

Standing Committee Report

REPORT NUMBER 175-2026-City Manager's Office-Office of the City Clerk	
DATE PREPARED	March 31, 2026
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING DATE	April 28, 2026
SUBJECT	Heritage Property Designations – 281 Ray Court, 27 Cumberland Street South, 277 Camelot Street, 1017 Isabella Street East, and 716 Pacific Avenue

PURPOSE

WITH RESPECT to Report 175-2026 – City Manager’s Office – Office of the City Clerk, we request endorsement of the Standing Committee - Growth to forward the following recommendations to City Council:

WE RECOMMEND THAT the properties known as the Doctor’s Cottage, located at 281 Ray Court, the Bank of Montreal, located at 27 Cumberland St S, the Thunder Bay District Court House, located at 277 Camelot St, the McIntyre House located at 1017 Isabella Street East, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary located at 716 Pacific Avenue, be designated as City of Thunder Bay heritage properties for their design, historical, and contextual value as defined by Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*,

AND THAT the properties be listed on the City of Thunder Bay’s heritage register as designated properties;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following discussion and review, the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) is recommending that the properties known as the Doctor’s Cottage, located at 281 Ray Court, the Bank of Montreal, located at 27 Cumberland St S, the Court House, located at 277 Camelot St, the McIntyre House located at 1017 Isabella St E, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary located at 716 Pacific Ave, be designated heritage properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (the “Act”).

Designated properties are added to the municipal heritage register through Council's ratification of a designation by-law. Designation provides protection against alteration that affects heritage attributes, and against demolition. Designation of these properties is recommended primarily for their design, historical, and contextual value.

These properties were evaluated for designation by heritage consultants from Egis Group. The evaluations were based on extensive research and application of the criteria of Ontario Regulation 9/06. The Egis consultants recommend all five of these properties for designation based on their evaluation.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The Heritage Register

The *Ontario Heritage Act* Subsection 27(1) requires municipalities to create and maintain a heritage register. In April 2008, City Council established a Municipal Heritage Register for the City of Thunder Bay, (Report No. 2008.060 (Office of the City Clerk)).

One of the roles of the Heritage Advisory Committee is to recommend properties that are of significant historic interest to the community and to recommend their inclusion on the Heritage Register as heritage designated properties.

Inclusion on the City of Thunder Bay Heritage Register:

- Recognizes properties of cultural heritage value in the community;
- Fosters civic identity and pride by drawing attention to the heritage and historic development of the community;
- Promotes knowledge and enhances an understanding of the community's cultural heritage; and
- Provides easily accessible information about cultural heritage value for land-use planners, property owners, developers, the tourism industry, educators, and the general public.

The Designation Process

Properties are designated through a process defined by the Act. The decision to designate a property is made by Council.

The formal designation process begins with seeking feedback from the Standing Committee, which will then make a recommendation to Council. This process can be initiated by a property owner, HAC, or a Member of Council. All properties are assessed for their heritage value and potential designation under the Act, according to the nine (9) criteria of Ontario Regulation 9/06. A property must meet two (2) or more criteria to qualify for designation. Properties proposed by HAC have been assessed prior to recommendation.

In August 2025, Egis was retained by the City to complete Statements of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and the necessary documentation to support the designation of six (6) prioritized properties. To date, HAC has reviewed and approved all six of these reports and is presenting five of the properties for designation at this time.

The property owners were alerted to the start of the designation process for their properties in October in preparation for Egis consultants to conduct site visits. No concerns about potential designation have been received from any of these five property owners to date.

The *Ontario Heritage Act* (section 27.(4)) specifies Council must consult the Municipal Heritage Committee prior to including a property on the Municipal Heritage Register. The combination of this corporate report, the HAC resolution, and the Egis reports establishes the recommendation and consultation steps of designation. The designation process is terminated if Council makes the decision to reject the recommendations to designate an individual property.

If Council ratifies the recommendations of this report, after consultation from the Standing Committee, the next step is to serve Notice of Intent to Designate (NOID) on the property owners, the public, and the Ontario Heritage Trust. The notice must also be published in a newspaper. There is a 30-day waiting period for objections to the NOID to be made. Objections and comments will be collected from property owners and the public. If no objections are made during this time, Council makes a final determination on whether to make the designation.

