston in its current location on the east bank of the river was dramatically spurred forward by two events. First, in 1850, a disastrous flood broke over the river flats on the west side of the river, destroying most of the buildings there. As a result, while Wadsworth's grist mill survived, the villagers chose to rebuild their homes and businesses on the east side of the river, which was higher and less vulnerable to flooding.¹⁵ Second, shortly after the flood, the railway came to Weston, running parallel to Weston Road on the east bank before crossing the river north of St. Phillips Road. With the railway came the next wave of growth for the community.

Transition from River to Railway (1860s-1890s)

The first railway train passed through Weston in 1856, travelling on the newly constructed Grand Trunk Railway line.¹⁶ Another rail line, the Toronto Grey and Bruce Railway, followed in the early 70s.¹⁷ At a time when roads were still often poor and dependent on the seasons, making long distance travel difficult, railways were relatively high-speed, year-round transportation systems that promised ease of access to markets, and economic growth. If the railways had bypassed Weston, it may have faded with the decline of water power like many other previous milling villages. With the railway, Weston had new connections to predicted growth.

In 1851, the population of the Weston community on the east side of the Humber River was around 500 inhabitants.¹⁸ By 1866, Weston's population had grown to 900,¹⁹ and various stores and churches were established to cater to the new inhabitants of the village, as well as those in the surrounding countryside. Messrs. Farrand and Miles carried on their woollen factory that employed 25 people. There was also a brewery, foundry, machine shop, and several stores and hotels – including the Eagle Hotel and the Weston Hotel.²⁰ Serving the growing community were Anglican, Wesleyan Methodist, Episcopal Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic churches. Equally significant, the community had already established its importance as a centre of education in the area with a public school (elementary), Grammar School (secondary), a Catholic school, a private school, and for a three years in the 1860s, Trinity College School.²¹

Growth remained steady in Weston through the next two decades. In 1870, the population had risen to 1,000. By 1881, the small community reached a large enough population to become an incorporated village with its own municipal government. Its population was then reported to be 1,200 people.²²

¹⁵ Cruickshank, 13.

¹⁶ This line ran from Queen Street West in Toronto to Guelph

¹⁷ The first sod was turned at Weston by Prince Arthur on 3 October 1869, and by 1 May 1871, the track had been laid to Orangeville. The line from Orangeville to Owen Sound was completed in 1873.

¹⁸ William Smith Henry, *Canada: past, present and future: being a historical, geographical, geological and statistical account of Canada West* (Toronto: Thomas Maclear, 1851), 18.

¹⁹ *Mitchel & Co's General Directory*, 422.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *County of York Gazetteer and Directory* (Toronto: W.H. Irwin & Co., 1881), p.224.

In this period, milling was still very much part of the local economic structure, but its influence was waning. The 1870 County of York Gazetteer and Directory noted the importance of water powered industry, and noted in particular a woollen mill and several flour and saw mills in the community.²³ With timber stands dwindling, however, the water-powered mills were hit with a disaster. In 1878, another major flood wiped out water-powered mills in the Toronto area, including some of those in Weston. Wadsworth's Mill survived, but was by then running at least partly on energy provided by steam.²⁴ Water-power was erratic. Industry was leaving the rivers behind and turning to steam and coal as more stable sources of power.

In the new economy that was freed from the rivers as a power source, the railway, and proximity to the large Toronto area markets, would be critical factors in Weston's future. With the railway and ease of travel came the eventual development of larger, consolidated factories that could take advantage of economies of scale to reduce prices beyond what smaller, local mills and factories could manage.

Periods of excitement for expansion, combined with the community's gradual growth, was clearly represented in the transition of the Weston II HCD Study area from agriculture to village streets. The coming of the railway appears to have sparked an initial wave of early plans of subdivision – a clear sign that those subdividing the land were expecting the village to boom. Though Plan No. 5 in 1846 largely subdivided land lining Weston Road, new subdivision plans in the 1850s and 1860s created a large grouping of residential streets running east from Weston Road to today's Jane Street. Including a portion of the Weston II Study area, these residential streets, when built out, would form the residential core of the municipality of the Village and later Town of Weston until amalgamation in 1967.

In 1853, for example, Plan no. 50, a plan for the subdivision of the "Donaldson Farm" (largely Lot 6, running east-west, north of today's Lawrence Avenue) was the first to use the new railway right-of-way as the western boundary, and indicated Rosemount Avenue (then North Station Street), William Street, and Elm Street – the latter acting as the point at which streets - running east-west at a 90 degree angle with the concession roads – turned to meet the angle of Rosemount Avenue, which followed the railway tracks. The distinctive angled streets of this neighbourhood were largely determined by this plan.

