

## What is designation?

Conserving historic buildings through legal protection is an internationally recognized best-practice in heritage planning and is supported by the *Calgary Heritage Strategy* and *Municipal Development Plan*. Legal protection in Alberta is achieved through designating sites as **Municipal** and/or **Provincial Historic Resources**, enabled by the *Alberta Historical Resources Act*, and performed by a municipality, or Alberta Culture and Tourism, respectively.

### Designation by City Council as a Municipal Historic Resource:

- \* Prevents a heritage resource from being demolished and requires City approval for alterations to certain historic elements
- \* Does not affect the ability to sell or purchase property
- \* Does not affect activities in a building or on the property
- \* Allows the owner to retain all rights to the individual enjoyment of their property

As part of the designation process, the *Alberta Historical Resources Act* (Section 28 [1]) specifies that municipalities must compensate property owners for any decreased economic value related to designation. To avoid incurring this cost, City practice has been to designate sites as Municipal Historic Resources only where the property owner consents and waives any compensation associated with the Act, or if Council has otherwise directed the designation.

## Which properties are eligible for designation?

Prior to being designated, a property must be included on Calgary's *Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources*, a growing list of significant local heritage sites. The *Inventory* is maintained by the Calgary Heritage Authority, a Council-appointed advisory board comprised of members of the public, which evaluates potential *Inventory* sites and advises Council on heritage-related matters. Properties suggested for inclusion on the *Inventory* are researched and evaluated according to the Council-approved Calgary Historic Resource Evaluation System.

## Why do owners choose to designate?

A property owner may choose to designate for a variety of reasons, including an interest in heritage conservation. Additionally, a variety of incentives for designation are offered at the Municipal and Provincial level, including heritage conservation grant programs (discussed on following page), and incentives through the planning approvals process.

Density Transfer is a significant planning incentive available to owners of Municipal Historic Resources in the Downtown, Beltline, and East Village areas. A historic resource can transfer unused development rights (density) to a new development site at a privately negotiated profit—supporting growth, and benefiting heritage conservation. Further information on density transfer can be found in Attachment 9 to this report, and at [calgary.ca/heritage](http://calgary.ca/heritage).



**Blum Residence (built 1963)**  
Municipal Historic Resource  
designated November 2018



**West End Telephone Exchange (built 1910)**  
Municipal Historic Resource  
designated February 2018  
utilized density transfer program

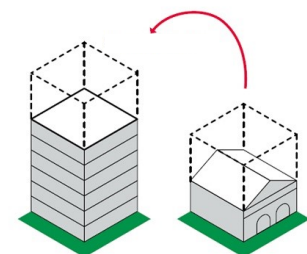


Diagram showing transfer of density from a historic resource to a new development

## Heritage grant programs

### **City of Calgary *Historic Resource Conservation Grant Program***

The City of Calgary operates a heritage conservation grant program, offering matching funds for projects to restore, preserve or rehabilitate a privately-owned, designated resource.

Sites designated as Municipal Historic Resources, or those in the process of designation are eligible to apply for grant funding through this program. Applicants can apply for up to 50% of a conservation project cost, once every five years. Total grants received cannot exceed 15% of the assessed value of the property, or \$125,000, over a period of 15 years.

The *Historic Resource Conservation Grant Program* is provided through a reserve fund established in 2003, which receives \$225,000 per year from the Planning & Development budget. In 2012, the grant program was restructured through PFC2012-0159, and began issuing grants. Through the *One Calgary 2019-2022 Services Plans and Budgets*, this amount increased to \$500,000 per year beginning in 2020.

Grants supporting 25 Historic Resources have been committed to by The City of Calgary to-date, totalling approximately \$4 million. However, as grants funds are paid at conservation project milestones, the total funds issued to-date total approximately \$2.8 million. Prior to 2020, the average individual grant was approximately \$85K for single residential resources, and approximately \$200K for all other types. Beginning in 2020, a funding cap of \$125,000 was introduced to make the grant reserve available to more applicants.

Prior to the 2020 grant program increase through One Calgary, the annual allocation of \$225,000 was insufficient to accommodate the average of approximately 2 grant applications per year, reducing the grant reserve from the initial endowment and rendering the program fully subscribed through the 2020 year. It is unclear if the grant program allocation increase in 2020 will allow a replenishment of the reserve fund principal (2012), but at minimum it will allow for more grants to be accommodated.

As of this report, 99 sites are designated as Municipal Historic Resources in Calgary, with 72 being privately-owned, and therefore eligible to apply for grant funds. This number is further reduced by the 25 sites having already received grants; while a number of previously-awarded sites have not reached their 15-year funding cap and remain eligible to apply to the program again, the likelihood of requiring additional conservation work is low. As such, there are currently 47 Municipal Historic Resources eligible to apply for their maximum possible grant value as part of a cost-matching conservation project.

### **Province of Alberta *Heritage Preservation Partnership Program***

Alberta Culture and Tourism operates a Provincial-level grant program, providing matching funds to owners of historic sites under terms and conditions established by the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation (available online through [www.culturetourism.alberta.ca](http://www.culturetourism.alberta.ca)). The designation of a property as a Municipal Historic Resource qualifies a property owner to apply for up to \$50,000 per year in Provincial matching funds, as opposed to a one-time grant of \$5,000 available to non-designated sites.



**Scarboro United Church  
(built 1929)**

Conservation grant recipient

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#### **Average approved matching grant for heritage resources:** (approximate)

Single residential home

**\$85,000.00**

All other resource types

**\$200,000.00**