

Heritage Evaluation

A potential HCD needs to be evaluated based on the criteria for determining cultural heritage value in *Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto: Policies, Procedures and Terms of Reference* in order to establish its significance and whether the area merits designation as an HCD. In addition, the area must retain enough integrity so that these values can be communicated.



Historical and Associative Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	YES	The Baby Point district has direct associations that are significant to the local community, First Nations and to the history of Toronto. Its associations can be charted against the district’s periods of significance: 1. Indigenous Presence (c.9000 BCE – late 18th century) 2. The Baby Estate (c.1820s – 1909) 3. Home Smith Development and Building Restrictions (1911 – 1941) The two most influential periods are the <i>Indigenous Presence</i> for its archaeological potential, and the <i>Home Smith Development and Building Restrictions</i> for the influence it had on the built form and landscape character of the area.
Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of the history of a community or area	YES	The majority of the Study Area is located within an Archaeological Sensitive Area (ASA). Archaeological finds have been located within the Baby Point neighbourhood, and the area has significant potential to provide more information on early indigenous settlements in Toronto, particularly the Seneca Village of Teiaiaagon.
Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of a planner, architect, landscape architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	YES	The physical character of the district is a direct reflection of the initial planning and building restrictions envisioned by the developer Robert Home Smith and dictated by the Humber Valley Surveys. Rooted in English town planning, the garden suburb plan of the district was a direct response to the gridiron rigidity of 19 th and early 20 th century urban development. The restrictions from the Home Smith period were enshrined by the passing of by-law 12,056 of the Township of York which ensured that the garden suburb character of the neighbourhood was preserved past the 1941 expiry of those original restrictions.

Contextual Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Possesses a character that defines, maintains or supports the area’s history and sense of time and place	YES	The present day physical character of the Baby Point district reflects its early development as a planned garden suburb maintaining and supporting a unique sense of place.
Contains resources that are interrelated by design, history, use and/or setting	YES	The built form and landscapes are interrelated by design and exemplify the garden suburb principles. The landscape’s historic indigenous use as a settlement and as part of the carrying place trail further contributes to the area’s contextual value. Other contributing resources include the Baby Point Club, which was founded in 1923 by local residents on one of the multiple green spaces that Robert Home Smith reserved for recreational use, and the Humbercrest United Church, which has served as a focal point within the community since its founding in 1914 as the Baby Point Methodist Church.
Is defined by, planned around, or is a landmark	YES	The district is defined by the Humber River, a designated Canadian Heritage River, and the promontory upon which it is located. Magwood and Etienne Brulé parks frame the north and east boundaries of the district; the change in elevation, its southern one; and the Baby Point gates at Jane Street define its entrance at the east.

Design and Physical Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Has a rare, unique, representative or early collection of a style, type, expression, materials, or construction method	YES	The district represents an important period in the western residential expansion of the City of Toronto, containing a unique and representative collection of buildings and landscapes that reflect garden suburb principles. The majority of the buildings were constructed in the early to mid-20 th century resulting in a consistency of construction methods, architectural styles, details and materials. This consistency also reflects the material palette and architectural styles regulated by the <i>Home Smith Development and Building Restrictions</i> .
Has a rare, unique, or representative layout, plan, landscape, or spatial organization	YES	The district’s spatial organization provides an excellent example of a garden suburb that is exceptional due to its siting on the Baby Point promontory and within the natural landscape of Magwood and Etienne Brulé parks.
Displays a consistently high degree of overall craftsmanship or artistic merit	YES	The <i>Home Smith Development and Building Restrictions</i> imposed a high level of review prior to construction which resulted in high overall quality of craftsmanship of the houses built during that period.

Social and Community Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Yields information that contributes to the understanding of, supports, or maintains a community, culture or identity within the district	NO	
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	YES	Indigenous communities continue to view the district as an important part of their history and heritage. The lands around the Humber River are part of their traditional hunting and fishing grounds, and the presence of the village of Teiaiaagon and the archaeological findings including burial grounds reinforce and support their identification with the district.

