

# Evaluating Historic Places

## Statement of Significance Checklist



Municipal Heritage  
Partnership Program

A Statement of Significance (SoS) is written for a designating authority (i.e., a municipality – City, Town, Village or Municipal District) explaining what the authority will conserve about a specific historic place and why. If you have never visited the site, you should learn certain things from reading a well-written SoS.

### Description of Historic Place

*The description section locates the place and describes what can be found at the site.*

**After reading this section, can you answer the following questions?**

*If you cannot, please include the appropriate information.*

- |  | Y                        | N                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.) What, specifically, is the historic place?<br>(e.g., barn, bridge, house, commercial building, church, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.) Where is the site located?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.) What are the historic place's boundaries?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.) What will the reader see if they visit the historic place?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.) Does the description emphasise the aspects the designating authority will conserve?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Heritage Value

*This section explains why the designating authority will conserve the historic place described in the preceding section. This section does not list the individual elements; instead it explains why the designating authority values the continued existence of the place.*

**After reading this section, can you answer the following questions?**

*If you cannot, please include the appropriate information.*

- |   | Y                        | N                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.) Why is this place significant?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.) Has the designating authority explained how the historic place reflects its history/identity?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.) Has enough detail been provided to begin thinking about the types of physical elements that the designating authority might conserve? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*There are common mistakes made in writing this section that confuse a reader not familiar with the site. To avoid some of these mistakes, ask yourself the following questions. If you answer YES to any of the questions, please make revisions so that the content focuses on the site.*

- |   | Y                        | N                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.) Does the SoS discuss a historical theme, an event or an activity without explaining how the historic place, as it currently exists, reflects this?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.) Does the SoS discuss a person without explaining how their residency or their work is reflected the historic place, as it currently exists?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.) Does the SoS discuss an event that has clearly not left a physical mark on the historic place?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.) Does the SoS talk about an architectural style or building material without showing how the site reflects these things <u>or</u> why they are important to the designating authority? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



### Character-Defining Elements

*The Character-Defining Elements describe the physical parts of the historic place that cannot be lost. If these elements are obscured or destroyed, the historic place loses its ability to represent the heritage values described in the previous section.*

*After reading this section, can you answer the following questions?  
If you cannot, please include the appropriate information.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|   | Y N   |
| 1.) Is there a comprehensive—but not exhaustive—list of the physical elements that reflect or communicate the heritage values?          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.) Can you understand the relationship between the character-defining elements and the heritage values listed in the previous section? | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

To be understood, the character-defining elements must explain how each element relates to the reasons the designating authority is conserving the place (the Heritage Value section). To avoid common mistakes that confuse the reader, ask yourself the following questions. *If you answer YES to any of the questions, please make revisions so that the content better aligns with the heritage values.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Y N   |
| 1.) Are there elements listed that do not related to one of heritage values?   | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.) Have I failed to identify <i>major</i> elements that clearly communicate heritage value?                             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.) Have I identified elements that communicate heritage value, but are not located on the historic place?               | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.) Have intangible “elements” (like historic use) been listed?  | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.) Are elements listed that the designating authority <i>wishes</i> were still present, but been removed and destroyed? | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

