

YUKON HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS: CASE STUDIES AND  
STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

by

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“Yukon Heritage Conservation Districts: Case Studies and Strategies for Success,” a thesis prepared by Rebecca June Jansen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science degree in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program: Historic Preservation.

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Dr. Michael Hibbard

The success of heritage conservation districts as a more holistic approach to heritage resource management has been documented around the country. Yukon, Canada has expressed a desire to move beyond traditional approaches to establish district designations. Through detailed examinations of the evolution of districts and of the progression of historic sites management in Canada and the Yukon, best practices will be established and measured against the unique challenges faced in the Territory. Further, an examination of the potential benefits and challenges are discussed and measured against three case studies: downtown Dawson City, Takhini North in Whitehorse and Carcross, Yukon. The case studies provide tangible evidence for the successful implementation of heritage conservation districts as a way to preserve and enhance the Yukon's historic sites.

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For Tyler and Tennyson, whose love and affection have taught me that anything is possible if only we put our mind to it.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Preservation for the most part, is a grassroots effort that requires the support of a community for it to be successful. Values associated with historic sites are identified and deemed worth saving by those people most closely associated with the site. For some, the reason to preserve is very obvious but for many people, questions about why we preserve and how we should go about preserving historic sites require further explanations. The mere mention of heritage conservation districts is enough to cause fear for private property owners or local businesses who worry that districts will take away their property rights, decrease property values or negatively affect business. Research has proven the contrary though, and districts are becoming a favored planning and preservation tool across North America and around the world.

This chapter explores some basic reasons behind not only the desire to preserve entire neighbourhoods through district designations but why one might be persuaded to preserve anything at all. In so doing, the argument is also being made for the suitability of heritage conservation districts in the Yukon as a preservation and education tool. The expressed desire for a new holistic management approach for historic sites in the Yukon is discussed and through the use of heritage conservation districts a solution is presented.

## Why Preserve?

To make the case for heritage conservation districts we might first examine the rationale behind preservation. As Robert E. Stipe states in the prologue to *A Richer Heritage*, “for the public at large, historic preservation is not as high a priority as we might wish”, and the “public is entitled to hear ‘why’ we think it is important.”<sup>1</sup> For preservation to be effective, public buy-in is a crucial component of the process. Each of us will no doubt have different interests and reasons behind why we preserve, some of which may be rooted in traditional beliefs while others have emerged with changing trends over time. Norman Tyler states that “Historic preservation does not have set rules to follow. Rather, its supporters constructively argue over how to preserve all types of historic properties in all types of situations... people bring various interests and perspectives to their involvement in preservation.”<sup>2</sup> All of these reasons still play a factor in why we preserve today and influence individual approaches to preservation.

Additionally, much of why we preserve can be linked to human emotion and sentiments, and how societies have chosen to preserve has evolved continuously over time. In answering the question of “what do we keep,” W. Brown Morton states “We keep what we need to feel safe. We keep what we need to feel authentic. We keep what we need to survive. Historic preservation is a dynamic element of change. We are never

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<sup>1</sup> R. E. Stipe, ed., *A Richer Heritage: Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), prologue xiii.

<sup>2</sup> Norman Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), 32.

at square one.”<sup>3</sup> This line of thinking therefore makes determining why and how we preserve very difficult. Understandably, those values most highly regarded in different cultures will reflect what they preserve.

Stipe has identified seven reasons he believes can accurately describe people’s motivation to preserve an aspect of their heritage. For some, it is the need to keep sites as a way of physically linking us to our past or that we feel that because we have lived with it, it has therefore become a part of us.<sup>4</sup> Others view our relationship between structures and artifacts with eras, people and events that warrant understanding and remembrance. Further reasons alluded to by Stipe are more exemplary of shifting attitude in the value of historic preservation. Seeing sites for their value as art and contributing to community esthetics and the increasing belief of our right to have beauty in our cities, as well as the countryside, are all motivating factors for preservation today. Lastly, Stipe believes that “we seek to preserve because we have discovered- all too belatedly- that preservation can serve important human and social purposes in our society.”<sup>5</sup> For these reasons, preservationists continue to aspire to protect important social, cultural and architectural specimens that help define who we are and where we have been. These reasons motivate preservationists to continue to seek innovative ways of protecting important historic sites, heritage conservation districts being one of many approaches to achieving these goals.

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<sup>3</sup> W. Brown Morton III, “What Do We Preserve and Why?” in *The American Mosaic: Preserving A Nation’s Heritage*, ed. R.E. Stipe and A.J. Lee (Washington, DC: US/ICOMOS, 1987), 146.

<sup>4</sup> Stipe. Xiii.

<sup>5</sup> Stipe. xiv.

## **The Benefits of Heritage Conservation Districts**

Historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for the conservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest is well established. By suggesting continuity and stability, such areas provide points of reference in a rapidly changing world: they represent the familiar and cherished local scene.

-English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*

After determining why we preserve, the next logical questions are: a) what should we preserve and b) how should we do it? It is the argument of this thesis that heritage conservation districts can effectively answer both of these questions. As the quote above illustrates, heritage conservation districts have many benefits and are increasingly becoming a favored planning tool for the preservation of important heritage areas. These sentiments extend beyond the United Kingdom and as this thesis will explore, have proved beneficial in North America as well.

Districts as a planning and preservation tool are the culmination of many attempts to preserve larger aspects of our heritage and the recognition that individual sites and buildings alone cannot accurately tell the stories of our past. Collections of buildings, landscapes, views, streetscapes, cemeteries and archaeological sites can all fall under the umbrella of a district, joining together to create a defined area that physically expresses the tangible and intangible aspects of that area's heritage. Known by many names, heritage conservation districts are primarily referred to as historic districts in the United States, and in the UK, conservation area is the term generally used. However, no pan-Canadian term exists. Each jurisdiction uses its own term and definition, including: *historic area*, *historic district*, *heritage precinct*, *cultural landscape*, *heritage*



*conservation area*, and in French, *secteur patrimonial*, and *arrondissement historique*. For its purpose, the Canadian Register for Historic Places (CRHP) has adopted *heritage district* in English, and *secteur patrimonial* in French to identify this type of historic place.<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, the term *heritage conservation district* has been chosen as a generic term suitable for use in the Yukon but does not preclude the suitability of other terms listed above.

Heritage conservation districts can find their roots in the development of Colonial Williamsburg beginning in 1926 as a restored town; marking it as the first American experiment in the museum-oriented preservation of a community.”<sup>7</sup> From this experiment, the preservation of whole towns and districts emerged after the restoration of Williamsburg. The concept was expanded with the first zoning ordinance in the United States for a historic district in Charleston, South Carolina, which, at the same time, established a Board of Architectural Review to approve plans for exterior construction in the Old and Historic districts. For the first time, preservation was supported by an effective coalition of public and private leadership and funding, moving preservation into the realm of land use controls.”<sup>8</sup> In Canada, the first site to receive formal recognition as a distinct heritage area was St. John’s, Newfoundland in 1975. The impetus for the designation came from urban renewal programs that had been devastating the city’s

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<sup>6</sup> Historic Places Program Branch, *Canadian Register of Historic Places: Writing Statements of Significance*, Parks Canada, November 2006. 38.

<sup>7</sup> Writing Statements of Significance. 21.

<sup>8</sup> Diane Lea, “America’s Preservation Ethos: A Tribute to Enduring Ideals,” in *A Richer Heritage: Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Robert Stipe (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 7.

historic core.<sup>9</sup> District designations in Charleston, St. John's and all of those that followed, mark an important change in North American thinking as it shows the shift in values from sites saved merely to represent a person or single event to sites that recognize and honor the collective heritage of communities. Districts began to acknowledge the architectural merit and social history of developed areas and the people, of any class, who made those neighborhoods home.

From these early beginnings, Dennis Gale, professor of public policy and management and author, states that the concept of heritage conservation districts has become "almost universally embraced by historic preservationists."<sup>10</sup> Gale also believes that despite some reservations, due to issues with balancing preservation goals with competing interests, many planners have begun to see the value of districts as a planning tool as well. Gale continues:

Historic districts are viewed by many planners not only as a device for encouraging respect for the architectural and historic attributes of a neighborhood, but also as a means to stimulate property rehabilitation and community reinvestment in infrastructure. Raising pride in neighborhood history and the built environment often improves resident confidence in the future of the area....Furthermore, historic districts can increase tourism in a community, contributing to business development, employment, income, and community revenues.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the proven benefit of districts, broad support is not always easy to achieve when public support is not gained. When speaking of the politics of historic districts in the

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<sup>9</sup> Lori Anglin & Natalie Bull, "Heritage Canada Foundation: Celebrating 35 Years of Helping Canadians Keep Historic Places Alive," *Heritage Canada*, (Spring 2008).  
<http://www.heritagecanada.org/eng/news/archived/spring2008/35.html> (accessed March 10, 2010).

<sup>10</sup> Dennis E Gale, "The Impacts of Historic District Designation Planning and Policy Implications," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 57:3 (1991), 337.

<sup>11</sup> Gale.

United States, Bill Schmickle argues that since preservation alone cannot be the only argument, the approach to be taken in advocating for districts is to speak to the role that they could play in the kinds of futures we want for our communities. To gain public support the social and economic advantages need to be made clear.<sup>12</sup> However, Schmickle believes that if advocates of districts are well prepared and knowledgeable about the effects of districts success will prevail. With the growing acceptance and promotion of the benefits of districts they are becoming an increasingly popular method for the conservation of historic sites around the world and in Canada.

### **A New Heritage Management Approach for the Yukon**

Canada's most Northwestern territory, the Yukon boasts a small but lively population whose history has been heavily influenced by the boom and bust cycles of the mining industry. The ninth largest of Canada's provinces and territories, the Yukon's population totaled 34,984 as of June 2010 making it the province or territory with the second smallest population.<sup>13</sup> The territory's small population and large land area have contributed to its unique history. Most well known as the home of the Klondike Gold Rush, the Yukon's history begins much earlier with the habitation of aboriginal people who lived off the land for thousands of years previous. Additionally, early exploration, the construction of the Alaska Highway and CANOL project, government and land

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<sup>12</sup> William Edgar, Schmickle, *The Politics of Historic Districts: A Primer for Grassroots Preservation* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2007), 8.

<sup>13</sup> Yukon Bureau of Statistics, *Population Report: June 2010*, [http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/stats/pdf/population\\_jun\\_2010.pdf](http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/stats/pdf/population_jun_2010.pdf) (accessed September 28, 2010).

claims and continued mining have all contributed to the Yukon's history and development.

Of these histories, a rich cultural heritage has been left behind to help to tell their stories. Left unaided, the many log cabins, roadhouses, trails and mining landscapes would peaceably revert back into the land but the retention of many of these sites are desired for the cultural richness that they bring to the territory, to the lessons they impart to today's generation and the economic opportunities they bring for tourism and urban renewal. While it is recognized that not all sites can or should be saved, in Dawson City alone, approximately 60 per cent of the community's historic buildings have been lost in the past 25 years.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, the Yukon Historic Sites Inventory lists 320 of the 3249 historic sites as having been demolished. While this number does not seem staggering, it does not include the countless buildings that were lost prior to the establishment of the inventory in the 1980s. Many of the sites have been demolished since the last site monitoring visit or have lost all integrity because of drastic alterations to the historic fabric of the site. Sites in the Yukon are managed through a combination of federal, territorial and municipal legislation, and land claims agreements making it well equipped to care for its heritage. However, as historic sites management in the Yukon continues to grow and learn from other jurisdictions, areas for improvement and new methods for preservation are always sought.

