

To: Chief Administrative Officer **Date:** June 17, 2024
From: Mike Dickinson, Manager of Long Range Planning & Special Projects
Subject: **Demolition Permit Process for Buildings with Potential Heritage Value**

Recommendation(s)

1. That Council approve the addition of a new section 4 to policy LAN.57(C) 'Identification and Protection of Heritage Resources' to include a pre-demolition permit review process to determine the potential heritage value and any opportunities for conservation as per the Manager of Long Range Planning and Special Projects report dated June 17, 2024; and
2. That the Building Permit Application Form and procedure for demolitions be amended to provide guidance on heritage conservation.

Purpose

This report recommends that Council approve the Building Inspections Division's process (Process) for reviewing demolition permit applications along with the corresponding amendments to Council policy (LAN.57(C) 'Identification and Protection of Heritage Resources' that includes a new section 4 'Heritage Protection Mechanisms, Demolition Permit Review Process' (**Attachment A**). The proposed changes would provide specific guidance to staff and applicants for evaluating buildings, - structures and places that might have 'heritage value' and to determine opportunities for conservation thereof.

Background

Over the past number of years, a series of directives and recommendations to revise the City's demolition application process has been provided to staff by Council and the former Mission Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) (previously, the Mission Community Heritage Commission/MCHC). The timeline and brief description of these directives are listed in **Attachment B**.

2023 Interim Demolition Permit Review Process

In response to Council and the MHAC direction, staff implemented an interim demolition permit review process in 2023. Staff would like to finalize the Process now. The criteria for this interim review added a provision in the application requiring information on a building's age and any other characteristics that would help identify a building's heritage value, if any. Heritage BC is considered the provincial voice for education and awareness for heritage conservation. When reviewing demolition permits, staff referred to the Heritage BC's definition of heritage:

- Heritage may be related to whatever a community, past or present, values and would like to pass on the future, regardless of age or vintage.
- It can be a place, landscape, a cultural practice or a language.
- It does not have to be associated with a famous historical figure or event, or in the case of buildings and structures, architecturally significant or be aesthetically pleasing.

- Generally, any structure older than 50 years may have heritage value.

Based on the Heritage BC definition, a building's construction date of older than 50 years can be used as one of the metrics in evaluating heritage potential as part of the demolition permit review process. Other BC municipalities, including New Westminster (which has a rich history that prioritizes heritage preservation), use a 50-year building age as a metric for evaluating demolition permit applications for buildings with potential heritage value. Based on the above, staff determined that a building construction age of 50 years and older would be a metric to use in the Process.

Applicants are requested to voluntarily provide building exterior photos and historical information (where possible) with their applications as part of the Process. Staff track the permits in a spreadsheet that includes the civic address, file number, BC Assessment information (year built), photo information (links to photos), and staff evaluation notes. Building exterior photos received for are reviewed and any historical information volunteered by applicants is retained as part of the City's record.

During 2023, Development Services staff reviewed 29 demolition permits, of which, 22 had a building construction age of 50 years or more. Among these applications, two had a construction age of approximately 100 years and older. In these cases, applicants were requested to provide an archive review, recognizing the buildings' construction age (constructed in 1908 and 1934). The majority of the demolition permit applications received involved single-family dwellings. Others included two detached garages, two mobile homes, a commercial building, a warehouse, and a hotel (partially destroyed by fire).

Notwithstanding the analysis of demolition permits received in 2023, all applications for demolition with a construction age of 50 years and older were recommended for continuation of the demolition permit process. One applicant indicated he would protect some components of a building for future display at the museum or have these elements integrated into the new structure.

Discussion and Analysis

Through the experience gained from the 2023 Process, staff identified different viable options and criteria for conservation provided appropriate conditions exist; including: construction age, structural condition, types/quality of building materials, contamination of site or building materials, site location, geotechnical conditions, and building code compliance.

Heritage Protection

Beyond encouraging applicants to voluntarily conserve buildings with heritage value, BC's *Local Government Act* and *Heritage Conservation Act* provide municipalities with more direct mechanisms for protecting heritage buildings and structures as noted below.

- Heritage Designation Bylaw
- Heritage Revitalization Agreement
- Heritage Conservation Area
- Heritage Conservation Covenant.

Mission's Heritage Strategic Plan and Heritage Context Study also provide guidance in protecting the City's heritage assets. The report titled 'Heritage Conservation in Mission – Current Overview' on the June 17 agenda provides additional detail as to existing mechanisms to protect Mission's heritage as well as possible improvements to the regulatory system. Mission's protected heritage assets include the Mission Memorial Centre, Mission Museum and

the Silverhill Hall. Mission's heritage registry is an official listing of properties deemed to have heritage value. The registry allows Mission Council the option to temporarily withhold a building permit, a demolition permit and or require a Heritage Impact Assessment report in accordance with Local Government Act provisions.