Natural and Scientific Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Has a rare, unique or representative collection of significant natural resources	YES	Magwood and Etienne Brulé parks, the Humber River, and the Humber River Recreation Trail are important natural resources within the City of Toronto. They are part of an interconnected park system that runs alongside the Humber River from Lake Ontario northward to Highway 407.
Represents, or is a result of, a significant technical or scientific achievement	NO	

Statement of District Significance

Description of Historic Place

Baby Point is a well-known picturesque residential enclave overlooking the Humber River that was designed and developed by the Toronto entrepreneur Robert Home Smith in the early 20th century according to garden suburb principles. It is the historic location of the village of Teiaiagon, and was subsequently the estate of James Baby. The neighbourhood is an excellent example of the combined work of nature and human activity, a harmonious landscape in which houses, gardens, streets and parks were sensitively integrated within the natural landscape and is one of Toronto’s most comprehensively designed garden suburbs, retaining a high degree of authenticity and integrity. The neighbourhood includes Baby Point Road, Baby Point Crescent, L’Estrange Place, Baby Point Terrace, the west side Humbercrest Boulevard from Langmuir Gardens to Baby Point Road, and both sides of Humbercrest Boulevard from south of Baby Point Road to Langmuir Gardens. The area is bordered by the Old Millside neighbourhood to the south, Jane Street to the east, and the Warren Park neighbourhood to the north.

The neighbourhood is defined by a collection of predominantly 2 storey early 20th century houses situated on curvilinear streets in a park-like setting. It also includes a number of important institutions and landmarks, such as the Baby Point Club, Humbercrest United Church, Magwood, Etienne Brulé, and Cashman parks, and the vestige of the Toronto Carrying Trail. It is part of the Baby Point Archaeologically Sensitive Area, and was historically the location of the village of Teiaiagon, as well as centuries of indigenous use.

Cultural Heritage Value

Baby Point’s Cultural Heritage Value is based on its historical and associative importance as a permanent and seasonal settlement for a variety of indigenous communities; its association with the prominent French Canadian and member of the Family Compact James Baby and the prominent developer Robert Home Smith, and its design and physical value as an excellent representation of an early and comprehensively designed garden suburb.

Baby Point’s *historical and associative values* are derived from significant events that occurred within the neighbourhood, and individuals who have had a significant impact upon its present-day character. Baby Point has a long history of Indigenous settlement and seasonal use dating back to at least 6000 BCE and whose traces have been found during archaeological excavations, including the discovery of burial sites associated with the village of Teiaiagon, one of the few known permanent settlements located in the present-day City of Toronto. The area’s name is derived from its association with James Baby, a prominent French-Canadian member of the “Family Compact” of Upper Canada whose family owned the land for over a century and who built a recreational house on the southern slopes of the promontory surrounded by orchards. Baby Point owes much of its picturesque character and natural landscape to Robert Home Smith, a prominent Toronto developer and businessman who purchased Baby Point in the early 20th century in order to develop a bucolic garden suburb for the growing city’s upper middle class.

The district has *historic value* as an early and representative example of a garden suburb in Toronto, a movement that was popularized as a reaction against growing industrial cities and facilitated through transportation improvements that allowed the mobile upper middle class to live outside the urban centre. The bucolic nature of Baby Point’s setting overlooking the Humber River and its period revival homes that reflect an earlier time period aimed to provide a counter measure to Victorian urban industrialized life. While marketed as being “A bit of England, far from England”, Baby Point and the garden suburb movement are more closely related to North American precedents, including Llewellyn Park (New Jersey), Riverside (Illinois), Lawrence Park (Toronto) and Forest Hills Gardens (NY).

Baby Point is a rare example of a planned and realized garden suburb in Toronto, and reflects an important part of the narrative of urban residential development in the early 20th century of the city. The neighbourhood is

an identifiable and upscale area known for the quality of its architecture, picturesque streetscapes, unique geography and placement overlooking the Humber River, and the high integrity of its houses that date from the initial period of development.

The district’s design and physical values stem from the significant intact collection of early 20th century residential buildings that reflect the popular revival styles that were built as part of the planned garden suburb of Baby Point, which was itself part of the larger Humber Valley Surveys, a collection of garden suburb neighbourhoods along the Humber River. The design and placement of the homes reflect the regulations established by the Home Smith Company that dictated their style, materials and siting to preserve the neighbourhood’s picturesque and bucolic character. The overall scale of the district is defined by a predominance of 2 to 2.5 storey houses, with more modestly sized houses on Baby Point Road between Jane Street and Humbercrest Boulevard, and larger houses on the promontory. The district has a unique layout and spatial organization consisting of a straight road (Baby Point Road) leading in from Jane Street and which subsequently splits into curvilinear streets west of Humbercrest Boulevard, reinforcing a perception of a transition into nature and reflecting garden suburb design principles.

Houses in Baby Point were designed in architectural styles reflective of trends in early 20th century upper-middle class housing, and are primarily English Cottage (with Tudor influence) and Colonial Revival (with Georgian and Edwardian influence) in style. The material palette imposed by the restrictions remains the predominant one in the neighbourhood: the majority houses are constructed of or clad with brick, stone and concrete (stucco), and many of the later additions and infill housing continue to incorporate these materials.