The case for heritage conservation districts in the Yukon is born out of the realization that collections of buildings and their associated landscapes, views and

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<sup>14</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. *Dawson City Heritage Management Plan*. March 2008. 2.

streetscapes may better be managed through conservation districts or areas. Heritage management reports in both Dawson and Whitehorse have discussed the benefit of this type of designation to better protect assemblages of buildings and their surroundings and have recommended particular sites that would benefit.<sup>15</sup> However, at present only procedures for the designation of individual parcels of land are in place. Designation procedures in the *Yukon Historic Resources Act*, although quite broad, do not include specific provisions for designating heritage conservation districts. Currently, only individual parcels of land have been designated based on the manner in which the Act is currently being interpreted. Across Canada, many provinces have written designation procedures for districts directly in their Heritage Act, while others have additional regulations which address the unique challenges districts pose.<sup>16</sup> As in other areas of Canada, such procedures could be implemented in the Yukon. Article 16 of the Act expands the designation criteria to include surrounding properties if it will aid in the “protection or enhancement of the historic site.”<sup>17</sup> By allowing the inclusion of adjacent sites in a designation, the Act opens up the possibility for allowing heritage district designations that contain both contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures. District designation would help protect more buildings as well as the overall historic character of the community. Districts also provide a more holistic management process that considers landscapes, viewscales and individual resources.

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<sup>15</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. *Dawson City Heritage Management Plan*. March 2008; Rob Ingram. *DPW Housing*, Unpublished, January 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Writing Statements of Significance, 37.

<sup>17</sup> Writing Statements of Significance, 37.

## Statement of Purpose and Research Methodology

In *The Politics of Historic Districts*, Bill Schmickle states, “preservationists will never run out of places to nominate because our definition is ever changing.”<sup>18</sup> In addition, the methods utilized to preserve these sites will continue to change and adapt as we progress as a profession and as a society. This study explores the historical progression of historic resource management in Canada and specifically focuses on the development of heritage conservation districts as a preservation method to determine how it might be utilized in the Yukon. A collective case study approach was chosen as the strategy of inquiry to test the applicability of districts in the Yukon. The three case studies were chosen to examine potential benefits and challenges that districts may pose in the Yukon in terms of designation with different management implications. From the case study findings the collective results were synthesized in order to develop a sound conclusion for the utilization of districts as a historic sites management approach in the Yukon.

The central question of this thesis was to determine the suitability of heritage conservation districts in the Yukon. In order to answer this question several subquestions were explored, including how other provinces in Canada have utilized districts successfully and how districts could be designated under the current *Yukon Historic Resources Act*, *Municipalities Act* and the *Yukon Area Development Act*. Also, local heritage bylaws, incentives and current land use policies were examined to better understand the local context for each case study. Procedures for delineating district

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<sup>18</sup> Schmickle. 7.

boundaries and identifying buildings to be included and determining character defining features were also explored. Document analysis included a review of international charters and documents regarding heritage conservation, national, provincial and local heritage policies and scholarly research on heritage conservation districts. Interviews with stakeholders in the Yukon were held to gain an understanding of past preservation efforts and to gain perspective on the many viewpoints and considerations that needed to be included in the study to gain a broad understanding of the Yukon situation. Additional interviews were held with representatives from other areas in Canada that currently manage historic districts.

The culmination of the research suggests that with careful planning and a consideration for local factors, districts could be employed as a preservation approach in the Yukon. By testing the proposed procedures against three potential districts this study identifies strategies for successful heritage conservation district designation and management in the Yukon. Heritage conservation districts are but one approach to heritage resource management but with careful consideration and selection of potential sites, districts can provide the holistic approach that individual designations are lacking. Heritage conservation districts have the ability to better represent and protect a diverse heritage that incorporates the values of many.

Chapter II helps lay the foundation for an understanding of the current state of heritage conservation in Canada and presents a history of the evolution of heritage conservation districts, not only in Canada but internationally as well. After gaining a clear understanding of the background literature, Chapter III provides an introduction to

Yukon history and historic sites management in the territory. The third part of the chapter then explores the many aspects that are crucial to understanding heritage conservation districts and identifies some of the key components to be included in the research, designation and management phase of heritage conservation districts. While respecting the provisions set out in the *Yukon Heritage Resources Act*, *Yukon Municipal Act* and *Area Development Act*, a proposed process for heritage conservation districts in the Yukon is then presented.

Case studies are presented in Chapter IV to test the application of the procedures discussed in the previous chapter. Potential districts in Dawson City, City of Whitehorse and Carcross are explored taking into consideration the local planning regulations and incentives. A rationale for designation, identification of boundaries and a discussion of character defining features to be protected are included. And finally, Chapter V provides concluding remarks and includes broad recommendations based on the collective case study findings. Recognizing the large scope of the topic, the limitations of this study and the continually evolving nature of heritage conservation districts, suggestions for future research are also discussed. All told, this study lays a foundation for the introduction of heritage conservation districts in the Yukon as a holistic approach to heritage resource management.



CHAPTER II  
HISTORIC SITES AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION  
DISTRICTS IN CANADA

**History of Heritage Resource Management in Canada**

An understanding of the progression of the heritage conservation movement is helpful to frame today's current policies and recommendations for the preservation and interpretation of Canada's historic sites;. Creating an awareness of Canadian philosophies and growth in the realm of heritage conservation movement can assist the development of procedures for heritage conservation districts in the Yukon. Much research, consultation and evolving philosophies have gone into the progression of historic site management in Canada and this information can help form the basis of a system that will work for the Yukon. In Canada, heritage conservation has gone from preserving battlefields and homes of important individuals at the beginning of the twentieth century to today's more inclusive system of value-based management of diverse sites. Finally, with the refinement of provincial heritage preservation acts and the development of the Historic Places Initiative, the nation is better equipped to deal with the conservation of its heritage. Increased cooperation and partnerships between the public and private sectors, planners and community members, First Nations and ethnic groups will ensure the

success of conservation in Canada as they become more involved and take ownership of their own heritage resources.

Heritage conservation in Canada had humble beginnings during the early years of the twentieth century. The primary focus was preserving historic military sites and creating historic house museums in homes largely associated with great men and significant events of Canada's past. These sites were often left unimproved as the thinking of the time felt that restoration harmed the evocative nature of historic properties.<sup>19</sup> The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), created in 1919, was a primary group concerned with heritage conservation during this time. Established because of pressure from a growing heritage community and the government's interest in extending the national parks system east, the HSMBC sought to designate sites centered around historic structures that represented important aspects of Canada's history.<sup>20</sup> However, lack of funding contributed to a declining state of repair at these and other historic sites under both public and private control.

Little has been written about the heritage conservation movement in Canada between the two world wars, presumably because of a slowdown in preservation projects due to the First and Second World Wars and the Great Depression. However, historic sites received attention again in 1951 when a federal review of historic sites and monuments in Canada took place as part of *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences Report*, often referred to as the Massey Commission.

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<sup>19</sup> Gordon W. Fulton, "Policy Issues and Their Impact on Practice: Heritage Conservation in Canada," *APT Bulletin*, Vol. 29, No. 3/4, Thirtieth-Anniversary Issue (1998). 13.

<sup>20</sup> Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, "History of the Board," [http://www.pc.gc.ca/clmhc-hsmbc/clmhc-hsmbc/clmhc-hsmbc1\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/clmhc-hsmbc/clmhc-hsmbc/clmhc-hsmbc1_e.asp) (accessed September 14, 2010).

The Commission reviewed the federal responsibilities to protect historic sites in Canada, which was primarily the responsibility of the National Parks Service of the Department of Resources and Development with recommendations from the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada on historical matters.<sup>21</sup> The inclusion of the work of the HSMBC was a late addition to the scope of the review but its inclusion was necessitated by an interest of more than a dozen organizations who argued that, even though not within the original terms of the review, historic sites should be included on the ground that while “reporting on archives we should not neglect ‘our archives in stone’”.<sup>22</sup> This growing awareness marks a mounting interest in preservation in Canada and the beginning of enhanced federal accountability for the protection of significant sites.

In the Commission’s report, they stated that “the time has now come for a considerable expansion of this program and for some modifications of policy,” further adding, “that the marking of sites, important as it is, has received undue attention in relation to restoration and maintenance. Restoration of course is much more costly, but it is more informative and it offers its information in a much more striking fashion...It seems to us important to consider whether marking with the familiar stone cairn should not more frequently be the sequel to rather than a substitute for restoration.”<sup>23</sup> These rather stark realizations marked a turning point for heritage conservation in Canada, changing the role of the HSMBC towards an emphasis on preserving rather than just

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<sup>21</sup> Canada, *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences Report* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1951), 123. (hereafter referred to as Massey Commission)

<sup>22</sup> Massey Commission. 125.

<sup>23</sup> Massey Commission. 347.

commemorating built heritage, consequently increasing demands for federal funding.<sup>24</sup>

From here, the Canadian government's commitment to preservation continued to evolve under the Diefenbaker and Trudeau administrations. This period from the late 1950s to through to the 1970s, launched the first major historic sites development and brought about the realization that preservation of only the major historic sites was not enough.<sup>25</sup> This recognition continued to grow as important historical sites continued to be identified across the country and as Canadians' interest in their own history began to flourish.

It was during this period, 1955-65 that planning began to truly take shape. As the population growth boomed, highway and suburban development became the major preoccupation of planners which led to the "paradox of progress" that was being felt during the last years of the 1960s. Early "slum clearances" had been well received but as functioning neighbourhoods started to be targeted for demolition to make way for transportation routes, offices and apartments, preservationists and conservation movements were organized across the country. Together, they began to question the intent of planners and to speak out more forcibly against projects that disturbed functioning neighbourhoods.<sup>26</sup> Opposition to urban redevelopment projects became increasingly common during this period across Canada, some receiving national

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<sup>24</sup> John Godfrey, MP, "The Missing Pieces: Heritage Commemoration and Public Policy," *The Place of History: Commemorating Canada's Past: Proceedings of the National Symposium Held on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada*, Thomas H.B. Symons, Ed. (Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada, 1997), 210.

<sup>25</sup> Frits Pannekoek, "Canada's Historic Sites: Reflections on a Quarter Century, 1980-2005," *The Public Historian*. Vol. 31, No. 1 (February 2009). 76.

<sup>26</sup> Jeanne Wolfe, "Our Common Past: An Interpretation of Canadian Planning History," *Plan Canada*. 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Special Edition (July 1994). 8. [http://www.cip-icu.ca/web/la/en/fi/ce7ddb14f3144381a18ffe8268be8be5/get\\_file.asp](http://www.cip-icu.ca/web/la/en/fi/ce7ddb14f3144381a18ffe8268be8be5/get_file.asp) (accessed February 5, 2010)

attention. Major clashes in the larger cities included “the Stop Spadina movement in Toronto, Milton Park in Montreal, Portage and Main in Winnipeg, Strathcona in Vancouver--but similar struggles were conducted with varying degrees of success in most centers.”<sup>27</sup> (Figure 1) Through these public protests for the safeguarding of neighbourhoods the realization of the scale of architectural destruction across the country gained momentum, finally providing the impetus for groups to unite and become spokespersons for the heritage conservation movement. The intrusion on neighbourhoods and loss of fine architecture caused citizens to join with historians, conservation architects and planners to seek ways to protect the character of neighbourhoods and architectural landmarks in the cities.



*Figure 1: The Stop Spadina movement was one of many efforts taking place across Canada to preserve traditional communities in cities undergoing urban development. Source: City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 2, Series 8, File 22.*

<sup>27</sup> Wolfe. 10.

