Don River Watershed Plan

Cultural Heritage – Report on Current Conditions

2009

Prepared by: Toronto and Region Conservation

Toronto and Region Conservation for The Living City

Member of Conservation Ontario Natural Champions

theDon

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1.0 Introduction

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), in consultation with the multi-stakeholder Don Watershed Regeneration Council and watershed municipalities, is developing a watershed plan for the Don River. This watershed planning process has been initiated in response to a number of recent policy and planning developments, including the need to fulfill York Region's watershed planning requirements under the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan* (ORMCP, Ontario Regulation 140/02) and to update the original management strategy outlined in *Forty Steps to a New Don* (Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority [MTRCA], 1994).

The goal of the watershed planning study is to recommend updated management strategies that will guide land and water use decisions, such that the overall ecological health of the Don River watershed is protected and improved. The aim is to build on the *Forty Steps'* principles to protect what is healthy, regenerate what is degraded, and take responsibility for the Don. Recognizing the significant watershed planning work that has already been completed, and given that there are limited undeveloped lands remaining on the ORM within the watershed boundary, the watershed plan will focus mainly on filling information gaps, guiding land use planning and approval decisions, and providing direction to advance implementation of regeneration priorities.

This report has been prepared as part of the scoping and characterization phase of the watershed planning process, in which current watershed conditions are presented in the form of technical reports covering a range of subject areas, including groundwater quality and quantity, surface water quantity, low flows and water use, surface water quality, fluvial geomorphology, aquatic systems, terrestrial systems, nature-based experiences, cultural heritage, and land and resource use.

This report summarizes the history of human occupation of Southern Ontario, describes the characteristics of archaeological sites in Ontario, presents the current state of understanding of cultural heritage through an exploration of the status of the database established on the Cultural Heritage of the Don, relates some reporting issues, and evaluates the current conditions of cultural heritage preservation in the watershed based on proposed indicators and measures. More detailed accounts of the history of the Don River watershed can be found in *Forty Steps to a New Don* (MTRCA, 1994), the *Don Watershed Heritage Study* (MTRCA, 1996) and, for the Lower Don, in the *Environmental Assessment for the Naturalization and Flood Protection for the Lower Don River: Cultural Heritage Study* (TRCA, 2004).

2.0 Brief History of Human Occupation in Southern Ontario

Over thousands of years and into the present, geological processes such as glaciation, erosion, flooding and deposition have shaped the Don River watershed into a unique environment and provided a diverse and resource rich environment for human occupation. Humankind has always been fascinated with its history. The remains of what was past continue to intrigue and educate us. Evidence of past human settlement, transmitted through material culture (artifacts) is considered a non-renewable environmental resource that can provide

information that allows us to contemplate and attempt to understand our present relationship with the environment.
Archaeological evidence highlights how watershed resources were used and impacted in the past, revealing environmental reasons for settlement. These relationships include proximity to water (water-taking, food procurement, transportation) soil characteristics (for agriculture), slope conditions (for settlement), local biotic communities (food, shelter, clothing) and landscapes (spirituality). Watershed planning must take these fragile, non-renewable archaeological resources into account in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of our past, present and future relationship with our environment.

Another important aspect of the prehistoric legacy of the watershed is found in the study of its cultural ecology. Cultural ecology provides information of our everlasting ties with the watershed and intimate relationship with our environment. Just as archaeology provides us with physical evidence of the human use of the watershed in Ontario's prehistory, cultural ecology allows us to understand the symbiotic relationship that people had with the land and water. Human settlement was directly dictated by the presence of resources and these resources in turn were impacted through their use by the earliest inhabitants of the watershed. In a manner of speaking, cultural ecology at one level is the study and recognition of prehistoric sustainability. Ontario's earliest advocates of sustainability recognized the necessity of this form of environmental praxis. Without this understanding they could not have survived.

For more than 10,000 years the Don River has beheld the pageant of history that has been unrolled before it: Aboriginal hunters and farmers, explorers, traders, men of God, soldiers and surveyors and finally, settlers. They all came to use the river in some way; to make it their home, to earn a living. Today, much of the river flows through urban development.

The story of the Don River begins with the Aboriginal peoples who walked this land 12,000 years ago in small family groups following game and in search of resources. Millennia later, communities numbering in the thousands planted the rich loamy soil with the 'Three Sisters' (maize/corn, beans and squash). By the time the first Europeans (the French) arrived in the area, most of the Aboriginal communities living in this area had adopted this sedentary horticultural lifestyle and were speaking the Iroquoian languages.

From this time forward, glimpses into the past are provided by the written record: maps of exploration, reports, and letters in the early period. Later, these were bolstered by government documents, newspapers and books as the settlement period advanced. The following sections reveal the story of human occupation and cultural ecology that can be interpreted from heritage features.

2.1 PalaeoIndian Period – 12,000 to 10,000 BP

As the glaciers retreated from southern Ontario, nomadic peoples gradually moved into the areas recently vacated by the massive ice-sheets. It should be remembered that, as the glaciers melted at the end of the last ice age 12,000 years ago, the landscape of southern Ontario was very much like the tundra of the present day eastern sub-arctic. During this time, the entire population of southern Ontario is thought to be somewhere between 100 and 200 individuals. These PalaeoIndians lived in small family groups and presumably hunted caribou and other fauna associated with the cooler environment of this time period. This reconstruction

is substantiated by the location of a single toe bone of a caribou at a site in Detroit and the presence of arctic hare, arctic fox and a large ungulate at the Udora site (a PalaeoIndian encampment) near the south shore of Lake Simcoe.

During this time, the water levels and shorelines of lakes Huron and Ontario were fluctuating due to the run-off of the melting glaciers. Traditionally, the PalaeoIndian occupation of southern Ontario has been associated with these glacial lake shorelines. However, recent investigations in the Greater Toronto Area indicate that these peoples also exploited interior locations away from the glacial lakes.

2.2 Archaic Period – 10,000 to 2800 BP

As the climate in southern Ontario warmed, Aboriginal populations adapted to changing environments and associated fauna and flora. While settlement and subsistence patterns were similar to the PalaeoIndian period, many new technologies and strategies were introduced and developed by the peoples of the Archaic. Wood-working implements such as groundstone axes, adzes and gouges (implements used in dug-out canoe construction) begin to appear in the archaeological record, as do net-sinkers (for fishing), numerous types of spear points and items made from native copper, mined from the Lake Superior region. The presence of native copper on archaeological sites in southern Ontario and adjacent areas suggests that Archaic groups were already involved in long-range exchange and interaction with one another. The trade networks established at this time were to persist for millennia between Aboriginal groups and intensified during European contact.