The district’s *contextual value* as a designed garden suburb is reflected in its homes that date from the Home Smith Building Period (1911-1941), during which design restrictions were put in place to advance garden suburb principles and protect the character of the neighbourhood. These restrictions ensured the construction of single-family homes built of high quality material and the conservation of the area’s park-like setting. The neighbourhood’s early residential development as a garden suburb remains evident today, with many homes in their original condition or with complementary renovations. Architectural styles that predominant include English Cottage and Colonial Revival, with many houses retaining original features or having been sensitively replaced. The streetscape of Baby Point as envisioned by Robert Home Smith remains as well, with curvilinear streets that follow the promontory’s natural topography as defined in the Humber Valley Survey, a mature tree canopy and the adjacent parks and river valley. The neighbourhood’s context is further defined by the Baby Point Gates, which mark a physical and symbolic transition from the commercial stretch of Jane Street into the residential neighbourhood.

Important landmarks, parks and gathering places contribute to the heritage character and identity of Baby Point. These anchors help reinforce the contextual values by creating a strong sense of place interlinked through history and use. They include the Baby Point Club and Humbercrest United Church that have long served the community, as well as the park system that defines the area and gives it a distinct identity: Magwood, Etienne Brulé and Cashman parks and the Humber River.

The area also retains *social and community value* for Indigenous communities due to its long history of occupation and settlement, and the archaeological finds that have occurred within the neighbourhood. The careful situation of houses in Baby Point and limited excavation that was permitted during their construction resulted in a landscape with minimal disturbance and which has archaeological potential relating to centuries of known indigenous use and settlement, including the village of Teiaiagon, as well as later occupation by French explorers and the Baby family.

Baby Point’s *natural value* is defined by its park-like setting, supported by and reflected in the large front yard setback of houses from the street, the siting of houses that were positioned so as to preserve the mature tree canopy and natural topography, the parks and the Humber River.

Heritage Attributes

Heritage attributes are the physical, spatial and material elements within the district that convey its heritage character and that should be conserved. They include buildings, streets and open spaces that are a collective asset to the community. Heritage attributes can range from physical features, such as building materials or architectural motifs, to overall spatial patterns, such as street layout and topography.

Historical and Associative Attributes

These attributes are important features that convey the history of the district, from its indigenous use through to its development as a planned garden suburb

- The plan of the neighbourhood which exemplifies garden suburb design principles as envisioned by Robert Home Smith
- The Baby Point Archaeologically Sensitive Area, associated with the district's ancient indigenous and later European uses
- The historic Indigenous village of Teiaiaagon and its potential archaeological remains

Contextual, Social and Community Attributes

These attributes support a sense of place, defining the context of Baby Point and its community values

- The district's historically strategic location atop a promontory adjacent to and overlooking the Humber River
- The Baby Point Gates, which mark a formal entrance into the neighbourhood from Jane Street
- 1 Baby Point Road, the former residence of Robert Home Smith and one of the neighbourhood's first houses
- The Baby Point Club, a community and social hub founded by the neighbourhood's early residents
- Humbercrest United Church, an important neighbourhood institution and community landmark