The celebration of Canada's centennial marked a new appreciation and sense of national pride in many Canadians, which gave credence to the work of historians and historical societies across the country who, for the most part, had gone unheard by the general populations. This was considered a turning point in heritage conservation by Marc Denhez, author of *Heritage Fights Back*. He believed the benefit was an increased national pride in one's community, which in turn fostered an appreciation for buildings that represent the founding of communities.<sup>28</sup> Equally, it was also true that the celebration of Canada's centennial had a detrimental effect on heritage preservation. While some chose to honour their past on this momentous occasion, many communities chose an alternative approach by sacrificing heritage buildings in the name of progress and replacing them with buildings "more befitting Canada's second century."<sup>29</sup> Although a positive starting point to increasing awareness about the conservation of Canada's built heritage, progress and Canada's struggle to recognize their own heritage continued to plague conservation efforts in Canada.

The difficulty in defining a "Canadian identity" left many Canadians self-depreciatory about their culture. The pervasive belief among the general population continued to be that because Canada is such a young country with a short history, preservation of built heritage was hardly a concern.<sup>30</sup> This lack of concern for heritage preservation and focus on new development was recognized by heritage advocates,

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<sup>28</sup> Marc Denhez, *Heritage Fights Back* (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1978), 17.

<sup>29</sup> Denhez. 17.

<sup>30</sup> Ann Falkner, *Without Our Past*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 7.

citizens and planners as a problem during mid-century when “progress” started to get out of hand. Confronted with unmanaged growth in cities, the pleasure and safety that was once enjoyed in cities began to decline because of overcrowding and the need for land. This resulted in the regular destruction of single buildings and even whole neighbourhoods to make way for new projects.<sup>31</sup> This period of mass demolition and rapid growth necessitated a refocusing of the planning profession and urban planners to account for cohesive older communities.

Other events that shaped the heritage conservation movement in Canada were a direct result of events taking place, not in Canada, but internationally. The success of American conservationists in the mid-1960s through lobbying efforts, convinced the United States Congress to pass statutes relating to the protection of heritage and the natural environment. The creation of statutes was enough to provide, for the first time, a vehicle for action for historic preservation and environmental conservation.<sup>32</sup> For example, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) expanded the National Register of Historic Places, authorized matching funds for state led preservation projects, and established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, a watchdog federal agency.<sup>33</sup> Although no such legal tools existed in Canada, the events taking place in the United States first inspired the spread of environmental activism. A voice began to emerge in defense of the lakes, rivers and trees. The success of the “environmentalists” inspired new confidence among heritage advocacy groups, in both the U.S. and Canada,

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<sup>31</sup> Falkner.

<sup>32</sup> Denhez. 17.

<sup>33</sup> Lea. 11.

and led to informal coalitions between the groups. The environment, history and architecture slowly became linked and a new approach to conservation took root. Other groups concerned with issues such as the loss of low-income housing and the character of their neighbourhood all joined into the discussion.<sup>34</sup> Canada, being as diverse as it is, did not have such a consistent approach to conservation though. Mark Denhez explains:

Naturally, the above scenario was not applicable to all Canadian cities. The kind of coalition which was most obvious in places such as Montreal, Quebec City or even Guelph took a rather different form elsewhere. In Vancouver, architecture buffs found themselves in alliance with the Chinese community, in Winnipeg, they associated with local entrepreneurs. In one of Canada's most prominent success stories, that of St. John's Nfld., conservationists mounted their campaign with such speed and efficiency that it was difficult to observe whether any coalitions were being negotiated; if they were, they appeared overtaken by events in that city's remarkable surge of heritage consciousness.<sup>35</sup>

So, it seemed that likeminded people were joining together to identify and preserve their values and goals. From here the realization that we all have a stake in our heritage continued to grow as the scope of heritage conservation expanded.

Additionally, Canada acknowledged its role in protecting historic sites internationally on 23 July 1976 when it made formal acceptance of the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Paris, 16 November 1972*. By doing so, Canada was making a formal declaration of their intentions to abide by the Articles of the Convention. The Convention identifies methods and rationale for the protection of both cultural and natural heritage. For example, Article 4 States:

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<sup>34</sup> Denhez. 19.

<sup>35</sup> Denhez.



Each State Party to this Convention recognizes that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage referred to in Articles 1 and 2 and situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that State. It will do all it can to this end, to the utmost of its own resources and, where appropriate, with any international assistance and co-operation, in particular, financial, artistic, scientific and technical, which it may be able to obtain.<sup>36</sup>

The Convention also provides guidance in how nation states can achieve the stated goals.

Canada took a step forward by declaring acceptance of the Convention, leaving the country poised to better protect its cultural and natural heritage.

Although interest in conserving historic sites was growing at both the national and local level, the ability to find adequate funds to sustain heritage conservation projects continued to be a glaring problem. During the early 1970s even the federal government found itself having increasing difficulty in managing their sites let alone assist with the preservation of sites of local or regional importance. Owners of historic places across the country were continually struggling for funding yet the number of designated historic sites across the country continued to grow. As a possible solution to the problem, Jean Chretien, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs under the Trudeau government, established Heritage Canada in 1973.<sup>37</sup> Heritage Canada, a non-profit foundation, was created for the purpose of holding and preserving buildings, national areas, and scenic landscapes that are part of Canada's heritage with an endowment of twelve million dollars from the Canadian government. Eager to take on the challenge, by 1974 Heritage Canada had ambitiously identified six priorities for that year:

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<sup>36</sup> UNESCO, Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf> ( accessed September 15, 2010).

<sup>37</sup> Pannekoek. 76.

1. Stronger legislation to protect heritage;
2. Acquisition of land;
3. Public education;
4. Support for local groups;
5. Strong membership base; and
6. Increasing professional and trade skills<sup>38</sup>

Heritage Canada moved cautiously at the beginning, focusing on both the short and long term. To meet their priorities, the organization sought to expand research in the heritage conservation field. They undertook a number of feasibility studies about renovating entire areas instead of individual sites and at the same time entered into negotiations with governments over heritage legislation and addressed large-scale heritage conservation problems that were occurring during renovation projects. They also launched a number of programs based on the successful experiences of other countries such as the Main Street program.<sup>39</sup> Heritage Canada continued to grow and carve out its place in the national context of Canadian heritage conservation.

By the end of the 1970s Heritage Canada was not alone; dozens of grassroots heritage organization had formed as well as a number of professionally based non-governmental organizations to address heritage concerns. Provincial heritage organizations such as the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, formed in 1959, the Ontario Heritage Foundation established in 1967 by the Ontario Heritage Foundation Act, and Le Conseil des monuments et sites du Quebec which began in 1975, were established for the protection and promotion of provincial built heritage. Additional supporting organizations such as the Association for Preservation Technology was started as a joint

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<sup>38</sup> Falkner. 37.

<sup>39</sup> Denhez. 21.

venture between Canadian and United States preservationists in 1968 to provide education, training and publication on the technical aspects of preservation, and to address specific needs in heritage resource management.<sup>40</sup> Another organization, the Canadian Centre for Architecture, was founded in 1979 as “a new form of cultural institution to build public awareness of the role of architecture in society.”<sup>41</sup> Nearly every province had some form of heritage legislation in place by this time.<sup>42</sup> Together, heritage groups and heritage acts provided opportunities for training, sharing of ideas and the legislation required to protect Canada’s historic sites.

Parks Canada’s presence also grew during the 1970s and 1980s as regional offices opened across the country to help manage national historic sites under federal ownership and to continue updating the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings (CIHB).<sup>43</sup> The role of the federal government could not extend beyond their own sites though, due to the government’s inability to interfere with private property rights. Canada has a strong belief in the sanctity of property rights and the federal government was further restrained because property rights are part of a provincial mandate and outside of the Government of Canada’s scope.<sup>44</sup> All federal policies must then be national and serve all equally. Subsequently, the same applies to the provincial governments who, through provincial

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<sup>40</sup> Diana S Waite and Laura Shore, “Three Decades of Interdisciplinary Preservation Technology: APT Celebrates Its Thirtieth Anniversary,” *APT Bulletin*, 1998, <http://www.apti.org/about/apt-history.pdf> (accessed February 5, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> Canadian Centre for Architecture, *About Us*, <http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/about> (accessed September 13, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> Fulton. 14.

<sup>43</sup> Pannekoek. 77-79.

<sup>44</sup> Pannekoek. 70.

heritage legislation, gave additional powers to municipal governments to manage their own heritage. This regionalized approach to preservation it meant that in Canada, no two cities or provinces/territories follow the same procedures or standards.<sup>45</sup> Consequently, unlike the United State's *National Historic Preservation Act*, Canada does not have a national policy to help govern the management of historic sites. The development of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* in 2003 has created a more unified approach to heritage management in Canada.

Designations continue to occur on three different levels: national, provincial and municipal, and all may have different levels of protection. While a national designation appears to be the highest level of commemoration, the opposite is more likely true. As of September 2010, 2,021 national designations have occurred in Canada for places, persons and events of national significance.<sup>46</sup> Despite the recommendation of the Massey Commission, in regards to preservation over plaquing, the number of designations is misleading, however, as "...these designations are virtually meaningless at least from a preservation perspective, since designations are really a 'plaquing' program, whose principal costs are research, meetings, and bronze. National designation at best offers some moral persuasion for the provinces and their communities to preserve their sites."<sup>47</sup> Currently, all of the nationally designated sites outside of Parks Canada's ownership are at the mercy of the owner who may choose to take care of their property or not.

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<sup>45</sup> Falkner. 13.

<sup>46</sup> Parks Canada, "Directory of Designations of National Historic Significance of Canada," [http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/lhn-nhs/page3\\_E.asp?locateinp=&nhsprov=allprov&nhschoice=alldesig&list4=Generate+List](http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/lhn-nhs/page3_E.asp?locateinp=&nhsprov=allprov&nhschoice=alldesig&list4=Generate+List) (accessed September 14, 2010).

<sup>47</sup> Pannekoek. 75.

Designations at the provincial and municipal level are important for the protection of Canada's diverse heritage. Representations of all levels of history and the diversity of cultures cannot be covered on a national level and must be preserved by those who understand and value it the most. Municipal and provincial/territorial designations provide a higher level of protection than national designations and helps safeguard the future of sites of local significance.

As the heritage conservation movement in Canada has grown, so has a realization that if we are to be successful in protecting Canada's historic resources, there needs to be a clear understanding of goals and cooperation among groups before public interest will occur. In 1977, Ann Falkner spoke to the need for a consistent and rational preservation philosophy among the heritage conservation sector that could also appeal to everyday people. Falkner wrote: "In addition to the primary goal of halting building destruction, it is essential that preservation efforts have as a definite objective valid contemporary use."<sup>48</sup> In other words, to be successful preservation should not turn buildings into artifacts but into functioning spaces that fit modern day needs and that can appeal to the sentiments of everyday people.

An additional requirement for successful preservation is the need for heritage organizations to work with other like minded organizations. While not a new concept, conservation of the environment has been much more effective at appealing to the public and gaining recognition. Thomas H.B. Symons, stated that "arguments for environmental protection can and should be extended to include heritage conservation and historic preservation," and added that, "just as environmental issues have been made relevant to

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<sup>48</sup> Falkner. 60.

our everyday life in the past decade, so should heritage concerns be made part of our everyday value system.”<sup>49</sup> Symons further explains:

As the thinking of historic preservation broadens from an original concern with single historic sites and buildings to a wider concern with streetscapes, historic districts and entire cultural landscapes, there is a growing realization that historical and environmental resources are very often inextricably intertwined, that historic preservation is a significant part of conservation and vice-versa.<sup>50</sup>

Heritage conservation has taken a much more holistic approach, recognizing that historic sites are not only about the built heritage but are interconnected with the landscape that they belong to. To protect historic sites, we must therefore broaden out alliances to achieve similar goals.