To harvest the new riches of the warming climate, the Archaic bands of southern Ontario followed an annual cycle which exploited seasonably available resources in differing geographic locales within individual watersheds. For example, from spring through fall, bands joined together and inhabited sites in lakeshore environments where abundant foodstuffs such as fish, waterfowl and wild rice enabled the establishment of larger multi-season occupations. As the seasons changed and aquatic resources became scarce, these bands split into smaller groups and moved inland to exploit other resources that were available during the fall and winter, such as deer, rabbit, squirrel and bear, which thrived on the forest margins of these areas.

Unfortunately, due to the fluctuating Lake Ontario water levels at the end of the ice age, the shoreline would have sat at a location that is currently 10 to 20 meters below the present surface level. Aboriginal groups of this era would have exploited the shoreline environments in these now submerged locations and associated archaeological sites representing these seasonal activities are now under water. Consequently, our understanding of the Archaic uses of the Lake Ontario shoreline is poor.

2.3 Initial Woodland Period – 1000 B.C. (c3000/2800 BP) to A.D. 700

Early in the Initial Woodland period (1,000 B.C. - A.D. 0), band size and subsistence activities were generally consistent with the groups of the preceding Archaic. Associated with the earliest components of this cultural period is the introduction of clay pots. Ceramic vessels provide a means for long-term storage of abundant resources. With the ability to store foodstuffs during times of plenty the stress of harder times was greatly reduced as it would have been possible

to take advantage of accumulated goods. Additionally, around the turn of the first millennium A.D., a revolutionary new technology, the bow and arrow, was brought into southern Ontario and radically changed the approach to hunting. These two technological innovations allowed for major changes in subsistence-settlement patterns. As populations became larger, camps and villages with more permanent structures were occupied longer and more consistently. Generally, these larger sites are associated with the gathering of two or more band groups into what are referred to as "macrobands". Often, these larger groups would reside in favourable locations to cooperatively take advantage of readily exploitable resources such as fish.

It was also during this period that a brief horizon of Hopewellian influences (from Ohio) emerged, resulting in more elaborate burial rituals, such as cremation, burial mound construction (as with those most popularly seen at the Serpent Mounds near Peterborough, Ontario, for example) and the interment of numerous exotic grave goods with the deceased began to take place. In fact, these goods, which include large caches of well-crafted lithic blades, sheets of mica, marine shells, shark teeth, silver and copper beads, and artifacts such as platform smoking pipes and decorative ear ornaments, all indicate that the Initial Woodland period was one of increased trade and interaction between southern Ontario populations and groups as far away as the east coast and the Ohio Valley.

2.4 Ontario Iroquoians (Late Woodland) Period – A.D. 700 to 1651

Around AD 700, maize (North American corn) was introduced into southern Ontario from the south. With the development of horticulture as the predominant subsistence base, the Late Woodland period gave rise to a tremendous population increase and the establishment of permanent villages (which were occupied between 5 and 30 years). These villages consisted of numerous cigar-shaped structures, or longhouses, made from wooden posts placed in the ground and tied together at the top in an arch-like fashion. Although these windowless structures were only 8 meters (20 feet) wide (and the same in height) they extended anywhere from 12 to 60 meters (30 to 150 feet) in length providing shelter for up to 50 people[1]. Quite often, these villages, some of which are 1 to 4 hectares (3 to 10 acres) in size, were surrounded by multiple rows of palisades suggesting that defense was a community concern during this period.

Aside from villages, Late Woodland peoples also inhabited hamlets and special purpose cabins and campsites that are thought to have been associated with the larger settlements. A hamlet consisted of a small scattering of longhouses (approximately one acre in size) that were used on a year-round basis by lower numbers of people that were related to those in the village, but for various reasons lived outside of the village. Cabin sites are those sites that consist of just one longhouse, perhaps built for those individuals whose crops were located a fair distance away from the original village. As such, they were only inhabited on a seasonal basis during times of planting and harvest. Finally, there are special purpose campsites: locations that were temporarily used by Late Woodland peoples in order to extract a particular resource (such as fish, deer, or plant foods). Unfortunately, because of their short-term use, there are generally

[1] This number is based on a longhouse with 4 hearths, one family on either side of each hearth, and six people in each family. Past researchers have employed similar models based on what is known from the early missionaries that lived among these Iroquoian groups in the seventeenth century.

few artifacts and they rarely contain evidence of structural remains. Many of these campsites are associated with Algonkian-speaking nations who continued a relatively nomadic lifestyle (primarily on the Canadian Shield areas where crop cultivation was not predictable) although travel to and trade with their Iroquoian-speaking counterparts was common.

Also associated with the Late Woodland period are the large communal grave sites known as "ossuaries." Ossuaries are large circular pits (approximately 4 to 10 meters in diameter) that contain the skeletal remains of hundreds of individuals. Historically we know that, every ten years or so, the inhabitants of one or several villages would exhume the remains of their ancestors from their original resting places, clean and wrap them in fur robes, and re-inter them in prepared pits a short distance from the hosting village. The purpose of this secondary and final burial was to reaffirm and strengthen community ties. At the end of this tremendously powerful ceremony, which could last up to 10 days, it was believed that the souls of the deceased were finally at rest and united with one another in the spiritual world.

This period represents a time when a number of social changes were taking place in Iroquoian society, as reflected in the flourishing of smoking pipe types (which played an important cosmological role), burial rituals, increased size in settlements, and distinct clustering of both longhouses within villages (clan development) and villages within a region (tribal development). One interesting socio-cultural phenomenon that occurred during this period was a matrilineal/matrilocal organization, where women, as the major providers of food, played an integral role in the political life of the Ontario Iroquoian groups.

After centuries of small-scale warfare and the gradual depletion of resources, such as soil nutrients and firewood, the Late Woodland groups that inhabited the north shore of Lake Ontario began moving their villages northward towards Georgian Bay. It was these groups that eventually evolved into the Petun and Huron Nations witnessed and recorded by the early French missionaries and explorers during the seventeenth century as the newcomers traveled up the Trent-Severn waterway on their journeys inland from the St. Lawrence. By AD 1650, the numbers of people in both of those nations dwindled through contact with Europeans (and their diseases) and many relocated or were adopted through continued warfare with the League Iroquois (Five Nations) from New York State.

Descendants of the PreContact indigenous peoples continue to reside on reserve lands and in urban areas throughout Ontario, as well as in other provinces and many U.S. states, and are actively involved in consultations with the provincial and federal governments relating to ancestral sites (particularly burial grounds and other sacred spaces) and proposed projects that might have an impact on ancestral territories and Aboriginal rights under the Canadian constitution.

2.5 Post-Contact (AD 1650-1800)

Southern Ontario lay largely vacant following the tumultuous times of the early 17th century. During the second half of the century, a few villages, primarily of Five Nations/Seneca, were established on the north shore of Lake Ontario. At around 1700, in the wake of several peace treaties and land agreements with both the Iroquois and the French, the north shore of Lake Ontario was settled by southward moving Algonkian-speaking Ojibwa and Mississauga groups

looking to further their role in the fur trade. Although there were reportedly two main Mississauga villages along the shoreline in the 1780s, a number of small seasonal encampments elsewhere indicate that they maintained their traditional subsistence strategies of fishing, hunting and collecting, while gradually incorporating any European technologies made available to them through trade.

