

HeritageBC



PROVINCIAL ROUNDTABLES ON

THE STATE OF HERITAGE

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMENDATIONS

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Executive Summary

“This meeting is one of the most exciting things to come along and there is a great opportunity... Will people be heard? Will something happen? Will something come back? We hope this meeting really goes somewhere. Words need to be turned to action. Without hope, there will be no legacy or heritage.”

Provincial Roundtable Participant

The Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage project was created to assess the state of the heritage sector in the province, and identify new trends, challenges and opportunities. The information gathered in this study is one piece of a much larger puzzle, and further steps are necessary to build on its observations to inform the future strategic directions of Heritage BC and the Heritage Branch, and to influence program and policy development into the future.

Oral testimony is a cornerstone of historical inquiry and the beginning point to understanding local experience: thus, the overall goal of the roundtables was to “bring people together to share ideas, situations, challenges, successes, relationships, and aspirations related to heritage and other disciplines such as museums, archives, archaeology, and arts and culture.” Approximately 500 individuals participated in the 26 meetings, totalling 140 hours, and an online survey. The heritage sector is eager for opportunities to come together for in-depth conversations. In this regard, the project provided an immediate benefit, something that had not been anticipated in its development.

Meetings were held in Kelowna, Kamloops, Quesnel, Prince George, Fort St. John, Terrace, Prince Rupert, Skidegate, Masset, Creston, Fernie, Trail, Nakusp, Maple Ridge, Surrey, Burnaby, Vancouver, North Vancouver, Metchosin, Victoria, Nanaimo, and Campbell River. BC Heritage Fairs members also participated. Meetings were open to anyone who declared a connection to heritage and the varied backgrounds of participants demonstrated the expansive and inclusive definition of heritage as it is practiced today in BC. Participants included politicians and local government staff, not-for-profit employees and volunteers, archaeologists, archivists, historians, genealogists, consultants, professional organizations, tradespeople, Indigenous people, and members of diverse communities. The first meeting was held at the 2018 Heritage BC conference and the final presentation was made at the 2019 Heritage BC conference. Each Provincial Roundtable meeting explored a number of themes through informal face-to-face discussion:

- Defining heritage in BC
- Collaboration in conservation
- The vision and values of heritage
- Evolving the practice of heritage
- Future opportunities for heritage
- Environmental stewardship through heritage conservation
- Economic diversity and durability through heritage conservation

Overall feedback from participants coalesced around the collective belief that British Columbia’s identity is strengthened and renewed through heritage conservation. They noted that heritage has many

benefits from protecting the built environment to create great spaces for human interaction, to building social cohesion through the recognition of all peoples and all cultures, to helping future generations make informed decisions. A strong value, yet to be fully realized, is its ability to bring people together through the collection and telling of stories for positive change.

Participants also noted that the heritage sector is facing a great number of challenges: in rural areas especially, many not-for-profit organizations are struggling to survive, and many local governments do not actively protect heritage with clear, accessible, and strong supports through policy. Participants observed that BC's heritage, whether that is built heritage, cultural landscapes, museum collections, or the collective narrative of our history, is under threat.

This *Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage Report* proposes twelve broad recommendations -- supported with actions that aim to evolve current systems -- to positively affect the state of heritage, and to support the sector in reaching its aspirations. These recommendations require prioritization in accordance with resources available, and their associated actions require the development of specific and measurable goals. Some of the actions can be achieved quickly and with limited resource input; others will require years of effort. Some of the actions can be achieved by the heritage sector, and others can be achieved only from within government structures. Many of the actions depend on the continued collaboration and consultation between the heritage sector and the Heritage Branch.

Recommendations:

1. Develop and communicate a provincial definition of heritage that will unify the sector and better align programs and services with the sector's work
2. Acknowledge past wrongs and develop programs that lead to positive, mutually-beneficial relationships with Indigenous peoples
3. Develop strategies supporting inclusion and diversity in the sector
4. Develop strategies fostering awareness of environmental impacts of and to the sector
5. Develop strategies to provide leadership for capacity building to move the sector beyond crisis management, to enhance its stability and growth, and to improve the conservation of heritage assets of many descriptions
6. Revise the *Heritage Conservation Act* to reflect the current understanding and practice of heritage as it is articulated in international standards such as The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
7. Develop a toolkit to improve the adoption of the *Local Government Act* (Section 15) to increase implementation and improve conservation in BC.
8. Revise the *Local Government Act* (Section 15) to fully align with current priorities, capacities, and values of local governments and the heritage sector
9. Improve funding opportunities specifically aligned with the sector
10. Support the sector in describing its economic impact and relevance
11. Support the sector in developing and delivering content to BC's education system
12. Support the sector in creating catalyzing moments that mark change and create momentum

Background

The *Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage Project* found its origin in the observation that the heritage sector is evolving. This perception was a frequent topic of conversation among stakeholders, including Heritage Branch staff and Heritage BC directors and staff, who shared observations, speculated on new directions, and considered the condition of the sector.

In early 2018, Heritage BC proposed that the best way to truly understand the state of the sector would be to visit communities, to listen to the stewards of heritage, and to ask these people to share their challenges and aspirations.

The Heritage Branch agreed. Similar meetings had been held 10 years ago and the information collected in these meetings formed the basis of the province's strategy, "Our Heritage – Historic Places." The Heritage Branch believed it was the right time to draw its community together in the forum of provincial roundtables to once again inform its new directions and strategies.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The overall goal of the roundtables was to bring together people -- who have a self-declared interest or association with heritage -- to share ideas, situations, challenges, successes, relationships, and aspirations related to heritage and other disciplines such as museums, archives, archaeology, and arts and culture. A list of participating organizations can be found in the appendix.

This goal was articulated in the Consulting and General Services Agreement as follows:

The purpose of this work was to assess the state of the heritage sector in the province, and identify new trends, challenges and opportunities. Information gathered through this process will inform Heritage BC's and the Heritage Branch's strategic planning and influence program and policy development. The results will facilitate the best possible alignment between Heritage BC's and Government's mandates and collective efforts to support heritage conservation in BC.

Each of the roundtables followed the same structure based on a set of predetermined themes to ensure consistency throughout the process and to enable each meeting to contribute to the overall goals and outcomes of the project. Information collected from these meetings in different parts of the province was intended to describe the current condition of the heritage sector and its relationships with associated disciplines. From this base of reflections, it was anticipated that observations and recommendations would lead to

- Increased knowledge, appreciation, understanding, retention, and management of BC's cultural history and heritage
- Increased organizational and individual capacities
- Increased community engagement and awareness

- Increased awareness of differing perspectives, approaches, and worldviews
- Increased recognition of and participation from Indigenous and distinct communities
- Increased awareness and implementation of better practices
- An expanded vision and new characterizations of heritage, as it relates to associated disciplines, leading to a revitalization of conservation, protection, and interpretation of BC's heritage and history
- A vision and calls-to-action for the sector

Project Scope and Limitations

Developed over several months leading up to the first roundtable meeting, the scope was defined by establishing a series of discussion topics and supporting questions. Topics were identified to provide a focus to what would otherwise be a limitless main topic -- the state of heritage -- but in this initial iteration, they were designed to avoid setting limits to the breadth of conversation.

These established discussion topics formed the basis for each meeting conversation. All meetings worked within the scope and limitations of the project. The planned topics and the flexibility of delivery were well-suited to the meetings, providing a comfortable environment in which participants could provide candid commentary. It is possible participants were freer in their comments because the meetings were led by a not-for-profit organization instead of a government agency. The success of the meeting format is evidenced in the number of participants and the quality of commentary.

The original concept was to include arts and culture organizations, but the selected topics were specific to the heritage sector and so the conversations did not allow people from the arts and culture sector to easily participate. Although anyone could attend the meetings, the effort to include the arts and culture sector was reduced. This result is only an outcome of meeting design; it should be noted the roundtable participants strongly believe arts, culture, and heritage are inextricably linked.

The project was launched at the Heritage BC 2018 conference in New Westminster. Although the *Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage Project* was originally conceived to include 19 roundtables, a total of 24 roundtables were held. Two review panels -- one on Vancouver Island, and one in the Lower Mainland -- reviewed and commented on the summary findings and recommendations from the roundtables. A presentation and discussion of the findings was presented at the Heritage BC 2019 conference in Nanaimo.

Methodology

Meeting Locations and Participation

The meetings were held in Kelowna, Kamloops, Squamish, Quesnel, Prince George, Fort St. John, Terrace, Prince Rupert, Skidegate, Masset, Creston, Fernie, Trail, Nakusp, Maple Ridge, Surrey, Burnaby, Vancouver, North Vancouver, Metchosin, Victoria, Nanaimo, and Campbell River. BC Heritage Fairs members also participated. The first meeting was held at the 2018 Heritage BC conference. See Appendix A for a list of meeting dates and locations.

Each location was strategically chosen to act as a regional hub, so that a meeting location could draw participants from the surrounding area. Fort St. John was chosen because of an existing regional network of museums; two meetings were planned on Haida Gwaii on the recommendation of the Haida Gwaii Museum at Kay Llnagaay; and the session with BC Heritage Fairs took place at the organization's request.

Outreach and Participation

Main contacts were identified for most locations. These stakeholders were important contributors to outreach due to their familiarity with their communities. Because of their community connections, many stakeholders were the lead communicators, distributing meeting invitations directly through their communication channels.

Heritage BC also provided extensive direct email communication by using existing contact lists that were supplemented with online research.

Invitations to the meetings were distributed as broadly as possible and meetings were open to anyone who declared a relationship with or an interest in the topic. This resulted in a broad range of participants, including politicians and local government staff, not-for-profit employees and volunteers, archaeologists, archivists, historians, consultants, professional organizations, tradespeople, and Indigenous people. A summary list of participating organizations is included in the Appendix D. The project must recognize the impressive number of participants who were willing to commit to six-hour meetings, sometimes travelling several hours to attend a meeting.

A value of the project was “nothing about us, without us”, meaning participants could express personally-held opinions, but they could not speak on behalf of a culture for which they did not identify. This value was well understood by all participants as they came into the meetings. At the request of Indigenous participants, the meetings were documented by written notes and recordings to capture their exact words in the reports.

As noted, the messages were remarkably consistent, and the meetings were typically collegial. Credit must first be given to the participants, who approached the meetings as individuals aligned in common interest.

Meeting Format

24 roundtable meetings with 430 participants were held between May 2018 and February 2019. An online survey for those who could not attend meetings was available; over 65 initiated the survey, although not all completed it. A link to the survey was included with every invitation for the roundtables; survey results are included in this report.

A meeting format was developed to take the participants through a series of topics to explore the broader concepts related to the practice of heritage, such as the definition, vision, and values of heritage, each supported with a series of questions that were designed to encourage and support conversation. The topics and questions were developed by Heritage BC in consultation with the Heritage Branch. As per the project scope, the meeting structure was specifically designed to bring people together in conversation to share ideas, situations, challenges, successes, relationships, and aspirations related to heritage and other disciplines such as museums, archives, archaeology, and arts and culture. The predetermined meeting structure was not intended to capture quantitative information. Nevertheless, the project must recognize the impressive number of participants who were willing to commit to six-hour meetings, sometimes travelling several hours to attend a meeting.

Each meeting started with a land acknowledgement and, on many occasions, Heritage BC's statement was read aloud:

As an organization of provincial scope, Heritage BC recognizes that its members, and the local history and heritage they seek to preserve, occupy the lands and territories of BC's Indigenous peoples. Heritage BC asks its members to reflect on the places where they reside and work, and to respect the diversity of cultures and experiences that form the richness of our provincial heritage.

It was observed that, in most locations, a formal land acknowledgement did not exist or sometimes participants were uncertain if such a statement existed.

The topics were chosen to allow participants the opportunities to explore their challenges and aspirations and to test some of the provincial priorities. While the meeting structure could not cover every topic, it was believed the chosen topics would allow for an expansive, unrestricted conversation.

Each Provincial Roundtable meeting explored a number of themes through informal face-to-face discussion:

- Defining heritage in BC
- Collaboration in conservation

- The vision and values of heritage
- Evolving the practice of heritage
- Future opportunities for heritage
- Environmental stewardship through heritage conservation
- Economic diversity and durability through heritage conservation

See Appendix B for supporting questions that were used to encourage conversations and exploration of topics. Each meeting unfolded to suit the group of people and the configuration of the room. The goal was always to produce an environment that was conducive to good conversation.

Heritage BC led every meeting. Paul Gravett attended every community roundtable meeting for consistency. Heritage BC staff also attending meetings as much as schedules and budget allowed; Laura Saretsky attended 11 meetings, and Jennifer Dunkerson attended 4 meetings. All three wrote notes and many of the meetings were recorded. Heritage Branch staff attended meetings in Fort St. John, Fernie, and Victoria; the staff provided notes for two of the meetings.

Two peer review panels were convened to comment on the final report and recommendations; almost all of these participants had also attended one of the provincial roundtable meetings, so they were familiar with the topics and roundtable discussions. The peer review meetings were to ensure the final report appropriately reflected the roundtable meetings and provided representative and well-conceived recommendations. As much as possible, the make-up of the review panels reflected the broad range of experiences seen at the roundtables. Peer review panel participants included urban and rural participants, and people from archaeology, architecture, consulting, local government, the not-for-profit sector, museums, heritage commissions, Indigenous communities, and Chinese-Canadian and Japanese-Canadian communities.

Meeting Report-Out

The predetermined meeting format of established topics was delivered in all communities so that differing opinions could be detected.

Throughout the timetable of meetings, participants were told their words would be captured for an honest reflection of their concerns and aspirations. Many of the meeting groups requested that Heritage BC produce reports for distribution to main meeting contacts and to the Heritage Branch. Relying heavily on the participants' words, 17 reports were prepared to provide accurate representations of the meetings.

Participants understood this was an opportunity to be heard, and this opportunity was particularly important to Indigenous participants, many of whom requested their words be respected and not altered. (One Indigenous participant prepared a multi-page report with a request her words be used verbatim.) As a result, meeting reports are largely based on the words of participants.

Meeting reports were synthesized into major themes as a way to manage the substantial amount of information that had been collected and that dovetailed with the broader themes identified in predetermined meeting topics: definition of heritage, evolving practice, future, vision and values, identity, collaboration, environment, and economy. Other themes naturally arose out of these topics, and these have been captured in sections of their own.