During the 1970s, traditional viewpoints were expanded to encompass both the landscape and built heritage and focused on the characteristics of a whole neighbourhood rather than just individual buildings or sites. During its early years, Heritage Canada incorporated this new preservation approach by launching initiatives based on successful models in Britain. The 1950s Magdalen Street experiment of Norwich was collaboration between the community, businesses and the municipal government that restored the shops and homes of Magdalen Street. The success of the program was most notable in that it occurred without significant expense or redevelopment. The success of Magdalen Street precipitated Heritage Canada’s Area Conservation Program, which promoted adaptive reuse of buildings within a district based on a partnership between the community, all

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas H.B. Symons, “Commemorating Canada’s Past: From Old Crow to New Bergthal,” *The Place of History: Commemorating Canada’s Past*, (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1997), 15.

<sup>50</sup> Symons. 21.

levels of government and private enterprise.<sup>51</sup> Although the program was short-lived, by 1978 at the end of the program, it was deemed successful as Heritage Canada had established conservation areas in seven of ten provinces. Problems with achieving broadly based financial support from government, coupled with legislation and planning practices that favored development, caused Heritage Canada to abandon the program and to focus its efforts on advocating for more effective national heritage laws.<sup>52</sup> However, Heritage Canada did not abandon the goals of the program and sought new ways of advocating conservation of greater areas.

In 1978 they took another approach by sponsoring one of Canada's most successful programs, the Main Street Program.<sup>53</sup> Through a self-help process, communities took charge of revitalizing the central core of small and medium sized towns through the preservation and rehabilitation of their historic buildings. Heritage Canada provided information on preservation techniques, how to improve streetscapes and on marketing initiatives and funding. The success of the program was evident in the renewed sense of pride that was felt in each community that took part in the program. The Main Street Program was discontinued in 1994 due to a cut in federal funding but in over a decade and with an \$8 million contribution from the federal government, seventy communities across the country benefitted from the program.<sup>54</sup> The impact of the program can still be felt in many communities today and the program's legacy continues by way of a

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<sup>51</sup> Heritage Canada, "History," <http://www.heritagecanada.org/eng/about/hist.html> (accessed February 5, 2010).

<sup>52</sup> Heritage Canada, History.

<sup>53</sup> Pannekoek. 82.

<sup>54</sup> Heritage Canada, History.

provincial Main Street Program in Alberta which helps to celebrate and recognize the heritage attributes of its communities while increasing economic opportunities that showcase the historic main streets.<sup>55</sup>

In the 1990s, a national shift in priorities occurred and the emphasis on the types of sites that should be protected changed. The realization by heritage professionals that an equitable approach to national designations was not taking place led to the identification and protection of sites of often neglected heritage. Industrial sites, aboriginal sites, cultural communities and sites identified with important aspects in women's history were identified as "neglected heritage" and were designated through federal programs.<sup>56</sup> For example, since 1990, approximately 10 percent of the 860 federal designations have been of sites of significance to indigenous Canadians.<sup>57</sup> At the provincial level, legislation allows for the designation and protection of places of environmental, architectural and archeological significance with additional varying levels of protection at the municipal level.<sup>58</sup>

One example of provincial legislation is British Columbia whose Heritage Conservation Act is meant to "encourage and facilitate the protection and conservation of heritage property in British Columbia," including sites with "heritage value to British

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<sup>55</sup> Government of Alberta, "The Future of Main Street: A New Paradigm," <http://www.albertamainstreet.org/default.aspx> (accessed September 15, 2010).

<sup>56</sup> Godfrey. 210.

<sup>57</sup> Bruce Ziff and Melodie Hope, "Unsitely: The Eclectic Regimes that Protect Aboriginal Cultural Places in Canada," *Protection of First Nations Cultural Heritage: Laws, Policy, and Reform*, Edited by Catherine Bell & Robert K. Paterson (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 184.

<sup>58</sup> Ziff and Hope. 181.



Columbia, a community or an Aboriginal people.”<sup>59</sup> Under the Act, provincial designations in BC are protected against “damage, desecration, or alteration” although the province retains the right to issue permits allowing prohibited acts. The province therefore holds ultimate control over the safeguarding of provincial historic sites except for when sites are on First Nations land, in which case permits can only be granted after consultation with any and all affected First Nations.<sup>60</sup> This level of authority over land use and heritage sites held by the provinces and territories is typical although each Province and Territory has variations to the way historic sites are managed.

Differences from province to province range in both the levels of protection provided and the involvement of First Nations and other special interest groups. The *Yukon Historic Resources Act*, detailed further in Chapter III is a noteworthy example for its more participatory process of historic site designation and development of heritage policies. The Act was written with requirements placed under “Chapter 13: Heritage” of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* in mind, which was designed with one objective being that Yukon First Nations and Government be involved equitably in the management of Heritage Resources of the Yukon, and that they respect the values and culture of Yukon First Nation peoples.<sup>61</sup> The Act established an advisory board known as the Yukon Heritage Resources Board (YHRB), which is charged with advising the federal and territorial Ministers responsible for heritage and to Yukon First Nations on heritage resources and heritage policies. YHRB is also tasked with providing recommendations

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<sup>59</sup> Ziff and Hope. 185.

<sup>60</sup> Ziff and Hope. 186.

<sup>61</sup> Council for Yukon Indians, “Chapter 13: Heritage” *Umbrella Final Agreement between the Government of Canada, the Council for Yukon Indians and the Government of the Yukon*. 1992. C. 13, S. 1.1.3.

for designation of Yukon historic sites. At least half of the ten members must “be chosen from people nominated by governing bodies of Yukon First Nations or by the coordinating body for Yukon’s First Nations.”<sup>62</sup> The YHRB is but one example of how First Nations ensure that they have a place at the table when it comes to the discussions surrounding heritage resource management in the Yukon.

Despite the adoption of provincial, territorial and municipal legislation to safeguard Canada’s historic places, a 1999 study found that 20% of Canada’s historic buildings had been demolished since 1970.<sup>63</sup> Not a reassuring statistic considering the efforts that have been undertaken by heritage professionals across Canada over the past half century. One problem was the lack of a national standards system of heritage resource management. For this reason, in 2001–2003 a pan-Canadian partnership between Canada’s federal, provincial and territorial governments created a program that addressed the conservation of Canada’s historic places and promoted their value. The Historic Places Initiative (HPI) was based on three core tools- the Canadian Register of Historic Places, *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, and the HPI certification process.<sup>64</sup> The program is a successful tool in maintaining consistency and providing guidelines for hands-on conservation across Canada. This was done by standardizing the terminology, best case practices for heritage conservation, and emphasizing values based management in the preservation of historic sites.

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<sup>62</sup> Historic Resources Act. *Revised Statutes of the Yukon, 2002*, C. 109, S. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Parks Canada, *Historic Places Initiative: Report on Results* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2008), 1.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* 2.

Canada's decision to apply a values-based approach to heritage conservation can be traced to several international charters and documents. The *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*, first written in 1979 and subsequently updated in 1981, 1988 and 1999, places an emphasis on preserving places of cultural significance. The Charter defines cultural significance as “aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations... embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.”<sup>65</sup> The Charter further defined conservation as “the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.”<sup>66</sup> The emphasis of the Burra Charter is therefore on the importance of ensuring that the conservation of the cultural values associated with the site are paramount and that one should “do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained.”<sup>67</sup> The Burra Charter continues to be a guiding document in heritage conservation around the world and has been expanded upon in other key international documents.

The Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994 prepared by the World Heritage Committee was “conceived in the spirit of the Charter of Venice, 1964, and builds on it and extends it in response to the expanding scope of cultural heritage concerns and

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<sup>65</sup> Australia ICOMOS, *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999* (Burwood: Australia ICOMOS Incorporated, 2000), 2.

<sup>66</sup> Burra Charter.

<sup>67</sup> Burra Charter. 1

interests in our contemporary world.”<sup>68</sup> Section No. 9 of the document is one example of the documents reference to the importance of linking authenticity and value of place in conservation. It states:

Conservation of cultural heritage in all its forms and historical periods is rooted in the values attributed to the heritage. Our ability to understand these values depends, in part, on the degree to which information sources about these values may be understood as credible or truthful. Knowledge and understanding of these sources of information, in relation to original and subsequent characteristics of the cultural heritage, and their meaning, is a requisite basis for assessing all aspects of authenticity.<sup>69</sup>

The Declaration of San Antonio followed the Nara Document on Authenticity but was meant to focus on the meaning of authenticity specifically for preservation in the Americas. Prepared by the ICOMOS National Committees of the Americas, the Declaration of San Antonio included recommendations for the preservation of architecture and urbanism, archaeological sites and cultural landscapes. Again, the document focuses on cultural values and identity and determining significance for identifying the authenticity of sites. One consideration identified in the Declaration of San Antonio helps illustrate the spirit of the document and is included below for consideration:

The authenticity of our cultural heritage is directly related to our cultural identity. The cultures and the heritage of the Americas are distinct from those of other continents because of their unique development and influences... Because cultural identity is at the core of community and national life, it is the foundation of our cultural heritage and its conservation. Within the cultural diversity of the Americas, groups with separate identities co-exist in the same space and time and at times across space and time, sharing cultural manifestations, but often

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<sup>68</sup> World Heritage Committee, *Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994*, [http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc\\_eng.htm](http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc_eng.htm) (accessed September 15, 2010).

<sup>69</sup> Nara Document.

assigning different values to them. No nation in the Americas has a single national identity; our diversity makes up the sum of our national identities.

The authenticity of our cultural resources lies in the identification, evaluation and interpretation of their true values as perceived by our ancestors in the past and by ourselves now as an evolving and diverse community. As such, the Americas must recognize the values of the majorities and the minorities without imposing a hierarchical predominance of any one culture and its values over those of others.

Further:

An understanding of the history and significance of a site over time are crucial elements in the identification of its authenticity. The understanding of the authenticity of a heritage site depends on a comprehensive assessment of the significance of the site by those who are associated with it or who claim it as part of their history. For this reason, it is important to understand the origins and evolution of the site as well as the values associated with it. Variations in the meaning and values of a site may at times be in conflict, and while that conflict needs to be mediated, it may, in fact, enrich the value of the heritage site by being the point of convergence of the values of various groups. The history of a site should not be manipulated to enhance the dominant values of certain groups over those of others.<sup>70</sup>

This Declaration clearly lays out the importance of proper identification of authenticity of historic sites and provides a solid framework for much of the work taking place in Canada. The spirit of the above documents has helped inform the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

As discussed, the impact of these and other documents have helped shape Canada's value based approach to conservation. The definitions used in the Standards and Guidelines clearly reflect the value based approach; conservation is defined as: "all actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of a cultural resource so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life," with character-defining elements being "the materials, forms, location, spatial configurations,

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<sup>70</sup> ICOMOS National Committees of the Americas, *The Declaration of San Antonio*, 1996, [http://www.icomos.org/docs/san\\_antonio.html](http://www.icomos.org/docs/san_antonio.html) (accessed September 16, 2010).

uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of a historic place, which must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value.”<sup>71</sup> *The Standards and Guidelines* provide “sound, practical guidance to achieve good conservation practice,” and have been “adopted by federal, provincial, territorial or other authorities as a benchmark for assessing proposed conservation interventions.”<sup>72</sup> Canada is poised to address heritage conservation projects around the country in a consistent manner while respecting the heritage value of each site and the values inferred on those sites by all groups associated with the site.