In 1856, Plan 182 further subdivided "Porter's Farm" on Lot 7 to the north of Donaldson's Farm. The plan laid out King Street and Queen's Drive (then Maria Street) from Rosemount Avenue to Jane Street, as well as the current street grid from Elm Street west to Pine Street, and from Church Street (then Beech Street) south to William Street. Other plans in the late 1850s and early 1860s filled in small sections of the study area, including today's John Street between Elm and Rosemount. Then, in 1864, Plan 273 subdivided William Tyrrell's large property north of King Street and east to Elm Street, extending Rosemount Avenue to Church Street.

²³ *County of York Gazetteer and Directory for 1870-71, Including a Full Business Directory of the City of Toronto* (Toronto: McEvoy & Co., 1870), p.161.

²⁴ Fisher, 151.

These subdivision plans marked preparations for residential development, including the origins of today's street layout within the study area. However, while the railway promised growth, growth in Weston was gradual. Often these subdivision plans created residential parcels which were not built upon for many years, if not decades. Plan 273 in 1864, for example, indicated about 10 buildings in the Weston II HCD Study area, excluding Tyrrell's own property. Notably, the study area had become home to two schools – Trinity College School was located in a house on the northwest corner of Rosemount and King Streets in the late 1860s while the County of York's Grammar School (secondary school) was built on lots on the south side of King Street, west of Elm Street in 1858.²⁵ According to the construction dates of buildings in the entire study area still existing today, less than 15 of the existing buildings in the study area had been built by 1870. Registered subdivision plans in the study area slowed if not stopped from 1864 to 1887, when William Tyrrell re-subdivided much of the area previously subdivided in 1864. That he could do so was a clear indication that he had sold few if any of his lots in the previous 23 years.

It was William Tyrrell, in fact, who was one of the most influential persons in the development of the HCD Study area. Immigrating to Canada in the 1830s, he quickly connected to the milling industry, building his first grist mill and sawmill in 1837. In 1846, he married Rowland Burr's daughter, Elizabeth.²⁶ In that same year, he was listed as owning six acres in the study area. His grand home, still standing at the northeast corner of Rosemount Avenue and King Street, was completed in 1859. As one of the earliest in the area, it set a high standard. Tyrrell's first subdivision plan for his land, registered in 1864, shows his lot extending the full block to today's Joseph Street, including gardens and outbuildings.

The same plan showed Rowland Burr's house, constructed in 1855 across the road, on the northwest corner of Rosemount Avenue and King Street. When the Grammar School funded by Burr was destroyed by fire in the early 1870s, it was Tyrrell who accepted and added to the insurance funds to build a new school, effectively keeping York Township from moving the Grammar School to another community. Tyrrell was also a successful politician, and was elected to York Township Council, including as Warden (head of government) for York Township in 1864.²⁷ When Weston was incorporated as a village, he was elected its first Reeve (Mayor) (a position he would win in 8 elections) and designed the community's first Town Hall (now demolished). "His foresight and force did much to get Weston off to a good start as a thriving village," wrote Cruikshank in 1937.²⁸ Tyrrell's sons would be hailed as important alumni of the high school on its anniversary in 1907.²⁹ J.B. (Joseph) Tyrrell, in particular, became a renowned geologist, historian and explorer, the namesake of the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology at Drumheller, Alberta.³⁰

25 Cruikshank, 78.

26 Fisher, n.25, 171

27 Cruikshank, 26.

28 Ibid.

29 *Souvenir of Weston*, 56, 58.

30 McNicholl, Martin K., "Joseph Tyrrell". In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada. Article published January 10, 2008; Last Edited November 16, 2018.
<https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/joseph-tyrrell>

Other prominent individuals also took up residence in the HCD Study area. Rosemount Avenue and King Street, in particular, became streets representing high economic and social status. Rosemount Avenue was the only residential street photographed for the *Souvenir of Weston* publication in 1907. The photograph captured a treed boulevard. A number of Rosemount Avenue homes were also featured in the same publication. Dr. Wm. J. Charlton, an early medical doctor who would rival Tyrrell for his many terms as Reeve and, after incorporation as a Town, Mayor, built "what was then one of the finest residences in the village"³¹ at 89 Rosemount Avenue in 1893. "Few citizens have played as prominent a part in the development of Weston as this delightful gentleman,"³² wrote Cruickshank in 1937. His home later served as the Town's Maternity Home in the 1940s.³³ H.E. Irwin, a lawyer and Clerk of the Peace for the Township of York, lived in a large home at 117 Rosemount Avenue. William McFarlane, a Councillor of the Village of Weston, lived at 125 Rosemount Avenue.³⁴

