

Executive Summary

Built heritage resources located within floodplains and flood vulnerable areas are a cause for concern. These resources require specialized planning practices and policies to ensure their conservation and preservation for future generations.

This research report addresses the critical need to safeguard Ontario's built heritage resources against the growing threat of floodplain inundation. As climate change exacerbates the frequency and intensity of flooding events, protecting these invaluable cultural resources is of paramount concern in the realm of heritage planning. The central inquiry driving this research report was:

How can built heritage resources in Ontario be made more resilient to flood events through innovative planning strategies, policies, and guidelines?

This research question was further guided by the following research objectives:

- 1. Investigate and identify existing strategies for bolstering the resilience of built heritage resources to climate change and flood events.*
- 2. Develop a comprehensive framework and set of guidelines tailored for the creation and evaluation of enhanced floodplain management of built heritage resources across Ontario.*

This report presents a comprehensive planning framework tailored specifically to the management of built heritage resources located in floodplains and flood vulnerable areas. This is accomplished through integrating principles of historic conservation and preservation with disaster and flood risk mitigation strategies, aiming to strike a balance between conservation and resilience. Through extensive academic literature and policy research, and case study analyses, the framework offers practical guidance for policymakers, planners, and heritage professionals for the floodplain management plans for built heritage resources.

Key components of the framework include:

- 1. Establish the context, scope, and build a multidisciplinary planning team;**
- 2. Organize resources and conduct stakeholder engagement;**
- 3. Identify and assess risks;**
- 4. Develop mitigation strategies;**

- 5. Implement and monitor progress;**
- 6. Prepare for emergencies including response; and,**
- 7. Recovery and rehabilitation**

In addition to the planning guideline framework that was developed, this report introduces an evaluation toolkit designed to assess the quality and effectiveness of floodplain management strategies in preserving built heritage resources. The toolkit encompasses various evaluation characteristics, components, and criteria to ensure relevance and effectiveness in guiding planning and decision-making processes. Ensuring internal and external consistency, the toolkit emphasizes the alignment of issues, visions, goals, and implementation actions with monitoring mechanisms in place to gauge goal achievement and policy effectiveness. By utilizing this evaluation toolkit, stakeholders can systematically evaluate the efficacy of Ontario's floodplain management strategies for built heritage resources.