As part of the development application review, staff regularly identify buildings and structures with potential heritage value and provide preliminary comments on this potential when responding to property inquiries (at the counter, by phone, or by email). Similarly, opportunities to identify heritage values of structures are encountered during the Pre-Application Review process, and with formal development applications (e.g., during the early stage of rezoning, development permit processing).

Recommended Demolition Permit Review Process

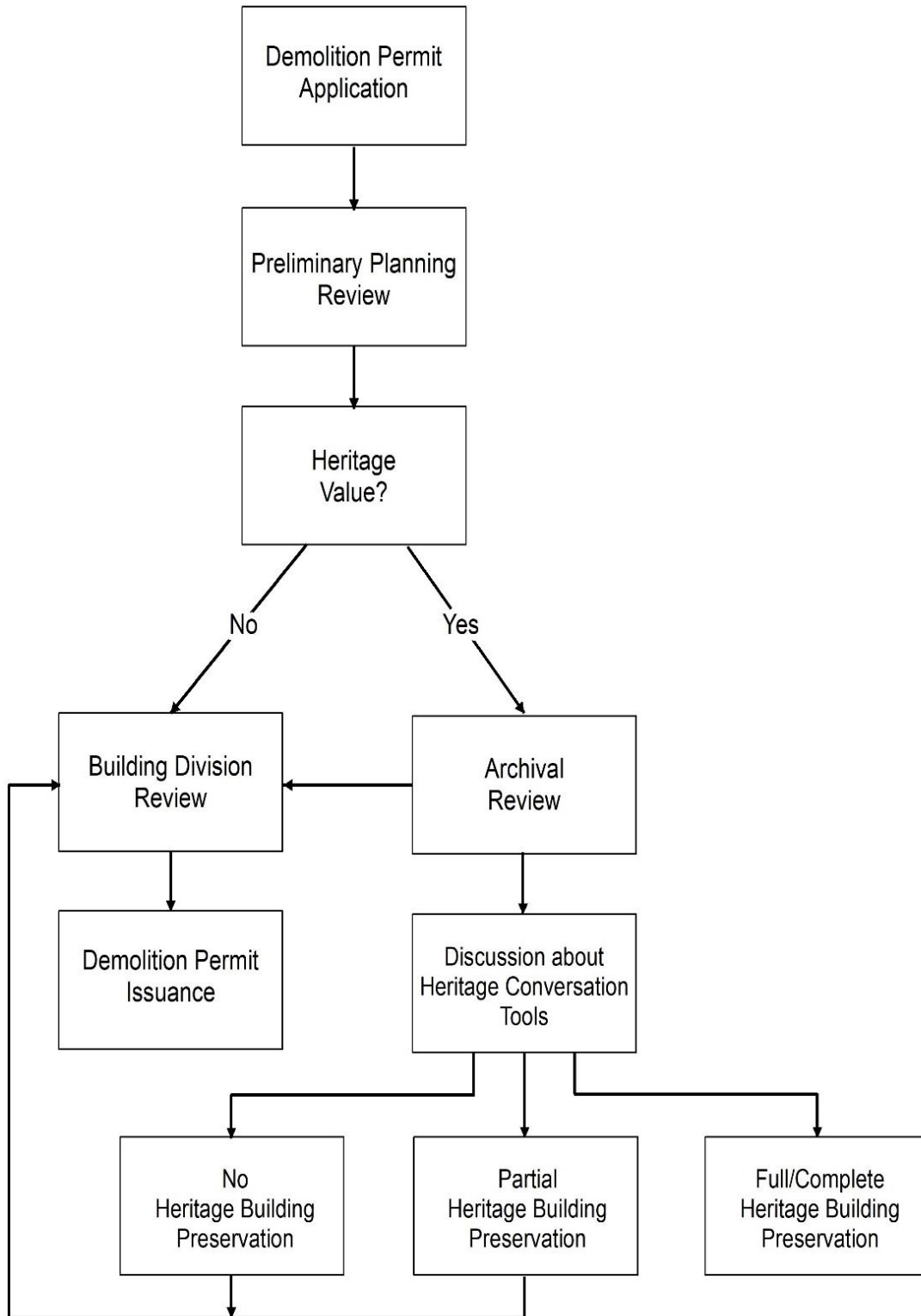
The Demolition Permit Review Process and Policy amendments recommended herein would improve staff's ability to identify buildings with potential heritage value. Evaluations would be conducted more thoroughly and expeditiously (within 10 days of Planning staff receiving demolition permits) identifying buildings with potential heritage value and communicating with applicants early in the review process. Where heritage value of a building is identified, staff could negotiate approaches for full or partial conservation with applicants.