Design and Physical Attributes

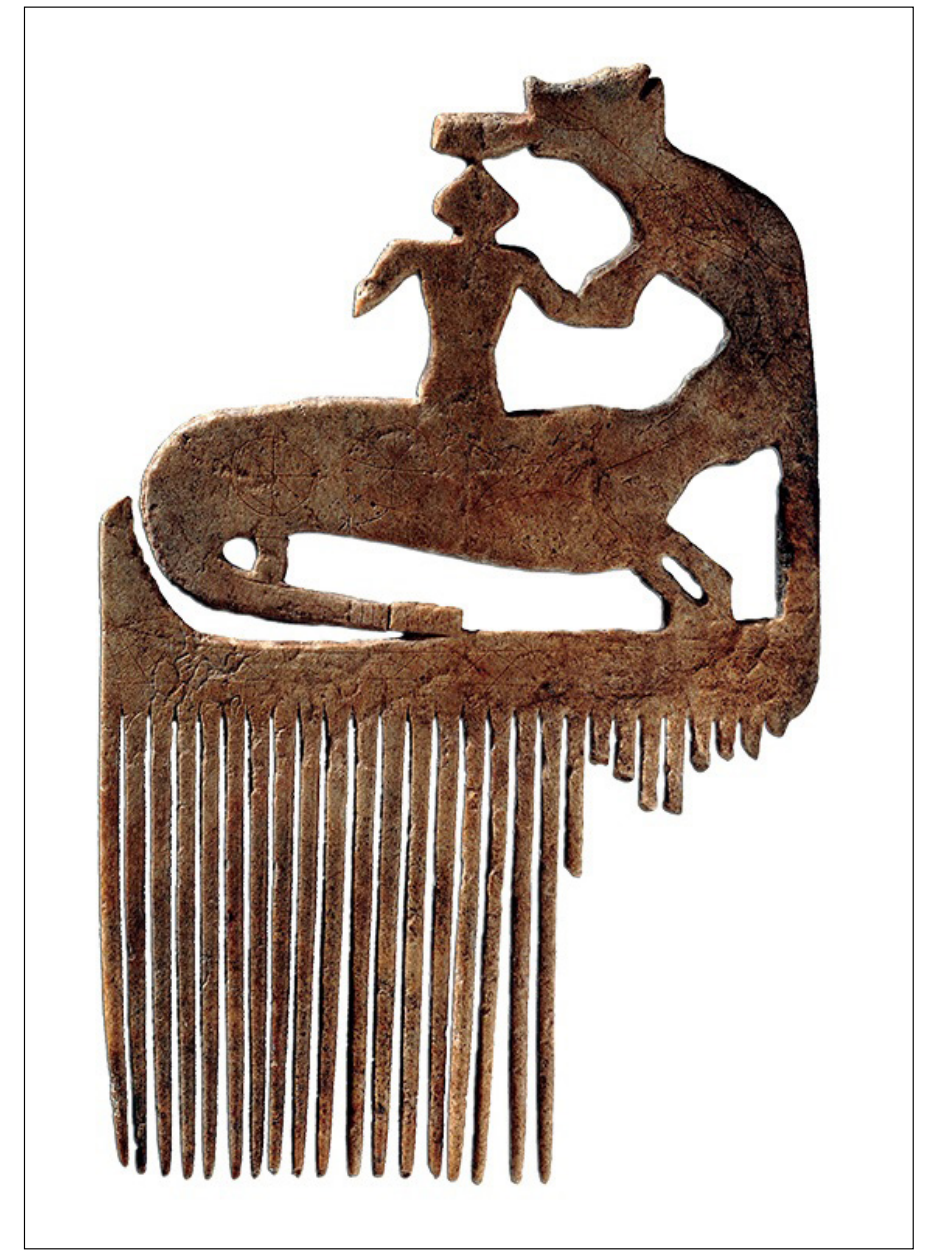
These attributes reflect the design of Baby Point as a garden suburb, guided by a set of principles that informed the streetscape and architecture of the neighbourhood

- The curvilinear street pattern, that follows and reflects the natural topography
- The undulating pattern of houses that are sited and setback from the road, resulting in large landscaped yards and contributing to a park-like setting
- The predominantly low-rise scale of houses, generally 2-2.5 storeys tall
- The general use of brick, stone and stucco
- The consistency of early 20th century architectural styles, namely English Cottage (with Tudor influence) and Colonial Revival (with Georgian and Edwardian influence)