The French explorers and fur traders began to travel along the Lake Ontario shoreline and explore parts of the north shore inland. They followed the centuries-old route of the well-established west branch of the 'Toronto Carrying Place Trail' along the Humber River and the east branch along the Rouge River north to the Holland River and beyond, to the upper lakes. It was at this time that the Métis culture developed, resulting initially from the union of indigenous women with the fur traders and a blending of cultural traditions with the ensuing generations began.

2.6 Euro-Canadian History (AD 1800 to 1900)

The arrival of Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe in 1796 began the formal colonial period of land grants and settlement of the Toronto area. Most of the surrounding townships had begun to be surveyed in the 1790s. The first land grants in the area were in 1796 to absentee landlords, primarily as a form of payment for military service or to United Empire Loyalists. Actual settlement began to occur once the original patent holders began to sell their properties. Yonge Street was cleared by 1800 linking communities between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe. The population grew steadily as more settlers were attracted to the rich farm land so near to the growing markets of the town of York (later Toronto) and York County. Mills were built along the major watercourses, and hamlets grew around these and near the major north-south and east-west travel routes. Tracks for the railroads were constructed beginning in the 1850s. Local histories for the communities of this area are plentiful and varied.

2.7 20th and 21st Century Culture

In addition to the initial land clearing and settlement of the Don River watershed, *Forty Steps to a New Don* describes the three waves of more extensive urban settlement that have occurred in the Don River watershed since the late 1700s: the first wave of European settlement in the Lower Don (1793-1920), the second wave in the middle reaches of the watershed (1945-1965), and the third wave in the upper reaches (1975-present) (MTRCA, 1994). Key events and trends during these waves of settlement include:

- Agriculture and city building resulting in deforestation, buried tributaries, erosion and flooding;
- Rerouting of the mouth of the Don from Ashbridge's Bay to the artificial Keating Channel and creation of the port industrial lands;
- Suburbanization of rural agricultural lands;
- Construction of the Don Valley Parkway in the river valley; and
- Rapid population growth.

More detailed accounts of the history of the Don River watershed can be found in *Forty Steps to a New Don* (MTRCA, 1994), the *Don Watershed Heritage Study* (MTRCA, 1996) and, for the Lower Don, in the *Environmental Assessment for the Naturalization and Flood Protection for the Lower Don River: Cultural Heritage Study* (TRCA, 2004).

2.7.1 New Canadians

The role and impact of immigration continues to be seen in the changing cultural fabric of the watershed's residents. As of the 2001 Canadian census, the Don Watershed is home to 1.15 million people. The prevalent ethnic origins in the Don Watershed remained Canadian or British heritage (30%), followed by Jewish (11%) and Chinese (11%). Of the recent immigrants (i.e., those who immigrated to Canada between 1996 and 2001), the predominant countries of origin were: China (14%), Iran (8%), Philippines (7%), Russia (6%), and Pakistan (6%). The remaining new immigrants came from over 35 different countries.

Many new Canadians celebrate their cultural heritage and continue to practice their traditions. They are also often keen to learn about their adopted Canadian heritage. They are common users of local tourist destinations and natural spaces, and are often eager volunteers in events, such as tree planting, where they can begin to develop a sense of community. This means that there is an ever evolving living culture in the watershed that should be appreciated and documented. In addition, there is a need to understand the changing needs and appreciation of nature. There are opportunities to offer educational programs which will welcome newcomers and encourage the exchange of cultural heritage and stewardship of the natural environment.

2.7.2 Living Culture

The Don River watershed contains hundreds of contemporary cultural resources – the continuously evolving properties, features, landscapes, and cultures, which link the inhabitants of today's watershed to their surrounding cultural and natural environments. As culture helps to define our interests and needs, the cultural resources found in many different communities across the watershed may be both similar and unique. Some contemporary cultural resources are properties, such as pools, arenas, churches, hospitals, government buildings, golf courses, and parks, all of which provide services for individual and community needs and interests.

Many other types of features and events play a role in contemporary cultural heritage, such as architectural landmarks, art galleries, botanical gardens, cinemas, community centers, cultural and religious centers, fairgrounds, festivals, special events days, libraries, museums, public art and theatres, dance studios, heritage themed signage on walking trails, fiction and non-fiction books, walking tour brochures, murals on public buildings, and a number of websites. Cultural features help educate and entertain people from both inside and outside the watershed.

Museums and art galleries are also common and important cultural assets. Within the watershed, there are several museums and art galleries. These venues display visual forms of culture, often featuring the artifacts and works produced by the local population, providing area residents with a better picture of the cultural characteristics of their neighbourhood. These resources additionally serve as attractions for non-residents, who benefit by the exposure to unique historical and artistic productions. Both museums and art galleries often provide informative details which supplement the school curriculum. Unique examples are the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art and the Koffler Centre of the Arts, featuring art galleries, studios, theatre, as well as music and dance schools. Contemporary cultural features such as these are part of the fabric which strengthens and binds communities together throughout the watershed. The Science Centre brings together aspects of science and culture through innovative and

enriching methods. The 1935 David Dunlap Observatory is a former working research centre and a Richmond Hill landmark. Part of the Observatory lands have been recommended by the Conservation Review Board for creation of a cultural heritage landscape under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Doors Open is an annual event that allows visitors free access to properties that are usually not open to the public, or would normally charge an entrance fee. Many locations have organized guided tours, displays and activities to enrich the visitor experience. To name a few, in the Don there are unique buildings such as the Don Valley Brick Works, the Distillery District, and Todmorden Mills that are open to the public for viewing. The Thornhill Village Festival is a major celebration of the preservation of the historic village character and environment of Thornhill in Markham and Vaughan. Other special events such as Paddle the Don and Richmond Hill's Mill Pond Splash are annual events that celebrate and support the Don River through public and corporate participation.

There are many ways in which we express our past and present relationships with the environment. Photography, literature, drawing, painting, and performance arts are just a few of the activities that help foster an awareness and appreciation for living things and instill in us a sense of stewardship. These forms of media can also represent some of the most compelling means of communication about the need for protection and conservation of natural and cultural heritage. By looking at past works of artists, we can learn of their perspectives on their environment; by watching or participating in ethnic dance or live music, we can experience cultural traditions blending with the geographic and cultural climate developing in the watershed.

Community groups are dynamic elements that help shape living cultures in Toronto. These groups may have ethnicity; religion; environmental, natural, or social issues; or heritage concerns as their focus. Their efforts create a layer of social activity that strengthens our local sense of place and evolving identities.

