

City of Hamilton Heritage Properties

Project: Investigating the impact of heritage property designation on real estate value

Contact: Alissa Golden, Heritage Project Specialist, City of Hamilton

Email: Alissa.Golden@hamilton.ca

Phone: 905-546-2424 ext. 4654

About the Organization:

The City of Hamilton consists of many diverse districts, communities, and neighbourhoods, each with their own heritage character and form. The Tourism and Culture Division of the Planning and Economic Development Department (PED) of the City of Hamilton is responsible for the proactive identification of heritage properties through the Built Heritage Inventory Strategy initiative. Tourism and Culture staff work closely with the Cultural Heritage Planners from PED's Planning Division who designate significant heritage properties under the *Ontario Heritage Act* as directed by City Council.

About the Initiative:

Stakeholders in Hamilton's real estate sector are frequently concerned about Heritage Designation due to beliefs that a designation depresses value. In 2019, the City of Hamilton Planning Committee commissioned Cultural Heritage Planning staff to investigate if evidence exists to support this belief. Though staff were able to locate several academic studies concluding that heritage designation does not have a negative impact on property values, no local studies have been conducted to see if these conclusions apply to Hamilton.

Since the review in 2019, the Realtors Association of Hamilton-Burlington have agreed to provide local sales figure data to assist Cultural Heritage Planning staff in conducting a comparative analysis of property values between homes with and without heritage designation. The McMaster Research Shop has agreed to lead on conducting this analysis to demonstrate or refute a connection between heritage designation and property values in Hamilton.

Research Questions:

To what extent, if at all, does heritage designation impact residential property values in Hamilton?

Research Activities:

This research will involve two phases:

1. A critical review of existing studies estimating the impact of heritage designation on real estate property values to justify the existing study and for methodological insights (e.g., variables to include in a statistical model).
2. Quantitative modeling of sales property values and its relation to heritage property designation while *possibly* considering/controlling for the impact of other variables (e.g., location, size of property, square footage of home, building age, etc.).

Audience:

The community partner will report back the findings to the City of Hamilton's Planning and Economic Development Department, who may also request the findings be presented to the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and Planning Committee. Findings have implications for community support of heritage property designation. If the evidence does not support the assertion that designation decreases property values, then this information can be shared with the Realtors Association, private realtors, and other community members to clarify the impacts of heritage designation.

Deliverable:

Plain language report with context, methods, and findings.

Timeline:

Fall 2022.

Community Partner Role:

The community partner will be responsible for garnering and sharing property sales data from the Realtors Association. Depending on the state of the dataset, the community partner (and their staff) may assist with data cleaning and formatting so that it's ready for analysis. The community partner will also provide the City's heritage property data and any other related property information that might be required. The community partner will additionally inform as needed with project scoping and review of project deliverables.

Interest for Students:

Students interested in quantitative analysis, cultural heritage planning and designation, and statistical modeling.