However, many critics continue to point out a glaring weakness in the Canadian system. Lack of funding or incentives is a constant battle for heritage preservationists. Through the use of a tax regime the federal government could create an environment where private developers are encouraged to undertake rehabilitation projects. This private investment could assist in preserving Canada’s heritage since the need to generate economic returns remains the dominant theme in preservation today.<sup>73</sup> The greater protection of our heritage now depends on appealing to the sentiments of funding agencies and private benefactors. Success will no doubt continue to be limited if economic incentives, rather than cultural associations and sentiment, drive development projects among the general population. Private property owners need to be engaged in order to become active participants in the preservation of Canada’s heritage with the goal of creating a connection between cultural and historical values and the public.

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<sup>71</sup> Parks Canada, *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2003).

<sup>72</sup> Standards and Guidelines.

<sup>73</sup> Pannekoek. 80.

Some have done just that by promoting incentives for adaptive reuse projects in historic downtowns. The City of Victoria, for one, recognized the importance of economics in relation to retaining the heritage of its downtown and commissioned a Downtown Victoria Heritage Building Economic Study in 2007 which was based on the following premise:

Simply applying a heritage designation to a building, and preventing its demolition, is not necessarily sufficient to ensure retention and upgrading. Historic buildings must be occupied by viable uses and must be financially attractive investments if they are going to be retained in the long term, properly maintained, and make a contribution to the vitality of the area.<sup>74</sup>

The study examined tax incentives already in place to for property owners. Most notably, the Tax Incentive Program (TIP) for owners of downtown designated heritage buildings and the Building Incentive Program (BIP) for owners of commercial or institutional heritage designated buildings. The TIP has been designed to offset seismic upgrading costs for conversion of upper storeys into residential space while the BIP provides financial assistance to owners of commercial or institutional heritage buildings for façade restoration, structural improvement, meeting building codes and other rehabilitation costs. BIP grants may cover up to 50% of eligible costs for heritage related work up to a maximum of \$50,000 per project while TIP projects have the added benefit of receiving tax exemptions for a period of up to ten years designed to offset the cost of seismic upgrading but vary project to project.<sup>75</sup> One project to have received grants under TIP was the Palladian, a 1912 First Congregational Church that was converted to

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<sup>74</sup> Coriolis Consulting Corp, Busby Perkins + Will & TBKG, *Downtown Heritage Building Economic Study* (Victoria: City of Victoria, June 2007), 1.

<sup>75</sup> City of Victoria, *City of Victoria Heritage Program*, [http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/departments\\_plncmm\\_hrt.shtml](http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/departments_plncmm_hrt.shtml) (accessed September 18, 2010).

29 residential condominiums at a total cost of over \$8 Million. The project won the Hallmark Society's prestigious Presidents Award for adaptive re-use in 2008.<sup>76</sup> Helen Cain, City of Victoria heritage planner credits TIP for the success of their Heritage Conservation Areas of Old Town and Chinatown.<sup>77</sup> (Figure 2) Results from the 2007 Economic Study show the success of the programs but has also found them to be inadequate to stimulate the rehabilitation of some buildings and has recommended the development and adoption of a Heritage Transfer of Density Program which is proposed as a policy in a new draft Downtown Plan.<sup>78</sup> Through these programs, the City of Victoria shines as an excellent example of incentive based heritage rehabilitation in Canada.



*Figure 2: Financial and tax incentives have helped promote the reuse and preservation of many of the Victoria's old town historic resources. Photo courtesy of Katharine Olynyk, October, 2010.*

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<sup>76</sup> City of Victoria, *The Palladian*, [http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/txincn\\_csstds\\_1600qdr.pdf](http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/txincn_csstds_1600qdr.pdf) (accessed September 18, 2010).

<sup>77</sup> Helen Cain, interview by author, August 6, 2010.

<sup>78</sup> Helen Cain, follow up to interview.



This examination of the progression of heritage resource management details both the challenges and successes that Canada has seen in terms of preserving its heritage. A prevailing theme is the importance of employing a value based approach to conservation while promoting partnerships between the various levels of government, conservation groups, First Nations, developers, and most importantly with the people who can identify with the aspects of their community that provide a sense of place and community pride. Without these partnerships, success will be limited. It is with this in mind that this thesis will aim to develop an approach to preservation through the use of heritage conservation districts in the Yukon that meets the needs of all parties involved.

### **Heritage Conservation Districts: Background and Rationale**

Although less frequently used as a preservation approach to preserving historic sites, heritage conservation area designations have the ability to preserve much larger portions of the historic fabric of communities than individual designations do. From a purely preservation standpoint the arguments for district designation are overwhelming, but, resistance to districts remains an obstacle to many preservationists. Beliefs that heightened restrictions will infringe private property rights, contribute to declining property values and support gentrification are commonplace. Research has disproven these beliefs and has proven additional benefits such as community revitalization, increased economic development in heritage districts and increased community pride and a sense of place. As a planning and preservation tool, district designations remain a relatively new experience and a reflection of past successes and challenges is an important step in moving forward.

The focus of preservation prior to the 1960s was primarily in the form of individual buildings and sites but a shift in strategies began to be seen after this time. However, in some areas the notion of districts was beginning to form much earlier. In 1891, the opening of an open-air museum made up of an ensemble of individual structures in Stockholm set the stage for privately funded preservation of collections of buildings.<sup>79</sup> This early experiment in large scale preservation set the tone for early forms of districts. In the US, this is evidenced through the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>80</sup> Although the focus here was also on developing more of a living museum, aspects of its preservation echo the goals of modern day districts. The intention of capturing the streetscapes and relationship between buildings marked a departure from focusing solely on the larger community icon buildings. The success of Colonial Williamsburg was noticed in Canada as well as the United States and led to a shift in focus to comprehensively restored and reconstructed outdoor museums.<sup>81</sup> Criticism was levied against these types of sites by purists as not being real, as reconstruction and demolition often accompanied these types of development to portray the site in a desirable way.<sup>82</sup> Some criticism can be expected, as it was the first step towards new approaches to historic preservation.

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<sup>79</sup>W.J. Murtagh, "Aesthetic and Social Dimensions of Historic Districts," *Historic Districts: Identification, Social Aspects & Preservation* (Rome: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1973), 13.

<sup>80</sup> D. A. Hamer, *History in Urban Places: The Historic Districts of the United States* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 2.

<sup>81</sup> Fulton. 13.

<sup>82</sup> Hamer. 4.

The approach taken in Charleston, South Carolina in the 1920s provided a more significant model for district designation than Colonial Williamsburg and is noted as being the first of its kind in the United States. The intention in Charleston was to preserve entire historic neighbourhoods through the use of zoning ordinances, requiring applications for building permits for alteration of exterior features and managing compatible new construction within the district. Decisions were managed through the establishment of a board for architectural review.<sup>83</sup> Although the success of Charleston began to spread, the idea did not fully catch on until 1966 when the federal government passed the National Historic Preservation Act. A precursor to the Act was the publication, “With Heritage So Rich”, produced by the special committee on Historic Preservation and in association with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which declared that the preservation movement must go beyond saving individual historic buildings and called for a concern for ‘total heritage’. The Act took these recommendations seriously and in addition to developing a national register of historic sites, it added districts as a form of designation.<sup>84</sup> A momentous occasion in preservation, district designation became an important preservation tool in the United States.

Around the same time the idea of the conservation areas began to emerge in the United Kingdom. The concept was first introduced in 1966 when Duncan Sandy won the ballot for Private Members’ Bills. His Civic Amenities Bill was well received but was essentially a declaration of interest that provided no new regulatory power or burdens on

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<sup>83</sup> Hamer. 5.

<sup>84</sup> Hamer. 18.

local governments.<sup>85</sup> As early as 1968 the potential impact of conservation areas was already being contemplated and thousands of designations across the country were predicted and steps were created to for local planning authorities to establish conservation areas. By 1981 the number of designations had reached 5084 areas, 60 percent of which were located in rural districts.<sup>86</sup> The rapid rate of designations did not allow much time for reflection on their success and it is therefore difficult to measure. Since its inception, heritage areas have become a useful planning tool and designation remains the best method for local authorities to apply conservation policies to protect the heritage character of an area.<sup>87</sup> English Heritage states that “historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for the conservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest is well established.”<sup>88</sup> For this reason, conservation areas have been chosen as a preferred conservation method with more than 9100 having now been designated across the UK.<sup>89</sup>

In Canada, the impetus for a change from individual to community wide designations was first introduced by the Heritage Canada Foundation soon after its creation in 1973. The first site to feel the effects of this new program was St. John’s,

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<sup>85</sup> Peter J. Larkham, “Designating Conservation Areas: Patterns in Time and Space,” *Journal of Urban Design*, Vol. 1 Issue 3 (October 1996). 315.

<sup>86</sup> Larkham. 315.

<sup>87</sup> English Heritage, *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (English Heritage, February 2006), 8.

<sup>88</sup> English Heritage. 4.

<sup>89</sup> English Heritage.

Newfoundland in 1975, which was targeted to help put an end to devastation caused by urban renewal projects in the city's historic core. Shannie Duff, the then Heritage Canada Foundation governor for Newfoundland wrote at the time, "The Area Conservation program will result in streetscape preservation of a district which will help retain and enhance the character of the area, greatly increasing its tourist potential and its attractiveness for commercial enterprises. Even more important it will preserve for all the citizens of St. John's an oasis of familiarity where they can go back and touch their roots."<sup>90</sup> Other projects that benefited from the program were St. Andrews-By-The-Sea, New Brunswick, Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, Barclay Square in Vancouver, the Winnipeg Exchange District, and Old Strathcona in Edmonton. Although the program was short lived, it merged into the very successful Main Street Canada Program without much delay in 1979. The purpose of this program, similarly, was to help revitalize the central core of small and mid-sized towns while preserving their historic buildings.<sup>91</sup> Although the success of these programs are considered to be extensive, for the most part it did not come with formal district designation which was still an emerging idea during the end of the 1970s in Canada.

A UNESCO report published in 1980 further marked the international shift from individual designations to incorporating streetscapes and districts. The report highlighted this trend by reporting, "protected zones, which are covered by law in all countries concerned with the exception of Canada, Greece and Italy, always, as the term suggests,

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<sup>90</sup> Anglin and Bull.

<sup>91</sup> Anglin & Bull.

relate to the preservation of groups of buildings, streets, squares, districts, etc.”<sup>92</sup> Perhaps sparked into action from this declaration, Canada would not take long to respond and quickly began to move towards a more broad interpretation of sites eligible for designation. The Historic Sites and Monument Board (HSMBC) addressed a shift towards more inclusive designations in Canada in June 1981 when it adopted new approaches to dealing with streetscapes and groupings of buildings. The criteria established by the board were:

- 1) that streetscapes and other significant groupings of buildings constitute appropriate subjects for commemoration.
- 2) that the proposed criteria include the following:
  - i. a group of buildings none of which singly may be of national architectural significance but when taken together comprise a harmonious representation of one or more styles or constructions, buildings types or periods;
  - ii. a grouping of buildings none of which may be of individual historical significance but which together comprise an outstanding example of structures of technological or so social significance;
  - iii. a group of buildings or structures which share common associations with figures or events of national historical significance;
  - iv. a group of buildings whose designation by the Board depends upon the integrity of the group being maintained and where the destruction or modification of any one of the buildings would bring into question the original designation.<sup>93</sup>

As a first attempt at dealing with streetscapes over individual structures the Board quickly realized that modifications were required. The Board recommended the designation of only one site, the Prince William Streetscape in Saint John, New Brunswick under the criteria stated above before experiencing problems. The next

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<sup>92</sup> UNESCO, *Protection and Cultural Animation of Monuments, Sites and Historic Towns in Europe*, (Bonn: UNESCO, 1980), 10.