The Don River played a central role in many books that were written during the past several yeas. *Mrs. Simcoe's Diary* (Simcoe, 1965) documents early 18th century settlement along the Don River; Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* (1996) depicts life in the 19th century and takes place in several locations some within the Don Watershed; *I've Got a Home in Glory Land*, by Karolyn Smartz Frost (2007) illuminates a moment in time where the underground railway intersected the Don Watershed; Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of the Lion*, (1991) set in the 1920's unfolds through fiction the construction of the Bloor Viaduct; and Charles Sauriol's several publications about the Don, past and present (1981,1984,1992,1995).

Gardening represents another form of cultural expression, in the choice of foods, plants and design. By working with the soil and relying on the garden as a source of food, we also learn to respect the natural environment. The City of Toronto has launched a Community Gardens Program; Sackville Park, Don Mount Court, and Eglinton Park Heritage Garden Park are examples of these initiatives in the watershed.

These "living cultural" forms of expression should be promoted and celebrated as an exciting way of engaging new and existing members of the community in an entertaining celebration of

the watershed's natural and cultural heritage.

3.0 Measuring Cultural Heritage

The original Don Watershed Plan, *Forty Steps to a New Don*, included as Step 28, "Honor our cultural heritage throughout the watershed" (MTRCA, 1994). However, the reporting mechanisms established in the Don Watershed report cards have not included any indicators for cultural heritage to date. Given the lack of prior reporting, at this point a set of indicators and measures can be proposed and a baseline can be established. The proposed indicator and measures presented in Section 4.4 may be used to assess progress towards cultural heritage related objectives of the Don River watershed. The indicator and measures are based on data collected and tracked in the TRCA's Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database. While tracking progress towards improved interpretation and celebration of cultural heritage is important, the database doesn't lend itself to tracking those issues.

The original cultural heritage inventory began in 1992 and is described in the *Don Watershed Heritage Study* (MTRCA, 1996). The Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database is a TRCA initiative, in partnership with municipalities, to monitor the status of heritage structures within the watershed. The database can be used to track changes over time, such as demolitions of listed structures or increased protection represented by increases in the number of structures listed or designated. Fields for the database were based on the Heritage Record Form for Environmental Assessments, defined by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (Figure 1).

The inventory is confined to aspects of cultural heritage involving "real property", or real estate – land and structures – usually described as historic or archaeological sites. As such, the inventory does not encompass other aspects of cultural heritage, important though they are, such as "movable property" (artifacts), archives, published documentary history, folklore or traditions, and oral histories. Five categories of cultural resources are included in the inventory:

- Archaeological sites are formally registered in the provincial archaeological database. However, in order to protect these sites, their locations are not disclosed to the general public.
- Designated sites - designated by municipal bylaws under authority of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; may also involve provincial government recognition (a blue-and-gold plaque) or a federal designation (a red-and-gold plaque).
- Listed sites - recognized by Municipal Heritage Committees (MHC) as being significant to warrant monitoring and with potential for designation at some future time.
- Cultural heritage landscapes and heritage conservation districts - communities or concentrations of designated/listed sites, such as Cabbagetown and old Thornhill.
- Contemporary cultural features - prominent modern structures, generally in public use; for example, Ontario Science Centre, Sunnybrook Hospital.

Figure 1. Historic Properties - Sample Data Sheet from Don watershed heritage inventory update.

ID Number:	15
Name:	Peter Rupert House
Address/Lot&Con:	51 Belmont Crescent
Original Use:	Residence
Date:	1851
Architectural Style:	Not assigned
Reference:	Vaughan Inventory
Type of Listing: (D/L/C/demolished)	Designated
Category of Access: (public/private)	Private
Extent: single/multiple	Single
OBM:	69
Northing:	4855110
Easting:	615950
Municipality:	Vaughan
Comments:	see data file

4.0 Current Condition of Cultural Heritage Resources

4.1 Built Heritage

Built Heritage Resources are described in the 2005 Ontario Provincial Policy Statement as involving “one or more significant buildings, structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history and identified as being important to a community”. Figure 2 shows some (but not all) of the widely recognized cultural heritage features in the Don River watershed, including heritage conservation districts, heritage buildings and museums, and “highlight areas” where clusters of features exist; and conceptually identifies areas that have the potential to provide distinctive experiences about the cultural heritage of the Don River watershed.

The original Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database compiled in the early 1990s had 418 listings in Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill, and the pre-amalgamation municipalities of what was then Metropolitan Toronto. Since that time, the number of structures listed by the five municipalities within the watershed has increased over tenfold. As of January 2006, there were 4,984 listings. The database was updated using recent heritage inventories from Don municipalities. As such, the increase reflects the increasing efforts of municipalities to identify heritage properties through listing or designation. Table 1 presents the number of heritage properties listed in the Don Cultural Heritage Database by municipality (see Appendix A for a

definition of terms). Toronto showcases the largest number of heritage features in general as well as in any of the categories. Heritage districts are the main contributors to the large numbers, and Toronto wards that contain heritage districts display significantly higher numbers in comparison to other wards. The distribution of listings per municipality is both a function of the cluster of historic districts and the proportion of watershed area that lies within the borders of each municipality.

Since the original Don database was compiled, heritage easements have been introduced as another legislative tool for heritage protection, and this category has been added to the database. In addition, a category included in the updated database is "buildings of interest", used by the City of Vaughan to indicate properties which after further review or research may be determined to have cultural heritage significance.

Table 1: Summary of Listings in the Don Cultural Heritage Database as of January 2006.

Municipality	Designated[1]	Listed	Building of interest[2]	Demolished	Relocated	Other[3]	Total
Markham	75	45	-	0	0	21	**141**
Richmond Hill	28	230	-	0	0	39	**297**
Toronto	3,053	1,028	-	40	2	146	**4,269**
Vaughan	86	64	97	0	0	30	**277**
Total	**3,242**	**1,367**	**97**	**40**	**2**	**236**	**4,984**

[1] These numbers may include hundreds of designated cultural heritage buildings that are clustered within Heritage Conservation Districts and are protected and celebrated at a community scale rather than as individual properties.
[2] 'Building of Interest' is a designation used by the City of Vaughan to indicate properties which after further review or research may be determined to have cultural heritage significance; category is not applicable in other municipalities.
[3] Other built heritage includes parks, greenbelts, schools, cemeteries, mill sites, etc.

