

HERITAGE REVITALIZATION AGREEMENTS

Heritage Conservation: A Community Guide states, “Heritage revitalization agreements (HRA) are intended to provide a powerful and flexible tool which enable agreements to be specifically written to suit unique properties and situations. They may be used to set out the conditions which apply to a particular property. The terms of the agreement supersede local government zoning regulations, and may vary use, density, and siting regulations.” ([source](#))

The flexibility of the HRA allows for creative solutions that can be used for unique properties and special situations requiring exceptions and relaxations of existing regulations. As a result, the HRA is a creative process that can be individualized to the specifics of each situation.

Following are some of the ways for which the HRA can be used. (Note: this is not intended to be an exhaustive list; specific application of the HRA is at the discretion of the local government.)

The HRA can be used to:

- Supersede local government regulations by altering existing bylaws, such as:
 - Zoning bylaws
 - Subdivision bylaw
 - Heritage conservation bylaws
 - Development cost levies bylaw
- Vary use, density, lot size, setbacks and other siting regulations
- Vary a permit under Part 14 of the Local Government Act (Planning and Land Use Management)
- Vary a Heritage Alteration Permit
- Establish and detail the timing of agreement terms

- Set out the level of conservation to be undertaken by the owner
- Include other conditions as negotiated
- Outline the owner’s responsibilities if the property is damaged or destroyed
- Outline the owner’s responsibilities if the HRA is contravened in any way
- Include other terms of conditions agreed to by both parties

Common requests in HRA projects are:

- property subdivision
- extra floor space
- fewer parking spaces
- extra building height

Eligibility

To be eligible for a heritage revitalization agreement, a property must have heritage value according to the local government’s specifications. It is possible, then, the property will already be found on a heritage inventory or register, or it will have been designated as a heritage property.

Without prior recognition of heritage value, the property will likely need to be identified and described by a heritage professional (in a Statement of Significance) and approved by the Community Heritage Commission and/or city staff.

In addition to heritage value, the property may be assessed according to:

- Neighbourhood context
- Streetscape character
- Existing zoning, especially lot sizes and density
- Balance of public and private benefits
- Level of neighbourhood support

([source](#))

For more information about heritage revitalization agreements and other heritage conservation tools, please refer to our in depth series of [resource guides](#).