



# City of Vancouver *Planning By-law Administration Bulletins*

## Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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# Heritage Assessment Process

*Authority - Director of Planning*  
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## 1 Intent

The Vancouver Heritage Register (VHR) identifies the city's heritage resources, those sites and buildings with formally recognized heritage value. However, not all the sites/buildings with heritage value have been listed on the VHR. Exclusion from the VHR does not mean these places do not have heritage value or should not be considered for addition to the VHR. To be added to the VHR the property must be properly evaluated and approved by City Council. The Vancouver Heritage Register may be viewed at: <https://guidelines.vancouver.ca/V001.pdf>

The heritage value of a place may be revealed later in the development process, for example, when an owner starts planning for construction or redevelopment, resulting in direction from the Planning Department to retain and conserve, rather than to demolish and replace. To avoid such uncertainties, it is highly recommended that the inquirer contact the City's Planning Department to verify the site's heritage value if it appears that it may have heritage merit, whether or not the place is currently listed on the VHR.

The intent of this document is to inform both owners and staff involved in the inquiry and permit approval process on the heritage assessment and evaluation procedure, and to clarify when it would be necessary to prepare a Statement of Significance (SoS) and a Conservation Plan.

## 2 Application

### 2.1 Property listed on the VHR

For a property listed on the VHR, the first step is to verify with city staff whether or not a Statement of Significance (SoS) has been completed and is registered with the BC Register of Historic Places. Staff may also be able to determine whether the SoS has been drafted but not yet formally reviewed. Statements of Significance that are listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places can be viewed at: [HistoricPlaces.ca](http://HistoricPlaces.ca).

If an SoS is in place, and in an acceptable format, it will guide the proposed rehabilitation and form the basis for the conservation approach. A full set of existing and proposed drawings and a Conservation Plan are necessary as part of the development permit review process.

In cases where there is no SoS, it will be necessary to have one prepared by a qualified heritage consultant. It will be submitted to city staff who will determine when it is ready for the formal review process, which includes review by the Vancouver Heritage Commission's subcommittee. If the SoS exists, but in pre-review (draft) stage, staff will determine if it requires re-submission. Following that submission, the proposed rehabilitation strategy for the heritage resource will be assessed. A full set of existing and proposed drawings and the Conservation Plan are necessary as part of the development permit review process.

To complete the development permit process, review by the Heritage Advisory Commission may be required in both cases.