Once a demolition permit application is received by the Building Division, all buildings and structures having a construction age of over 50 years are forwarded to Development Services staff for review of potential heritage value. In unique cases when a building having an age of less than 50 years is identified as having heritage merit, it will be reviewed accordingly. During the review process, Development Services staff will use the review criteria noted below to determine 'heritage value.' The building construction age of 50 years is a trigger point for commencing an evaluation for a building's heritage potential. At this early stage of evaluation, an applicant is requested to provide documentation with photos of the building's exterior and other historical documentation, if available. At any stage of the review process, when buildings or structures are found to have heritage value, the applicant would be contacted to discuss possible next steps for heritage conservation.

Applications for demolition of a 'protected' heritage building (one that is identified in the City's Heritage Registry or one with a Heritage Designation bylaw) shall be reviewed by staff and be referred to Council for its input. This is reflected in the recommended demolition permit review process evaluation criteria below.

Following preliminary review, where an application does not meet the heritage value requirements, then the demolition permit will be forwarded to the Building Division for further processing, which is when the demolition permit application processing time for the Building Division starts. The recommended Process is shown below and outlined in Attachment A.

Recommended Demolition Permit Review Process for Buildings with Heritage Value



Embedded within the Process are two building age categories (50 to 100 years, and 100+ years construction age) along with other evaluation criteria and processes as follows:

i. Buildings and structures with a construction age of 50 to 100 years

- Building construction date/age (using information from BC Assessment).
- Building type.
- Property address/location (e.g., south of 7th Avenue (Y/N)).
- Neighbourhood area.
- Require building exterior photos and, where possible, other historical documentation from the applicant (staff review photos or other historical documents to understand if past renovations mask possible building heritage value).
- Meet with applicant if criteria indicate the need for an Archival review., conducted by the Archives Manager.
- Require an Archival review at the discretion of the planner, unless they are for properties identified in the Heritage Registry, or if they are a Designated Heritage Site with a Bylaw (archival fee to be paid by the applicant).
- Identified on the staff's heritage inventory list (Y/N). If not, then include on the inventory which is managed by Development Services staff.
- Identified with an in-stream development application. If conditions apply, require a Statement of Significance (that could be prepared by Development Services staff).
- Identified in the Heritage Context Study (Y/N). If yes, then require a Statement of Significance.
- Identified on the Heritage Registry (Y/N). Refer to the MHAC for comments and to Council for a recommendation. This could result in Council issuing a Temporary Heritage Protection Order as authorized under the Local Government Act (that could place a demolition permit application for a building or structure with potential heritage value on hold for up to 60 days).
- Identified as a Designated Heritage Site with a Bylaw (Y/N). Refer to the MHAC for comments and to Council for a recommendation. This could also result in an issuance of a Temporary Heritage Protection Order.

ii. Buildings and structures with a construction age of 100 + years (additional evaluation criteria to be used)

- Arrange a site meeting with the applicant or owner and take photos to document the condition and location of building(s).
- Require a Statement of Significance when not part of a development application.

Financial Implications

In cases where a review is conducted to determine if a building has heritage value, a demolition permit applicant may be requested to pay for an Archival Review where the typical fee is \$125.00. In rare cases, if a building has been determined to have heritage value and further investigation is required, an applicant may be requested to pay for a 'Statement of Significance' (although in some cases, this report could be prepared by staff at nominal cost to the applicant). Aside from these cases, there are no financial implications associated with this report.

Communication

In preparing the Process, Development Services staff have conferred with the Mission Heritage Advisory Committee members, Council, and Building Division staff.

If supported by Council, information about the new Demolition Permit process will be made available on the City's website, describing options for conserving buildings with potential heritage value when they are proposed for demolition.

Summary and Conclusion

This report recommends that Council approve the Building Inspections Division's process for reviewing demolition permit applications along with the corresponding amendments to Council policy (LAN.57(C) 'Identification and Protection of Heritage Resources') that includes a new section 4 'Heritage Protection Mechanisms, Demolition Permit Review Process' (**Attachment A**). The proposed changes would provide specific guidance to staff and applicants for evaluating buildings and structures that might have heritage value and to determine opportunities for conservation thereof.

To implement this, amendments are recommended for Council policy LAN.57(C) 'Identification and Protection of Heritage Resources' and corresponding updates for the Process. Corresponding updates are also recommended for the City's Demolition Permit application form and procedures. This initiative will be further supported when heritage conservation tools are used to enable additional mechanisms for conserving the City's older buildings that are considered to have heritage significance.

Report Prepared by: Mike Dickinson, Manager of Long Range Planning & Special Projects; and
Hardev Gill, Planner 2 – Development Planning

Reviewed by: Dan Sommer, Director of Development Services

Approved for Inclusion: Mike Younie, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments

Attachment A: LAN.57(C) Amendments for Heritage Protection Mechanisms showing proposed changes for inclusion of Demolition Permit Process

Attachment B: Direction from Council for Heritage Advisory Committee