

# Archaeological Assessment

## Terms of Reference

Updated December 28, 2024

### 1. Description

The preservation of sites with archeological value provides an important link to our past and offers an opportunity for better understanding of our history, including local Indigenous history related to the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation, on whose unceded territory Ottawa is built, as well as early settlement history leading to the formation of the Nation's Capital.

### 2. Authority To Request

- *Ontario Heritage Act*
- *Environmental Assessment Act*
- *Cemeteries Act*

### 3. When Required

Assessments are required when the land has either: a known archaeological site; or the potential to have archaeological sites. This includes Official Plan amendments, Zoning By-law amendments, site plan control, plan of subdivision or plan of condominium.

The City shall require an Archaeological Assessment, where the City's Archaeological Resource Potential Mapping Study indicates archaeological potential. The Archaeological Resource Potential Mapping Study shows the historic core of the City (as defined by the City limits at the time of its incorporation in 1855) as having archaeological potential. While an Archaeological Assessment is exempt in the Downtown Core, upon discovery of any archaeological resource, the site shall be immediately protected from further disturbance until an archaeological assessment and any necessary mitigation has been completed.

In accordance with provincial regulations, where a marked or unmarked cemetery or burial place is found during any archaeological assessment, or excavation activity, the provisions of the *Cemeteries Act* and associated regulations, and the policies of the Official Plan shall apply, and the Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation shall be notified.



Where sites of archaeological value are identified on federal lands, the National Capital Commission is the approval authority.

#### 4. Contents / Evaluation Criteria

Archaeological assessments must be carried out by licensed archaeologists ([archaeologists licensed in Ontario](#)). After completing an archaeological assessment, the archaeologist submits a report to the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. The Ministry reviews the report to ensure:

- the licensed archaeologist met the terms and conditions of their license, including the ministry's requirements for fieldwork and reporting
- any archaeological sites found were properly conserved.

The City, proponent and licensed archaeologist will receive a letter from the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism stating that the archaeological assessment report has been entered into the *Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports*. This letter confirms that the ministry, acting in its role of regulating archaeological fieldwork, is satisfied with the licensed archaeological fieldwork. This letter is to be submitted to the city prior to issuance of a commence work notification.

Where an archaeological site has been identified by the archaeological assessment, that archaeological site continues to be of further cultural heritage value or interest. The site cannot be altered in any manner other than by a licensed archaeologist until the report by the archaeological licensee indicating the site has no further cultural heritage value or interest has been entered into the *Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports*. Any approval by the City prior to receiving the ministry's letter could result in an unlicensed alteration of an archaeological site and a violation of Section 48(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

#### 5. Roles and Responsibilities / Qualifications

Archaeological assessments must be carried out by licensed archaeologists. The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport publishes a list of all [archaeologists licensed in Ontario](#).

#### 6. Resources / Background

- [Archaeological assessments | ontario.ca](#)