<sup>93</sup> Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, *Historic Districts and the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1990), i.

proposed site to be presented to the Board posed challenges to the criteria already. The Prince and Hollis Buildings, a group of eight buildings incorporated into contemporary development, presented to the board did not fall under the criteria established for streetscapes. Before being able to rule on the designation the Criteria Committee needed to clarify the criteria to broaden their scope from a potentially significant streetscape or grouping of buildings to encompass historical districts.<sup>94</sup>

The outcome of the Criteria Committee was the adoption of new criteria that dealt specifically with historic districts:

- 1) Historic Districts constitute appropriate subjects for commemoration. Historic districts are geographically defined areas which create a special sense of time and place through buildings, structures and open spaces modified by human use and which are united by past events and use and/or aesthetically, by architecture and plan.
- 2) Nationally significant historic districts will include one or more of the following:
  - i. a group of buildings, structures and open spaces none of which singly need be of national architectural significance, but when taken together comprise a harmonious representation of one or more styles or constructions, building types or period;
  - ii. a group of buildings, structures and open spaces none of which may be of individual historical significance, but which together comprise an outstanding example of structures of technological or social significance;
  - iii. a group of buildings, structures and open spaces which share common association with individuals of national significance.
- 3) A commemorated historic district will be subject to periodic review in order to ensure that the elements which contribute to its integrity and national significance are being reasonably maintained.<sup>95</sup>

These criteria set identifiable guidelines that would better inform the HSMBC when reviewing designations for historic districts.

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<sup>94</sup> Historic Districts and the HSMBC. ii.

<sup>95</sup> Historic Districts and the HSMBC. iii.

In developing these criteria the HSMBC was not without precedents. A background paper on historic districts completed in 1986 for the HSMBC was based on research compiled from reviewing policies in place in those countries that already had provisions in place to deal with historic districts. The three countries that served as good examples and informed Canada's decisions were England, France and the United States.<sup>96</sup> For these reasons, Canadian policies continue to be informed from preservation policies in these countries and conversely, Canadian models help inform the policies born by other countries such as Australia.

Today, a variety of names have been used to describe distinctive historic areas. The National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States uses the term *Historic Districts* which are defined as “areas in which historic buildings and their settings are protected by public review, and encompass buildings deemed significant to the city's cultural fabric. A property included in a historic district, valued for its historical associations or architectural quality, is worth protecting because it is a virtue to the special and unique personality of the city”.<sup>97</sup>

In Canada, no one definition guides policy makers, with the HSMBC definition already stated above, each province also defines districts in their own way. Although the HSMBC uses the term *historic district* much like the United States, the common term used in Canada is a *Heritage Conservation Area or District*. Canada's Historic Places

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<sup>96</sup> Julie Harris, *Background Paper: Historic Districts and the HSMBC* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1986), 5.

<sup>97</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, “What is a Historic District,” <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/faq/historic-districts/what-is-a-historic-district.html> (accessed February 21, 2009).



uses the term *heritage district*, stating that “heritage districts tend to be relatively large, built areas with a complex set of values and character-defining elements that work together to create a discernable whole.”<sup>98</sup> Ontario defines the term more specifically as follows: “A HCD may comprise an area with a group or complex of buildings, or a larger area with many buildings and properties. It may also comprise an entire municipality with a concentration of heritage resources with special character or historical association that distinguishes it from its surroundings”.<sup>99</sup> British Columbia more broadly defines the term as, “a distinct district with special heritage value and/or heritage character, identified for heritage conservation purposes in an official community plan.”<sup>100</sup> Similar terms are used across the rest of Canada in areas that recognize districts as legal planning methods.

While conservation methods of choice have expanded to include the notion of heritage districts, the focus in Canada primarily remains on designating individual buildings. Of the Canadian provinces that do allow districts, their relatively low number is indicative of the slow progression in Canada towards using districts as preservation and planning tools. Ontario and British Columbia have the largest number of municipal district designations. As of February 2010, 94 districts have been designated in Ontario. In other provinces as few as only one district has been established, as is the case in Manitoba where Winnipeg is the only city to have designated a district. While complete and accurate numbers for provincial/municipal designations was not determined, Table 1 illustrates the low number of designations at the national level showing the reluctance to

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<sup>98</sup> Writing Statements of Significance, 37.

<sup>99</sup> Ministry of Culture, *Ontario Heritage Toolkit: Heritage Conservation Districts, A Guide to District Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act* (Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2006), 5.

<sup>100</sup> Heritage Branch, *Heritage conservation, a community guide* (Province of British Columbia, ND), 50.

confer such designations unless sites are truly representative of national significance, thus shifting responsibility for preserving districts to the provinces and municipalities that have the power to enforce regulatory measures and provide incentives. Reasons for low numbers in the provinces (other than Ontario) were not uncovered but may be due in part to reluctance from municipal councils and planning staff. The relative newness of districts as a form of designation could also account for the low numbers.

*Table 1: Heritage district designations across Canada.*

<b>Historic Districts in Canada as of August 2010</b>			
	Designated	National*	UNESCO Cultural sites
Ontario	94	1	1
Alberta	2	1	1
British Columbia	37**	4	1
Manitoba	1	1	0
Quebec	13	4	1
Nova Scotia	6	3	1
New Brunswick	3	3	0
PEI	2	1	0
Saskatchewan	1	0	0
Newfoundland & Labrador	10	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>
*as of June 2009			
**as reported in a 2010 annual survey of municipal governments that have districts listed in an official community plan. 128 of 189 local governments responded.			

Since the 1970s, Canadian provinces have introduced a series of heritage acts to address issues of heritage conservation. Ontario's Heritage Act was the first to be passed, in 1975, and has since been updated, most recently in 2005.<sup>101</sup> Of the provincial heritage acts, all ten Provinces have processes in place to designate historic districts, most of

<sup>101</sup> Kovacs, Jason F et al., "Do Heritage Conservation Districts Work? The Case of Kitchener's Upper Doon District," *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, (December, 2008).

which defer the responsibility to local governments. Of the territories, the Northwest Territories was the first to introduce heritage legislation with the passing of the Historical Resources Act in 1990, and was closely followed with the Historic Resources Act by the Yukon in 1991. Only Nunavut remains to introduce a Heritage Act that would provide a process for recognizing historic places, although they do have a burgeoning heritage sector through the Nunavut Heritage Network and the Inuit Heritage Trust. Currently, none of the territories have processes in place to define or recognize heritage conservation districts.

The reason some provinces have chosen to adopt districts as a method for conservation is the common belief that developers, the public and even local governments are indifferent or unaware of the historical significance of an area and may unknowingly do harm to these areas. Buildings, when viewed in isolation, may appear to be insignificant but through more careful examination, it is the compilation of a group of buildings within a streetscape or community that truly define the historical significance of an area. Additionally:

The designation of a H[eritage] A[rea], rather than of individual buildings, is necessary because such areas have a definable character which may be deleteriously affected by the removal or alteration of buildings which may individually lack any intrinsic architectural and/or historic significance. However, they are deemed to be irreplaceable parts of a fragile context in which individually important buildings are located, and which helps to give them their special status.<sup>102</sup>

It is with this premise in mind that districts are becoming a favored tool in protecting heritage resources from development, alterations and teardowns.

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<sup>102</sup> C.A. Sharpe, "House Prices in a heritage area: the case of St. John's, Newfoundland," *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, (winter 2006), [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_hb6525/is\\_2\\_15/ai\\_n29365290/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb6525/is_2_15/ai_n29365290/) (accessed on February 19, 2010)

An acknowledged importance in the success of heritage conservation districts is the need for both public and private support. In addition to the main goal of retaining the historical significance of an area, whether it is of local or national significance, support for districts tends to focus on the positive economic values and retention of sense of place in communities. On the other hand, many opposed to districts argue that property values will drop, or if they do rise so will taxes, and that heritage districts cause gentrification and push low and middle-class families out of neighbourhoods. The final reason for opposition, and perhaps the most argued reason, is that zoning and historic districts are associated with negative restrictions on development and private property rights.

Of those issues, studies into the effects of historic districts on property values have received the most attention. Studies to date have had mixed results but have overall yielded positive results. Table 2 shows the breakdown of major studies dealing with property values in historic districts, with 13 of 24 having positive effects and only two showing negative effects. One author, Donovan Rypkema, was so confident in the success of districts that he claimed, the impact had been so positive in the 1970s and 1980s that property values rose in every heritage district in Canada.<sup>103</sup> However, uncertain in these and other claims, author Dennis E Gale cautioned in his 1991 study that many of the early studies in the 1970s and 1980s did succeed in demonstrating that property values were higher or rose more rapidly than those in other section of the community but they did not conclusively show that official designation itself was the cause for these disparities. It is possible that other factors such as speculation in real

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<sup>103</sup> Donovan Rypkema, "Rethinking Economic Values," *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*, ed. A.J. Lee (Washington: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992).

estate, neighbourhood revitalization, new infill construction and improved city services could all affect property values, independent of district designations.<sup>104</sup>

*Table 2: Studies dealing with the impact of designation on property values. Source: Leichenko et al. 2001, Table 1, p. 1976, updated by the Sharpe in 2006 and again by the author in 2010.*

Study	Impact of designation on property values
Heudorfer (1975)	Neutral
Scribner (1976)	Positive
Rackham (1977)	positive
New York L.C. (1977) (1)	neutral
U.S. APHP (1979) (2)	positive
Samuels (1981)	mixed
Schaeffer and Ahern (1988)	mixed
Ford (1989)	positive
Asabere et al. (1989)	neutral
Benson and Klein (1988)	mixed
Schaeffer and Millerick (1991)	Mixed
Gale (1991)	Neutral
Shiple (1992)	Positive
Asabere and Huffman (1994a)	Positive
Asabere and Huffman (1994b)	negative
Asabere et al. (1994)	negative
Clark and Herrin (1997)	positive
Shiple (2000)	positive
Asabere and Huffman (2001)	Positive
Leichenko et al. (2001)	positive
Coulson and Leichenko (2001)	Positive
Deodhar (2004)	positive
Sharpe (2006)	Neutral
Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (2009)	positive

Of the studies that have yielded negative results, two of them focused on St. John's, the capital of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Canada's first and largest heritage conservation district, the city designated 111 acres of its inner city as a Heritage Area in 1977 and it was subsequently expanded to 536 acres between 1987 and

<sup>104</sup> Gale. 326.

2004.<sup>105</sup> Both studies concluded that the failure to increase property values in the Heritage Area was compromised by the city's inability to uphold the preservation plans of the area. Early on, the planning department had approved a number of incongruous and obtrusive developments that compromised the historic and scenic waterfront. Furthermore, conservation regulations of residential property were not being enforced, leading to incompatible window alterations and the use of vinyl siding over the original wood cladding that had an "unfortunate visual impact on the unity and integrity of the street scene".<sup>106</sup> The problems were further impounded when in 1992 the city chose to remove all restrictions on the type of cladding, the size and characteristics of fenestration and door openings on buildings within the district, essentially rendering the heritage designation meaningless.<sup>107</sup> With these important changes, the success or failure of St. John's should perhaps be viewed more in the ability to meet the intended goals of the designation than whether or not it had a positive effect on property values. The intention of the designation was to "preserve the residential function and social mix and also preserve the distinctive architectural character of the townscape."<sup>108</sup> So, while no heritage premium was identified, St. John's is an important lesson in the necessity for clear district plans and guidelines that are enforced to ensure that success of the district.

