

SUBURBAN MODERN: EXAMINING THE TOOLS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF A MID-CENTURY COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Too new to be viewed as worthy of conservation but sufficiently old to be threatened by demolition, Toronto's modernist communities lack the public appreciation and legislative protection required for their conservation. If we are to avoid repeating the process that led to the destruction of large segments of Toronto's Victorian architectural heritage, the City of Toronto must take a proactive approach and extend protection to its modernist communities. Appropriately viewed as a non-renewable resource, our modern built heritage demands a protection that recognizes its irreplaceable cultural value and its significance to the history of the city. Utilizing a literature review and policy scan, the exploration of Don Mills as a cultural landscape has important implications for preservation work more broadly, calling into question the stasis enforced by current conservation approaches. By extending the scope of heritage beyond individual structures to incorporate the landscape from which they are inextricably tied and the rituals from which they derive meaning, it is hope that a more holistic and meaningful approach to heritage conservation can be achieved.

Keywords: cultural landscapes, modernism, heritage preservation, Don Mills.