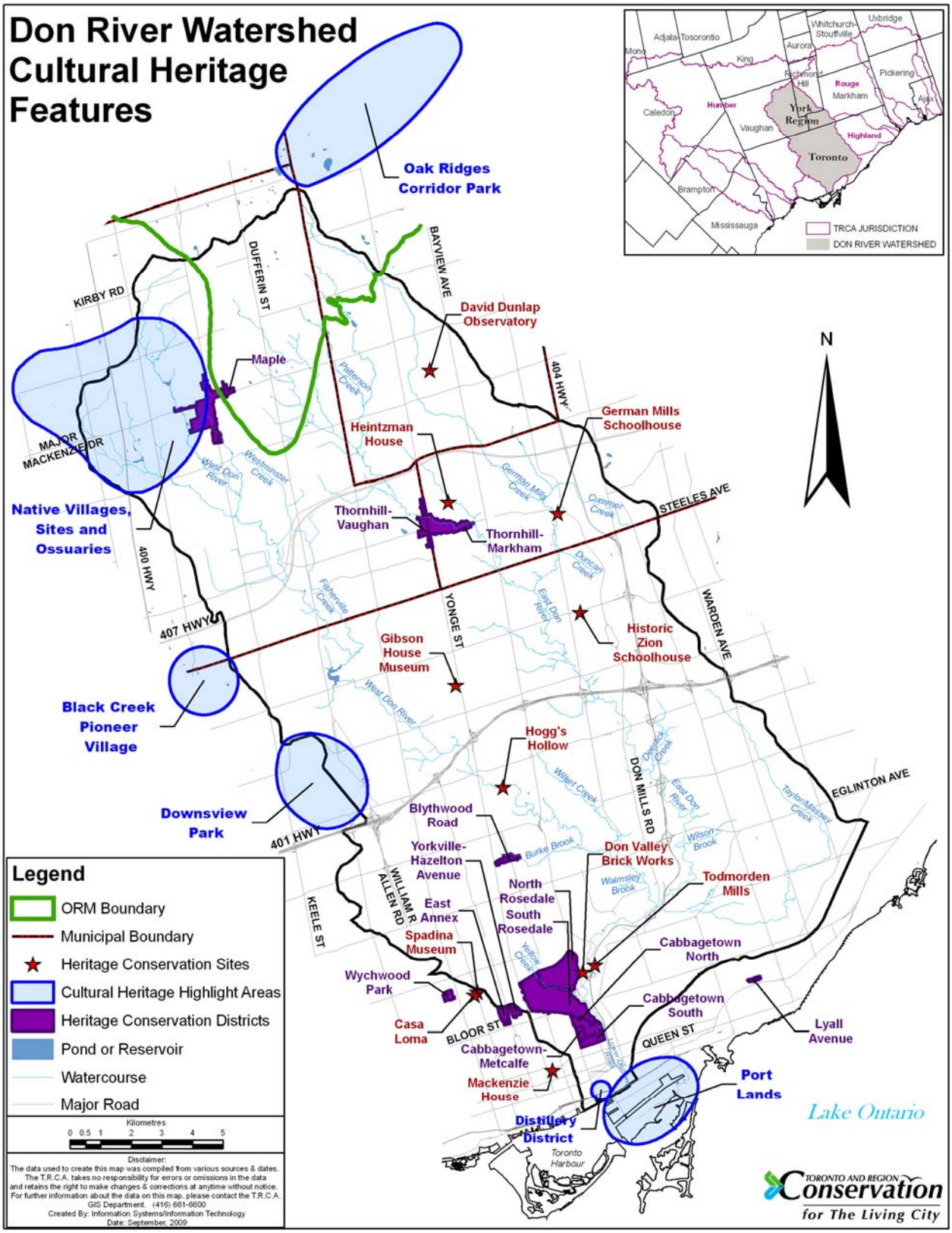
There are many types of built heritage that are not yet captured by the database. Most notably, mill ponds, old bridges and bridge abutments, and the remains of historical channelisation works (e.g., original Don Narrows bank protections) exist throughout the watershed.

The database of addresses is largely complete up to 2006. However, additional work is required to complete all database fields (e.g., photographs, architectural styles, age, GIS coordinates). While the database lacks spatial data for most of the new properties preventing GIS mapping of concentrations of heritage structures, a ward-by-ward inventory of Toronto shows that the great majority of heritage structures (approximately 85%) are concentrated in the two wards closest to the mouth of the Don, representing the earliest settlement areas when the Don was the heartland of Toronto.

The database provides useful information for monitoring purposes, such as information on:

- demolitions of structures from the previous database,
- increasing municipal concern (may be reflected in the huge increase in listings),
- changes from listed to designated,
- removals from listed or designated,
- heritage easements, and
- heritage conservation districts.

Figure 2: Cultural heritage features in the Don River watershed.



Euro-Canadian early settlement has left a legacy of important heritage structures ranging from Toronto's oldest existing house, to industrial sites like the Brick Works and Todmorden Mills, and representing the various architectural styles in vogue as the original settlement of "muddy York" grew into the megacity of today, with the Don flowing through the heart of the settlement. The Don was the site of Toronto's oldest surviving house, built by the Queen's Rangers in 1794 for John Scadding, clerk to Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe. The one-room, square-timber Scadding Cabin now sits at Exhibition place. Industrial sites, such as the Brick Works and Todmorden Mills have become public spaces devoted to education. The sensitive renovation of the Distillery District has been a model of revitalizing heritage buildings, without disturbing their architectural integrity. Finally, the inclusion of relatively new buildings such as the 1965 Bata Shoe building on Wynford Drive (just west of the Don Watershed boundary) reminds us that buildings from any era can be architecturally significant and part of our evolving heritage.

With respect to heritage resource protection, a large majority of the buildings (65%) are designated, with almost 29% being listed or of interest (which is the precursor to listing). Less than 1% have been demolished. However, there are some structures on the original database which do not appear on current municipal lists. Further research is required to determine whether this represents a formal de-listing of these structures.

Focusing on 3,242 designated buildings in the database, only 7 (0.2%) have been demolished (4 of these after repeal of their designation). The vast majority, 95%, or 3,076, of designated buildings received designation because of location in a Heritage Conservation District. The establishment of Heritage Conservation Districts has added whole neighbourhoods, which may include hundreds of individual structures, to the list of designated buildings. In this way, whole streetscapes have been recognized as significant. There are 10 designated Heritage Conservation Districts in the Don, eight of which are located in the City of Toronto, with the remaining two in Vaughan and Markham (Figure 2).

Another tool available to a municipality to recognize properties with heritage attributes is the 'heritage easement,' and several of the municipalities within the Don have begun to employ this valuable planning tool. Heritage easements in some respects offer more protection than designation.

The tenfold increase in municipal listing of structures would seem to indicate increasing municipal concern in taking at least the first steps in protecting structures. Much of the increase is due to the large number of buildings designated within Heritage Conservation Districts (Figure 2). However, within the inventory 2.4% of listed buildings have been demolished, in comparison with only 0.2% of designated buildings. One of the strengths of the amended *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2005 is that there is now permanent demolition control for designated properties under the *Act* and a measure of limited demolition control for listed properties.

