Can being “listed” on the Register create any insurance issues for my property?
No. Being on the Register does not place any additional requirements on the insurer to maintain the property in a certain way. Further, if a “listed” property is damaged or destroyed, there is no obligation to replicate the original, in terms of design features, quality of materials, or building methods. Older buildings with such things as antiquated plumbing, electrical, or heating systems may garner special attention from insurers, but that is not related to a property being included on the Register.

How can I have my property “listed” on the Register?
Contact the City of Cambridge, Planner – Heritage, who will then conduct a preliminary historical research assessment to determine the property’s cultural heritage value to the community. A recommendation for inclusion on the Register will be given to the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC), which in turn will go forward to the City Council for a final approval.

Contact: Planner – Heritage at (519) 621-0740 Ext. 4788 or e-mail: planning@cambridge.ca

To learn more about heritage conservation in Ontario, and some related research:
• Review the Ontario Heritage Act - available on the internet.
• For research regarding adaptive re-use of heritage buildings, consult Dr. Robert Shipley’s study The Lazarus Effect at: https://uwaterloo.ca/heritage-resources-centres/sites/ca.heritage-resources-centre/files/uploads/files/lazarus-jan20-verA_0.pdf
• A publication Heritage Districts Work! by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) & University of Waterloo’s Heritage Resource Centre is available at https://uwaterloo.ca/heritage-resources-centre/sites/ca.heritage-resources-centre/files/uploads/files/HCDStudySUMMARYREPORT.pdf

This information has been prepared by the City of Cambridge, Development and Infrastructure Department.
The 'Who and What' of being a “Listed” Heritage Property

Many different types of properties may be considered for inclusion on the Register such as houses, industrial structures, barns, woodlots, churches and cemeteries, to name a few.

The Register not only recognizes a property’s unique contribution to the history of the area, but also acts as an important resource document for municipal decision makers when considering such things as development applications. It can also prove helpful in identifying points of historic importance to educators, property owners, developers, the tourism industry, and the general public.

The only municipal intervention for properties “listed” on the Register is in regard to demolition. If a notification to demolish a “listed” property is received by the City, there is a 60 day delay before this action can take place. This time allows for a formal review by planning staff, the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) and Cambridge Council to ensure that all of the implications of losing an important part of the community’s history are considered before demolition can occur. Sometimes an alternative course of action may be identified.

Conservation of heritage properties can have a positive impact on real estate values. Inclusion in the Register recognizes specific properties and neighbourhoods which have special features and/or a chronology of ownership or property location which contribute to the historic fabric of the community. Research studies have shown that real estate values of heritage properties are often more resilient in times of fluctuating market conditions, and can even increase at a faster rate than non-heritage buildings. Often these special properties and sites are located in established and mature neighbourhoods, the appearance of which is consistent and more stable over time as the result of preservation efforts.

Questions and Answers

Can being “listed” on the Register restrict the use of the property?
No. Only a zoning by-law can do that.

Can I renovate the interior of my property if it is “listed” on the Register?
Yes. Very often owners of heritage properties enjoy the old architecture and mature neighbourhoods, but still want those contemporary features found in new homes such as central air conditioning, modern kitchens and bathrooms. Being “listed” does not prevent interior renovations from taking place.

Is special approval required to do exterior maintenance work on “listed” properties?
No. Ongoing repairs such as roof, eaves and window replacement, repainting, landscaping and so forth can all be done at the discretion of the property owner, without consultation with the City.

Does being “listed” on the Register prevent a property from being redeveloped?
No. There are many good examples of local heritage buildings which have been renovated and adapted in new and exciting ways, such as old factories being converted into residential units or retail outlets, or heritage properties being successfully integrated into new subdivisions. Also, not only can older buildings often be less expensive to refurbish than to demolish and build new, but also this “adaptive reuse” approach can be more environmentally friendly by reducing the amount of construction waste sent to landfill sites.

What is a Listed Heritage Property?

The Ontario Heritage Act provides municipalities and property owners with a variety of ways to work together to identify and conserve local “heritage resources” – buildings, places, and landscapes that hold special cultural value and reflect the history of a community. The Act requires that the final stage of these efforts be reflected in a public municipal record known as the Heritage Properties Register.

The Register is simply a “catalogue” of properties. Municipalities can include on the Register those locations which are of historic value, but that do not have the legal protection of an official heritage designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. These are known as “listed” properties.