Consistent throughout the project, preconceived ideas were not imposed on the participants. A learning lesson of the roundtables is that it is not possible and, in fact, inappropriate, to characterize a participant or a community; each must make their own determination.

68 people initiated the online survey, although not all completed the survey. The survey was also based on the 8 predetermined topics.

After several in-person meetings, common themes were starting to appear. When appropriate, and without leading the conversation to a predetermined conclusion, common themes and statements were occasionally "tested" by asking participants to comment on the themes and statements. Typically, participants agreed with the themes and statements and they would add more depth to what had been said at earlier meetings.

A principal value was carried meetings: every participant had the right to express an opinion and that opinion was considered to be correct according to the experience of that particular participant. Heritage BC's role was not to impose ideas or to lead conversations to predetermined conclusions; its role was to look for strong themes that describe the state of heritage.

The process was successful in achieving that broad goal of bringing people together to share ideas, situations, challenges, and aspirations. All ideas expressed in this report are based on a strong consensus of those who participated in the provincial roundtables. While subtle differences are due to the changing mix of participant experiences and locations, but overall the similarity of opinions, challenges, and aspirations among the meetings was striking.

Exploring Themes

Defining Heritage

*“The focus on definitions reflects the development of the sector.”
“Defining is complex and necessary. It informs everything that follows.”*

Each meeting started with the topic of defining heritage. This task proved to be as compelling as it was challenging to answer, and participants often returned to this topic throughout the day. It was not unusual for participants to dwell on this topic longer than any other.

Definitions of heritage included the following:

“Heritage is the tangible and intangible record of human imprint on the world.”

“Our heritage is our environment. Culture is part of our environment; we need our culture to take care of our environment. If we don’t take care of the land, we lose our culture.”

“Stories of the past are our stories... to tell, sing, draw, write and record.... Everyone’s stories are important, and their contributions should be equally valued. For this to happen, everyone needs to be given a voice.”

“Heritage is the active recognition of the human story. The definition is evolving, it needs dynamism that moves through time. Heritage is a verb, not a noun.”

“Our nation and people will tell our own story and that is the heart of what we are talking about, that is what heritage is, telling our own stories. My words and my voice.”

Participants consistently described heritage in inclusive and expansive terms that focused on social or humanistic qualities rather than its traditional focus on building fabric. A strong consensus emerged that heritage is about human interaction with each other and the surrounding environment.

While it is inclusive of all people and all cultures, heritage is not about the assimilation of cultures, but rather the appreciation of distinctions between cultures. Recognizing heritage has long been told outward from the values and point-of-view of settler history, participants articulated the belief that it is imperative heritage must now include all voices and all stories, both good and bad. Participants frequently said stories have been told primarily from the point of view of European newcomers, and it is now time to hear other interpretations to these stories.

For non-Indigenous people, heritage tends to have an “otherness” or a “thingness” -- words used by the participants -- suggesting heritage can be identified and described as something separate from the individual. Some participants pointed out the word “heritage” does not exist in many Indigenous languages, and that Indigenous concepts of heritage can be the embodied spirit of tradition, belief, and environment, inextricably linking past, present and future.

Different cultures may have different relationships with heritage, but they describe it in similar broad terms and believe the story of heritage could and should be better told. One Indigenous participant commented, when comparing a meeting discussion with studies of Indigenous heritage and culture, “These themes are similar across the country.”

Participants agreed that Indigenous culture has been appropriated, dismissed, or excluded by past heritage practices, that work must be done to acknowledge past wrongs, and that the heritage sector must strive to be truly inclusive. “We need to reframe as we talk about heritage... We need to understand heritage so that we [Indigenous peoples] can be a part of it.”

Heritage as a link between past, present, and future was common to most meetings and many believe that understanding the past helps us to make better decisions in the future. “Heritage is knowing your past, keeping it now, and passing it on to future generations.”

Several people talked about heritage as an action, which distinguishes between preservation and transformation and reflects on the living landscape. “Heritage is not just static, it is living... it needs dynamism that moves through time. Heritage is a verb, not a noun.”

Participants in metropolitan areas also explained heritage in expansive terms, but perhaps not with the same emphasis of rural participants.

As mentioned, defining heritage was the most compelling and challenging topic of each meeting. This underscored a real need to explain this sector and the purpose of the work. “Defining is complex and necessary. It informs everything that follows.” Others expressed a need for a common understanding. “Clear definitions are important and valuable to explain so that we can convince policymakers of our needs.”

Intersections between Heritage and History

When defining heritage, the distinction between heritage and history arose as a topic in the urban meetings.

History was described as an academic topic, while heritage was described as “how we cope with what happened... how we distill it into what is important to us. A continually evolving process.”

Participants noted that heritage is what matters to a community, whereas history just happens and is not necessarily what is important. Heritage is more encompassing than history.

History is studying and heritage is doing. History is observational and heritage is connectedness. "Heritage has a richness that suggests that it draws on experience and humanity."

Another important difference is heritage as an activity. To paraphrase a comment at another meeting, "heritage is not a state, it is an action. We 'do' heritage."

More than semantics, this conversation underscores key ideas found in the definition of heritage. Heritage is distinguished through experience, action, interpretation, and valuation.

The Vision and Values of Heritage

Participants described heritage as layered stories that include all voices and cultures; it is values-based, understood as those aspects of the past ascribed value by individuals and groups. Participants are also aware that inclusion is a wholistic concept: exhibition content, language, and interpretations mobilized by the sector in its work needs to be evaluated so that they are not exclusive (intentionally or unintentionally) of marginalized peoples who are part of the fabric of BC's history.

To understand heritage as a wholistic and values-based concept, the sector must be willing to acknowledge past injustices and to recognize that BC's heritage spans many thousands of years and incorporates the lives and work of many cultures. These ongoing acts of cultural valuation foster the dynamic state of heritage and are key to defining and identifying heritage.

Heritage in the Disciplines

Participants recognized that understandings of the scope and definition of heritage is nuanced across disciplines.

Archaeology

Many see archaeology as a commercialized practice that has a stronger connection to industry than to heritage -- this because many believe archaeologists are contracted to fulfill legal requirements for corporations.

In contrast, it is also it is considered a way to deepen the stories of heritage -- and some Indigenous governments have hired archaeologists to help them reclaim the stories of their past and their ties to place:

“Archaeology is dedicated in equal measure across the province to commercial purposes and to provide support for land claims. There are a growing number of Indigenous archaeologists and traditional use studies. It is being driven by the local bands.”

“Some communities are working as collectives in response to proposed developments and using archaeology as a means to share the responsibility of stewardship, while also recognizing each community claim to parts of the asserted traditional territories. Their own archaeological teams are conducting the field work and drafting reports in response to projects that impact multiple communities. In this way, archaeology is also being used as an assertion of title and rights.”

The traditional temporal demarcation between archaeological artifacts and historical artifacts -- set at 1846 for the purposes of the *Heritage Conservation Act* does not have relevance in the current practice of heritage, according to some participants. It is an arbitrary date from a time when the field of archaeology was gaining traction as a discipline, and participants consistently described it as being artificial and inconsistent with the broader interpretation and practices of heritage.

Many participants were unaware of this distinction and its implications. Heritage sites and objects are afforded several categories of automatic protection, one of which is based on the 1846 date criteria. A permit is required to conduct any type of work in the public and private sectors as explained in the *Heritage Conservation Act (HCA)*. However, archaeology can be conducted on heritage sites that are not protected under the *HCA*. It is noted that these nuanced approaches to archaeology are not necessarily recognized or understood by the sector at large.

Many participants characterized the date demarcation as creating a two-tier system based on colonialist ideas that separate Indigenous from non-Indigenous. “These systems were developed by colonial Canada... This means heritage has been defined by settlers with privilege.” This is particularly true of Indigenous people, who have a history spanning thousands of years, and who recognize a fluid timeline of past and present leading to the future.

Indigenous participants expressed frustration with legislation that relegates their heritage to the past, while non-Indigenous heritage is treated as something in the present. “When you use heritage in a First Nations community, you are up against 1846 and all that baggage.”

“Separating heritage from archaeology is very problematic in that it deepens the divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous values and rights. It maintains the separation between 'us and them.' It makes it hard for us to work together.”

“How we practice archaeology in BC comes back to bite us... Archaeology literally buries First Nations heritage.”

It should be noted, the practice of archaeology itself -- especially when it is used to reveal a richer story - was not under attack by participants. However, participants oppose the distinction of archaeology and heritage and see as this as detrimental to the overall sector and counter to the efforts of reconciliation.

Archives

Who is an archivist? What is an archive?

“How we value archives and archival records is part of the problem.”

“Archives need a ton of support and advice. There is no legislation around the protection of archives. As things change, how are we defining the online archives? Everything about the discipline is evolving.”

The maintenance and stability of archives is a common concern throughout the province, but the situation is particularly acute in rural communities. In many rural communities, the local archivist is a lay-person who has a particular interest in the community and who decides to create a record. It was reported that there are a number of "basements archives" along the east side of Kootenay Lake, which were started by such lay people. While admirable, there are many challenges to the approach: systems and best practices are not in place; proper archiving materials are not used; and the collections are often held privately.

The town of Silvertown, for example, ceased to support the local archive and the collection was imminently threatened. At the time of the meeting, a proposal to move the collection to New Denver was under consideration. A small community near Creston lost its basement archive when the collection was discarded after the homeowner passed away. It is possible this community lost its only written historical record.

In this case and in others, people expressed a need for help: for knowledge, so that they could improve their approaches to archiving, and for funding, so that they could purchase archival materials and

equipment. Unfortunately, acquiring these capacities will not resolve other issues, including lack of personnel, available time and appropriate storage.

This situation is found throughout the sector, as described in "Capacities".

Built Heritage

Although built heritage has been traditionally synonymous with heritage in BC, it was often absent from the discussion on defining heritage. The notable exception to this statement was Victoria -- a city well associated with built heritage -- where conversations focused on the built environment more than at any other meeting.

Participants at numerous meetings did not suggest built heritage is no longer important or should be valued less. Instead, participants strongly focussed on the social/humanistic aspects of heritage and they described the built environment is an element of this larger idea of heritage, standing as a marker of a community's history and stories and a representation of past techniques, traditions, and styles.

"Built heritage tells the story of the community... the building has to connect through a story."

"Buildings may be gone, but there is still a connection to the place where it stood. It comes down to interpretation."

Many participants suggested buildings are not significant merely because they exist, but because they are ascribed value and they contribute to the story of place, time, people, and community. One participant noted, "This new knowledge needs to include how people lived their day-to-day lives, their culture, entertainment, and self-sufficiency."

While participants typically emphasized the social/humanistic qualities of heritage, it does not mean they are unconcerned about the retention of the built environment. One participant summed it up in the following words:

"There is a crisis with the protection of heritage buildings in Canada. How will the building be maintained and kept up? If it is just about the story, it is easy to say we do not need the building anymore. The reality is buildings are coming down, even those with the protection."

Conservation techniques are not well-known throughout the province, the majority of local governments have not adopted heritage conservation tools, and funding is critically low.

Museums and their collections

Museums are considered heritage institutions, as they tell stories through the artifacts that constitute their collections.

Like built heritage, participants do not believe artifacts intrinsically possess significance; rather, the significance comes from the value that is ascribed to them (by an individual or a group) and from the story that the artifact helps to represent. Like the built environment, artifacts are elements of heritage that stand as markers of a community's history and stories.

Many museum managers spoke of the need to re-examine their collections, exhibits, and interpretive material in order to better represent the diversity of their communities. They also spoke of the need to explore the potential of virtual reality in order to reach new audiences. The role of technologies in museums is uncertain, in part because technology continues to evolve at a fast pace. Many museum workers believe it is unlikely a virtual copy of an artifact will be a substitute for the real thing, but technology might help to generate curiosity.

Lack of staff training and time, insufficient funds, and the possibility of reduced attendance were cited as challenges. Other challenges include managing collections that are too large or too unfocused, establishing collections of present-day artifacts, and deaccessioning.

Funding is particularly challenging due to an uneasy fit with the BC Arts Council. Typical exhibition programs and collecting are not eligible for funding through the BCAC. Museum managers often feel they must tailor their programs in order to meet eligibility criteria.

Evolving the Practice of Heritage

The evolution of the sector was one of the explored themes.

De-emphasizing the built environment and promoting the social aspects of heritage are indicators that the sector is evolving in its approaches to and practices of heritage.

Several groups were asked if they felt they would have had the same conversation in the past, say two or five or ten years ago. A large group in a rural area was emphatic in its response: No. A group in an urban setting said the conversation began years ago and it had not advanced in the intervening time. There was a striking contrast of optimism and pessimism. The meetings did not provide opportunities to delve into these responses, but it is interesting to note the rural group talked mostly about "social" heritage, while the urban group focused more on the built environment.)

“We have come so far from the attitudes that history has to be written.”

Heritage “will evolve if more people are involved. This should happen with more community meetings and events that are advertised to the correct audience... example: more community members from the community, different age groups – to include children/teenagers and young adults, social media, youth groups, etc.”

“There is a great disconnect between policy and advocacy work being done internationally, nationally, regionally and locally and on the ground. Many seem unaware of the larger conversations around heritage, the work being done at the UN, by groups like the First Nations Leadership Council, or even within BC, which groups are doing what work on cultural heritage. This suggests more work needs to be done to bring cohesion to the sector, to advance rather than duplicate efforts, to communicate and network, to be inclusive and open.”

Organizational Effectiveness and Capacity

On occasion, a community would describe a situation unique to that area. However, that situation did not affect the overall conclusion. (Fernie and Sparwood described a strong pull toward Alberta due to their location in an eastward-facing valley. Although a unique setting, the conversation in Fernie emphasized the influences of geography, isolation, and local identity, themes that were heard throughout the province).

Subtle differences between urban communities and rural communities were detected, but the project did not reveal anything that was not already known. Non-urban areas consistently cited lack of funding and other capacities, challenges with succession, isolation and lack of connectivity, and lack of infrastructure and governmental support. Organizations in non-urban areas are more likely to be managed by volunteers.

Urban areas have greater access to services and funding as the local governments are more likely have adopted heritage programs. No doubt urban-based organizations also have funding challenges, but this was not expressed to the same degree as by non-urban organizations.