An Industrial Suburb (1890s-1960s)

In Weston, the 1890s were marked hopeful signs of growth, though these were tempered by a major industrial loss. The beginnings of a new period of industrial growth was represented by the opening of the Moffat stove plant in 1892. Originally established in Markdale, the company's move to Weston gave it distinct advantages. An article/advertisement in the *Globe* in 1894 reported on the factory's modern amenities, but also noted its "close proximity to the City of Toronto" and its enjoyment of "the best possible railway facilities"³⁵ – two factors that would set up Weston for success. A year after the Moffat plant opening, a full-page article in *The Saturday Globe* spoke glowingly of the Town's prospects. "The population is now about 1500," it stated, "and if present indications are verified this is almost sure to greatly increase as its advantages as a residential and manufacturing site become appreciated."³⁶ Clearly promotional in nature, the article indicated that the Village had recently awarded prizes to the best essays promoting the Weston community. It laid out the reasons why Weston was a Village on the rise: "Weston is really a part of Toronto, but exempt from its high taxes and cost of living. The Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk railways give the best facilities; there are eligible sites for manufacturers or dwellings at merely nominal cost; there are good schools at home...; the Humber...[gives] ample water power, and...the village is exceptionally healthy. Surely the lot of Westonians is cast in pleasant places."³⁷ In 1894, the Toronto Suburban Railway, an electrified street car service, reached Weston from West Toronto/Junction, where commuters could connect to the City of Toronto.³⁸

In 1895, however the small community was dramatically impacted by the painful failure of the Weston Woollen Manufacturing Company. Writing in the 1930s, F.D. Cruickshank noted that the Company was considered the "largest and most important local industry,"

31 Cruickshank, 140.

32 Ibid.

33 Anderson, 15.

34 *Souvenir of Weston*.

35 *The Globe*, July 7, 1894, pg. 12.

36 *The Saturday Globe*, March 18, 1893, pg. 1.

37 Ibid.

38 James V. Salmon, *Rails from the Junction : the story of the Toronto Suburban Railway*. 1958 (PG?)

and its closure threw over 100 people out of work and "a great many families moved away."³⁹

Hope for the future and signs of growth were again reflected in land subdivisions. In 1894, William Tyrrell's previously subdivided lots north of King Street were re-subdivided for a third time. As a result of the plan, Joseph Street, named after William Tyrrell's son, was laid out north of King Street, and a laneway was inserted between Joseph and King Street. In 1911, previously subdivided lots north of Joseph Street between Rosemount Avenue and Elm Street were again re-subdivided, this time to layout Grattan and Robert Streets (both named after other Tyrrell sons),⁴⁰ to run Church Street east from Grattan Street to connect with Beech Street, and to add a short laneway behind Rosemount Avenue, north of Joseph Street. Lots were reconfigured accordingly on those streets.

The 1910 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan for Weston provides the first detailed map showing buildings existing in the Weston II HCD Study area by that date. It confirms how gradual the residential development of this area was, considering the first subdivision plans dated to the 1850s. Houses were concentrated along Rosemount Avenue (then North Station Road), from Church Street to William Street, and stretched east along King Street and Queen's Drive (then Maria Street) from Rosemount Avenue a little over halfway to Elm Street. Only two houses had been built on Church Street or Joseph Street east of Rosemount Avenue. Only 6 houses stood east of Elm Street.

Weston, however, was now entering its most significant period of growth. In 1907, the publication *Souvenir of Weston*, noted that the village "has had no great boom, but its growth has been substantial."⁴¹ In 1894, the population had been approximately 1500. In 1915, when Weston became incorporated as a Town, its population was recorded as 2200⁴² – an increase of 700 people over 20 years. Over the next 7 years, the Town would grow by another 1300 residents to 3569 in 1923. Six years later, in 1929, the town had grown by approximately 900 people to 4425.⁴³ As a sign of the impact of the growth on the small community, Weston Town Council installed its first signs indicating the name of streets in 1916.⁴⁴ Numbering on houses followed. In 1927, the town installed its first stop signs to manage traffic.⁴⁵

In this period, Weston seemed to be rewarded for its self-promotion.⁴⁶ Though electric lighting had been introduced to Weston in 1899, produced by a coal-fired steam engine, cheaper hydro-electric power from Niagara Falls was introduced in 1911 with rates more suitable to industry.⁴⁷ Shortly after, several manufacturing companies began to

39 Cruickshank, 16.

40 See Cherri Hurst, "Lost in Weston? A History of Weston Street Names."

<http://www.welcometoweston.ca/Archive-2010-01-01/images/pdfs/guardianstreet.pdf>

41 *Souvenir of Weston*, "A Progressive History".