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<sup>105</sup> Sharpe.

<sup>106</sup> G. J. Ashworth, "Conservation Designation and the Revaluation of Property: the risk of heritage innovation," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2002), 19.

<sup>107</sup> Sharpe.

<sup>108</sup> Sharpe.

More recent studies undertaken in Ontario have yielded positive results through more inclusive methods of assessing the success of districts. Beyond looking at the effects on property values, which did play a part in the analysis, the focus included whether or not designation restricted property rights, if the districts met their stated goals and whether residents were satisfied with living in districts. In 2008, research into Kitchener's Upper Doon district was undertaken with positive results. Residents stated that their initial fears about property rights never materialized and if anything sufficient development controls were not in place in and around the district even though the neighbourhood has kept its rural and historic character as identified in the original plan. In conclusion, the authors state that "HCDs can work and they work even better when heritage regulation rules are respected and enforced."<sup>109</sup> The success of this review sparked interest in a similar, Ontario wide, project to measure the success of districts.

The *Heritage Conservation District Study*, completed by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario examined 32 districts in Ontario that had been designated prior to 1992. Key findings of the study, published in 2009, suggested that the goals of districts had been achieved, satisfaction with living in a district was overwhelming, applications for alteration were easy and that real estate values in districts generally rise more consistently than surrounding areas. The study also recognized areas for improvement.<sup>110</sup> One of the main areas for concern that needed to be addressed was the need to ensure that districts had plans in place and that they had clearly identified goals.

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<sup>109</sup> Kovacs et al.

<sup>110</sup> The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, *Heritage Districts Work*, (May 2009), 15, [www.arconserv.ca](http://www.arconserv.ca) (accessed April 15, 2010).

The report also suggested ensuring public relations were in place to keep residents informed and ensure that new residents understood the requirements when living in a heritage district. The importance of having strong heritage committees and staff was also seen as an important requirement to address policy issues in a timely matter and to ensure that alteration requests remained an easy process for residents.<sup>111</sup> The final recommendations encouraged the designation of more districts and for the expansion of current districts to manage development pressure, ensuring that parks and open spaces were included in and protected through these measures. Better entrance signs and coordinated street signs would also help create place reference.<sup>112</sup> This visual demarcation of the districts is believed to help residents, visitors and developers begin to realize the unique nature of districts and to recognize the inherent value in designation as well as the restrictions.

As the success of districts becomes more apparent, so do problems stemming from that success. As highly desirable places to live, historic districts have many of the features that people are increasingly looking towards, shorter commutes and less congested neighbourhoods. However, they are bringing with them their “suburban-style housing preferences”, which lead to large expansions, new amenities and multi-car garages. The challenge then is to find a way to accommodate this type of growth without sacrificing the heritage character that made the neighbourhoods attractive in the first

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<sup>111</sup> Heritage Districts Work.

<sup>112</sup> Heritage Districts Work, 16.



place.<sup>113</sup> Outside of residential areas, similar problems are being encountered in commercial areas. It is recognized that development must continue and be incorporated even in heritage areas but the issue lies on determining where the balance is between preservation and development. In many cases retaining just the façade has been seen as a good compromise but many feel that this type of token preservation is not enough and more efforts need to be made to integrate whole buildings into development plans.<sup>114</sup> Financial incentives and tax incentives, currently not available in most areas in Canada, are suggested to encourage and support owners to invest in the heritage character of their building and the area.<sup>115</sup> The environmental benefits are being touted as excellent reasons to retain more of the original building. By retaining the entire structure, rather than just a portion or a façade, building materials are retained and kept from landfill.<sup>116</sup> With the popularity of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and other programs that encourage sustainable buildings practices this argument will no doubt continue to grow, hopefully in tandem with heritage conservation, prolonging the future and character of many buildings.

As the popularity of heritage conservation areas continue to grow in Canada, and around the world, best practices and lessons learned will continue to grow and inform policies and guidelines for establishing and managing districts. While the economic,

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<sup>113</sup> Sheila Ascroft & Carolyn Quinn, "Heritage Conservation Districts Under Pressure," *Heritage*, (Fall 2007), <http://www.heritagecanada.org/eng/news/archived/fall2007/pressure.html> (accessed February 20, 2010).

<sup>114</sup> Charles Mandel, "Adding Without Subtracting: New Development in Historic Districts," *Heritage*, XII, 2 (2009), 10.

<sup>115</sup> Ascroft & Quinn.

<sup>116</sup> Mandel. 12.

environment and successful planning model arguments are made it is important to always remember the guiding premise and intention of heritage conservation area designation is first and foremost to retain the heritage qualities that led to their recognition in the first place. Clearly defined management plans and proper enforcement of established criteria will help ensure their long-term success. The economic and social benefits are also then more likely to follow.

## CHAPTER III

### THE YUKON SITUATION

#### **A Brief History of the Yukon**

Although the Yukon is most well known as the backdrop to the famed Klondike Gold Rush, The Yukon's written history begins not with gold seekers but with those seeking to trade with the native people of the region. The first Caucasian people to enter Alaska were the Russians and although they never pushed far enough East to enter Yukon territory, the Russian port of Saint Michael created a gateway into the Yukon that would be of vital importance to the Yukon throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>117</sup> The Russian trade monopoly went unchallenged until early explorations by the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) sought to establish trading posts in the territory with the local First Nations. Robert Campbell was the first to expand the company's presence in the area when he established a post at Frances Lake in 1842. John Bell also eventually reached the Yukon in 1845 after several failed attempts to cross the Richardson Mountains. The following year he established Lapierre House on the Bell River.<sup>118</sup> In 1847, Fort Yukon, another HBC trading post was established by Alexander Murray on land that would later become

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<sup>117</sup> Gordon Bennett, *Yukon Transportation: A History*, Issue 19 of Canadian historic sites: Occasional papers in archaeology and history (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs, 1978), 11.

<sup>118</sup> Ken Coates & William Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 22.

part of the state of Alaska. In 1848 Robert Campbell pushed farther inland and set up Fort Selkirk where the Pelly meets the Yukon River.<sup>119</sup> However, these early posts were short lived. The Coast Tlingit destroyed Fort Selkirk in 1852 in an attempt to retain trade in the area for themselves. In 1867 when Russia sold Alaska to the United States, the HBC had to reluctantly relocate their post at Fort Yukon, eventually landing new Rampart House, located just on the Yukon side of the border.<sup>120</sup>

The mineral potential of the Yukon only began to be recognized when traces of gold were found by Robert Campbell at Fort Selkirk between 1848 and 1852 and a decade later when a second report of gold was made by another HBC trader. A third report was made in 1864 when Reverend Robert MacDonald, a missionary of the Church of England in the region to offer “Christian salvation” to the native people, found gold near Birch Creek, Alaska.<sup>121</sup> As interest in the area grew, explorers began to enter the territory on sponsored missions. Robert Kennicott from the Smithsonian first came in 1860-61 and was followed by Lieutenant Schwatka who explored the Northwest in 1881 for the US Army. The most thorough investigation was the Yukon Expedition of 1887 which was sponsored by the Canadian Department of the Interior which saw George Dawson, Richard McConnel and William Ogilvie each exploring and reporting on a region of the Yukon.<sup>122</sup> During this time the number of prospectors also began increasing

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<sup>119</sup> Catharine McClellan et al., *Part of the Land, Part of the Water: A History of the Yukon Indians* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1987), 64.

<sup>120</sup> McClellan. 70.

<sup>121</sup> Michael Gates, *Gold at Fortymile Creek: Early Days in the Yukon* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994), 5.

<sup>122</sup> McClellan. 72-73.

and in 1886 a gold strike at Forty Mile attracted many prospectors prompting the establishment of a store by Jack McQuesten and the erection of a school by Bishop Bompas in 1892.<sup>123</sup> By 1894 there were nearly one hundred cabins at Forty Mile, prompting Inspector Charles Constantine of the Northwest Mounted Police to arrive with a detachment of twenty police officers.<sup>124</sup> (Figure 3) From these humble beginnings of small communities emerging on the Yukon's rivers no one could anticipate the great stampede that was about to ensue.



*Figure 3: Fortymile continued to serve as a small community well past its peak prior to the Klondike Gold Rush. The RCMP office and two other log buildings are seen in this 1932 photograph. Yukon Archives, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds, #8480.*

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<sup>123</sup> McClellan. 82.

<sup>124</sup> McClellan 84.

August 16, 1896 a trio of prospectors, George Carmack and his two First Nation companions, Skookum Jim and Tagish Charlie, found gold on Rabbit Creek “lying thick between the flaky slabs of rock like cheese in a sandwich.”<sup>125</sup> The next morning the three staked claims and set off for Fortymile to record their claims telling everyone they encountered along the way. Within five days the valley around the now renamed “Bonanza” Creek was in a frenzy and the community of Dawson City had been started by Joseph Ladue to service the miners.<sup>126</sup> When word of the strike finally reached the outside it started a stampede of fortune seekers. Although the gold rush was relatively short lived its impact on the land and the people was great. The Klondike Gold Rush drew more than 40,000 men and a few women into a territory that had previously only had a handful of whites and a few thousand natives, a shift that dramatically affected the First Nation population; effectively marking the end of their traditional lifestyle in many parts of the Yukon.<sup>127</sup> The gold fields and Dawson City were most directly impacted with Dawson flourishing into a modern metropolis with all the amenities. The frenzy was short lived though and Dawson lasted in its peak only from July 1898 to July 1899 where in a single week in August over 8000 people left Dawson marking a hasty end to the stampede.<sup>128</sup> The impact of the gold rush was, and continued to be, felt throughout the Yukon.

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<sup>125</sup> Pierre Berton, *Klondike: The Last Great Gold Rush, 1896-1899* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 43.

<sup>126</sup> Berton. 48.

<sup>127</sup> McClelland. 84.

<sup>128</sup> Berton. 393.

With the population increase the numerous transportation routes opened up the territory and allowed greater access to the outside world. By late 1898 over 30 transportation companies operated in the Yukon operating some 60 sternwheelers, 20 barges and 8 tugboats along the upper Yukon River and by 29 July 1900 the White Pass and Yukon Route railway was completed from Skagway, Alaska to Whitehorse, Yukon.<sup>129</sup> While late for the rush, the improved transportation networks gave the Yukon life beyond the gold rush.

As men and women left the Klondike in search of other pursuits and more hospitable climes Dawson City, although much smaller in size, enjoyed a modest recovery that many believed would create a more stable lasting community. Confidence in Dawson's future prompted the federal government to authorize the construction of a series of elaborate administrative buildings securing Dawson's future as the administrative, legal and commercial center for the upper Yukon River basin, at least temporarily.<sup>130</sup> Dawson's success during the period from 1900-1914 was due largely to the shift from labour intensive mining to more efficient yet capital intensive techniques using dredges, hydraulic monitors, steam thawing and large mining concessions. The shift accounted for increased extraction rates resulting in 75% of the 250 odd million dollars of gold being extracted after the gold rush had ended.<sup>131</sup>

The Klondike area was not the only area that proved to have good mining prospects. In 1899 gold was discovered on Duncan Creek, a tributary of the Mayo River.

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<sup>129</sup> Bennett. 46.