Collaborations and the definition of heritage were two other topics that revealed subtle, but not substantive differences.

Taken collectively, there is an undercurrent of fear for non-urban participants that does not seem to exist for urban participants (or at least was not expressed in the same way). This stems from concerns for the future of heritage stewardship and includes declining volunteerism, declining interest in history and heritage with younger generations, overtaxed workloads, limited funding opportunities, and lack of knowledge and expertise. Not-for-profit organizations feel they have reached the limits of their capacities, which includes space, expertise, knowledge, and financial and human resources. Local government workers discussed budgetary and political constraints and lack of human resources: “Experience, knowledge and capacity are missing. When projects come to light, there is a lack of confidence.”

While the vision for heritage is expansive and inclusive, many organizations believe they are, at best, only able to maintain the status quo. They feel they are in survival mode, and they are unwilling to assume new responsibilities due to the current situation.

“There are so many things people want to improve, but groups struggle due to lack of capacities and personnel. Smaller groups have to compete against organizations with much more capacity. Educating groups in capacity building is an important part of the process.”

The impacts of reduced capacity are significant, and they must be recognized: “These resources [experience, knowledge, and financial and human resources] are integral to allow for relevancy. They are the real limitations faced by organizations wanting to embrace reconciliation.”

Expertise and knowledge are not readily available to most organizations. Conferences are too expensive to attend, and they are generally programmed for larger, more urban-based organizations. Webinars and online resources are available, but they do not appear to be a solution.

Face-to-face meetings are the preference, especially when a meeting is convened by an external agency. It is noted that organizations want access to information, but they want to be able to apply the best practices themselves.

Lack of funding is a consistent theme; funding is seen as a means to an end, such as supporting collaborations that would not otherwise occur.

Funding to increase capacity is needed but, by itself, it is not a solution. An organization with newly acquired knowledge is not necessarily better off if workers are not available to put the new knowledge into practice or if they do not have access to the proper equipment and materials.

Collaboration

Collaboration is strongly desired, and it is agreed there is much to be gained by working together:

“Collaboration is a means of survival in small communities. Sometimes, heritage places can survive only when organizations work together for a win-win solution.”

However, there appears to be many impediments: leadership is lacking; time and resources are not available; the collaborative process is not fully understood; and manageable and achievable projects have not been identified.

“Collaboration is another way to connect organizations and individuals, but it cannot happen without connections – even collaboration – with funders.”

Collaboration has many values, such as sharing and listening, which are important steps toward understanding and reconciliation, and it is seen as a way to increase capacities and to achieve mutual goals.

Collaboration has the potential of breaking down barriers and building community by bringing together people of diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences: “Working with more than one community in a Nation, working with different sectors of a community, knowing when to work with language speakers, elders, youth, etc. can change the conversation. Ethical and effective engagement, decolonization and a commitment to building knowledge jointly can help the community work together in a good way.”

Lack of collaboration is an outcome of the current state of capacity, such as funding, and is exacerbated by the lack of catalysts, such as leadership. Many participants described organizations stretched to the maximum of their limits and unable to take on new activities, such as new collaborations, without additional inputs.

Collaboration did not elicit the same level of conversation in the metropolitan areas as it did in the more rural areas.

“I would like to see more collaboration and sharing of information. That has got to happen. Everyone is working really hard but separately. That is what is really valuable about this. It is a place to have a conversation with other people working in the sector. We need to help each other. People are doing the same things but in different capacities. There is a lot of good work going on, but we aren’t talking to each other.”

As seen elsewhere, there can be a disconnect between the stewards of heritage and, as suggested here, funding agencies: “There is a difference between top-down and bottom-up. If this comes from the community, that’s one thing. But part of the problem is the granting institutions that have a one-size-fits-all form, which does not suit every situation. They expect boxes to be ticked, which says they care more about that than the value of collaboration.”

Making a Case

Many people expressed an inability to “make their case” to influencers, such as politicians and funders. Typically, this is knowing how to express different types of value so that a funder or politician is encouraged to provide or increase support.

Making a case is, in fact, complicated and there are many theories and approaches. Another challenge is the lack of information that is available to organizations. Obtaining the right information requires forethought, research, and analysis, sometimes done over many years. Unavailable measuring systems, lack of personnel, and insufficient funds are other factors that prevent proper data collection.

Heritage workers are frustrated they not able to convey and convince influencers of the qualitative and quantitative values of local history; they feel their work and interests are underappreciated and insufficiently recognized and supported.

Two politicians who attended workshops did not believe heritage provided a tangible benefit to their communities. When a group of participants was asked what they would exclude from their definition of heritage, a councillor responded “economy.” Considering the low level of support from local governments (e.g. heritage conservation protections and funding), this could be indicative of politicians’ opinions relative to the contributions of heritage to their communities.

Funding

Funding was the most frequently mentioned problem. The current level of funding is having serious ramifications on the stewardship of BC’s history and heritage. Purposeful funding – to stimulate collaborations, improve staffing and compensation levels, address shrinking budgets and increasing costs – is urgently needed.

“I think we are overwhelmed with our individual responsibilities that we tend to work in silos. Everyone is so busy they don’t often take the time to do that. It is a symptom of money. Resources are a real impediment. Money would correct the problem by giving organizations more staff and to be more adept at dealing with everything they need to do so you wouldn’t feel like you couldn’t take the time out to spend the time.”

Many funding programs are too onerous for smaller organizations. The application and reporting requirements are disproportionate to the small size of many grants, and many organizations do not have the financial means to provide matching funds. Too many grant programs only support projects and this short-term focus does not support organizational growth or sustainability. Many grant programs use language and include expectations that are not suited to smaller, often volunteer-run organizations.

Museum managers frequently expressed frustration with the current funding structure as their projects or programs were often considered ineligible by the BC Arts Council. As such, museum managers feel “there is no place for us [in the funding system].”

“The Province needs to put more money into heritage at the local level... The Province has a very narrow focus which means they aren’t really helping a lot of heritage in the province. They use ‘benefit to all people in the province’ as a touchstone for making decisions regarding funding and support.”

“When the Province funds multiple orgs or processes, there needs to be a connection between the work. The current model of funding results in disconnected projects and makes it challenging for the field to advance.”

While the government may be focused on the “benefit to all people in the province,” most roundtable participants are focused on local identity. The priorities of the government and stewards of heritage are not aligned. (This divide is further explored under Identity.)

“Funding enables continuity which is so important for organizations. Fewer people are doing more with less. Stable core operational funding that grows at a reasonable rate is needed so that you can keep your staff. This sector is not very good at recognizing that we are in the business of knowledge and when someone retires, we lose that knowledge. It is about succession management. Core operational funding and mentorship are huge.”

Future Opportunities for Heritage

Leadership

The Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage brought together hundreds of people, all of whom are passionate about heritage and their communities despite the many challenges they face. However, there is a feeling that the limits of capacities and energy have been reached and participants do not believe it is possible to add to their workloads or to produce more projects.

The lack of a leader or catalyst is a consistent observation – it is a recognition that someone or something that will galvanize people around a project is missing.

The Provincial Roundtables provided a perfect example: despite the relative smallness of the communities and the common interests of the participants, many people had not met previously and, even if they had, they were not necessarily familiar with each other's work. The meetings provided the needed catalyst to bring people together; many participants expressed their enthusiasm for the benefits derived from sharing and learning.

At almost every roundtable, people expressed how much they appreciated coming together to meet their colleagues and to learn from one another. But, despite these benefits, the participants did not foresee the potential of convening a second meeting. Time and money were cited as obstacles. To emphasize the restraints facing many organizations, one museum manager pointed out her annual travel budget is only \$50. Other managers pointed that when they attend a meeting, their museums are closed.

“There needs to be an external catalyst – either from local governments, organizations or individuals. The catalyst of positive change requires resources, such as planning, money, and expertise.”

“Meetings are helpful for sharing information, but we need catalysts to keep them going. Having someone to spearhead or guide is very important.”

Catalysts for Communication: Meetings, Connectivity

While the purpose of the meetings was to discuss the state of heritage, the roundtable meetings offered numerous direct benefits and value for the participants. Most notably, the meetings brought people together, many for the first time, to share information and to learn from each other.

The roundtables provided rare opportunities for many of the participants to come together for intensive discussions. As one participant said, to emphasize the impact of the roundtable, “We meet, but we do not talk.”

Many participants expressed a desire for similar meetings in the future, although they did not foresee the potential of convening for a second meeting. Lack of time, funding, and leadership were reasons given.

“We talk a lot about community engagement. It is really interesting because it is really misunderstood. In the larger context, it is networking and collaborating with other organizations. At its finest, it is a good thing and it is where we are headed. In order to achieve it, all the involved organizations need to shut their doors to meet. If we had an infusion of money, we would feel better about the networking and building community relationships, which takes time and ongoing commitments. We are going to need relationships more and more and streamlining services and working together. It is imperative and all of the funders want to see it. I like that and I think that’s exciting and valuable, but it is costing a lot and it is hard to do.”

The roundtables revealed the extent to which the sector can be siloed. A community that cannot find ways to meet on a most basic level is a community that will not realize the benefits of networking and collaboration.

“I feel like a small player. I’m really appreciative of being here and having this opportunity. If there were more opportunities or another step in this process. How do we stay connected and engaged?”

Economic diversity and durability through heritage conservation

Economy

One of the predetermined topics was “Economic diversity and durability through heritage conservation,” which is found in the Province’s heritage strategy. In presenting the theme, “economy” was not defined so that participants could approach the topic through their own experiences and perceptions.

Overall, this topic did not resonate with the participants, and it would be safe to say the connection between economy and heritage is not well understood. Organizations expressed difficulties in making a case for heritage, which would require measuring and analyzing revenue generation and impacts.

As noted above, a councillor offered “economy” as an exclusion from his definition of heritage. A mayor of a small community suggested there is no economic benefit to the local government from the heritage sector (the mayor was describing her perception of a situation; she was not offering a criticism).

Participants in urban areas described a struggle between heritage conservation and real estate development. An interesting dichotomy was raised: the price of land and development, in general, is threatening conservation and preservation (e.g. natural and built sites), while development restrictions (that are unique to heritage conservation) can make conservation projects financially unviable.

While Heritage BC prepares an economic impact study on an annual basis (on behalf of the Heritage Branch), which demonstrates considerable impact on a provincial level, it is clear local impact is not understood or appreciated. Participants spoke of intangible benefits, such as contributing to a more livable community, but it was rare that participants spoke of measurable benefits and economic spin-offs, such as job creation, purchase of materials and services, and merchandise sales.

Tourism

Throughout the provincial roundtable meetings, many people expressed challenges related to the tourism sector. It is believed the tourism marketing, sometimes accompanied with generic or inappropriate imagery, is not always representative of the distinct qualities of an area, as one participant noted, “Tourism promotes misconceptions.”

Indigenous people spoke about the appropriation of their imagery to promote the province and about the lack of compensation and recognition for what is taken. “Indigenous culture is important to tourism. BC is recognized by it and the brand “Supernatural BC” is used. But what is the valuation of the Indigenous culture and the recognition to BC? This relationship needs to change. A lot of knowledge is taken away and what is given back? There needs to be reciprocity.”

Tourism is believed to have both positive and negative impacts. Tourists are not respectful of the people or places, and they can pose a risk to the environment.

Overall, a synergy appears to be missing between the tourism sector and the heritage sector (specifically, smaller community organizations). Many heritage stewards feel their priority is to tell a local story to the local community and not to cater to a tourist audience. Participants are concerned about the potential damage to heritage sites and landscapes, organizations do not have the finances and staff, local economic development offices do not always involve heritage organizations, and many organizations and communities are simply not prepared for tourism.

As seen elsewhere, this is a result of lack of capacity. Many smaller heritage organizations and their communities do not have the infrastructures, financing, and personnel to put into place a comprehensive framework to support tourism.

In addition, local tourism bureaus and local governments do not always recognize what heritage and history can contribute to tourism.

Environmental stewardship through heritage conservation

“Environmental stewardship through heritage conservation” was one of the eight topics introduced at most of the meetings; this phrase is found in the provincial heritage strategy. A definition of “environment” was not provided so that participants could approach the topic through their own experiences and perceptions.

The approach to this topic was broad and inconsistent, and the definition of “environment” could range from a setting or atmosphere created by (for example) a historic town centre to lands, forests, and water. Concepts of environmental protection, climate change, and carbon reduction were infrequently referenced, although some participants remarked that heritage has the capacity to describe climate change.

British Columbia was settled by non-Indigenous peoples because of its environmental richness, and so heritage can include our relationship with nature and the surrounding environment. Heritage is connected to the environment through logging, mining, and fishing, which strongly influenced the establishment and development of communities. Some communities include major forest fires in their stories (Kamloops); others are shaped by significant changes to the landscape (Sparwood); and others include outdoor activities, such as skiing (Nakusp).

As expressed above, Indigenous people express a particular relationship to the environment that may not have an equivalent in other cultures. Indigenous heritage is inextricably tied to the environment, which has influenced traditions and ways of life.

Several participants acknowledged Indigenous traditional knowledge and the ways of managing the environment through methods such as controlled burns. There is a belief that there is much to be learned from traditional knowledge and benefit to be gained from its application.

Recreation is affecting some landscapes, such as historic trails that are now used for mountain biking. New uses of land present potential for exploitation and destruction, but also the potential for economic benefit and education (examples: access fees and signage indicating the history of the region).

“Some communities are working with societies and local governments to use trails as a means of education. Interpretive signs, ethnobotanical markers, use of Indigenous languages are all being used by communities to make heritage trails more than just trails.”

Heritage as a means to steward the environment does not have strong resonance. That is not to suggest interest or awareness are lacking, but small organizations may not include environmental stewardship in their mandates, and such a large topic is likely beyond their capacities.

A few participants noted, with a long historic view, it is possible to tell the story of climate change. Heritage conservation as a means to affect climate change was raised at one meeting, but the commentary was not positive: “Heritage is not on the BC Government's radar as a way to deal with

climate change. It is not in their action plan. There was a chance to have an energy retrofit program. When we are talking about preservation we are coming up against capitalism (erasure and renewal). We have trades that are built on how to take down historic structures and replace with new.”