42 "Weston a Town", *The Globe*, October 3, 1914, 6.

43 "Weston's Progress is Shown by Clerk", *The Globe*, May 22, 1929, Pg. 17

44 Town of Weston Council minutes, October 16, 1916.

45 Town of Weston Council minutes, March 14, 1927.

46 In 1916, the Town distributed 1000 copies of the local newspaper, *Time and Guide*, during its annual agricultural fair. Town minutes.

47 Cruickshank and Nason, *History of Weston*, p.41.

establish factories in Weston. In 1916, two years after the Village of Weston became the Town of Weston, the Canada Cycle and Motor Company moved their factory from the Toronto Junction to Weston. Satin Finish Hardwood Flooring Limited began operation in Weston in 1922 in factory building at the north end of town that had been previously occupied by the K. & K. Rubber Company. That same year, the Massey-Harris Company established a tractor factory also at the north end of town. According to a 1923 article in the local newspaper, *Times & Guide*, building activity was moving full steam ahead in Weston in the 1920s. The newspaper urged residents to "become acquainted with the growth and development of [their] town and tell it out...that [they] are bringing people to reside and do business in [the] Town of Weston."⁴⁸

This period of growth was represented in and around the Weston II HCD Study area. In 1923, a subdivision of the Wadsworth estate created Springmount Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard, with smaller lots ready for residential development. The 1924 Goad's Fire Insurance plan shows homes sparsely dotted along Joseph Street and the north side of Church Street. South of King Street to William Street, lots were filling in. On King Street, only the lots on the south side, west of Elm Street, occupied by the Weston High School since 1858, were now empty awaiting redevelopment.

Two further developments indicated the increased construction in the area. In 1919, Memorial Public School was built on Pine Street between King Street and Queen's Drive "due to the rapidly increasing growth of the town east of the railways."⁴⁹ And in 1913, the Weston High School moved from its location on King Street to its current location on the south side of William Street. In 1928, stop signs were added at the intersection of Church Street and Rosemount Avenue, King Street and Rosemount Avenue, and Queen's Drive and Pine Street. Between 1909 and 1929, nearly 40% of all of the existing buildings in the Weston II HCD Study area were constructed.

Remarkably, though residential development in the area slowed during the Great Depression of the 1930s, it did so only gradually. From 1929-1939, about 8% of existing buildings in the area were constructed – more than were constructed in the 1890s. In the next decade, the same rate of growth continued. In 1946, the street layout of the area, as it exists today, was finally completed with the realignment of MacDonald Avenue at Springmount Avenue – a change related to creating a site for the construction of a new school, today's C.R. Marchant Middle School. In the same period, streets were laid out and lots developed south of William Street to Lawrence Avenue. In 1948, a stream running through what is now Elm Park was drained, and the previously unbuilt upon residential lots became a playground.⁵⁰

Residential development in the study area grew again in the 1950s to 11% of buildings continuing to exist today. Aerial photographs show residential development in the Weston area largely confined to the municipal boundaries, with fields beyond, in 1939. By the end of the 1950s, the study area was largely built out – the result of over 100 years of gradual growth, completed in the post-war building boom that stretched across Canada. An aerial photograph from 1954 shows fields being converted to residential

48 "Big Progress Made in Weston Bldgs," *York Times & Guide (Weston, Ontario)*, 15 August 1923, p.1

49 Cruikshank, 52

50 ARA Report, 28.

streets north of the municipal boundary. By 1965, residential development was filling in south of Lawrence Avenue and east of Jane Street.

A Post-Industrial Amalgamated Community (1960s-present)

In 1967, the Town of Weston was amalgamated with York Township to become the Borough of York. By that year, the Town had already experienced significant change outside of the study area with the redevelopment of the west side of Weston Road, north of Church Street, for apartment buildings. Change would continue through the 1970s, as more residential towers were built on consolidated lots in Weston south of the railway tracks. In response to the loss of historic buildings, the Weston Historical Society held its first official meeting in 1976 to fight for the conservation of Weston's heritage. Though few significant changes took place within the study area in this period, the CPR Railway station, which stood within the study area on the northwest corner of Rosemount Avenue and John Street, was demolished and replaced with houses.

