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November 20, 2023

RE: INTENTION TO DESIGNATE A PROPERTY UNDER PART IV OF THE  
ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, VICTORIA SQUARE UNITED CHURCH AND METHODIST CHAPEL, 10720 VICTORIA SQUARE  
BLVD

To [REDACTED]:

This will confirm that at a meeting held on November 15, 2023, Markham Council adopted the following resolution:

**That Council state its intention to designate 10720 Victoria Square Blvd under Part IV, Section 29 of  
the *Ontario Heritage Act* in recognition of its cultural heritage significance**

Please find attached the Statement of Significance which summarizes the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and provides a description of the heritage attributes of the property. Notice of objection to the notice of intention to designate the property may be served on the clerk within 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention on the City's website (November 21). Refer to 'Ontario Heritage Act Notices' at the link below. The notice of objection must include the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts.

<https://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/home>

Should you have any questions regarding the Statement of Significance or the implications of heritage designation, please contact Evan Manning, Senior Heritage Planner, at [emanning@markham.ca](mailto:emanning@markham.ca)

Kimberley Kitteringham  
City Clerk

C. Ontario Heritage Trust

Attachment: Statement of Significance

Received

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Victoria Square United Church and Methodist Chapel

10720 Victoria Square Boulevard  
c. 1845 and 1880

Victoria Square United Church and Methodist Chapel are recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in following Statement of Significance.

#### **Description of Property**

Victoria Square United Church and Methodist Chapel are located on the west side of Victoria Square Boulevard (formerly Woodbine Avenue), south of Elgin Mills Road within the historic community of Victoria Square.

#### **Design Value and Physical Value**

##### **Brick Church**

Victoria Square United Church, built in 1880, has design value and physical value as a representative example of High Victorian Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Rational in plan, and symmetrical in its layout, the essential form of the church harkens back to Classical architecture and its influence on the Romantic Gothic Revival style, the earliest form of the Gothic Revival style. The Romantic Gothic Revival used the temple form of Classical architecture and ornamented it with Gothic Revival features such as pointed-arched windows, label mouldings, buttresses, and towers.

The polychromatic brickwork, typical of Southern Ontario construction from the 1850s into the 1880s, is a key element of the High Victorian Gothic Revival style that has been skillfully applied to this church. This use of contrasting coloured materials, combined with different textures produced by the way the brick was laid, creates a play of colour, light and shadow that enlivens the building. A sense of verticality, characteristic to the Gothic Revival style, is enhanced by the building's raised stone foundation, steeply-pitched gable roof, and tall tower capped with elaborate pinnacles.

##### **Methodist Chapel**

The Methodist Chapel, built in 1845, is of design value and physical value as a locally rare example of a mid-nineteenth century Classical Revival church of frame construction. In the early days of Methodism in Ontario, modest chapels erected in rural communities were generally built in a simplified version of the Greek Revival style, typically called Classic Revival by Canadian architectural historians. The gable-fronted plan, medium pitched roof, wide and prominent cornice and cornice returns, and symmetrical arrangement of openings as seen in this example typical of this architectural style. Buildings of this variety have a classic simplicity that seems to be an outward expression of the faith of the people that built them.

### **Historical Value and Associative Value**

Victoria Square United Church and Methodist Chapel are of historical value and associative value as they represent the religious and cultural mosaic of Markham Township, and as a long-standing centre of Christian worship within the Victoria Square community. The beginning of the United Church congregation in Victoria Square dates to 1832 when the Primitive Methodists first established what was then termed a “class” under the leadership of “Daddy” William Hatton, a local resident. This group built a church on the east side of Woodbine, north of the Elgin Mills Sideroad, which was demolished many years ago.

In 1845, a group of Wesleyan Methodists constructed a frame church on the present site of the Victoria Square United Church. This modest frame building served the congregation until 1880 when it was replaced by the current Gothic Revival church. The new church was constructed by Josiah Hall, a prominent builder based in Unionville from 1874 to 1885. The frame church was purchased by village blacksmith, William Frisby, and relocated to the north side of Elgin Mills Road where it was converted for use as his shop. In its new location the church was oriented away from the street, and a pair of large shed doors were inserted into what was originally the rear of the building.

The Wesleyan Methodists and Primitive Methodists of Victoria Square merged in 1884 to worship in the new brick church. In 1925, the congregation became part of the United Church in Canada.

In 2003, the congregation saved the former church from demolition and relocated it to its original site to serve as a chapel. It is the oldest surviving church building in Markham.

### **Contextual Value**

Victoria Square United Church, with its restored Methodist Chapel, is a noteworthy and rare example of an evolved ecclesiastical property. The brick church of 1880, set close to the street with its prominent tower, is a local landmark within the historic crossroads community of Victoria Square. Together with an adjoining cemetery and mature trees, the property is a significant cultural heritage landscape that contributes to the distinctive, village-like character of Victoria Square.

### **Heritage Attributes**

Character-defining attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the Victoria Square United Church and Methodist Chapel are organized by their respective Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria, as amended, below:

#### **Brick Church**

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's design value and physical value as a representative example of High Victorian Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture:*

- Form of the church building with its rectangular, gable-fronted plan and central gable-end tower;
- Raised fieldstone foundation, containing segmentally-arched two-over-two sash windows;
- Steeply-pitched gable roof with open, overhanging eaves;

- Brick masonry consisting of a red brick body trimmed with buff brick accents including plinth courses, arches with dog's tooth label mouldings over doors and windows, and red angle buttresses, red brick dog's tooth string courses, and corbelled brick arcading as a frieze and parapet treatment;
- Datestone;
- Main entrance with paired wood doors featuring vertical tongue and groove panels and wrought iron hinges;
- Transom above the main entrance with quatrefoil tracery;
- Pointed arched windows on the sidewalls, containing Y-tracery, some of which are glazed with leaded stained glass and some retaining their original patterned and coloured glass;
- Pointed arched lancet windows on the primary (east) elevation and on the tower, some with their original glazing and others with recent glazing;
- Paired, lancet-arched louvered wood ventilators topped with quatrefoil appliques;
- Flat parapet of the tower capped with brick and copper pinnacles.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's historical and associative value as a site of Christian worship for over 175 years:*

- The prominent location and visibility of the church within Victoria Square which is indicative of its central role within the community.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's contextual role in in defining, maintaining and supporting the character of Victoria Square, and its status as a landmark within the community:*

- The location of the church close along the west side of Victoria Square Boulevard near the centre of the crossroads community of Victoria Square.

### **Frame Chapel**

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's design and physical value as a locally rare example of a mid-nineteenth century frame church:*

- Rectangular, gable-fronted plan and one-storey form;
- Horizontal wooden clapboard trimmed with corner boards and moulded window frames;
- Medium-pitched gable roof with boxed eaves and eave returns
- Wood cornice with Classical mouldings;
- Date plaque on the front wall;
- Six-panelled wood front door;
- Twelve-over-eight wood sash-style windows with projecting sills on the gable end walls;
- Twelve-over-twelve wood sash-style windows with projecting sills on the side walls.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's historical and associative value as a site of Christian worship for over 175 years:*

- The chapel is a tangible example of the evolution of the Methodist faith, notably changes in ecclesiastical architecture.

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*Attributes of the property that are not considered to be of cultural heritage value, or are otherwise not included in the Statement of Significance:*

- Rear addition;
- Cemetery;
- Modern accessory building.