Participants describe a strong or even inseparable connection between the environment and heritage. Some people describe our connection to the land or place through fossils, and many others recognize the importance and influence of trees, water, wildlife, etc. It is these natural elements that brought everyone to the land.

“There is a cultural heritage that we are responsible for and that includes protecting our lands and waters, trees and forests. We must protect the forests to make longhouses and poles. We must work together to protect our heritage – land, water, and forests – for future generations. This must underpin our discussion of heritage.”

“I think an entire lifetime of a conservation around environmental stewardship is necessary just to understand what that means to the average citizen of BC. I do not feel I have a grasp if this concept.”

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous peoples recognize a shared experience, but they point out they do not form a single entity of sameness. Nations and bands have their own unique set of conditions, needs, challenges, and aspirations.

"We have been practicing our heritage forever. It is not something that you start."

"Our nation and people will tell our own story and that is the heart of what we are talking about, that is what heritage is, telling our own stories. My words and my voice."

Indigenous people describe suppression that began with first contact and continues today through racism and restrictive provincial and federal laws. Indigenous people are proud to have survived, to now be able to reclaim their traditions and beliefs: "We are still here, and we are still practicing our culture and our connection with the land."

Indigenous cultural heritage is largely retained in memory and has been passed along, generation to generation, by knowledge keepers and elders. Indigenous people conveyed a sense of urgency when describing the eventual loss of wisdom, tradition, and history as knowledge keepers and elders age and pass away.

"A lot of traditional knowledge is being lost. Partly because of lack of interest, but also because when 'knowledge holders' or also known as 'Elders' are passing away without the opportunity to pass down their own personal traditional knowledge."

"We really need to see results and we need to remember the saying "Not about us without us.""

Indigenous people describe insufficient funding sources and situations in which they are excluded or, in collaborations, where they are relegated to a lower category in the team. "First Nations require funding to get their community members into archives and museums. This is where the change will occur, when archives and communities get in the room together over a shared interest."

"The impetus for First Nations to get involved is to have the recognition outside the reserve."

"Heritage is our culture."

Respect and Truth

Indigenous peoples stated, and many non-Indigenous people agreed, respect and truth are principal requirements that must precede or (at the very least) align with relationship-building and collaboration.

Indigenous peoples asked non-Indigenous people to listen to and to accept truth, without questioning or doubting what is heard. This is a prerequisite for establishing respect.

Reconciliation will be built on respect and truth.

Reconciliation

“I hear a lot from the First Nations communities that no one has a clear picture what reconciliation looks like. It is not just understanding the wrongs, but how we can move forward together. Everyone is grappling with what does it mean what does it look like. The sector has a responsibility to do that work.”

As heritage is described as humankind’s imprint on the earth (see Definition of Heritage) and values of listening, acknowledging, understanding and accepting were often mentioned, the field of heritage is well-suited to advancing reconciliation. While not articulated so specifically in the meetings, the non-Indigenous participants regularly spoke about the requirement to face past wrongs and the need to build bridges of reconciliation.

However, the Indigenous participants straightforwardly laid bare the impacts of the history of suppression and the continuing racism. The path to true reconciliation may be long, but even in the most difficult of conversations, hope and potential were not abandoned.

Listening and acknowledging without question are requirements. These are conditions of truth, without which little can be accomplished.

“The heritage sector has the ability to support reconciliation by developing more understanding of truth and beliefs.”

Many organizations have made reconciliation with and recognition of Indigenous peoples a priority. Many projects and programs were mentioned at roundtable meetings, the challenges, successes, and impacts are unknown as information is not collected and studied.

Many participants also advocated for reconciliation with other cultures that were suppressed in the past. Cultural reconciliation is strongly aligned with the social ideals of heritage and the values of reconciliation need to be incorporated into the work of the sector.

“The reconciliation conversation is super important, but not at the expense of other communities such as the Chinese community. There are institutions that are repositories of information that can serve Indigenous, academic and any other communities. There is a responsibility not to politicize that information, but to help people understand their relationship to that stuff. Reconciliation is highly politicized and by providing information without judgement and baggage we can help move it forward. We need to become better aware of our biases and stop them.”

Provincial Structures

Heritage, as it is described in the roundtables, touches on almost all aspects of community life, from education and health to social cohesion and informed decision-making. Heritage is also considered to be inseparable from arts and culture.

Provincial government structures are such that heritage is separated from its "sister" disciplines and other influences. Participants believe there is little to no communication or collaboration among the province's ministries.

Participants associated with museums (among others) expressed their frustrations with the current structures. They do not feel the museum sector is understood by the BC Arts Council and they expressed challenges with the funding programs.

Many participants were not aware archaeology and heritage are delineated by a date, and this distinction was considered contrary to the current understanding of heritage. Indigenous participants challenged the idea their heritage is considered archaeology, while non-Indigenous heritage is treated differently.

Participants urged cross-ministerial communication and collaboration as the stories of people, place, history, and heritage will benefit from and contribute to areas such as education, health, and economy.

"It is really important that all levels of government talk about how they define heritage and how it is integrated into processes, work and departments. The different groups currently do not talk to each other. Once we see the need to integrate, it makes it easier for the community. The government needs to get its act together in order to actually work with communities. It makes it hard to do our work. Communities have silos too. We need to break them down."

Overall, participants do not feel the provincial government is sufficiently serving the sector. Government definitions and divisions have contributed to a sector that is siloed, underappreciated, and undervalued.

"We must stop placing heritage into different ministries; we need relationships with tourism, arts, health, and multiculturalism. If we are talking about a healthy community, we need to be able to relate the framework of our activities to the ideal of sustainable health. We are not frivolous."

Heritage Conservation Act, Local Government Act, Heritage Tools

The purpose of the meetings did not include a review of heritage management tools as they are specified in the *Local Government Act (LGA)*. Not-for-profit organizations are not affected by the *LGA*, and most local governments have not developed heritage conservation or recognition programs.

It is known, through a series of annual surveys, that the majority of local governments have not adopted heritage programs based on the tools provided in the *Local Government Act*. This was also evident through the roundtable meetings.

In many communities, heritage stewardship is largely left to museums and in smaller communities it is left to other not-for-profit organizations. As noted elsewhere, smaller organizations are working with limited capacities.

Local governments do not necessarily recognize the benefits and contributions of heritage, and not-for-profit organizations do not feel they are able to make a case for heritage.

Many characterized the *LGA* as colonial due to its focus on the built environment and its inflexibility to extend protections and recognition to heritage elements that fall under the broader definition of heritage. This is particularly problematic when considering the heritage of Indigenous peoples.

When considering the poor adoption of heritage conservation tools and the evolving practice of heritage, the *LGA*, as it currently exists, will become increasingly out of step with the communities it aims to serve.

It should be noted participants did not suggest, at any time, that the *Act* should not protect the built environment. Rather, participants pointed out its deficiencies in protecting and recognizing other types of heritage.

Heritage conservation tools are more likely to be adopted in urban communities and so participants at the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island roundtables prioritized provincial legislation as a discussion topic. They cited numerous challenges with the legislation itself or with its implementation:

- The province is not recognizing that it created a problem when the *LGA* was put into place, creating a separation between provincial and municipal levels. The responsibilities are now in the hands of people who are focused on elections and not those who are “in it for the long game.”
- Some municipalities do not know how to use the tools and others “do not know the tools exist.”
- Municipalities are afraid to use the heritage conservation tools and they do not have the resources: “They do not know what they are doing.”
- The province is not providing an investment in training and it is not taking responsibility or action. It is a “struggle” and “unrealistic.”
- The situation is harming heritage: “The Province just shrugs.”

Participants want the *LGA* and *Heritage Conservation Act (HCA)* to be changed:

- The *LGA* is due for a “refresh” and to be “updated.”
- Currently, the *LGA* is “a pain from a practical perspective.”
- The *LGA* needs to be stronger “to direct municipalities on how to preserve.”

- The relationship between archaeology and heritage needs to be addressed. “The *Heritage Conservation Act* is problematic for the way it deals with both archaeology and heritage. Neither group should be satisfied.”

The *LGA* and *HCA* should also change because they do not reflect the current practice of heritage:

- The *LGA* needs to be renewed so that it can “encompass more of what is actually heritage. It needs to encompass the intangible heritage piece.”
- “A fundamental piece is legislation. Everything flows from the *Heritage Conservation Act*, which doesn’t offer much to Indigenous people. Our territories are not recognized outside of the reserves and it is a battle to protect something that the government does not think is in your jurisdiction. It becomes a complicated endeavour to work with your neighbours and with the province.”

The sector wants to help:

- “One of the things we can contribute is ideas about what a different relationship would look like, and where the act could be fixed.”

(Note: in 2011, a heritage working group for the First Nations Leadership Council drafted the First Nations’ Heritage Conservation Action Plan that looks at recommendation around Section 4 of the *HCA*.)

Stories and Storytelling

Telling stories is the pervasive way of describing heritage: it is the act of collecting stories, without filtering or interpreting. Anyone and everyone can contribute to the narrative, whether a historical figure or a newcomer. Stories are always evolving and deepening as new stories are added and as old stories are better understood.

A story is authentic when it is delivered in the voice of the storyteller. Conflicting stories are part of the richness of heritage and so they do not need authentication or correction.

More important than the veracity of a story is the authenticity of the “voice,” the one conveying the story. Many participants asked, “Who has the right to tell a story?” This is a compelling question, especially when considering the cultures that experienced oppression and that are now reclaiming their voices.

“We need to look at how smaller communities share their stories. They need to be given opportunities to share.”

“These stories that we recognize as our [Indigenous] heritage need to be told by our own people. Each community has the ownership of its own stories. There are property rights to stories.”

Many people commented that “the victors get to write the stories,” meaning stories are biased and inaccurate. Participants strongly believe stories must now include all voices and all cultures, and we must now include the stories that are usually avoided.

“Stories need to be what they have always been. They should not be sanitized, translated or changed for convenience. Just because a story is told does not mean it is understood, this is why we are told our stories time and again, with new details each time, until we are ready to understand.”

Built heritage and artifacts are tangible representations of stories.

“We need to look at the ephemeral aspects of stories and move away from the old focus of built history. We can talk about the church down the street and describe the stained-glass windows, but what were the people thinking and feeling at the time the building was built? This new knowledge needs to include how people lived their day-to-day lives, their culture, entertainment, and self-sufficiency.”

Authenticity

Authenticity or validation of stories was frequently raised in conversations and participants believe it is unnecessary or even counter to telling stories.

Two individuals can tell the same story, yet the stories may not be identical. What is important is the “authenticity” of the speaker, the original voice. Each story is authentic as it is told and together they create a richer story.

Creating a richer story is a key goal in describing heritage and this requires a continual layering of stories from all voices and cultures.

“Authenticity is a challenge within [Indigenous] communities too. In the past, people were trained to be knowledge keepers, that was their role. They were trained, and acquired expertise, and with it the responsibility to share that knowledge and pass it on. The complexity today is that a diversity of voices is absolutely necessary, as we have fewer knowledge keepers with the depth of understanding and responsibility that we had in the past. Communities can and do judge who is best to speak for the community on particular issues, who has that right, who should be listened to.”

Tangible / Intangible

The priority placed on defining heritage strongly indicates the practice of heritage is evolving. More than any other topic, the roundtable participants grappled with the idea of heritage and what it means to their work and their communities.

What participants did not say was that heritage as we understand it today is based on tangible objects. We learn about and talk about heritage is through stories -- and extant buildings and artifacts contribute to these stories, anchor the stories in time and place. These tangible items are not considered heritage because they exist, but because they are being ascribed value through the stories told about them, because of them.

From this perspective, which is consistent throughout the province, heritage is first and foremost intangible.

For a few participants, this strong emphasis on the intangible was concerning as it de-emphasized the built environment. But everyone agreed the built environment and artifacts are important and we must continue to protect, conserve, collect, and interpret them.

The prioritization of the intangible aspects of heritage has likely developed over many years. Some participants felt this is a new conversation while others thought these ideas go back 10 or 20 years.

What is significant is the heritage community has “evolved” in its understanding and practice of heritage, yet the support systems, such as legislation and funding programs, have not.

All participants emphasized the intangible aspects of heritage, either directly or indirectly. Following are direct comments emphasizing the intangible aspects of heritage:

“Twenty years ago, there would not have been a conversation about reconciliation. It was all about built, tangible heritage. There has been a movement to intangible and cultural heritage. The soft things that are not incorporated in a built form, which might be music, writing, cultural practice. I think this has been part of an international push. Indigenous languages are a key example of that. There has been a push and lots of funding for language conservation all around the world. We have a heritage planners’ meeting that has now become a culture and heritage planners meeting. We are broadening our scope... a lot of municipalities are doing that...”

“I’m finding this interesting. I hear from tourists who go down to our waterfront, look at a tangible symbol but are more interested in the people and culture behind that. There is a real interest in the cultural history and diversity of this area. It’s made a rich mosaic in this part of the world and people are very interested in that when they visit. From a practical economic sense, it is very noticeable that interest is not in things it is the cultural history behind them.”

“Our buildings and places are representations of an existence and a consciousness. They are reminders of what took place there. They are the consciousness of what happened, even if it is now invisible. It is the tangible and the intangible.”

“We have this diversity of cultures that have their own heritage. People are most proud of that heritage and they want to celebrate that, in both tangible and intangible ways. We thrive on that diversity, and how we are coming together to build our new community. That is very exciting.”

“The connection to the land and water is the tangible piece around heritage. Land, water, spaces, building, and archaeology. But it’s not always tangible. Passing down the experience of heritage and culture and why we do it and what it means. The sharing of the intangible. It’s the story that we are really trying to save when we are preserving a building.”

Community

Community was frequently referenced throughout the meetings, suggesting community is at the heart of heritage or heritage is by and for community.

Community was not necessarily raised as an issue, but rather it naturally flowed throughout the conversations. The meeting reports, with their numerous references to community, underscore this point.

“Heritage is about the things that matter. But none of those things matter if there is no human factor; we need to be involved through connections to places and impacts on the community. Every story is a thread in the tapestry of a community. A community is nothing without the stories and memories which equals its history.”

“Heritage describes what matters to a community. Arts is an expression of that.”

“The community has to define heritage; it should not be left to just one group. Community meetings give people opportunities to ask about heritage and to suggest how heritage can be retained. With community meetings, we can get down to the nitty-gritty. Top down does not work.”