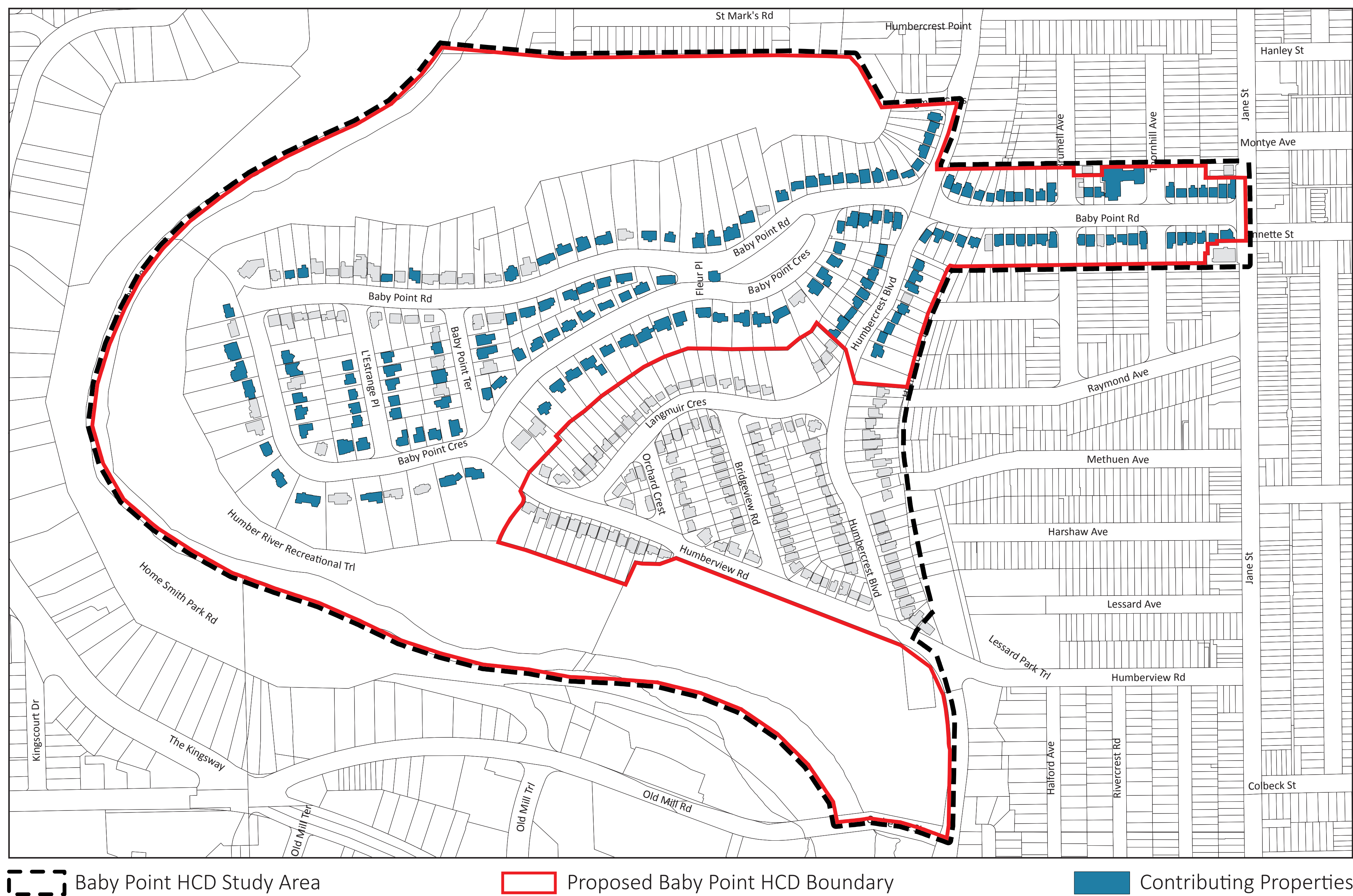
Natural Attributes

These attributes represent valued and unique natural resources that reflect the history of the district and contribute to a sense of place

- Magwood, Etienne Brule and Cashman Parks, and the Humber River – a designated Canadian Heritage River – which provide a green edge to the neighbourhood
- The landscaped front yards, with deep setbacks and extensive soft landscaping
- The extensive mature tree canopy, much of which predates the neighbourhood's residential development and was purposefully conserved



Proposed Boundary and Contributing Properties



Proposed Boundary

The proposed Baby Point HCD boundary encompasses the Baby Point neighbourhood, an area that retains a high degree of integrity and is representative of the planned garden suburb envisioned and developed by Robert Home Smith.

Baby Point was the site of indigenous use dating back thousands of years, including the village of Teiaiagon – one of the few known indigenous villages within present-day Toronto. The Toronto Carrying Place Trail, an important trade and transportation route between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe and a National Historic Event, is associated with this site.

Baby Point also has strong associations with Toronto’s French history – French explorers and missionaries are known to have visited Teiaiagon and used the Carrying Place Trail, an early French trading post may have been built on the site, and the point was later the estate of Jacques Baby, a prominent land owner and government official.

The boundary includes 220 properties and 3 City-owned parks that were donated by Home Smith to provide ample green space for the residents of Baby Point along the banks of the Humber River.

The Old Millside neighbourhood is not being recommended for designation.

Proposed Contributing Properties

Properties within the proposed Baby Point HCD were individually evaluated to determine whether they contribute to the neighbourhood’s heritage value. Contributing properties are those that have design, historic and/or associative value and that contribute to the neighbourhood’s heritage character. Properties were identified as contributing if they satisfied the following criteria:

- Constructed during the Home Smith Building Restrictions Period (1911 – 1941); and
- maintain their integrity and have not been significantly altered as seen from the street

There are 174 contributing and 46 non-contributing properties.