4.2 Archaeological Sites

An archaeological site is "any property that contains an artifact or any other physical evidence of past human use or activity that is of cultural heritage value or interest" (Government of Ontario, 2006). As of January 2006, there are 193 known archaeological sites in the Don River watershed, according to the records of the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Heritage (Tables 2

and 3). Many of the sites are isolated finds, or small temporary camp sites; some are larger, sedentary, and may be considered more significant. An example for a large sedentary significant site in the watershed is the McGaw site in Richmond Hill. A Late Iroquoian Village from the 15th century, the site is unusual in that it was never disturbed by plowing for agriculture. McGaw is located near the Elgin West Community Centre in Richmond Hill. The proximity of an archaeological site influenced the design of the centre, in the inclusion of archaeology displays. Also, the centre formerly housed the headquarters of the Ontario Archaeological Society (OAS), which ran public programs and, with the York Region District School Board, school programs. In both cases, program participants took part in actual archaeological excavation.

Another exciting find in the watershed that is highly significant, is the site of the first parliament of Upper Canada, which was burned by American forces during the War of 1812. The discovery and subsequent efforts to acquire the site from the landowner received substantial media coverage.

Table 2: Distribution of Cultural Affiliation of Archaeological Sites in the Don Watershed (Jan. 2006).

Cultural Affiliation	Frequencies	%
PalaeoIndian	0	0
Archaic	27	14.0
Woodland	24	26.4
Multicomponent	9	4.7
Undetermined Aboriginal	90	46.6
Historic, Euro-Canadian	43	48.7
Total	**193**	**100.00**

Table 3 categorizes the archaeological sites in the Don Watershed according to settlement types which range in size and rarity. The majority, 81.8%, of the sites are Aboriginal, while 18.1% are Euro-Canadian sites. Isolated finds, campsites, and homesteads are the most common settlement types.

Table 3: Distribution of Settlement Types in the Don Watershed (Jan. 2006).

Settlement Types	Frequencies	%
Isolated Finds	67	34.7
Campsites	55	28.5
Village	10	5.2
Midden	4	2.1
Burial	6	3.1
Manufacturing Site	1	0.5
Undetermined Aboriginal	15	7.8
Homestead	28	14.5
Cabin	4	2.1
Mill	1	0.5
School Yard	1	0.5
Inn	1	0.5
Total	**193**	**100.00**

TRCA archaeologists have developed a predictive model for PreContact Aboriginal sites utilizing the data for sites known on conservation lands. The model assigns the probability of a location having an archaeological site based on three main variables – slope, drainage, and distance from water (see *An Archaeological Master Plan for the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority*, Burgar, 1990). This model was updated in 2003 (Figure 3). A location is assigned a rating of high, medium, or low for each of the three variables, based on the parameters outlined in Table 4. When TRCA undertook this exercise at the full watershed scale a significant amount of the lands within the Don watershed were found to be rated high potential for the existence of archaeological sites, with the caveat that those areas already developed might be too highly impacted to contain any remnants of PreContact sites.

Table 4: Criteria and Ratings used in TRCA's PreContact Archaeological Site Predictive Model.

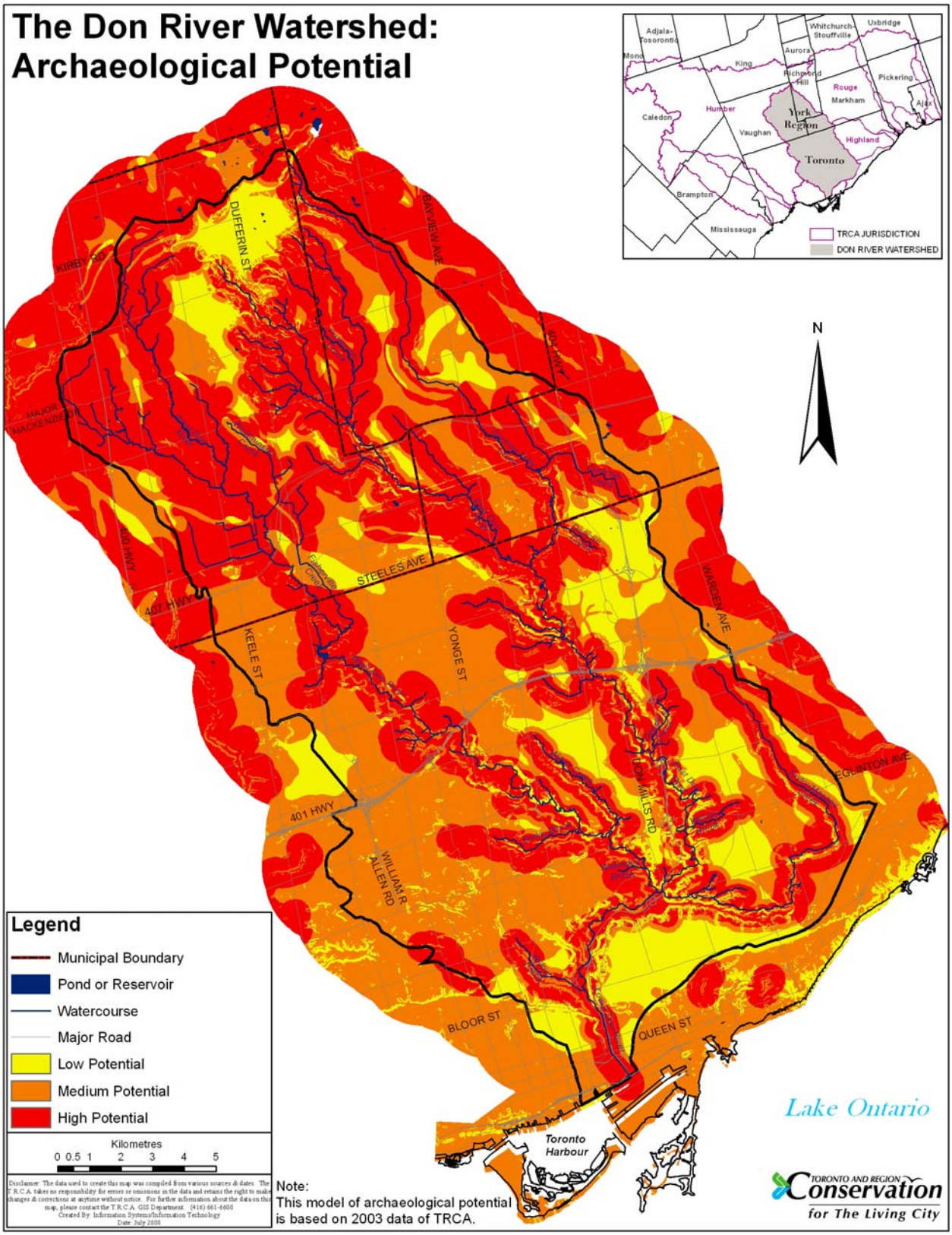
Variable	Value	Distance to Water (m)	Slope (% grade)	Soil Drainage
H - High Rating	3	0 – 331m	0 - 5	Good
M – Medium Rating	2	331 – 497m	5 - 10	Imperfect
L – Low Rating	1	> 497m	> 10	Poor

The different combinations of the ratings for the three variables are assigned a category number, and these categories are assigned a high, medium, or low potential, based on the average score for the three ratings.