Education and Youth

The lack of education is a common concern, and it is felt young people are no longer exposed to the history of their communities. There is a pervasive concern that heritage will be lost if younger generations do not develop an interest.

“If you do not grow up with learning about your community and how it affects your life, one does not usually seek this out in later life. Changing attitudes is what is required to make heritage, arts, and culture more important for monetary, volunteer, or moral support. How BC fits into the federal and global world is far from the average mind of the typical resident of this community and region of BC.”

Content to populate the new BC curriculum needs to be developed to introduce young people to heritage. Different approaches and ideas are needed, such as technology, sports, math, and environment, to align heritage with the interests of younger people. This will require some flexibility and ingenuity to develop.

The exact issue is not well understood, and it is likely there are a multiplicity of challenges. Some people say youth do not volunteer, while others say they volunteer for different reasons. Some people point out young people do not join organizations, while others say they are essentially excluded by the "old guard" who are challenged by new ideas.

It is likely there are a number of educational initiatives happening throughout BC, but the programs are being developed and delivered in isolated pockets without a cohesive approach and without common objectives.

Participants agree the provincial curriculum is to be blamed for the current lack of awareness of local, provincial and national history and heritage. It is believed teachers want to include history and heritage in lesson plans, but they lack the tools and the confidence to do so. “Many teachers have told us [Indigenous peoples] they want to be more inclusive of First Nations heritage, but they don’t know where to start.”

In terms of educating the general public, participants noted they are not always good at helping their communities connect with heritage and appreciate the values.

“Education is badly needed. [Indigenous] people have been lied to their entire lives; they have been denied their heritage and culture, and their relationship with their environment.”

“There is a huge culture of ignorance in terms of how people look at heritage and how they understand what it is.”

The Future

Every meeting included conversations about the vision and future of heritage, and participants were asked to consider questions such as, “What do you need to know?” and “What happens next?” These topics and questions were the most difficult and concrete responses were rare. Typical responses were “We need more” or “We need funding.”

Identity, Geography, Isolation

Heritage is used as a means to describe a community’s unique identity and particular circumstance. On occasion, the identity may expand to a region, but organizations and communities will always focus on local identity first, even to the exclusion of a neighbouring community. Additionally, small not-for-profits and local governments will, by the nature of their organizational structure and work, have mandates to serve their local communities.

While participants do not believe local heritage contributes to the identity of BC, the opposite may be true: a provincial priority can become a local priority. (An example provided is the Japanese-Canadian apology that led to the establishment of a Japanese garden.)

“BC identity and strength are shaped by the diversity of landscape, plants, animals, people and stories in the province. Support for heritage conservation ensures these ecosystems, organisms and community practices continue into the future, to shape future generations and the future of the province.”

Identity is also shaped by the surrounding geography, which can isolate a community on a provincial level and unify on a regional level. By strongly influencing character and relationships, geography and isolation are influencing factors on the uniqueness of each community. Conversely, isolation creates a feeling of have-and-have-not, providing a sense of disenfranchisement in a system that favours urbanism.

“Heritage conservation can strengthen a community's identity by presenting an authentic narrative which recognizes the geographic, environmental, economic, social and cultural forces that shaped it.”

Generally, participants at the metropolitan area meetings did not respond to the idea of identity in the same way as participants in more rural areas. This is likely because of urban densification and the fluidity between communities.

It was also pointed out that improved road access can reduce isolation as communities become more accessible to one another. While smaller communities are connected with highways, the distances are greater and road conditions are not always favourable.

“British Columbia’s identity is strengthened and renewed through heritage conservation” was one of the eight themes that were explored at each meeting. This is a problematic phrase as most participants do not believe there is a single identity for BC. As described in *Defining Heritage*, heritage is not about the assimilation of cultures, but the appreciation of the distinctions. Additionally, communities that are aware of their isolation and remoteness from urban areas do not necessarily feel a sense of “the whole” as the statement would suggest. Even urban communities described a sense of disconnect between the “haves and have nots.”

“It is impossible to define BC heritage and the idea of one identity is hopelessly simplistic; instead, it is the network of sectoral elements.”

“We can’t feel like we are part of the BC’s identity until we have figured out our own identity.”

A Common Vocabulary

Whether implied or explicitly stated, language that is commonly associated with the practice of heritage is not always understood or appreciated.

“Conservation might not be a broad enough term for heritage work. It feels narrow-minded.”

“We have a problem with our language that we use in the sector. We are unintentionally disenfranchising people through the words we use. It is our failing if we cannot make sense of that to a layperson. It is our responsibility to figure it out and make it clear and accessible. You can’t break the link to the national standards. A lot of stuff trickles out of that link. We need to be able to speak in specialized terms as colleagues. We mustn’t do that in a way that offends, disenfranchises or causes disengagement. We can’t forget the colloquial meaning of words or the Indigenous perspective.”

One person described the word “conservation” as fixed and devoid of life. It is unlikely this person was suggesting conservation is an unworthy activity, but rather was suggesting the word itself is not consistent with the ideals of an ever-changing, vibrant heritage. Similarly, statements such as “environmental stewardship through heritage conservation” and “British Columbia’s identity is strengthened and renewed through heritage conservation” were seen as inadequate as the word “conservation” is limited in scope relative to the practice of heritage.

A challenge with many words is the associated connotation and context, which can result in conflicting definitions. Many definitions of the word “conservation” were offered at one meeting.

The heritage sector often uses words without explanation and it is assumed the definition is understood. But this is not the case for commonly used words such as “conservation.” Phrases such as “collaboration through heritage conservation” were believed to be too restricted, excluding the broader interpretations and practices of heritage.

Many words may not be compatible with Indigenous beliefs. Conservation implies prolongation, but Indigenous people talk about giving back to the land and water or returning what is taken. The non-Indigenous culture wants to conserve a totem pole, but Indigenous people may believe the pole should return to the earth in a natural process of decay.

The ideas of "property" and "place" may also be challenging. These words imply a degree of ownership, which is not necessarily consistent with the Indigenous belief of stewardship. Without explanation, these words can seem to be narrow in scope and not containing the range of elements that would be understood by a heritage professional.

Urban / Non-Urban

The eight-topic meeting structure was used throughout the process for consistency and to discover if there are differences between more non-urban settings and metropolitan areas.

It would not be possible to quantify the differences, but differences were observed, nonetheless. Participants in more remote areas appeared to express the social/humanistic aspects of heritage with more passion than participants in metropolitan areas. Similarly, conversations about collaboration and funding seemed to elicit more impassioned conversations in remote areas.

Smaller communities are aware of their isolation and the challenges and threats that they face. Many smaller organizations and communities expressed concern about their viability in the near future. This is related to the lack of capacity, lack of support from various government levels, and a diminishing interest from younger generations. Many asked the question, "Who will take over from me when I am ready to retire?"

Because capacity and funding are not increasing, organizations are concerned about their precarious position. Because new volunteers are not available, there is a fear that past accomplishments will be lost, and sustainability and succession were concerns.

Communities in urban areas are more likely to have adopted heritage conservation tools provided in the *Local Government Act*. As noted above, approximately three out of four local governments, most of which are in rural areas, have not adopted heritage conservation tools.

Rural participants believe more opportunities are available in urban areas, and what is available is often designed for larger organizations. "The North needs support. Most events and conferences are in the Lower Mainland, but an effort needs to be made to make sure Northern and remote communities are supported in their quest to preserve and promote heritage."

Summary of Findings

The Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage provided an extraordinary opportunity that brought people together to share ideas, situations, challenges, successes, relationships, and aspirations related to heritage and other disciplines such as museums, archives, archaeology, and arts and culture.

The meetings provided immediate benefits of community building, sharing, and learning by simply bringing people together and providing a forum for conversation. While all the participants shared a common interest, it is obvious that organizations and disciplines are siloed and opportunities to meet and talk are rare (if they exist at all).

“This meeting is one of the most exciting things to come along and there is a great opportunity for Heritage BC to engage in the process.”

This project provided a rare forum for in-depth discussions about heritage, and participants showed they were eager for this type of discourse. Participants recognized the importance of this project, as illustrated through the number of attendees who were willing to commit to six-hour meetings and sometimes travelled several hours to participate.

Every meeting included conversations about the vision and future of heritage, and participants were asked to consider questions such as, “What do you need to know?” and “What happens next?” These topics and questions were difficult to answer, and concrete responses were rare. A typical response was “We need more.” (The most common was, “We need funding”).

While this may suggest a general lack of vision, it highlights the underlying conditions of the sector. Volunteer organizations are facing succession problems, not-for-profits are struggling to remain viable, and planners are working without consistent support from their local governments.

One participant summed up the situation with the remark, “Stewardship may be beyond our capacity if we cannot even survive.”

As a whole, the state of heritage is not healthy and, for much of the province, there is a fear of what lies ahead. Without change, large parts of the sector are at risk and the stewardship of BC’s rich heritage is jeopardized.

Recommendations

The recommendations offer twelve strategic priorities that, if accomplished, would have a sweeping effect on almost all areas of the heritage sector. The aim in proposing the recommendations is to achieve the aspirations and to address the challenges heard throughout the province. As such, the strategic priorities are broad-based and powerful.

The strategic directions are tactics to achieve the recommendations. Some of the strategic directions can be undertaken with relatively modest effort and resources. Other strategic directions will be complex and time consuming.

The recommendations do not include action plans. Some of the strategic directions can be undertaken by a single organization, but many require consultation, prioritization, coordination, and resources.

The recommendations and strategic directions have been developed to address the goals as outlined in the agreement:

- Increased knowledge, appreciation, understanding, retention, and management of BC's cultural history and heritage
- Increased organizational and individual capacities
- Increased community engagement and awareness
- Increased awareness of differing perspectives, approaches, and worldviews
- Increased recognition of and participation from First Nations and distinct communities
- Increased awareness and implementation of better practices
- An expanded vision and new characterizations of heritage, as it relates to associated disciplines, leading to a revitalization of conservation, protection, and interpretation of BC's heritage and history
- A vision and calls-to-action for the sector

Overview of the Recommendations:

1. Development and communication of a provincial definition of heritage that will unify the sector and better align programs and services with the sector's work
2. Acknowledgement of past wrongs and the development of bridges that lead to positive, mutually-beneficial relationships with Indigenous peoples
3. Development of strategies supporting inclusivity and diversity of the sector
4. Development of strategies promoting awareness of environmental impacts of and to the sector
5. Development of strategies to provide leadership for capacity building to move the sector beyond crisis management, to enhance its stability and growth, and to improve the conservation of heritage assets of many descriptions
6. Revision of the *Heritage Conservation Act* to reflect the current understanding and practice of heritage as it is articulated in international standards such as The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

7. Development of a toolkit to improve the adoption and successful implementation of the *Local Government Act* (Section 15)
8. Revision of the *Local Government Act* (Section 15) to fully align it with current priorities and values of local governments and the sector
9. Improvement of funding opportunities specifically aligned with the sector
10. Support for the sector in describing its economic impact and relevance
11. Support for the sector in developing and delivering content to BC's education system
12. Support the sector in creating catalyzing moments that mark change and create momentum

1. Develop and communicate a provincial definition of heritage

Rationale

Roundtable participants expressed a common view of heritage, yet noted that the sector is diverse, fragmented, and ever-evolving. Disciplines are siloed, and the practice -- and definition -- of heritage has evolved beyond the services and systems that support it.

Participants observed that all aspects of the sector are bound together under the broad concept of heritage, so creating common understanding and a common definition is a priority in order to align the services and systems to serve the heritage community, and for the community to, in turn, serve the larger population and to achieve better outcomes.

Understanding heritage as it is practiced across BC is critical to moving forward. Many of the tools, programs, and services available to the broad sector are not aligned with the current understanding and practice of heritage. Funding programs and the *Local Government Act* are two frequently referenced examples.

Actions

- Prepare an overarching definition of heritage based on the information collected through the provincial roundtable meetings, drawing from the wealth of experience and knowledge in BC, as well as other established definitions (e.g. UNESCO, Indigenous Heritage Circle). Developing a definition should consider existing and sometimes negative connotations, such as its associated historic “whiteness.” Inclusivity and diversity must be embedded in the definition, so that it reflects all cultures and peoples. The definition should be fluid and recognize that the sector may continue to evolve.
- Develop a roster of related definitions to distinguish the specific approaches and priorities of different disciplines that function within the broad field of heritage (e.g. museology, archaeology, etc.).
- Use relationships noted between the broad definition of heritage and the definitions of heritage in its subdisciplines to draw together currently siloed understandings, to reveal areas of commonality, to foster sharing and collaboration, and to align programs and services across the sector under the current overarching definition heritage.

References

- [Defining Heritage](#)

2. Indigenous Peoples: Acknowledge past wrongs and develop bridges to positive mutually-beneficial relationships

Rationale

Roundtable participants expressed a desire for inclusive and meaningful representation of all cultural groups in BC and were keenly interested in acknowledging past wrongs and in developing bridges leading to positive, mutually-beneficial relationships. They observed that the heritage sector has real potential to advance reconciliation, but decisive steps are required: as is common to the sector, past efforts have been done in isolation; their effects and impacts are unknown; successes and best practices are unknown, and lessons learned are not shared; in short, a cohesive approach to inclusion and reconciliation does not exist.

Indigenous participants recognized that their definition of heritage is both broader and more nuanced than that expressed by the sector-at-large. They recognized positive transitions, and also express anger and frustration with the slow pace of change. Some participants were skeptical that positive action will occur. For example, that most communities in BC have not prepared territorial land acknowledgements did not surprise Indigenous roundtable participants. Long-established prejudices, outdated systems, and lack of autonomy and funding are seen as impediments.

Many participants expressed the belief that much can be learned from Indigenous practices -- in particular practices and strategies related to the stewardship of intangible heritage.