If the decision is in favour of the designation, Council must pass a designating by-law that is registered on the property title. Notice of designation is served on the property owner, the Ontario Heritage Trust, and published in the newspaper. The property is listed on the Municipal and Provincial Heritage Registers. It may also be listed on the Canadian Heritage Register. The Act further includes a process that allows appeals of the Designation to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Strategic Plan

Heritage designation aligns with the Strategic Plan goals to “Create and maintain strong neighbourhoods and Indigenized spaces where people connect and engage” and to “Collaboratively create an attractive and supportive environment where people and businesses can flourish.” Heritage buildings contribute to the beauty of our neighbourhoods and downtown cores, creating visually appealing spaces where people want to live, work, and shop.

Smart Growth Action Plan

Heritage designation aligns with the Smart Growth Action Plan. The plan emphasizes strengthening neighbourhood identity, supporting reinvestment in established areas,

and enhancing quality of place. Heritage designation contributes to these objectives by preserving character assets, stabilizing long-term property value, and supporting community attractiveness - all of which are important components of sustainable growth.

The Plan also recognizes the importance of reinvesting in existing neighbourhoods and leveraging established infrastructure. Heritage designations can complement these goals by encouraging adaptive reuse, maintaining built form continuity, and reinforcing community identity while still supporting appropriate intensification where feasible.

Culture Plan

Heritage was included in the Culture Plan and heritage designation aligns with three of the five pillars of the plan. Heritage designation supports pillar 1 “Celebration & Promotion / Mamakadendan Dagoo Waabidehyawmin” by helping to promote and integrate heritage into the local culture and maintain a strong visual representation of our culture for locals and tourists alike. Preserving the natural and built heritage of Thunder Bay is objective 2.5 of pillar 2 Spaces & Places / Daawamagad Dagoo Achigmigad. Under pillar 3 Community Connection / Anakay Dinakii, heritage designation can help to build an engaged and connected community by generating pride in our landscape.

The Egis Reports and Draft Statements of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (Reasons for Designation)

Egis’ qualified heritage professional, Tara Jenkins, recommends that:

- The property at 281 Ray Court be designated because it possesses design value as it contains a unique example in the City of Thunder Bay of a one- and- a- half- storey early twentieth century English Tudor Revival style cottage with stone and shingle cladding. The property also has historical associative value through its connections with artist Cymanthe Anne Bready, widow of T.T. William Bready whose company operated more than eighty grain elevators and contributed to the local grain industry, as well as physicians Dr. Robert Luther Harold and Dr. Evan Powell, whose lasting contributions were integral to the medical development of Port Arthur, now the City of Thunder Bay. Lastly, the property retains contextual value as it maintains and supports the early twentieth century character of the McVicar Harrington neighbourhood through retaining its original location, estate lot, and park- like setting north of McVicar Creek.
- The property at 27 Cumberland Street South be designated because it has design value as a rare example of a three-storey bank constructed between 1913 and 1914 in the style of Edwardian Classicism. The property also has design value as it displays a high degree of artistic merit shown through its quality design features, which are linked to the architect’s goal of projecting stability and

prosperity. Additionally, the property has significant historical associative value for its direct association with Port Arthur's early banking history since this building was constructed to serve as the local branch of The Molsons Bank. The property also has historical associative value as it reflects the work of Turner & Carless, Montreal-based architects responsible for designing this bank and others across Ontario and Quebec. Lastly, the property retains contextual value as a landmark within one of Thunder Bay's oldest commercial corridors. The architectural quality, scale, and prominent location of this former bank at the intersection of Cumberland Street South and Park Avenue continues to define, maintain, and support the historical commercial character of the streetscape.

- The property at 277 Camelot Street be designated because it has design value as a representative example of a three - storey early 20th century building designed in the style of Beaux-Arts Classicism. Distinguished by its symmetrical façade, monumental frontispiece with Corinthian columns, pediment, and main entrance pilasters, along with the integrity of its interior features such as the Hall of Justice, the building also has design value since it demonstrates a high degree of artistic merit. The property also has historical value as the former Thunder Bay District Courthouse as well as historical associative value since the design of the former courthouse reflects the work of Francis Riley Heakes, Chief Architect of the Ontario Department of Public Works, together with supervising architects R.B. Chandler and A.E. Angus. Lastly, the property has contextual value as it defines and supports the institutional character of the area as part of the former government plot. Its elevated siting atop the Court Street ridge visually links the courthouse to its surroundings, overlooking Lake Superior and the Sleeping Giant land formation, which reinforces its prominence and visibility. This, in conjunction with its continued presence for well over a century, makes the property a landmark in the City of Thunder Bay.
- The property at 1017 Isabella Street East in the City of Thunder Bay has design value as a rare surviving example of an Italianate style residence in Thunder Bay, constructed between 1878 and 1879 with a wood frame and clapboard siding. Its design value is expressed through its form, scale and massing, symmetrical three-bay façade, bracketed overhanging eaves, full-width verandah, and Classical pediment detailing, along with its contributing early twentieth century rear addition and carriage house. Additionally, the property has historical associative value for its direct connection to John McIntyre, a significant early Hudson's Bay Company official whose long tenure at Fort William and construction of the house as his retirement residence make it the most tangible surviving link to his life and legacy. Lastly, although the residence was relocated, the property retains contextual value as it is recognized as a landmark within the Vickers Park neighbourhood for its historical association, its rare architectural form, and enduring presence at this site for more than 115 years.
- The property at 716 Pacific Avenue in the City of Thunder Bay has design value as a representative example of Ukrainian - Canadian architectural fusion style