In 1974, GO Transit started a new service along their route between Union Station and Georgetown and included a stop in Weston.⁵¹ In the 1980s, Weston suffered serious decline with the loss of industry, related to larger trends across the Province of Ontario. In 1998, what was then the City of York was amalgamated into the City of Toronto. In 2005, the City of Toronto named Weston one of the City's 13 Priority Improvement Areas through its Neighbourhood Action Plan. In 2015, the Union Pearson Express was launched, with a stop in Weston.

In the early 2000s, the Weston Historical Society launched an effort to have surviving historic residential areas of the former Town of Weston designated as a Heritage Conservation District. The first Weston Heritage Conservation District was approved by Toronto City Council in 2007, and protects portions of George Street, Cross Street, Church Street, Fern Avenue, Little Avenue, King Street Crescent and Weston Road – all south of the railway tracks. The remaining area north of the railway tracks was planned for a Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Weston Heritage Conservation District.

⁵¹ Daniel Garcia and Sean Marshall, "Go Transit's Kitchener Line," accessed on 24 October 2019, at <https://transit.toronto.on.ca/regional/2102.shtml>

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APPROXIMATE YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION



Weston II HCD

Approximate Year of Construction (Version 1)

HCD Boundary

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1845-1854 (0.79%) | 1875-1884 (2.78%) | 1905-1914 (14.68%) | 1935-1944 (17.86%) | 1965-1974 (3.57%) |
| 1855-1864 (3.97%) | 1885-1894 (3.57%) | 1915-1924 (22.62%) | 1945-1954 (16.67%) | 1975-1984 (5.16%) |
| 1865-1874 (1.98%) | 1895-1904 (1.98%) | 1925-1934 (0.79%) | 1955-1964 (0.4%) | 2005-present (2.78%) |



Not to Scale
08/28/2024



Weston II HCD
Architectural Styles

Styles

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 20th-Century Vernacular (22.36%) | Colonial Revival (3.66%) | Georgian (3.25%) | Modified (6.91%) | Queen Anne Revival (0.41%) | Victorian (5.28%) |
| Arts - Crafts (4.47%) | Edwardian (15.04%) | Italianate (2.85%) | Neo-Georgian (2.03%) | Regency (1.63%) | Victorian- Ontario Cottage (1.63%) |
| Bay and Gable (0.41%) | Foursquare (13.82%) | Modernist (0.81%) | Prairie-Craftsman-Bungalow (11.79%) | Second Empire (1.22%) | Other (2.44%) |
| HCD Boundary | | | | | |

Not to Scale
08/28/2024



Weston II HCD
Cultural Heritage Resources

- HCD Boundary
- Designated Property (Part IV)
- Heritage Register Property (listed)
- Property with Potential Cultural Heritage Value



Not to Scale
11/12/2024

PROPERTIES RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

ATTACHMENT 7

52 Church Street
57 Church Street
61 John Street
69 John Street
65 King Street
74 King Street
76 King Street
78 King Street
16 Queens Drive
38 Queens Drive
66 Rosemount Avenue
89 Rosemount Avenue
91 Rosemount Avenue
106 Rosemount Avenue
117 Rosemount Avenue
125 Rosemount Avenue
135 Rosemount Avenue
149 Rosemount Avenue
6 William Street
8 William Street

VISUAL RESOURCES

ATTACHMENT 8

52 Church Street (1869)



57 Church Street (1858)



61 John Street (1883)



69 John Street (1857)



65 King Street (1884)



74 King Street (1900)



76 King Street (1894)



78 King Street (1898)



16 Queens Drive (1893)



38 Queens Drive (1870)



66 Rosemount Avenue (1847)



89 Rosemount Avenue (1893)



91 Rosemount Avenue (1896)



106 Rosemount Avenue (1878)



117 Rosemount Avenue (1902)



125 Rosemount Avenue (1894)



135 Rosemount Avenue (1910)



149 Rosemount Avenue (1910)



6 and 8 William Street (1855)





View looking west down Church Street towards Rosemount Avenue illustrating the diversity in the built form (Google Streetview, 2021)



View looking north down Rosemount Avenue towards King Street illustrating the diversity in the built form (Google Streetview, 2020)



View of the north side of Queens Drive from 35 Queens Drive to 42 Queens Drive illustrating the diversity in the built form (Heritage Planning, 2019)