Actions

- Provide funding for Indigenous communities to assess gaps and needs related to Indigenous cultural heritage,
- Provide funding for Indigenous communities to understand and share what is learned through this gap analysis
- Revise legislation and policies so that Indigenous peoples are recognized as stewards of their own heritage
- Revise legislation (related to heritage and conservation) so that all Indigenous communities are represented and respected
- Continue to advocate for a broader definition of heritage and inclusivity in the sector
- Provide leadership to support the sector in developing effective, positive relationships, and provide necessary tools, guidance, and resources.
- Develop an information resource that guides organizations and local governments in developing relationships with Indigenous governments and communities, including an inventory of activities that have already taken place throughout the province to develop case studies and best practices.
- Develop funding programs that support Indigenous communities in preserving and interpreting their heritage, and ensure accessibility and flexibility in funding programs, as not all Indigenous communities have the same needs and capacities

- Advocate for truly equal partnerships between non-Indigenous and Indigenous organizations and provide funding and opportunities to bring together non-Indigenous and Indigenous organizations to support the development of relationship-building, collaborations, and projects
- Develop programs and funding opportunities that encourage mentorship by Indigenous people in managing intangible heritage and understanding our relationship to the land and environment

References

- [Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Defining Heritage](#)

3. Develop strategies supporting inclusion and diversity

Rationale

The sector does not reflect the diversity it wishes to embody. Although participants describe heritage in a broad societal context, diverse cultural communities were largely unrepresented at the meetings. Additionally, most of the participants -- which represented a large cross-section of organizations and institutions related to BC's heritage community -- did not self-identity as being part of minority communities. Some participants ask the question: "Why have we not made more progress?"

Actions

- Improve communication pathways to build relationships with diverse communities
- Support inclusion and diversity through the definition of heritage
- Develop and support collaborations and projects that are built on mutually beneficial goals and that equitably bring cultures together
- Provide funding specific to programs that advance inclusion and diversity, and ensure these funding programs are flexible, accessible to diverse communities, and supportive of a wide range of needs and abilities
- Encourage the recruitment of culturally diverse staff and board members to ensure the voices of all communities are heard in program development and implementation
- Support organizations to diversify collections and tell more inclusive stories

References

- [Defining Heritage](#)
- [Identity](#)

4. Develop strategies promoting awareness of environmental impacts

Rationale

The “greening” aspect of heritage conservation has been considered a strong argument to retain the built environment, and BC was the lead proponent in developing *Building Resilience: Practical Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Buildings in Canada*. Yet concepts of “green buildings,” “resilience,” and “environmental sustainability” in the context of heritage conservation were not commonly understood among roundtable participants.

Environmental impacts of and to heritage coalesced around the idea of climate change, with the environment and land understood to be the starting points and fundamental building blocks. Participants noted increasing alarm for climate change and for the threat it poses to cultural heritage. Leadership with respect to the protection of cultural heritage and capacity building are needed to move the heritage sector to meet a future defined by climate change: this is a priority that must include all aspects of heritage. With no oversight or leadership, many of BC’s heritage organizations do not have the capacity to include climate change in their mandates and programs.

Actions

- Confirm environmental stewardship as a priority for the preservation of cultural heritage
- Build awareness of the anticipated effects of climate change on landscapes and tangible and intangible heritage
- Fund long-term studies to track and monitor changes, to assess risk and develop management plans, and to analyze the gaps and issues facing all forms of heritage
- Address lack of capacity with respect to knowledge by providing mentorship, encouraging collaboration and networking between sectors and peoples, and supporting knowledge keepers
- Develop sector-specific strategic planning tools and measures to address environmental stewardship and climate change and to guide the sector
- Develop sector-specific best practices with respect to addressing climate change
- Develop educational materials (workshops, webinars, downloadable guidebooks, conference sessions) and provide regular learning opportunities
- Incorporate environmental impacts into “making a case,” so that the heritage sector has another advocacy tool supporting heritage conservation

References

- [Environmental Stewardship through Heritage Conservation](#)

5. Revision of the *Heritage Conservation Act* to reflect current international standards

Rationale

Since the development of the *HCA* in the 1980s and its enactment in the early 1990s, much work has been done on the international stage to develop and consolidate the understanding and practice of heritage and to cultivate respect for cultural artifacts of all kinds, including cultural landscapes.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous roundtable participants were vocally opposed to the separation of cultures that is the result of the division between two related disciplines -- archaeology and history -- by the date of 1846. The *HCA* conflicts with the unifying vision of heritage and is described as a hindrance to reconciliation. Participants observed that the separation of archaeology and heritage or history represents colonial privilege and perpetuates a two-tier system that fixes Indigenous heritage in the past and presents the heritage of newcomers as a living heritage. Such systems and legislation not consistent with current values and perspectives perpetuate fragmentation of the sector and fosters division between people and communities.

Actions

- Review, modernize, and rename the *HCA* to align with current international understanding and practice and to be responsive to what has been and is heard by Indigenous communities -- including the necessity of its alignment with UNDRIP and international protocols with respect to intangible heritage
- Develop a provincial framework and strategy for cultural heritage and revise and/or develop new heritage tools to support the broad understanding and practice of heritage
- Support the development of Indigenous policies with respect to protections of remains
- Eliminate the line of demarcation established at 1846 -- which separates archaeology and history -- in order to recognize the strong relationship between the two disciplines and to eliminate the distinction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage
- Amend the *HCA* so that it recognizes an Indigenous perspective of heritage, which is living and vital, and the spirit of tradition, belief, and environment, inextricably linking past, present and future
- Review policies related to the administration of the *HCA*
- Develop communication and coordination protocols as well as educational resources that will increase public ability to access, understand, and mobilize the *HCA*
- Broaden public understanding of the importance of cultural artifacts and incentivize the disclosure and possible handover of cultural artifacts held in private collections

Resources

- [Defining Heritage](#)
- [Provincial Structures](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples](#)

6. Develop a toolkit to improve implementation of the *Local Government Act*, Part 15 – Heritage Conservation

Rationale

The *LGA* is the only provincial legislation that provides heritage conservation tools to local governments. Yet local governments are not required to adopt any form of heritage protection and the Province of BC exerts no pressure, expectation or incentive. Heritage protections, when put into place, are not binding. Local governments need support in understanding the goals, benefits, and values of heritage conservation -- and local government staff require easy-to-implement systems. Education and advocacy would help to incentivize municipalities to take advantage of the existing tools.

Only one in four local governments offers some form of heritage protection or recognition based on the *LGA*. In the absence of local government support, other entities, such as not-for-profit and volunteer organizations are sometimes *the de facto* stewards of the built environment, but they do not have the authority or resources to protect heritage as intended by the *LGA*.

Actions

- Develop a comprehensive, easy-to-use, and affordable resource for local governments to encourage the adoption and successful implementation of heritage conservation tools. The resource should address the misunderstandings of existing heritage conservation tools and highlight the community benefits of heritage retention so that local governments are encouraged to adopt heritage protections and staff are better equipped to serve their communities. Special attention should be given to smaller local governments that do not typically have the capacities to implement the heritage tools
- Develop a distribution protocol for this resource to target influencers, including local governments and professional organizations: an interactive website, webinars, downloadable guidebooks, workshops
- Develop a cohort of planners and heritage planners who provide best practices, successful methodologies, and case studies that demonstrate the value of heritage conservation

Reference

- [Provincial Structures](#)

7. Revise the *Local Government Act*, Part 15 – Heritage Conservation to align with current priorities and values of local governments and the sector

Rationale

The *Local Government Act* (*LGA*; Section 15 – Heritage Conservation) is inconsistent with the current understanding and practice of heritage: while the *LGA* prioritizes the built environment, the heritage community emphasizes the social and cultural aspects of heritage, which includes, but is not restricted to, the built environment.

Indigenous people and rural participants report they are particularly affected by the *LGA*'s privileging of the built environment over other heritage assets such as cultural landscapes. If the *LGA* is to gain greater relevance, its conservation tools and policy framework must reflect priorities and values that are important to local governments and to the current understandings of the heritage sector.

Actions

- Review the language used in “Section 15 – Heritage Conservation” so that the legislation reflects the broader understanding of cultural heritage as it is practiced throughout the province
- Expand “Section 15 – Heritage Conservation” (or create a new section) with tools that acknowledge other forms of heritage beyond the built environment
- Incentivize the adoption of the heritage conservation tools, and improve relevance, so that the *LGA* reflects broader interests, priorities, and values
- Develop toolkit to guide local governments in describing values and prioritizing built heritage retention and conservation
- Provide leadership to increase the adoption of heritage conservation tools by local governments and to improve the interpretation and to increase the implementation of the tools

References

- [Defining Heritage](#)
- [Heritage Conservation Act, Local Government Act, Heritage Tools](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples](#)

8. Develop strategies to provide leadership for capacity building

Rationale

The heritage sector articulated repeatedly in roundtables that it is faced with many stressors, which are noticeably affecting stability and growth. Long-term under-resourcing is leading to a failure of systems, placing heritage at risk. Many organizations have reached the limits of their capacities, including personnel, time, knowledge, infrastructure, and funds. Many organizational budgets include little funding for activities that are not included in daily routines; volunteers pay out of pocket; smaller organizations need to close when attending an external activity. As a result, these organizations are, at best, maintaining status quo or, at worst, in survival mode. Rural organizations are isolated from one another and from urban BC; they are unable to take part in many activities offered by provincial service organizations.

Despite good intentions and aspirations, leaders are not present to spark projects and collaborative efforts. Nevertheless, the sector retains optimism and is eager for assistance and direction.

Actions

- Develop new approaches to improving capacities and reducing isolation:
 - Create travel and accommodation stipends
 - Deliver programs in rural areas that are tailored for those areas, such as a "pocket conference" that brings expertise to a region
 - Develop and revise programs so that they are consistent with the current understanding and practice of heritage
 - Provide opportunities that support cohesion and connectivity, and that encourage collaboration
- Develop programs that embed a catalyst or leader to spark projects or collaborative efforts; programs should include subsidies, so it is financially possible for people to attend activities
- Redevelop existing funding programs and develop new funding programs that recognize organizational needs and improve capacities, especially for those in rural communities
- Assist organizations in "making a case"
- Develop programs, supported with funding, to encourage collaborative projects among, Indigenous governments, communities and organizations, cultural groups, and non-Indigenous organizations

References

- Organizational Effectiveness and Capacities
- Urban / Remote

9. Improve funding opportunities and align them with the needs of the sector

Rationale

Lack of funding is the greatest challenge facing the heritage sector and the current level of funding is having serious ramifications on the stewardship of BC's history and heritage. The heritage sector is under-resourced, which has placed considerable strain on the organizations that are its constituents. Many organizations are merely coping (and some are not) and the potential of their work has diminished. Without new investments and funding programs designed to meet the specific needs of heritage, the sector will likely face a crisis. Beyond an investment of funds, well-designed funding programs can influence priorities and can build capacities.

Actions

- Invest in new funding programs that encourage growth, capacity building, and sustainability for long-term results
- Invest in the Heritage Legacy Fund
- Assess existing fund programs for alignment with heritage sector. Consider:
 - Current practice and priorities of heritage
 - Terminology that is understood across the sector
 - Application requirements that are scaled to the size of the fund and type of applicant
 - The ability of the grant program support applicants in developing capacities and relevancies
 - Timelines that are appropriate to the different types of funded projects
- Redesign existing fund programs, application criteria, and eligibility to ensure programs are clearly open and accessible to Indigenous and diverse applicants
- Provide museum grant programs to support their core missions (e.g. collecting, interpreting, exhibiting, educating through artifacts)
- Invest in funding for archiving projects and programs

References

- [Capacity](#)
- [Funding](#)

10. Support the sector in describing its economic impact and relevance

Rationale

The heritage sector -- across its many organizations -- understands and articulates its core mission and values. However, while the sector can easily discuss the social and cultural values of heritage, it is not able to place its work in a larger context and articulate other types of benefits and impacts, such as the sector's contribution to the local economy -- and some participants do not believe a connection exists. Participants easily described inflows of revenue (e.g. grant funds, membership fees), but could not describe economic benefit (outflows) to the community.

If the sector is not able to "make its case," it minimizes its own value and risks being perceived as irrelevant and/or unnecessary. There is evidence this is already the case. For sustainability and survival, the heritage sector must be able to describe its relevance to the larger context.

Actions

- Develop a toolkit to guide the sector in describing tangible and intangible values, benefits, and outputs. The toolkit should be based on established methodologies, supported with measurement and analysis tools, and regularly updated with new research and analysis
- Continue provincial economic and capacity surveys, which provide the only economic data related to the sector (note: these surveys are, in fact, the only surveys of this type in Canada). Review the purpose of the survey and renew the questionnaire to ensure appropriate information is collected to effectively describe the contribution of the heritage sector
- Undertake a cost analysis of the sector's finances, time, and paid and unpaid labour force to produce empirical data on the wellness and contribution of the sector; develop analytics to provide empirical data and support with case studies
- Develop resources to support revenue generation and diversification for sector organizations and economic impact for local governments
- Develop linkages to the tourism sector and relationships with Destination BC

References

- [Economic Durability and Diversity](#)
- [Making a Case](#)

11. Support the sector in developing and delivering content to BC's education system

Rationale

There are many signs that heritage and traditional knowledge are at risk. Roundtable participants believe that young people do not learn about their local communities through the school curriculum. Some local organizations are trying to fill the void, but like so many elements of the heritage sector, these efforts are isolated and sporadic, and little is known about the collective effort (e.g. how many organizations are offering educational programs to local schools; what are the efforts; are they successful). It is a burden for organizations to develop and deliver educational programs, due to their limited capacities.

While many believe that BC's education system is failing BC by not providing access to the heritage of the province, there are new opportunities for communication and collaboration in the space of the new provincial curriculum, and it is incumbent on the heritage sector to foster relationships with the education system and to provide content and programs to teachers.

Actions

- Itemize currently available education programming to document best practices and successes with respect to the communication of BC's diverse heritage and develop an online resource to access it
- Develop an inventory of educational programs -- linked to the current curriculum -- to be offered by local organizations and develop scalable education models that provide access to smaller organizations with limited capacities
- Develop a relationship with the Ministry of Education and others to explore ways and means of developing and delivering province-wide programming based on stories of local identity and values
- Examine and seek to resolve impediments to the delivery of educational programs in local, rural, and remote areas
- Develop a communications toolkit to bring together the heritage and education sectors
- Support the transmission of traditional knowledge

References

- [Education](#)
- [Identity](#)

12. Taking Action: support for the sector in creating catalyzing moments

The Province of BC, through the Heritage Branch in cooperation of other ministries and provincial service organizations, must provide leadership in achieving the recommendations and increasing the capacities and means to reach the goals set forth in this report.

