

What is a Heritage Revitalization Agreement?

A Heritage Revitalization Agreement, or HRA for short, is a formal, voluntary, written agreement that is negotiated between a property owner and a local government. It outlines the duties and obligations of, and the benefits to both parties of the agreement.

The agreement allows local governments to supersede local zoning regulations and to provide incentives which would make it viable for owners to conserve and preserve property of heritage merit.

An HRA is enabled with a bylaw that is registered on the title of the property. It is a form of long-term, legal protection.

Provisions for local governments to negotiate HRAs are set out in Section 966 of Part 27 of the Local Government Act.



What does an HRA do?

A Heritage Revitalization Agreement is written to suit unique properties and situations; therefore, each HRA is different from the next.

An HRA may do the following:

- supersede local government regulations
- vary use, density, lot size, and siting regulations
- vary a permit under Part 26 of the Local Government Act (Planning and Land Use Management)
- vary a heritage alteration permit;
- 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

The most common requests in HRA projects are:

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

Is my property eligible?

Any property that is identified by the City as having heritage value may be eligible for an HRA.

A property that is listed on the City's Heritage Resource Inventory or on the City's Heritage Register is eligible.

Properties not previously identified will need to have their heritage value established by a heritage professional and confirmed by the Community Heritage Commission and City staff.

In addition to a heritage evaluation, a property's eligibility for an HRA will be assessed against neighbourhood context and character, streetscape, and existing zoning.

A further analysis of the public and private benefits must also take place.



Public and Private Benefits

An HRA must balance:

- private and public interests
- heritage conservation and development
- liveability and densification
- philosophy and realism

Private benefit may take the form of:

- financial through subdivision
- An increase in square footage and density
- Change of use
- Zoning relaxations

Public benefit may take the form of:

- Long term protection of the property
- Restoration or rehabilitation of the resource
- Extended lifecycle of the resource
- Improved site condition/ beautification of streetscape
- New historic information and documentation

What types of costs can I expect?

Cost considerations may include (and are not limited to) such items as:

General Costs

- Permits and application fees
- Professional fees
- Construction costs
- Legal fees
- New or repaired building foundation
- Interior upgrades
- Landscaping
- Works and Services Agreement costs
- On site signage prior to Advisory Planning Commission public hearing

Subdivision Costs

- School site acquisition fees
- Greater Vancouver Sewage and Drainage District Charges
- Development Cost Charges
- Undergrounding electrical wires
- New fire hydrant
- Transit study
- Site servicing requirements (sewage, water, storm drainage)
- Road and/or sidewalk upgrading

Relocation Costs

- Tree pruning along moving route
- Relocation of light standard or telephone pole
- Fees to remove and then re-attach electrical wires along moving route
- Relocation permit fees (for night-time moves and resulting noise)

The City strongly encourages every applicant to carry out a pro-forma as early in the application process as possible. A pro-forma is a financial analysis that forecasts the costs and profits involved in the proposed project.

Do I need an architect?

The City acknowledges that HRA projects range in size from large-scale commercial/ residential to small-scale residential. Medium and large-scale projects typically use the services of professional architects, heritage consultants, engineers, landscape architects, code consultants, etc.

In the case of an individual homeowner who is seeking an HRA, the cost of hiring professionals may seem onerous. Notwithstanding, the participation of professionals will make the HRA process smoother by:

- providing drawings that have all of the required information in a format that is accepted by the City
- assisting the homeowner with the application process
- making public meeting and Council presentations
- potentially reducing the application timeline significantly
- the City may consider a reduction in HRA application fees for a one or two family residential project that engages a registered professional for the duration of the HRA process

An HRA that involves a subdivision, a house restoration, and house relocation can cost in the magnitude of \$100,000 to \$300,000.



Application Process

The process for an HRA application needs to be consistent with Part 27 of the Local Government Act. The process must also be clear and transparent.

1. Preliminary Inquiry

This phase includes the determination of eligibility of a property through a completed 'Historic Information Form' or the Heritage Register listing. Staff conducts an assessment.

2. Application

The application package and fee is submitted. Staff present an information report to Council.

3. Departmental Review

The application is reviewed for zoning, building code, site servicing, fire aspects, etc.

4. Community Consultation

Community consultation includes the Heritage Commission, relevant Neighbourhood Associations, the Advisory Planning Commission, the Design Panel and immediate neighbours.

5. Agreement and Bylaw Preparation and Readings

This phase includes the preparation and review of the HRA, and its required readings and adoption by Council.



6. Project Phase

The project phase includes the submission of Building Permit drawings, a formal review by City departments and a Heritage Alteration Permit. Once the Building Permits have been issued, an update once every six months must be given to staff by either the property owner or the project's registered professional. City staff will periodically conduct site visits.

7. Project Completion Phase

Once the project has been certified as complete by the property owner or the project's registered professional, a site review takes place and Council's delegate will sign off on the project.

8. Follow-up and Enforcement

This phase will only be necessary if the work required under the HRA is not completed within the agree-upon timeframe.

Application Package

The following list is not exclusive and may be altered from time to time:

- Application Form
- Application Fee
- Letter of Authorization from property owner, if applicable
- Land Title Certificate showing current ownership
- Site survey (certified) showing location of building, height of building, corners of site, plus other elements as required
- Statement of Significance (by professional other than project architect)
- Heritage Conservation Plan detailing conservation work (this may be written by the project architect)
- Design rationale
- Fully dimensional architectural drawings of the proposed project, drawn to ¼" scale. Must include site plan, exterior elevations, cross sections, floor plans, geodetic elevations of all floors.