## **2.2 Property not listed on the VHR**

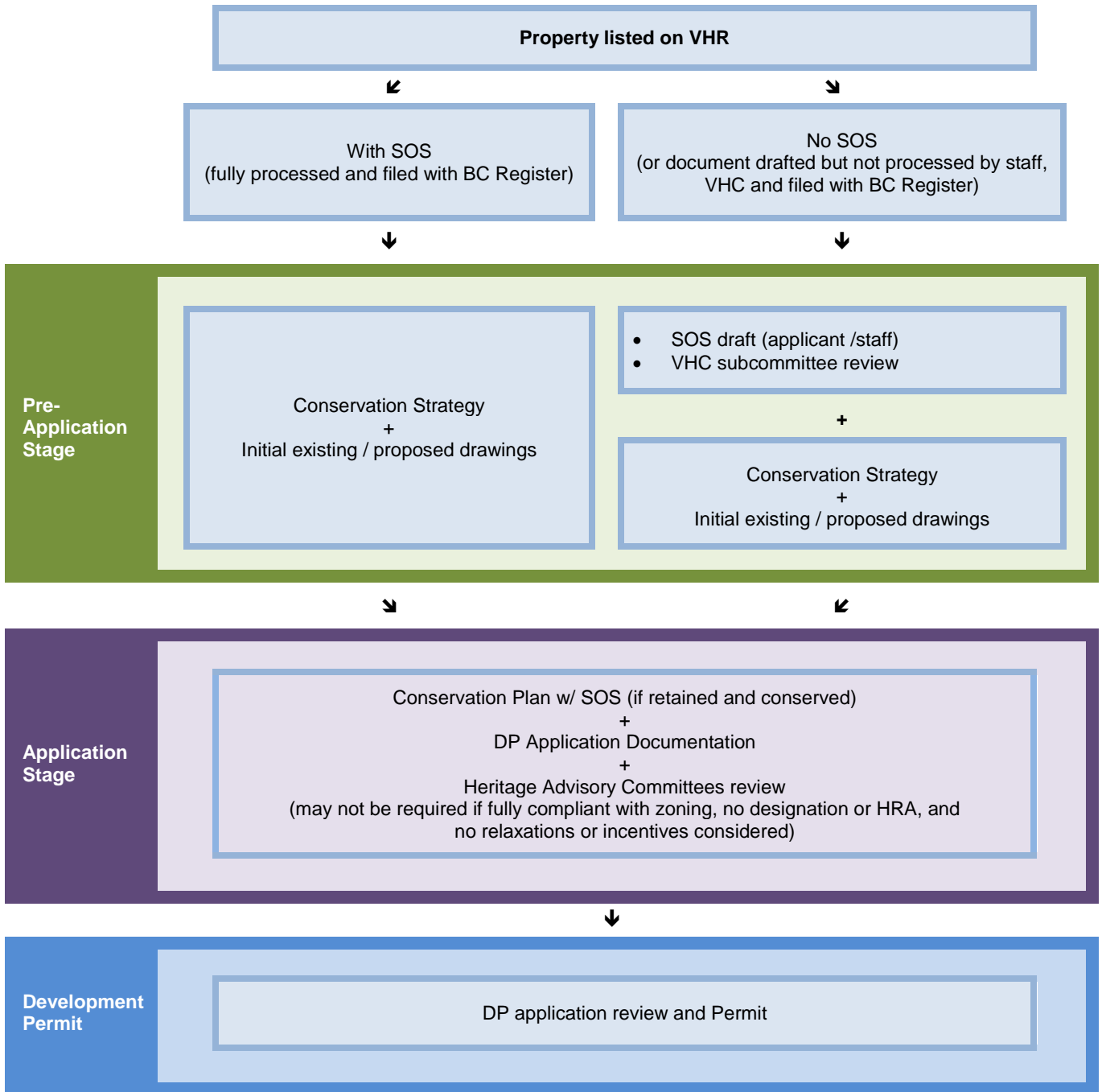
For a property not listed on the VHR, but demonstrating evidence of potential heritage value, or included on the city's list of sites recommended for further assessment as part of the VHR upgrade process, it will be necessary to undertake a rapid assessment of heritage potential. The rapid assessment is done by Heritage staff with assistance from the inquirer and consists of a high-level screening for heritage values based on research material – maps, photos, directory listings, prior research material, and other at-hand historical information. The outcome of the assessment will inform the appropriate course of pre-application review: whether the resource has potential for further consideration for full retention and conservation, including addition to the VHR, or whether it will require a lesser degree of retention, or no retention. This assessment may have significant impacts on built form and as such, should occur early in the design process by qualified design professionals.

The full retention and conservation approach (Route 1) will require an SoS to be drafted by a qualified heritage consultant and a VHR evaluation by staff as part of the pre-application process. It would undergo the same formal review process as noted above for a site on the VHR. It would form the basis for the conservation approach. A set of existing and proposed drawings and the Conservation Plan are necessary as part of the development permit review process.

The approach involving a lesser degree of retention (Route 2) would not require an SoS or a conservation strategy but would require an approach similar to character retention, as part of the pre-application process. Character retention is achieved through adequate architectural/urban design development and may include component retention or voluntary conservation procedures. A set of existing and proposed drawings are required.