As can be seen in Figure 3, most areas within the watershed fall into the high probability category, with a few of medium probability. Very few areas are of low probability, as long as the lands have remained relatively undisturbed by modern ground-disturbing activities. Other characteristics may be factored into predictive modeling such as unusual land formations, sacred/spiritual spaces and resource-rich areas, and specific variables are factored into Historic period modeling such as distance to a surveyed road (historic transportation route) (Government of Ontario, 2006).

Archaeological master plans have been developed at the municipal scale in the Don watershed by the City of Vaughan (1989), the Town of Richmond Hill (1990) and the City of Toronto (2004), plus the Town of Markham has inventoried their archaeological resources. The master plans and background archaeological studies greatly assist municipal planning staff as they identify the known archaeological resources to-date as well as areas of archaeological potential that require assessment ahead of development. Moreover, municipalities and other public agencies are giving greater attention to Aboriginal consultation with respect to archaeological resources as they formulate policies to update their Official Plans and guiding protocols.

Figure 3. TRCA archaeological potential model for PreContact archaeological sites in the Don Watershed



4.3 Abstract Resources

Abstract resources include oral histories and cultural heritage landscapes - geographical areas of heritage significance which have been modified by human activities and are valued by a community. Little work has been done on cultural heritage landscapes (except heritage conservation districts), oral histories, or traditional nomenclature, although there are some good resources such as Charles Sauriol's books on the Don (1981, 1984, and 1995), the Ministry of Culture website, and more (see Additional Sources).

TRCA staff has noted a need to inventory all tributaries of the Don, record the traditional names where possible, to give the streams a "more visible character" (Miller, 1991). Miller compiled a list of 58 Don River tributaries where he lists names for 19 streams (including the Lower, East and West Don) and suggests possible names for another 18, based on original landholders, aboriginal nomenclature, historic settlements, and current land uses and land owners. The Don River is a watershed of "lost rivers", including Yellow Creek, Burke Brook, Cudmore Creek, and Mud Creek. Highlighting segments of these tributaries could serve both ecological and cultural purposes. Lost Rivers is an active group in Toronto that engages in public education and walks along buried streams (see Additional Sources).

4.4 Summary

The cultural heritage objective for the Don River Watershed Plan is to identify, document, protect and celebrate the cultural and heritage resources of the watershed. The Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database can be used as an indicator of progress towards identification and documentation of cultural heritage resources. Overall, the cultural heritage indicator has been assigned a rating of "Fair". While progress has been made in updating the Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database since its creation in the 1990s, much work remains, including updating the database with geographic coordinates, and descriptions and photographs of architectural style.

Tracking progress in celebrating and protecting cultural and heritage resources is difficult, as it encompasses the activities and events of numerous organizations, including municipalities and grassroots groups. Regionally, TRCA continues to undertake archaeological surveys, update heritage inventories and assess properties for archaeological resources prior to making any site alterations. All municipalities in the Don River watershed have heritage committees and are working to record, categorize and update their heritage inventories. Toronto, Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill have Archaeological Master Plan studies and provide an on-line searchable database and, in some instances, an interactive map of their heritage properties. Some municipalities, such as Toronto, use mapping of the potential for archaeological finds to inform the development planning process.

A cultural heritage study was conducted in the Lower Don as part of the Environmental Assessment for the Naturalization and Flood Protection for the Lower Don River (TRCA, 2004). The study inventoried existing cultural heritage resources through a combination of fieldwork and a review of historical records, and identified 61 human heritage features in the study area, including two archaeological sites. Many of the heritage features are reflective of early

Toronto's industrial and commercial history, although there is some potential for future identification of additional heritage structures, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological sites that would represent other historical aspects of the area.

Ongoing Official Plan reviews in some watershed municipalities (Richmond Hill, Markham, Vaughan) offer an opportunity to update cultural heritage policies and requirements for heritage investigations during development planning (new and redevelopment).

Cultural heritage is being interpreted and celebrated at a number of sites in the watershed, including:

- Toronto's early industrial history and growth is featured at Todmorden Mills Heritage Museum and Arts Centre.
- Evergreen programming at the Don Valley Brick Works focuses on the relationship between nature, culture, and community at the site of an historic clay brick factory.
- The Gibson House museum and the Zion Schoolhouse are restored 19th century buildings available for tours and group bookings in Toronto.
- Toronto Green Community and the Toronto Field Naturalists host "Lost River Walks" in the Don River watershed, tracing the historic paths of buried or piped streams, such as Burke Brook, Castle Frank Brook, and Cudmore Creek.
- Heintzman House, German Mills School House, and Thornhill Village Library, plus the Thornhill-Markham Heritage Conservation District and the programs provided by the Society for the Preservation of Historic Thornhill in Markham,
- Richmond Hill Heritage Centre Museum is a restored 1840s Regency style cottage offering heritage programs, galleries and exhibits, and facility rentals.
- Vaughan's historic 19th century homes that are restored and available for arts and culture exhibitions and events include the Sarah Noble House and the Frank Robson Log House in Maple, the Baker House, the John Arnold House, the MacDonald House and the Armstrong House in Thornhill, and the John Charlton House in Concord.
- Vaughan has designated two Heritage Conservation Districts in the Don, including one in Thornhill (immediately west of Markham's Thornhill-Markham HCD) and one in Maple, and offers Heritage Discovery Tours.

Objective		Overall Rating
Identify, document, protect and celebrate the cultural and heritage resources of the watershed		Fair
Indicator	**Measures**	**Target**
Cultural heritage resources	Database of known archaeological, historic and burial sites; and built structures.	Increase the database of known archaeological, historic and burial sites, and built structures.

5.0 Management Considerations

Human cultural heritage has a long history in the Don River watershed. Understanding that cultural heritage helps to define our sense of place and provides insights into today's landscapes, environmental conditions, and human-environment relationships. For the purpose of this plan, cultural heritage includes archaeological resources, built heritage, cultural heritage landscapes as well as the stories associated with them. It also includes living culture pursuits, such as art, performing arts and gardening that are a means of expressing present relationships with our environment. Key cultural heritage issues and challenges in the Don River watershed include:

- Ongoing identification and preservation of all forms of cultural heritage landscapes including archaeological sites, built heritage structures, and natural elements such as heritage trees, or combinations thereof.
- Need for information sharing between heritage professionals and culturally descendant populations regarding the interpretations and cultural significance of the heritage resources being preserved.
- Lack of a suitable central repository for archaeological artifacts.
- Limited public awareness of both the historical and current relationships between people and the watershed.
- Changing cultural demographic of the watershed's residents.