The sector is siloed for numerous reasons and the government's structures are cited as a cause. The Heritage Branch and the Province are asked to provide leadership in bringing together ministries and branches as heritage spans all aspects of our society.

It is recognized that many organizations are duplicating efforts; for example, many educational programs have been developed, but these efforts are done in isolation and the successes and benefits are unknown. Participants recognized the duplication this is common problem related to the key topics of this study. An inventory and analysis of programs and services in all areas are required to develop best practices and case studies. Policy papers are needed to expand upon the important work of the Heritage BC Provincial Roundtables on the State of Heritage Report and to support the sector in furthering the practice of heritage, advancing inclusivity and diversity, gaining stability, and achieving greater effectiveness of managing BC's history and heritage.

The findings and recommendations contained in the report should be shared with sector stakeholders and with other related sectors, including education and tourism. The report should be continually used as a catalyst to break down silos, build relationships, and to improve the capacities.

The importance of this project cannot be underestimated, and the collected information and the recommendations will likely remain influential for many years. The work of the recommendations must be initiated, and progress and results must be measured. The Province is urged to repeat this project in future years.

Appendices

Appendix A: List of Provincial Roundtable Meetings

1. May 12, 2018

Heritage BC conference

2. June 7, 2018

Kelowna

Supporting organization: Central Okanagan Heritage Society

35 participants included: planners, municipal staff, archivists, UBCO staff, not-for-profit staff and board directors

Participants included MLA Steve Thomson, Mayor of District of Lake Country

3. June 8, 2018

Kamloops

Supporting organization: Kamloops Museum & Archives

22 participants included: representatives of Chinese and Japanese communities, school districts, film commission, printmakers society, art gallery, archivist

4. July 6, 2018

BC Heritage Fairs

Conference held in Squamish

Approximately 40-50 participants

5. September 19, 2018

Quesnel

Supporting organization: City of Quesnel Museum

23 participants included: Forest Protection Allies, Quesnel Visitor Centre, Quesnel Rodeo, City of Quesnel, Barkerville, Stantec Consulting, CRD Heritage Advisory Committee, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association, City of Williams Lake, Back Country Horseman, BC Rodeo Association, Quesnel & District Museum & Archives

Participants included MLA Coralee Oakes

6. September 20, 2018

Prince George

Supporting organization: Central BC Railway and Forestry Museum

9 participants included: City of Prince George, North BC Archives UBNC, Huble Homestead Historic Site, The Exploration Place, Regional District FFG, Two Rivers Gallery, Central BC Railway and Forestry Museum, Prince George Heritage Commission

7. September 21, 2018

Fort St. John

Supporting organization: Northern Trails Heritage Society

11 participants (members of the Northern Trails Heritage Society)

8. September 23, 2018

Terrace

Supporting organization: City of Terrace

27 participants included: Terrace & District Museum Society, Royal Roads University CCNRA - Cultural and Natural Resources, Terrace Regional Historical society, UNBC/Local Colour Research, Little House Ent. & Terrace Downtown Improvement Association, Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, Kitsumkalum First Nation Community and Land Code Planner, Kitselas Lands Clerk, Kitselas First Nation Lands Officer, Heritage Park Museum, Kleanza Consulting Ltd., Kitimat Museum & Archives, Bulkley Valley Museum

9. September 25, 2018

Prince Rupert

Supporting organization: Museum of Northern BC

20 participants included: St. Andrew Anglican Cathedral, archivist, architect, North Pacific Cannery, Metlakatla First Nation, City of Prince Rupert, Oona River Community Association

10. September 27, 2018

Skidegate

Supporting organization: Haida Gwaii Museum at Kay Llnagaay.

13 participants included: Skidegate Band Council, Haida Heritage Centre, Haida Gwaii Arts Council, Misty Isles Economic Development Society, Haida Gwaii Museum, Gwaalgaa Naay Corp.

Participants included Jason Alsop, council of the Haida Nation

11. September 28, 2018

Masset

Supporting organization: Haida Gwaii Museum at Kay Llnagaay.

9 participants included: Tluu Xaada Naay, Landfill Association, Port Clements Historical Society, Dixon Entrance Maritime Museum Society, Haida Gwaii Community Futures, SHN-Heritage Natural Resource Department, Delfatla Sanctuary Society

12. October 9, 2018

Creston

Supporting organization: Creston & District Museum and Historical Society

12 participants included: East Shore Learning Place, Creston Museum, Bricso Recreation Commission, St. Mary's Indian Band, Town of Creston, Erickson History Book Project, ?akisqnuuk First Nations

Participants included Councillor Jim Elkford

13. October 10, 2018

Fernie

Supporting organization: Fernie Museum

12 participants included: Holy Family Church, Fernie Heritage Library, Fernie & District Arts Council, Christ Church Fernie, City of Fernie, District of Sparwood, Fernie & District Historical Society, Key City Theatre

14. October 12, 2018

Trail

Supporting organization: Trail Museum & Archives

16 participants included: Rossland Museum, Greenwood Heritage Society, Trails to the Boundary, St. Andrew's United Church, Rossland Heritage Commission, VISAC Art Gallery & Centre, Gray Creek Historical Society, Beaver Valley and Pend d'Oreille Historical Society, Kootenay Columbia Education Heritage, Società M.S. Cristoforo Colombo, Loggia No. 1, City of Rossland, Teck, Trail Historical Society, Salmo Valley Historical Society

15. October 13, 2018

Nakusp

Supporting organization: Arrow Lakes Historical Society

24 participants included: Arrow Lakes Historical Society, Kootenay Lake Historical Society, Touchstones Nelson, Revelstoke Heritage Railway Society, Nakusp & District Museum, Village of

New Denver (Nikkei Centre), Silvery Slocan Historical Society, Village of Kaslo, Slocan Lake Arts Council, Valley Voice, Slocan Lake Garden Society – Kohan Reflection Garden, Lardeau Valley Historical Society, Nakusp Rail Society

Participants included Suzan Hewat, Mayor of Kaslo

16. January 28, 2018

Maple Ridge

Supporting organization: Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission

10 participants included: British Columbia Historical Federation, Pitt Meadows Museum and Archives, Maple Ridge Museum and Archives, City of Maple Ridge, Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission, Keystone Architecture, Maple Ridge Historical Society, Maple Ridge Museum, Coquitlam Heritage Society, Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission

17. January 29, 2018

Vancouver

18 participants included: Vancouver Heritage Commission, Steveston Historical Society, Reodde House Museum, Heritage Vancouver Society, City of Vancouver, Rare Books and Special Collections, UBC Library, Ance Building Services, Judy Oberlander and Associates Inc., Historic Joy Kogawa House, Kits Point Military Museum, Vancouver Heritage Foundation, Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens Association, City of Richmond, Vancouver Biennale, City of Richmond, Vancouver Maritime Museum, Binning Friends

18. January 30

Burnaby

3 participants included: Royal Westminster Regiment Historical Society, City of Vancouver, Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre

19. January 31

North Vancouver

10 participating organizations included: Life Threads Ceremonies, Deep Cove Heritage Society, Sea to Sky Forestry Centre Society, District of Squamish Councillor, Forest History Association of BC, West Vancouver Historical Society & District of West Vancouver Heritage Advisory Committee, Wild Bird Trust of BC, BC Historical Trails, District of North Vancouver, Resort Municipality of Whistler

20. February 1, 2018

Surrey

16 participating organizations included: BC Historical Federation, Seyem' Qwantlen, Alder Grove Heritage Society, Surrey Heritage Society, BC Farm Museum Association, City of Chilliwack, City of Langley, Surrey Historical Society, Fleetwood BIA, While Rock, Heritage Abbotsford Society, Brian G. Hart & Company, Royal Canadian Legion 61, Kilby Historic Site, Agassiz-Harrison Historical Society and Museum

21. February 4, 2019

Metchosin

Supporting organization:

14 participating organizations included:

Metchosin Heritage Advisory Select Committee, 1948, Sooke Region Museum, Shawnigan Lake Museum, District of Metchosin, Metchosin Museum Society, Metchosin Arts & Cultural Association, St. Mary's Church, Ravenstone Masonry Conservation Inc., District of Sooke

22. February 5

Victoria

21 participants included: City of Victoria, Schueck Heritage Consulting, Victoria Heritage Foundation, InSitu Services, Sidney Museum, Vancouver Island University, Kerri Ward & Associates Museum & Interpretive Planning, Ravenstone Masonry Conservation Inc., Royal BC Museum, Saanich Heritage, RDH Building Science, Oak Bay Heritage Fdn. and Commission and Salish Sea Biosphere Initiative Board, Greek Heritage Project Museum, Wentworth Villa - Architectural Heritage Museum, Royal Roads University, BC Museums Association

23. February 6

Nanaimo

Supporting organization: Nanaimo Museum

13 participating organizations included:

Nanaimo Historical Society, Nanaimo Historical Society, Nanaimo Family History Society, Nanaimo Archives, Friends of Morden Mine, Oak Park Heritage Preservation Society, Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, Nanaimo Museum, City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville, Town of Ladysmith

Participants included Councillor Marilyn Wilson, City of Parksville; Councillor Jim Turley, City of Nanaimo; Councillor Ian Thorpe, City of Nanaimo

24. February 7

Campbell River

Supporting organization: Museum of Campbell River

4 participating organizations included: Cortes Island Museum & Archives, Heritageworks Ltd., Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park Assoc., Museum of Campbell River

25. April 2, 2019

Vancouver Island Peer Review Meeting

26. April 3, 2019

Lower Mainland Peer Review Meeting

27. May 10, 2019

Presentation at Heritage BC conference in Nanaimo

Appendix B: Discussion Topics and Supporting Questions

1. Defining Heritage in BC

These questions explore the inclusions and approaches to heritage. Recognizing not everyone defines and distinguishes heritage in the same way, or 'practices' heritage in the same way, we want to learn from different worldviews and point-of-views.

- For you, what is an ideal description of heritage? What are examples of heritage according to your ideal description?
- Is there anything that you exclude in your ideal definition?
- Considering what you just heard:
 - Do these ideas about heritage open the door for inclusion and respect of Indigenous heritage?
 - Similarly, do these ideas about heritage open the door for greater inclusivity and representation of distinct communities?
 - If not, should heritage evolve so that it is equally inclusion of all people, places, and ideas?
- What are the relationships of cultural heritage to arts and culture and other disciplines, such as museology and archaeology?
- What do you think are the future directions of heritage in your community and in BC?
- Considering what you heard, what are the key steps arts, culture and heritage need to take in order to be open and receptive to, inclusive and reflective of different worldviews? What are the steps that are needed now to make this possible?

2. The Vision and Values of Heritage

With these questions we want to explore what heritage means to you, your community and to BC, and to explore your ideas for the future of heritage.

- What are the values that are important to you when describing heritage and history? What are the stories that reflect these values?
- What do you think is the future of heritage and what does it mean to society? What are your aspirations for arts, culture and heritage?
- Recognizing there are different worldviews in understanding and describing history and heritage, how can vision and values be improved to be more inclusive of First Nations/Indigenous people? How can the vision and values be improved to be more inclusive of other distinct communities?
- How can the heritage sector (and more broadly the arts, culture and heritage sector) support reconciliation?
- What needs to happen before your vision can be realized? What is needed now?

3. British Columbia's identity is strengthened and renewed through heritage conservation

These questions explore how history and heritage contributes to your community's identity and renewal and how that contributes to the overall provincial identity and renewal.

- How do you recognize and honour your community's legacies?
- What are examples of your preservation and conservation work that strengthen the identity [identities] of your community?
- How does your work contribute to the renewal of your community?
- Considering your community's arts, culture and heritage sectors, what stories do you want to pass along to future generations? How should this be decided?
- Are First Nations/Indigenous people appropriately represented in that story? Are distinct communities represented in that story? What needs to change so that their contributions and voices are captured in the stories that describe your community's identity?
- How can Heritage BC support your work in strengthening your community's identity and renewal? What is needed now?

4. Collaboration in Conservation

Rather than the responsibility of a single agency, heritage recognition and protection is ideally achieved through collaboration and partnerships at the local level. These questions explore this concept and how it works in your community.

- How would you describe collaboration (the successes and challenges) in your community? How important is collaboration in preserving your community's history and heritage, and in supporting arts, culture and heritage in general?
- Who are the collaborators in your community? Who is missing from this list, but should be a collaborator? Whose history and heritage might be seen as missing from the heritage narratives of your community?
- Who are the collaborators beyond your community? Who do you need "at the table" and what do you need them to bring?
- How can the conditions be improved to foster collaboration and partnerships with Indigenous people? How can the conditions be improved to foster collaboration and partnerships with other distinct communities?
- What are the opportunities for collaboration and partnerships among people of different backgrounds?
- What is needed now in order to create and maintain collaborations and partnerships?

5. Evolving the Practice of Heritage

The field of heritage conservation is fairly young in British Columbia, yet we have already seen changes in policies, approaches and definitions. We want to hear from you about the directions this change should take and what you believe are future priorities.

- Do you agree the practice of heritage is changing? What changes are you seeing now?
- Do you believe the approach to heritage needs to evolve?
- What stories and histories, related to arts, culture, heritage and history, are not being told? Why do you think this is?
- What should change, and what should be done, so the stories we tell are more inclusive of other worldviews?
- How should the heritage sector evolve so that it is more inclusive of First Nations/Indigenous people? How should the heritage sector evolve so that it is more inclusive of distinct communities?
- What will be needed to achieve this evolution? How can the ways heritage is defined, identified and supported be changed to be more inclusive? What is needed now?

6. Future Opportunities for Heritage

Today's conservation and preservation of history and heritage for future generations is a key goal. With these questions we will explore how this can be accomplished.

- Is heritage reflective of your community? How can heritage be more reflective of the many stories and layers of your community?
- How can a wider community understand the benefits of conserving and preserving a wide range and depth of/diversity of history and heritage? What is needed to demonstrate the benefits to the broad community?
- What methods, communications and protocols are needed to foster collaboration and partnerships with First Nations/Indigenous people? What methods, communications and protocols are needed to foster collaboration and partnerships with other distinct communities?
- How can the arts, culture and heritage sector support the aspirations of all communities toward better representation and inclusion?
- What resources will be needed? What needs to happen now?