- Proposed materials should be indicated on the exterior elevations. Parking on site must show stall dimensions, drive and manoeuvring aisles, drive-way slopes and turning radii
- Landscape plan to scale showing number, type and size of plant material proposed, plus the proposed treatment of other surfaces of the site, and the proposed treatment of the street boulevard and driveway crossing
- Plans must also include a statistical table of the proposal covering all of the conditions of use for the applicable zoning district, plus the variances being requested. The table must include required/permitted and proposed yards and setbacks, density, floor space ratio, site coverage, height, parking and loading requirements, balcony and open space dimensions and areas, housing unit types and areas, and areas set aside for common areas (if applicable) should also be noted. Any bylaw deficiencies should be noted
- Current photos of building (all elevations), also of the site and surrounding properties
- Colour and material board

Heritage Policy Document

The City has developed a comprehensive policy for the use of Heritage Revitalization Agreements.

The principle of the policy is to retain and rehabilitate valued heritage resources using a clear set of Heritage Revitalization Agreement guidelines.

For a copy of this policy, please see the Planning Division at New Westminster City Hall, or check online at: www.newwestcity.ca

For more information on Part 27 of the *Local Government Act*, refer to the *Heritage Conservation: A Community Guide* found online at:

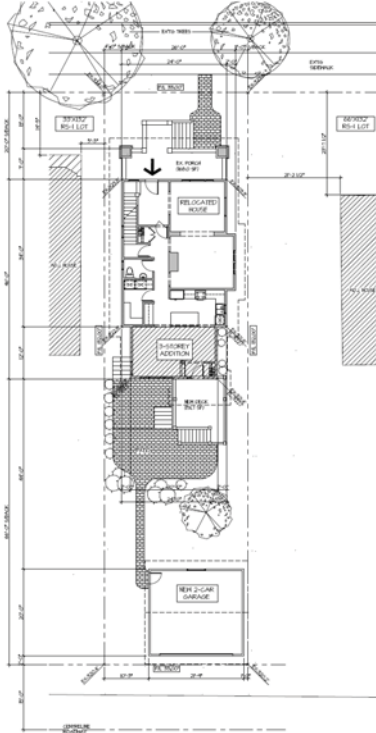
www.tca.gov.bc.ca/heritage/docs/pdf/HC_guide.pdf

Sample Projects

The following are examples from past projects that have successfully used Heritage Revitalization Agreements to preserve a heritage property:

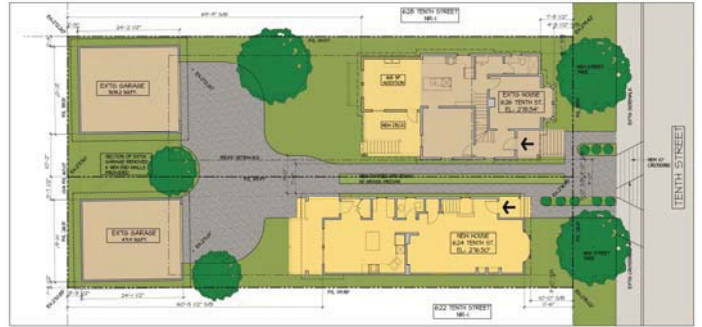
Project #1 –

Relocation of an at-risk heritage house and an increase in allowable floor space.



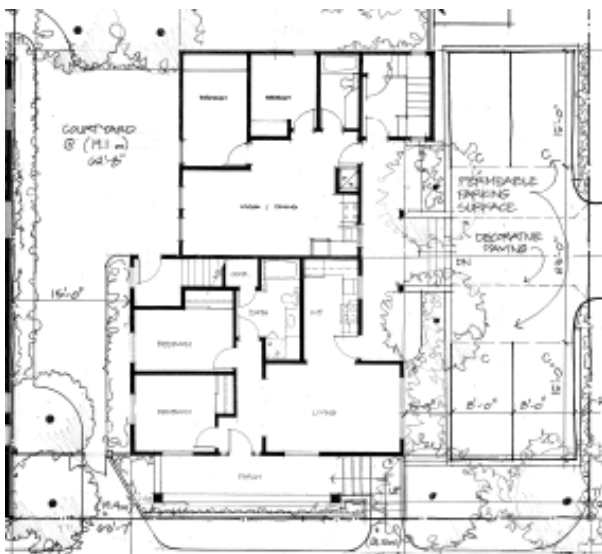
Project #2 –

Subdivision of a property to create 2 smaller-than-allowable lots, with construction of a new house and restoration of the heritage house.



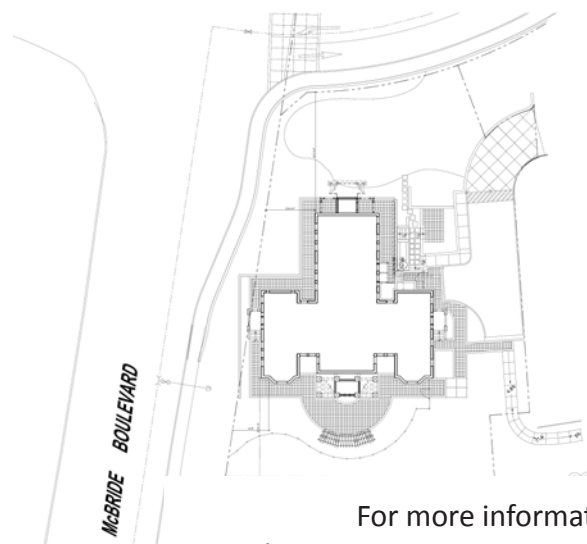
Project #3 –

Relocation of an at-risk heritage house, increase in allowable floor space, reduction in on-site parking.



Project #4 –

Change of zoning from institutional to multi-family residential.



For more information:
Development Services Department
604.527.4532