As the era of greenfield development of the Don draws to a close, the main thrust of the cultural heritage work will begin to shift from development-driven surveys and finds to preservation, interpretation and celebration of known cultural heritage resources. Celebration of human heritage and the interrelatedness of human history and the natural environment already is a focus at some well known sites, such as Todmorden Mills and the Don Valley Brick Works, but there are many more opportunities to tell the story of the cultural heritage of the Don River watershed.

Major management considerations for cultural heritage in the Don River watershed include: 1) taking advantage of new cultural heritage discoveries during the remaining greenfield development in the watershed, 2) new discoveries and opportunities for interpretation during redevelopment, 3) the need to complete and continue to update the Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database regularly, 4) opportunities to expand documentation and interpretation of abstract cultural heritage resources, and 5) need to establish a framework of indicators for documenting 21st Century cultural sites in the watershed (e.g., churches, public art).

Some archaeological sites have long been documented through discoveries by early archaeology, often found by farmers or amateur archaeologists. However, most sites are currently discovered as part of the development process. The Ontario *Planning Act* (O.Reg. 544/06 and Bill 51) requires an archaeological assessment as part of a draft plan of subdivision application involving lands with known archaeological resources or archaeological potential. Fortunately, the legislation requires plans for long-term protection and avoidance, or proper excavation and full documentation of the site before development. In this way development not only leads to discovery, but also analysis of the site so it can be characterized according to culture and time period. Consequently, as the remaining greenfield urbanization proceeds

across the upper reaches of the Don, we can expect the total number of archaeological sites documented to increase. The further urban expansion may actually fill in gaps in our knowledge of cultures inhabiting the Don River watershed. However, there is no legislative requirement to conduct archaeological assessments for site plans or other types of development applications.

TRCA's predictive model for archaeological sites helps to target possible locations of as-yet-undocumented archaeological sites, subject to sufficient resources to undertake fieldwork to locate and document new sites. A key action is to obtain funding to survey lands not subject to development, such as in the protected areas on the Oak Ridges Moraine, in order to discover sites which would otherwise go unknown (target high probability locations and survey over a five-year period). The predictive model needs to be updated on a regular basis in order to incorporate new data.

Much of the earlier growth of the GTA occurred prior to the requirement for archaeological surveys so much of the prehistory of the area is permanently lost. However, redevelopment in the already built majority of the watershed, particularly in the Lower Don (downtown and waterfront), will provide excellent opportunities to uncover, preserve, and interpret evidence from the early development of York (later Toronto). In particular, historical built heritage should be incorporated into redevelopment plans wherever possible. Key challenges will include:

- Building support among municipalities and the community at large to incorporate heritage features (i.e., existing heritage structures and themes) into redevelopment plans. In the case of existing communities, there will be a need to encourage enhancing existing heritage features' profile in the community.
- Information from heritage studies and archaeological investigations must be made available to the public, so the community can make informed decisions about preservation of cultural heritage resources.

Yearly targets should be established to complete the Don Watershed Cultural Heritage Database, so that expenses can be budgeted. Priority should be assigned to the following projects:

- Increase efforts to recognize and protect cultural heritage landscapes of all forms;
- Fill in gaps of geographic coordinates for built heritage and other heritage landscapes by geocoding or windshield surveys, to enable complete digital mapping and distribution analyses of resources on a watershed scale;
- Photography of all structures, to allow identification and confirmation of architectural styles;
- Further research to fill in specific gaps, such as date of construction and original owner/builder/architect; and
- Coordination among TRCA's cultural heritage databases and municipal cultural heritage databases.

Furthermore, there is a need to create a repository to curate and preserve the numerous artifacts from watersheds in the GTA. These artifacts represent human occupation in the Don and neighbouring watersheds ranging from 12,000 years ago to present times.

Abstract resources have been little studied in the Don River watershed. Key actions include 1) fund a research position to collect oral histories; 2) develop support for creation of a Toronto-focused museum/interpretive centre, to celebrate the early settlement of York and its public life, domestic life, industry, and commerce in the 17th to 20th centuries; and 3) form a committee to decide on a protocol and formally name unnamed Don River tributaries.

Finally, there is great opportunity to better integrate planning and celebration of cultural heritage resources, natural heritage resources (e.g., valley lands, Oak Ridges Moraine, tableland forest), and parks and recreation. Opportunities to interpret and celebrate cultural heritage landscapes – with natural valley lands, heritage structures, and trails – should be identified. Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings as visitor centers, art galleries or restaurants should be pursued as mechanisms for funding operations and maintenance of heritage structures.

Report prepared by:

Margie Kenedy
Aldo Missio
Janet Ivey

Report reviewed by:

Cathy Crinnion
Janet Ivey
Sonya Meek

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Appendix A: Cultural Heritage Resource Definitions

Archaeological Resources

Archaeological Resources are "artifacts, archaeological sites, and marine archaeological sites. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*" (Provincial Policy Statement, 2005).

Architectural Resources

Architectural Resources are defined as: Buildings, structures, or remains built by people which reveal some of the broad architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military patterns of Ontario's Euro-Canadian history or are associated with specific events or people that have shaped Euro-Canadian history. These would include resources such as: individual buildings; groups of buildings; historic settlements; foundations; cemeteries; barns and other outbuildings; fences; bridges etc. Architectural Resources of outstanding historical or architectural character can be protected under the *Ontario Heritage Act* by being **Designated**. This procedure requires the passing of a By-Law by the local municipal government. Architectural Resources considered as potential or candidates for this protective measure are defined as **Listed**. In this report, architectural resources classified as **TRCA Listed** represents buildings, structures or remains that have been identified by TRCA staff through visual inspection that seem to be of heritage value, but are not currently **Listed** nor **Designated**.

Cultural Heritage Landscapes

Cultural Heritage Landscapes are "a geographical area of heritage significance which has been modified by human activities and is valued by a community. A landscape involves a grouping(s) of individual heritage features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites and natural elements, which together form a *significant* type of heritage form, distinctive from that of its constituent elements or parts. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, trailways and industrial complexes of cultural heritage value" (Provincial Policy Statement, 2005).

For practical purposes Historic Landscapes may be considered as part of, or a subset of, the cultural landscape but are differentiated by their historical merit. They can be remnant or existing landscapes but have a specific association to historical events, people, heritage building(s)/structures or archaeological sites. They can be clearly identified as providing an important contextual and spatial relationship necessary to preserve, interpret or reinforce the understanding of important historical resources, settings and past patterns of land use.

Heritage Conservation Districts/Heritage Area

Heritage Conservation Districts are defined as: Any aggregate of buildings, structures and open spaces that as a group is a collective asset to the community and which may have architectural, historical, archaeological or scenic value. Districts may be found in urban and rural environments and may comprise residential, commercial or industrial areas landscapes or entire villages. Heritage Conservation Districts are designated by municipal by-law, under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.