7. Environmental stewardship through heritage conservation

These questions explore how preservation and conservation contribute to environmental stewardship in your community, and how that supports overall provincial environmental stewardship.

- What do you think are the connections between heritage and the environment?
- Thinking generally, what is the role and responsibility of preservation and conservation in environmental, social and economic stewardship?
- How is this applied in your community? How do the local arts, culture and heritage sectors contribute to environmental, social and economic stewardship?
- What resources do you need to maintain and improve this contribution? What is needed now?

- What are the connections between environmental stewardship and First Nations/Indigenous people communities? What are the connections between environmental stewardship and other distinct communities?

8. Economic diversity and durability through heritage conservation

With these questions we explore the economics of preservation and conservation.

- What is the relation between heritage and the economy?
- Does local heritage contribute to the local economy? Examples could be hiring and contracting locally, buying locally, attracting tourists, partnering with community organizations, and offering special events. What are the examples existing in your community?
- What entrepreneurial approaches do you or could you take to support the operation of your organization and further its mandate? What are the ways that your organization earns revenue?
- What do you need to address long-term operational sustainability? (think beyond funding)
- Considering the future needs for the preservation and conservation of your history and heritage, what capacities are missing or need further development/support? (Examples might include skills, training, human and financial resources, access to information, and so on.)
- In the context of this conversation, what is the connection between economic diversity and durability and First Nations communities? In the context of this conversation, what is the connection between economic diversity and durability and other distinct communities?
- How can Heritage BC support your work in achieving economic diversity and durability? What needs to happen now?

Appendix C: Overview of Meeting Format and Presentation of Topics

1. Eight topics were selected to explore the current state of heritage. Several of the topics were taken directly from the province's strategy for historic places. Most meetings covered all or most of the eight topics. At times it was determined a topic would not be a good fit with the participants and so the topic was not introduced in that conversation.
2. The supporting questions were designed to encourage conversations, and they were not necessarily intended to be answered. Originally, the supporting questions included specific references to First Nations and diverse communities, as a way to ensure participants considered all people in their communities. At varying times these questions were inappropriate (when Indigenous people were present) or unnecessary (the conversations naturally considered inclusivity). Over time, these questions were dropped from the supporting questions.

Observations:

- It was not necessary to include specific questions about First Nations and diverse communities; in the future, questions like these should be avoided as that approach is not consistent with participants' views and practices of heritage.
 - The questions about environment and economy were challenging throughout the process. The roundtables did not provide a context for these conversations; many participants did not know how to define environment and economy.
 - Although considerable time was dedicated to developing the 'right' questions, experience showed the questions were not always appropriate. Language often became an issue; for example, the topics and questions frequently used the word "conservation", but many people believed the word to be inappropriate or too narrow. Although a common work in the heritage sector, "conservation" is used in many different ways.
3. Upon arriving at a meeting, participants were asked to put their name on a name tag. Each tag had been pre-printed with one of six colours. People were asked to separate into groups according to their coloured badges; this was to separate friends and colleagues and to avoid 'groupthink'.

The basic presentation format:

- Participants were divided into six groups according to their coloured badges; each group discussed one of the first six topics listed above.
- Participants were then asked to move to a topic that interested them (same six topics).
- In the afternoon, participants divided into six groups according to their coloured badges; two groups discussed economy; two groups discussed environment; one group discussed the future of heritage.
- Participants were then asked to move to a topic that interested them (topics 6 to 8).

- There were several opportunities each group to report back to the entire group. In this presentation format, each participant could explore four topics.

Observations:

- This was a good format for larger groups; it would be worth repeating.
- This is not a good format for smaller groups.
- The actual format changed according to the group. Sometimes the morning started with break-out groups and then the afternoon remained in plenary. Sometimes groups preferred to remain in plenary session for the entire day.
- The size and make-up of the groups and the size and configuration of the room influenced the format of the meetings.
- In response to meeting conditions, the format could change as the meeting progressed.

Appendix D: Participating Organizations

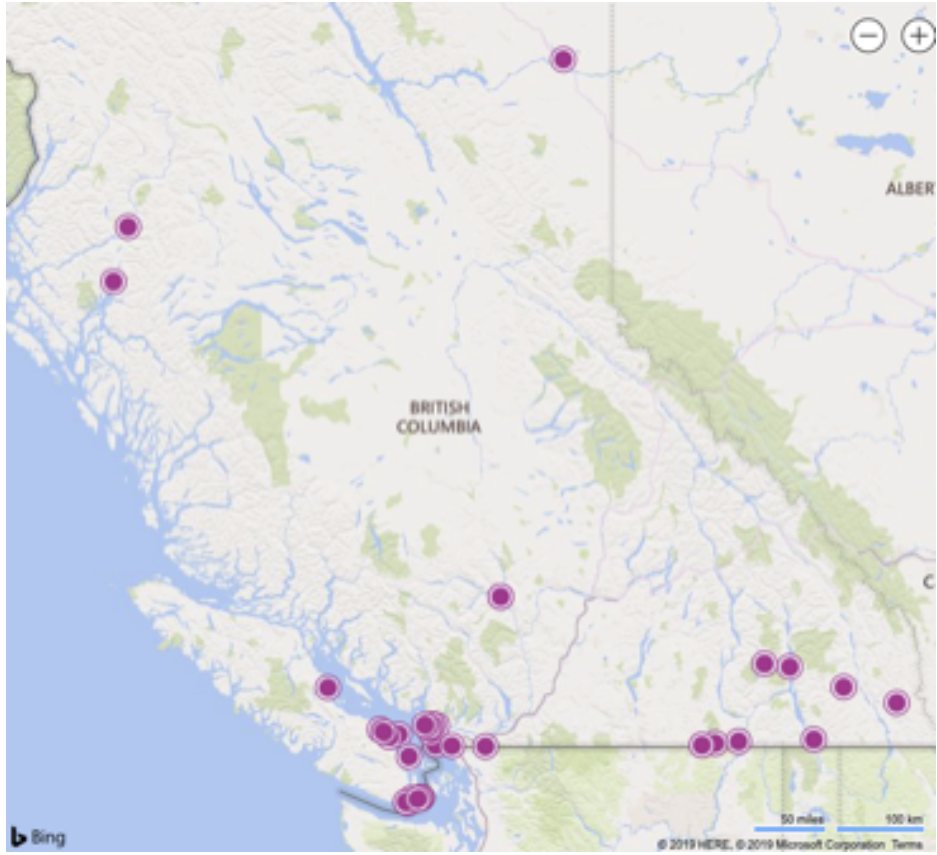
(information as supplied)

?Akisqnuq First Nations	City of Prince Rupert
?Aqam St. Mary's Indian Band	City of Quesnel
1948	City of Richmond
Agassiz-Harrison Historical Society and Museum	City of Rossland
Alder Grove Heritage Society	City of Terrace
Ance Building Services	City of Vancouver
Archivist, Lake Country Museum	City of Victoria
Arrow Lakes Historical Society	City of West Kelowna
Back Country Horseman	City of Williams Lake
Barkerville	Coquitlam Heritage Society
BC Farm Museum Association	Cortes Island Museum & Archives
BC Heritage Fairs Society	Council of the Haida Nation
BC Historical Federation	CRD Heritage Advisory Committee
BC Historical Trails	Creston Museum
BC Horsemen	Deep Cove Heritage Society
BC Museums Association	Delfatla Sanctuary Society
BC Rodeo Association	Department of History, UBC of the Okanagan
Beaver Valley & Pend d'Oreille Historical Society	District of Lake Country
Binning Friends	District of Metchosin
Brian G. Hart & Company	District of North Vancouver
Bulkley Valley Museum Smithers	District of Peachland
BV Museum	District of Sooke
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Assoc.	District of Sparwood
Cathedral Church of St. Andrews	District of Squamish
Cedar City Museum	Dixon Entrance Maritime Museum Society
Cederwood Heritage Consulting	East Shore Learning Place
Central Okanagan Foundation	Erickson History
Central Okanagan Heritage Society	Erickson History Book Project
Central Okanagan Land Trust	Fernie and District Arts Council; The Arts Station
Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society	Fernie and District Historical Society
Centre culturel francophone de l'Okanagan	Fernie Heritage Library
Christ Church Fernie	Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park Assoc.
City Council	Fleetwood BIA
City Kelowna	Forest History Association of BC
City of Chilliwack	Forest Protection Allies
City of Fernie	Friends of Barkerville
City of Fort St. John	Friends of Quesnel and District Museum and Archives
City of Langley	George Little House
City of Maple Ridge	Golden Museum
City of Merritt	Gray Creek Historical Society
City of Nanaimo	Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens Association
City of Parksville	
City of Prince George	

Greater Vernon Museum & Archives
 Greek Heritage Project Museum
 Gwaalgaa Naay Corp.
 Haida Gwaii Community Futures
 Haida Gwaii Arts Council
 Haida Gwaii Community Future
 Haida Gwaii Museum
 Haida Heritage Centre
 Heritage Abbotsford Society
 Heritage Park
 Heritage Vancouver Society
 Heritageworks Ltd.
 HGEC
 Historic Joy Kogawa House
 Holy Family Church
 Huble Homestead Historic Site
 IGS Group
 Indigenous Studies UBCO
 InSitu Services
 Judy Oberlander and Associates Inc.
 Kam Chinese Freemasons
 Kam Heritage Railway
 KAM Japanese
 Kamloops Art Gallery
 Kamloops Chinese Cultural
 Kamloops Heritage Commission
 Kamloops Heritage Society
 Kamloops Heritage Society Antique Chief
 Kamloops Society of the Written Arts
 Kelowna Museums
 Kerri Ward & Associates, Museum & Interpretive
 Planning
 Key City Theatre
 Keystone Architecture
 Kilby Historic Site
 Kitimat Museum and Archives
 Kits Point Military Museum
 Kitselas First Nation
 Kitselas--RRU-CCNRA
 Kleanza Consulting
 Kootenay Columbia Education Heritage
 Kootenay Lake Historical Society
 Lake Country Heritage & Cultural Society
 Lake Country Museum
 Landfill Association
 Lardeau Valley Historical Society
 Leak
 Life Threads Ceremonies
 Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission
 Maple Ridge Historical Society
 Maple Ridge Museum
 Maple Ridge Museum and Archives
 Merritt Heritage Railway
 Metchosin Arts & Cultural Association
 Metchosin Heritage Advisory Select Committee
 Metchosin Museum Society
 Metis-RRU-CCNRA
 Metlakatla First Nation
 Misty Isles Economic Development Society
 Museum of Campbell River
 Museum of NBC
 Museum QI - CDHs
 Nakusp and District Museum
 Nakusp Rail Society
 Nanaimo Archives, Friends of Morden Mine
 Nanaimo Historical Society
 Nanaimo Historical Society, Nanaimo Family
 History Society
 Nanaimo Museum
 New Pathways to Gold
 Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
 North Pacific Cannery, BC Heritage Fairs, BC
 Historical Federation
 North Peace Museum
 Northern BC Archives, UNBC
 Oak Bay Heritage Fdn. and Commission and Salish
 Sea Biosphere Initiative board
 Oak Park Heritage Preservation Society
 Okanagan Historical Society
 Okanagan Indian Band
 Oliver Heritage Society
 Oona River Community Association
 Osoyoos Museum
 Past heritage advisory committee
 Pitt Meadows Museum and Archives
 Port Clements Historical Society
 Prince George Heritage Commission
 Prince Rupert Archives
 Queen Charlotte Visitor Centre
 Quesnel and District Community Arts Council
 Quesnel Rodeo
 Quesnel Visitor Centre

Rare Books and Special Collections, UBC Library	Sooke Region Museum
Ravenstone Masonry Conservation Inc.	St. Andrew's Anglican Cathedral
RDH Building Science	St. Andrew's United Church
Regional District of Fraser-Fort George	St. Mary's Church
Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine	Stantec Consulting
Reodde House Museum	Steveston Historical Society
Resort Municipality of Whistler	Surrey Heritage Society
Revelstoke Heritage Railway Society	Surrey Historical Society
Rossland Heritage Commission	Terrace Historical Society
Rossland Historical Museum	Terrace Regional Historical Society
Rossland Museum	The Exploration Place Museum and Science Centre
Rossland Museum and Discovery Centre	Tluu Xaada Naay (artist and community studio)
Royal BC Museum	Touchstones Nelson
Royal Canadian Legion 61	Tourism Kamloops
Royal Roads University	Town of Creston
Royal Roads University - Kitslas	Town of Ladysmith
Royal Westminster Regiment Historical Society	Trail Historical Society
RRU-CCNRA	Trails to the Boundary Greenwood Heritage Soc.
Saanich Heritage	Tsimshan
Salmo Valley Historical Society	Two Rivers Gallery
Sandon	UBC Local Colour Research
Schueck Heritage Consulting	UBCO, Archives
SD73	Vancouver Biennale
Sea to Sky Forestry Centre Society	Vancouver Heritage Commission
Seyem' Qwantlen	Vancouver Heritage Foundation
Shawnigan Lake Museum	Vancouver Island University
Sidney Museum	Vancouver Maritime Museum
Silver Star Mountain Museum	Victoria Heritage Foundation
Silvery Slocan Heritage Society	Village of Ashcroft Museum
Skidegate and Haida Gwaii	Village of Kaslo
Skidegate Band Council	Village of New Denver (Nikkei Centre)
Skidegate Haida Immersion Program	VISAC Art Gallery and Centre
Slocan Lake Arts Council - Village Voice	Wentworth Villa - Architectural Heritage Museum
Slocan Lake Garden Society	Westbank First Nation
Slocan Valley Historical Society	While Rock
Smithsonian Institution	Wild Bird Trust of BC
Sncewips Heritage Museum	WL Stampede Association
Societa MS Christoforo Colombo Loggia No 1	WV Historical Society & DWV Heritage Advisory Committee
Solutions Table, SHN-Heritage Natural Resource Department	

(According to postal code; not all respondents provided location information)



“This meeting is one of the most exciting things to come along and there is a great opportunity...”

*“Will people be heard? Will something happen?
Will something come back?
We hope this meeting really goes somewhere.”*

*“Words need to be turned to action.
Without hope, there will be no legacy or heritage.”*

HeritageBC



heritagebc.ca

May 2019