

Historical Research

A Guide for Property Owners



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Please make an appointment prior to visiting the Windsor Community Archives, the Windsor Public Library's Local History Center or the Planning Department

Windsor Public Library

Windsor Public Library (850 Ouellette Ave) Local History Center:

- City Directories (almost Full Set till the 1980s)
Windsor Public Library, Central Branch on Ouellette @ the Local History Center

- Property Tax Assessment Rolls
- Land Title Deeds (using Instrument Numbers)
- Architectural Drawings
- Variety of Newspapers on Microfilm

Online:

- Windsor Public Library Obituaries
<http://projects.windsorpubliclibrary.com/digi/obits/index.php>

- Windsor's History & Pictures
<http://heritage.windsorpubliclibrary.com/index.php>

Museum Windsor

- Website
<http://windsormuseum.ca:8080/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=advform>

- Fire Insurance Maps
Windsor Community Archives (Maison François Baby House, 254 Pitt St W)
or in scanned format at the Planning Department

- City Directories (almost Full Set)
Windsor Community Archives (Maison François Baby House, 254 Pitt St W)

City of Windsor

- History of Windsor- includes map with boundaries of former Border City municipalities
<https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/historyofwindsor/Pages/default.aspx>

- Use “MyCity” app to search for property information such as legal description and property dimensions
<http://www.mappmycity.ca/>

- Use Cultural Heritage Map to see the locations of heritage properties by clicking on the Map Layers icon (lower left of screen), then click to turn on the “Heritage Site” layer
http://www.mappmycity.ca/Html5Viewer/Index.html?configBase=http://www.mappmycity.ca/Geocortex/Essentials/REST/sites/Cultural_Heritage/viewers/Viewer_HTML5_20/virtualdirectory/Resources/Config/Default

- Windsor Aerial Photos 2000-2015 Side-By-Side Comparison
<http://www.mappmycity.ca/MyWindsorAerial/index.html>

Planning and Building Department

- Municipal Heritage Register
<https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/planning/Plans-and-Community-Information/Know-Your-Community/Heritage-Planning/Pages/Windsor-Municipal-Heritage-Register.aspx>

- Heritage File Information (by request)

- Heritage Planning
<https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/planning/Plans-and-Community-Information/Know-Your-Community/Heritage-Planning/Pages/Heritage-Planning.aspx>

Heritage Planning Legislation

- Ontario Heritage Toolkit- Standard Practices & Procedures for Heritage Planning
http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_toolkit.shtml
http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/Heritage_Tool_Kit_DHP_Eng.pdf

- Legislated Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

- Ontario Heritage Act
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18>

Online

Ontario Land Registry Office:

- Historical Books now available online
<https://www.onland.ca/ui/12/books/search>

- Parcel/Abstracts (revealing land transactions such as ownerships)
<http://help.onland.ca/en/historical-books/#historical-books-categories>

City Directories (1888-1964)
<http://scholar.uwindsor.ca/windsor-directories/>

Newspapers

- INK - ODW Newspaper Collection- OCR searchable
<http://ink.scholarsportal.info/searchadv>

Available Collections include:

- The Windsor Evening Record (1893-1918)

<http://ink.scholarsportal.info/wer>

- The Border Cities Star (1918-1935)

<http://ink.scholarsportal.info/bcs>

- Google News Archive

<https://news.google.ca/newspapers>

- The Windsor Daily Star (1935-1959)

<https://news.google.ca/newspapers?nid=4b-LE5UluQcC>

- The Windsor Star (1959-1986)

<https://news.google.ca/newspapers?nid=SAguW2jnL4UC>

Other Online Resources

- Lost Windsor- local website about the history of Windsor and border region
<http://lostwindsor.com/>

- International metropolis
<http://internationalmetropolis.com/>

- County Atlas Digital Project (1880 Map of Ontario Counties)
<http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/countyatlas/searchmapframes.php>

- DTE Aerial Photography (1949-1997) - only applicable to areas close to Detroit River
https://digital.library.wayne.edu/dte_aerial/index.html

- Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada
<http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/introduction>

- Library of Congress (US) photos – Walkerville (also Windsor and Sandwich)
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=Walkerville&sp=5&co=det>

- Southwestern Ontario Digital Archive
<http://swoda.uwindsor.ca/title>

Other Resources to be Explored

- Land Registry Office
-Land Titles

- Business Records

- Business Webpages

- Private Manuscripts

- Municipal Records

- Published works

- Personal Interviews

How to Conduct Research

- Use the Sample Checklist to organize your research
- Reference al sources for ease of searching back
- Take pictures to record all materials referenced
- For Land Registry Office Records (now also available online), it is necesesary to know the Legal description of the property (i.e. The Registered Plan number and lot numbers) in order to search for ownership
- USB (stick) is needed for safing microfilm records at the Windsor Public Library
- Use a variety of resources to confirm:
 - Property addresses- numbers (and some street names) changed at certain times
 - Some locations were not numbered until the late 1800s and have to be checked under the correct physical boundary of the municipality at the time of interest. (Visit <https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/historyofwindsor/Pages/default.aspx>)
 - Some addresses changed multiple times in the 1920s
 - In 1937, for Windsor, former Walkerville, Sandwich and Ford City (East Windsor), addresses changed. The 1937 City Directory lists both old and new numbers and the Fire Insurance Maps showed both numbers
 - For the former Riverside, Sandwich East and West Townships, addresses changed after 1965
 - Refer to successive years of City Directories to trace changed address numbers
 - People associated with the property
 - Check the Land Registry office records to determine ownership dates through the land transaction records
 - Look up City Directories for residents and their occupations
 - Note that some tenants became owners later (owners have an asterisk * beside their names in the City Directories)
 - Year of Building Construction
 - If the property is subdivided (eg. Into lots from farm/undeveloped lands), the build ing is usually constructed after the date of the subdivision (date of subdivision found on Registered Plan). However some buildings could have been constructed prior to subdivision.
 - Land Registry office transaction records show ownership changes; however these records usually do not indicate if a property has building on it
 - City Directories, using current addresses for the time, show occupancy; the earliest record may indicate the first occupant, with construction likely completed the same or previous year
 - Use years of deed and/or early City Directory dates to check against the relevant Property Tax Assessment Roll for signs of building

Sample Checklist

HISTORIC RESEARCH RESOURCES – SAMPLE CHECKLIST

Property Name: _____

Resource Type	Check	Info
Registered Plans		
Insurance Plans		
Aerial Photos (DTE: Walkerville 1956, 1967)		
Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada		
Illustrated Atlas/History Maps		
Land Registry Records		
Property Tax Assessment Rolls		
City Directories		
Architectural Drawings		
Obituaries (Windsor Star)		
Photographs (Detroit Publishing Company, WPL)		
Newspaper		
Business Records, Private Manuscript, Municipal Records/ Info from Owners		