church which combines design sensibilities of the Ternopil nave, Bukovinian, and Cossack Baroque styles of Ukrainian architecture with Western architectural elements. The property has historical associative value through its association with St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Parish, the first Ukrainian Orthodox congregation in Fort William and the first in Northwestern Ontario. Established in 1909, the parish acquired this property in 1911, and construction of the church was completed in 1912. The church served as an important spiritual and cultural centre for early Ukrainian immigrants and was rebuilt in 1937 following a major fire. The property also has historical associative value as it is linked to significant community figures, including Father Luke Solohub, who served the parish for nearly 33 years, and long-time parish leader and businessman George Ostaff, whose leadership and involvement strengthened the parish. The property also has historical value since it yields information that contributes to an understanding of the cultural development of the Ukrainian community in Thunder Bay, reflecting the experiences of early settlers who faced social marginalization and relied on their church as a centre of cultural preservation and community cohesion. Lastly, the property retains contextual value as a long-recognized landmark in the East End neighbourhood, where the presence of a Ukrainian church for more than 110 years and the continued visibility of its domes along Pacific Avenue have ensured its enduring landmark status within the neighbourhood.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

BACKGROUND

The *Ontario Heritage Act*, Subsection 27(1) states that "The clerk of a municipality shall keep a register of property situated in the municipality that is of cultural heritage value or interest."

This references properties that have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act through a by-law passed by the local municipality in which those properties exist. The Act also allows for properties to be listed on the register but not formally designated: "27.(3) Subject to subsection (18), in addition to the property listed in the register under subsection (2), the register may include property that has not been designated under this Part if,

- (a) the council of the municipality believes the property to be of cultural heritage value or interest; and
- (b) where criteria for determining whether property is of cultural heritage value or interest have been prescribed for the purposes of this subsection, the property meets the prescribed criteria."

The Municipal Heritage Register is a planning document that is consulted by municipal decision makers, developers and property owners when development proposals or permits are being considered. Including a property on the Register may be the first step in identification and evaluation of a property that may warrant some form of conservation, recognition or protection through designation. It will also identify the location as being of significant built heritage that can be incorporated into municipal planning.

All five of these properties are currently “listed” on our Municipal Heritage Register without formal designating by-laws. 277 Camelot St was listed on the Register in 2009 (2009.110). 27 Cumberland St S was listed in 2011 (2011.058). 281 Ray Court was listed in 2022 (R 104/2022). 1017 Isabella was listed in 2009 (2009.029), and 716 Pacific was listed in 2010 (2010.034). This protects the properties against demolition and recognizes their heritage value to the community. *Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* amended the *Ontario Heritage Act* so that properties can only remain on the Municipal Heritage Register for 2 years without formal designation, at which point, if not formally designated, they are removed from the register and not able to be put back on the register for 5 years. The cut off date to designate previously listed properties is January 1, 2027.

The City of Thunder Bay currently has 50 listed properties on our Municipal Heritage Register. This list was narrowed down to 32 properties that are not municipally owned or under the jurisdiction and protection of other levels of government. From these 32, an initial 6 properties were chosen by HAC for evaluation for designation. Any of the 32 properties that are not designated by January 1, 2027 will no longer be protected from demolition or significant alteration and significant aspects of the City’s heritage landscape will be at risk.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

Attachment A – Egis Designation Report – 281 Ray Court
Attachment B – Egis Designation Report – 27 Cumberland Street South
Attachment C – Egis Designation Report – 277 Camelot Street
Attachment D – Egis Designation Report – 1017 Isabella Street
Attachment E – Egis Designation Report – 716 Pacific Avenue
Attachment F – Heritage Advisory Committee Recommendation Resolutions

REPORT PREPARED BY

Christina Wakefield, City Archivist & Chief Heritage Resource Officer

REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

John Collin, City Manager

04/20/2026 (MM/DD/YEAR)