

# HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOODS STRATEGY

Neighbourhood Profile  
December 4, 2009

*People led planning for Barrie's older neighbourhoods*

## Downtown

The historic core of the City of Barrie, the Downtown neighbourhood, is a vibrant mixed-use community comprising a rich blend of specialty shops and services, as well as institutional and ceremonial community spaces.

The Downtown continues to support commercial opportunities and is host to a growing arts and cultural community. Interspersed throughout this bustling area of entertainment and services exists the most diverse residential neighbourhood found anywhere in the City.

As the Downtown continues to evolve from its historic role as a shopping district into a destination, the neighbourhood will continue to evolve and accommodate growing numbers of future residents.

The Downtown neighbourhood is bounded on the north by a well-travelled east-west route for those seeking to bypass the city core—Codrington Street/ McDonald Street / Sophia Street. The neighbourhoods southern edge is defined by Lakeshore Drive / Heritage Park / Barrie Marina to Toronto Street and then across to Bradford Street.

The western edge is Eccles Street North and South, on either side of Dunlop Street West and then east to Mary Street and north to Sophia Street. The eastern edge is Berczy Street, one of Barrie's original streets, where the preponderance of Downtown businesses along Collier and Dunlop Streets naturally come to an end.

### Neighbourhood Characteristics

Being part of the original settlement, the Downtown neighbourhood contains a rich variety of original historic homes and buildings. It offers the widest variety of housing types and building ages available anywhere in the City, with high-rise apartments and condominiums as well as single and semi-detached homes and row-housing.

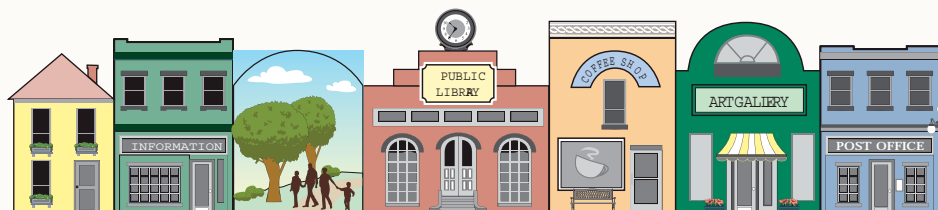


A large number of multi-use buildings and multi-residential dwellings are located in historic buildings, many of which were historic residential dwellings.

The Downtown is host to most of Barrie's cultural, civic and ceremonial facilities including the courthouse, City Hall, library, Downtown Community Theatre, MacLaren Arts Centre, cenotaph and the Farmer's Market. This is the locale of most of Barrie's festivals and events and includes



Downtown Farmer's Market



a concentration of restaurants, bars, retail shops, entertainment opportunities. The neighbourhood is wrapped around a large section of the waterfront parkland, which offers visitors some of the best views of Kempenfelt Bay.



Dunlop Street East

The Downtown has recently had significant investments in Heritage Park and Lakeshore Drive including upgrades

to the pedestrian pathways and spaces in and around the park. Additional parking and improvements to Lakeshore Drive, paralleling Dunlop Street, have also taken place, increasing the appeal of this area.

The City recently purchased, renovated and opened the Downtown Community Theatre at 5-points and is now looking to expand the facility.

A number of vacant or underutilized sites exist throughout the Downtown with potential for redevelopment. Some are owned by the City and others are not; however all have great potential for future investment.

Most of this area of the City is subject to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan (CIP), offering financial incentives for redevelopment, renovations and upgrades to buildings.

### Community Facilities & Services



Downtown Waterfront  
Courtesy of Retina Photography

With an eclectic mix of old and new built form, the Downtown neighbourhood serves a wide variety of users both day and night. It offers a range of services for residents in need, including those found at the David Busby Centre, Salvation Army and the

Barrie Native Friendship Centre, as well as providing recreational amenities such as Heritage Park, Barrie Marina and the North Shore Trail.

### Neighbourhood Heritage

The Downtown neighbourhood contains the original settlement area of the former Town of Barrie. This legacy has generated an inventory of buildings and sites that serve as reminders of the community's past. A number are still in use today including:

- Simcoe Hotel (c 1876) 31 Bayfield St.
- Sanders Block (c 1880) 72-74 Dunlop St.
- Queen's Hotel (c 1850) 94 Dunlop St. East
- John Pearson House (c 1840s) 16-18 Mary St.
- Dutton House (c 1874) 30 Mary St.
- Carnegie Library (c 1915) 37 Mulcaster St.
- County Jail (1840s), Mulcaster St.
- Commercial Building (c 1870s) 123 Dunlop St. East
- The Clarkson (c 1871) 130 Dunlop St. East
- 30 McDonald Street (c 1875)
- 90 Mulcaster Street (c 1860s)
- 58 Collier Street (c 1845)
- Trinity Church (c 1864) 24 Collier Street
- 118 Collier Street (c 1847)
- 158 Dunlop Street East (c 1875)
- Collier Street United Church (c 1864) 112 Collier St.
- Baptist Church (c 1878) 35 Worsley St.
- St Andrews Presbyterian Church (c 1882) 47 Owen St

### What residents said they like most about Downtown ...

- Immediate access to the waterfront
- The walkability to services and facilities
- Close to amenities

### What residents said they most want to change about Downtown...

- Improve the roads and sidewalks
- Improve the appearance of the Downtown
- Provide protection to heritage buildings
- Enforcement of 'quality of life' by-laws such as noise, signage and pollution
- Need more service businesses, such as grocery, pharmacy, hardware

Join your neighbours on the HNS Facebook site or go to [www.hns.barrie.ca](http://www.hns.barrie.ca).

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Two sources were invaluable in preparing these profiles — *Heritage Barrie Walking Tours* and *Beautiful Barrie, The City and its People* by Su Murdoch, et al (2005).