

Historic Places are Valuable Community Assets

Every community, big and small, rural and urban, has historic buildings, sites, neighbourhoods and landscapes that commemorate the past and enrich our lives today. Conserving these unique resources, and making them a living part of our communities, contributes to social, economic and environmental wellbeing.

Honouring the Past – Shaping the Present

Historic places recall the vision and contributions of those who came before us. They shape community identity and the distinctive character of our cities, towns and rural districts.

The story of a community's development is written in its buildings, streets and landscapes.



Central Avenue, Prince Albert.

Healthy Communities

Historic neighbourhoods convey a sense of place that feels familiar and reassuring. Their pedestrian orientation and



mixed-use design promote active transportation and facilitate social interactions that strengthen feelings of connectedness.

Historic places are often popular venues for community celebrations that bring people together.

Participation in heritage projects and organizations promotes civic engagement and community involvement.

Education and Life-long Learning

Historic places are resources for learning about community history, architecture, art and culture.

Heritage conservation provides opportunities to use traditional building skills, ensuring that this age-old knowledge is not lost.

Inclusion and Social Justice

Heritage conservation contributes to inclusion and social justice by preserving historic places that tell the stories of under-represented groups.



Shiloh Baptist Church, an Afro-Canadian heritage property in the RM of Eldon

Housing Stock

Repurposed historic buildings are an excellent source of housing stock for all segments of the housing market.



Assisted-living suites developed in the old Ituna schoolhouse.

Photo courtesy of: Darlene Holliday, Deer Park Villa Inc



Condominiums in a converted warehouse, Saskatoon

Photo courtesy of: K. Szalasznyj, City of Saskatoon

For Further Information:

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Heritage Conservation Makes Economic and Environmental Sense

Economic Development

Conserving historic buildings and finding viable uses for them has important economic benefits.

Jobs

Rehabilitating historic buildings creates employment for skilled workers in the building trades.

Because it is labour-intensive, the redevelopment of an historic building creates more jobs than a new construction project of equal value. Money paid for wages recirculates in the local economy.



Repairing a terracotta windowsill.

Property Values and Business Returns

Giving vacant or underused buildings new life raises property values and adds to the local tax base.

Historic buildings are well-suited to small businesses and start-ups. Specialty retailers and hospitality sector businesses often like them for their distinctive character.

Economic Revitalization

Rehabilitating its historic buildings improves downtown's look and appeal as a place to visit, shop and invest.

Quality of place is a drawing card. Attractive historic neighbourhoods can be community branding assets.

Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourists spend more per trip than other leisure travellers.



Historic places provide the authentic experience these tourists seek.

Historic W.D. & Alice Reesor Ranch, a guest ranch in the Cypress Hills

Environmental Sustainability

Responsible stewardship of the buildings that make up our cities, towns and farms is critical for a sustainable future.

Avoided Impacts

Rehabilitating instead of replacing an historic building avoids the impacts of demolition and new construction.



A former convent in the Village of Vibank houses the village office, community services and rent-paying commercial tenants.
Photo courtesy of: Jeanette Schaeffer, Village of Vibank

Energy Use and Green House Gas

When energy use and emissions related to a building's construction, operation and demolition are all accounted for, it is almost always more environmentally sound to reuse a building than to replace it.

Shutters, operable windows, awnings, porches, thick walls and landscaping help the energy performance of historic buildings. Retrofits to improve performance can usually be done with minimal impact to heritage features.

Landmarks, not Landfill



Before



After

Extending the life of historic buildings means less demolition waste in municipal landfills.

Smart Growth

Investing in historic neighbourhoods where municipal infrastructure already exists lowers the costs of servicing new subdivisions and reduces the consumption of land.