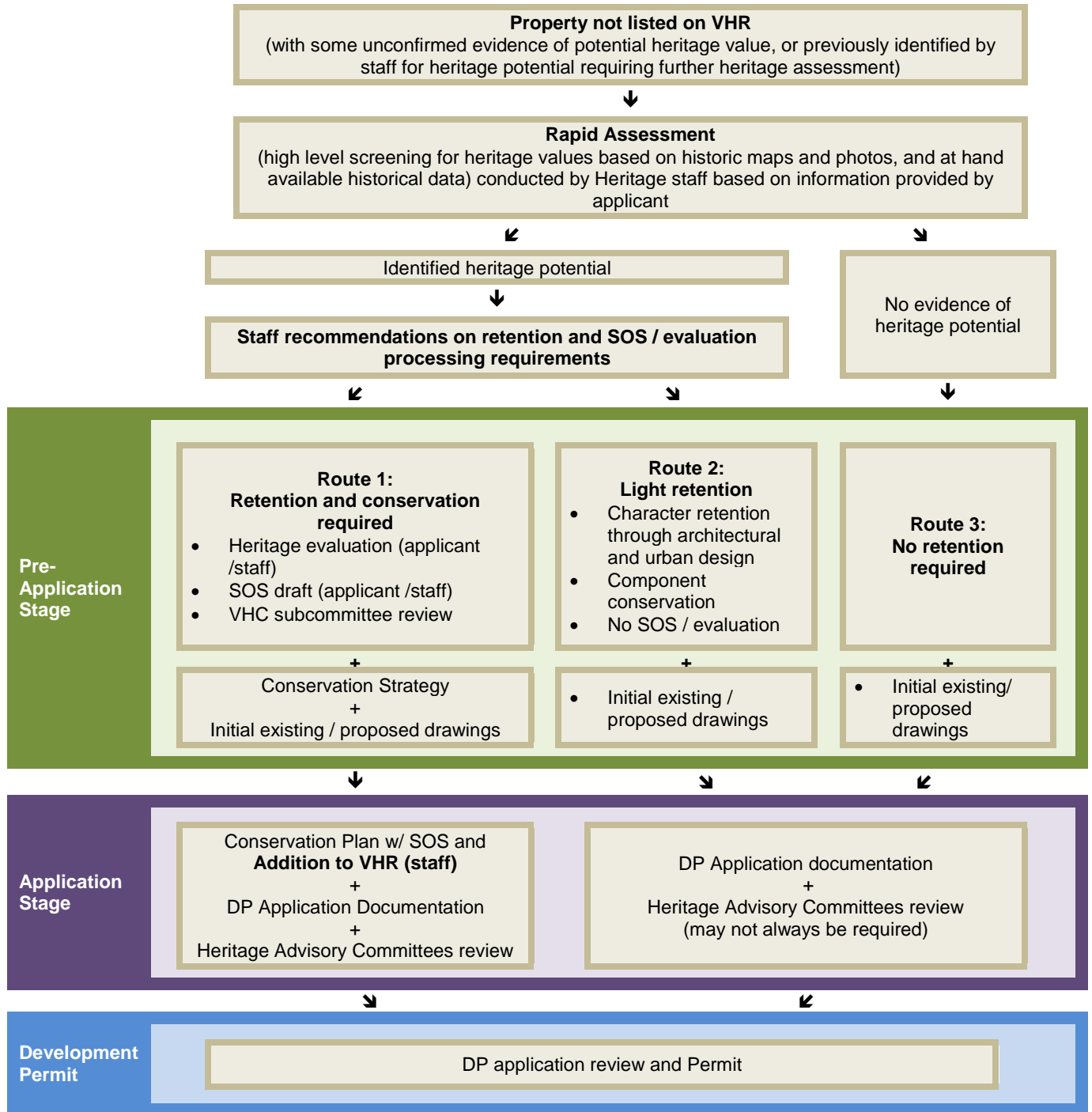
If no heritage potential is identified (Route 3), then the inquiry would proceed through the standard pre-application process without consideration for heritage retention, but would include a set of existing and proposed drawings.

## Heritage Assessment Process for properties listed on the VHR



Note: this flow-chart is for information purposes only as the process in some cases may differ from presented.

# Heritage Assessment Process for properties not listed on the VHR



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