<sup>130</sup> Coates & Morrison. Land of the Midnight Sun. 151.

<sup>131</sup> Bennett. 59-60.

This precipitated a brief local rush. Settlements were established at Mayo and nearby Gordon Landing. In 1906, silver lead ore was discovered at Galena Hill in the Mayo district. This was not mined however as the interest at the time was for gold. Large scale mining followed the discovery of even richer deposits at Keno Hill in 1919. Mayo became established as the shipping and supply base for the new silver mines in 1920. A massive deposit of copper was also discovered near Whitehorse but high transportation costs and the unstable market kept either discovery from attracting the same amount of attention Dawson had received.<sup>132</sup> During the 1950s, United Keno Hill grew to be a vital aspect of the Yukon economy, employing upwards of 476 men in 1955 with profits from the silver, lead and gold reaching nearly \$10 million.<sup>133</sup> Asbestos has also been discovered and subsequently mined 940,000 tonnes of cement-grade asbestos fibre from the Clinton Creek mine from 1967 to 1978. Additionally a massive sulphide zinc/lead/silver mineralization was discovered near Vangorda Creek in the Anvil Range in 1953 and a huge Faro ore body was discovered in 1965 with mine production commencing in 1970 and continuing with variable success under several mining corporations until its eventual closure in 1998.<sup>134</sup> Thus mining continues to play a large role in the development of the Yukon.

In addition to the mining industry, the impact of the Second World War was of great importance to the development of the Yukon. The attack on Pearl Harbour exposed

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<sup>132</sup> Coates & Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun*. 166.

<sup>133</sup> Coates & Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun*. 268.

<sup>134</sup> Government of Yukon, *History of Mining in the Yukon*, <http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/mining/history.html> (accessed July 19, 2010).



the vulnerability of the entire west coast of North America prompting an agreement between the United States and Canada to construct a military highway from Dawson Creek, British Columbia to Fairbanks, Alaska which was signed 17 March 1942.<sup>135</sup> Construction of the Alcan Highway (renamed the Alaska Highway in July 1943) began in March 1942 by the US Army Corp of Engineers and was open as an emergency route in only eight months on 20 November 1942. The highway was substantially upgraded during 1943 by a work force of 1400 civilian contractors but continued to be maintained by military personnel.<sup>136</sup> During construction Whitehorse emerged as the supply and command center for the project. Whitehorse was chosen for its location at the terminus of the White Pass and Yukon Railway which brought in the much needed supplies. Whitehorse also became the stopping point for the CANOL (Canadian Oil) project which piped oil from Norman Wells, NWT to a refinery in Whitehorse.<sup>137</sup> Built at a cost of \$133,111, the project was intended to provide inexpensive fuel to the highway and associated airfields but was abandoned in 1945, although a portion was briefly reopened later.<sup>138</sup>

Whitehorse's role as the supply and command center reshaped the town and created a rise to metropolitan status, eventually causing the transfer of the territorial

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<sup>135</sup> Bennett. 130.

<sup>136</sup> Heath Twichell, "The Wartime Alaska Highway: Boon or Boondoggle?" *Alaska at War, 1941-1945: The Forgotten War Remembered: Papers from the Alaska at War Symposium*, Edited by Fern Chadonnet (Anchorage: Alaska at War Committee, 1995), 167.

<sup>137</sup> Stan Cohen, *The Trail of '42: A Pictorial History of the Alaska Highway* (Altona, Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1979), 45.

<sup>138</sup> Bennett. 137.

capital here from Dawson in 1953. The construction of the Alaska Highway also spurred the expansion of all weather roads in other areas of the Yukon. Construction of a road between Whitehorse and Mayo and later between Dawson City and Stewart Crossing brought about the end to the sternwheeler days on the Yukon River in 1955, thereby changing the settlement patterns from river communities to those built alongside the highways.<sup>139</sup>

The increased interest in and access to more remote locations in the Yukon also had a large impact on the First Nation populations. By 1945 the Federal Government took over management of Yukon lands and created new health and education programs for First Nations people. After 1950, First Nation people began to question the laws and policies established by the federal and territorial governments though and began organizing themselves to make claims for title to their ancestral land.<sup>140</sup> In 1968 Elijah Smith prompted the organization of the Yukon Native Brotherhood who published *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* in 1973 which had the effect of convincing the federal government to begin land claim negotiations. In the same year, the Council for Yukon Indians was formed specifically to negotiate these claims.<sup>141</sup> On 29 May 1993, the Council for Yukon Indians, the federal and territorial governments signed the *Umbrella Final Agreement* marking the first official steps toward Yukon land claim agreements. The Agreement outlined the three parties' intention to negotiate the final agreements with the hopes that Yukon First Nations could secure rights, titles and

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<sup>139</sup> Bennett. 146.

<sup>140</sup> McClellan. 86.

<sup>141</sup> McClellan. 95.

interests with respect to their Traditional Territories, culture, history, way of life and social and economic well being for the future.<sup>142</sup> Since then, eleven of fourteen Yukon First Nations have reached Final Agreements.

Today, the Yukon continues to grow and is enjoying a relatively sound economy. Today, the current population sits around 33,000 people with approximately 7500 of those being aboriginal people.<sup>143</sup> The population is concentrated in Whitehorse which has just over 25 000 people. Historically the economy has experienced boom and bust cycles linked to mining but new industries are weakening dependence on mining. Government, First Nations land claims agreements, tourism, forestry and agriculture are now all contributing to the Yukon's diversified economy and with the Yukon's mining sector the Territory's economic picture is promising.<sup>144</sup>

### **History of Historic Sites Management in the Yukon**

A concern for the safeguarding of Yukon heritage resources began much earlier in the Yukon than most people would expect. From participants in the Klondike Gold Rush carefully collecting and preserving archival material and artifacts to the careful retention of First Nation culture through their efforts to preserve their traditions and language, Yukoners have been actively involved in retention of history for almost as long as the people themselves have called the area home. However, formal efforts are not as visibly

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<sup>142</sup> *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

<sup>143</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Community Profile*, Government of Canada, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed August 1, 2009).

<sup>144</sup> *Yukon Community Profiles: The Economy*, <http://www.yukoncommunities.yk.ca/yukon/economy/> (accessed July 21, 2010).

evident quite so early on. Formal efforts began through the creation of museums, archives, and eventually through protective legislation. The evolution of this process will be discussed below.

For an area that grew primarily out of a mining boom, the realization that mining would not always remain a sustainable industry caused residents of Dawson City to seek alternative revenue sources. Early attempts to tap into the tourist market were done by a local group of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire who maintained Dawson's most famous landmark, Robert Service's Cabin (Figure 4). However, the growth of Whitehorse after 1942 caused further decline of Dawson and even Robert Service's Cabin was in danger of collapse and was transferred over to the city government.<sup>145</sup> Not long after, in 1950, group of Yukoners established the Yukon Historical Society in Whitehorse to preserve aspects of the territories heritage. The first organization of its kind, the majority of the initial collection was donated from co-founder William MacBride who was able to salvage outdated transportation equipment. The collection was housed in an unoccupied Government Telegraph Office. Constructed in 1900 the Telegraph Office still stood on its original site in Whitehorse when it began to showcase an ever expanding collection in the 1960s that was open to the public as a museum during the summer months.<sup>146</sup> Still a vibrant and active community landmark, the Yukon Historical Society, now the MacBride Museum Society, marks the first formal, lasting attempts to preserve the tangible aspects of the Yukon's history.

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<sup>145</sup> Coates & Morrison. *Land of the Midnight Sun* 277.

<sup>146</sup> MacBride Museum of Yukon History, "Museum History," <http://www.macbridemuseum.com/museumhistory.html> (accessed March 13, 2010).



*Figure 4: Robert Service's cabin continues to be a popular tourism destination in Dawson City. Photo by the author, July 2009.*

From this early beginning, additional museums began to appear throughout the Yukon in various communities. Museums were often the first formal attempts at preserving the Yukon's built heritage through the use of important community buildings to house their collection. The Dawson City Museum, also established in the early 1950s, houses the largest collection of artifacts in the Yukon and is, the museum was initially located in the old Fire Hall but after burning down, the museum was moved to the Old Territorial Administration Building (OTAB). Now a National Historic Site, the OTAB building was built in 1901 by Thomas Fuller, Department of Public Works architect, at a time when Dawson's future was considered to be very promising and the Government of Canada was willing to invest heavily in the community as a sign of their confidence in

and sovereignty over the region.<sup>147</sup> In Whitehorse, the Anglican Church observed its Centennial in the Yukon in 1961 with the construction of a newer and larger cathedral. This left the original old log building empty and the target of vandals. A group of concerned citizens were then moved to clean up and restore the building for use as a small museum.<sup>148</sup> Like in Whitehorse and Dawson, museums around the Yukon were born largely of independent efforts through the establishment of not-for-profit establishments by concerned citizens with heritage buildings often serving as their main artifact. However, the museums were able to impact the preservation of the Yukon's built heritage in only a small way but these efforts led to recognition by government departments that more needed to be done to protect Yukon heritage.

The Klondike Visitors Association<sup>149</sup> (KVA) was also established in the early 1950s when a group of Dawsonites took a more serious approach to attracting a viable tourist trade. Basing their hopes on the writings of former Dawsonite Pierre Berton, who published his book *Klondike: The Last Great Gold Rush* in 1958. The KVA hoped the gold-rush lore repopularized by Berton would help promote the region as a tourist destination. The group took over operation of Robert Service Cabin, ran the museum and kept open the Palace Grand Theatre.<sup>150</sup> Not enough to attract the crowds needed to

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<sup>147</sup> Margaret E. Archibald. *A Structural History of the Administration Building* (Dawson: Parks Canada, 1977).

<sup>148</sup> Flo Whyard, "Keynote speech", from the Minutes of the Founding Convention of the Yukon Historical & Museums Association. YHMA office files. 5.

<sup>149</sup> The KVA was originally called Klondike Tourist Bureau until the early 1960s when its name was changed.

<sup>150</sup> Coates & Morrison. *Land of the Midnight Sun*. 277.

support their efforts, the City approached the federal government for support. Amenable, the federal government announced a Gold Rush Festival set for 1962 and brought in the historic steamer, the Keno, and turned it into a museum. The festival, although attracting double the normal amount of visitors as a normal year, did not spur lasting interest. The federal government's interest in the region did not die with the festival.<sup>151</sup> The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) had an interest in Dawson for some time and after preliminary examinations, as early as 1959; the HSMBC had recommended that Dawson be regarded as an "historic complex" of national importance.<sup>152</sup> This commemoration marked the first effort to safeguard the ensemble of historic buildings in the Yukon and gave the KVA continued hope for additional support.

The focus in Dawson was to preserve the history associated with the gold rush and its impact on Canadian history. It was formally recommended as such by the HSMBC in June 1967. Following this declaration, the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, on the recommendation of the Board, declared the Government of Canada's intention to develop a program which would acquire, preserve and where necessary restore a number of representative Dawson City buildings to the 1898-1910 period.<sup>153</sup> Over the following decade, the federal government and the KVA poured millions of dollars into the restoration of buildings and the development of tourist attractions in Dawson and the surrounding areas. The work then caused a resurgence to

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<sup>151</sup> Coates & Morrison. *Land of the Midnight Sun*. 279.

<sup>152</sup> Parks Canada, *Dawson Historical Complex, National Historic Site of Canada: Management Plan* (Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2004), 10

<sup>153</sup> *Dawson Historical Complex Management Plan*.

the Dawson business community who were eager to cater to the tourist community and to share their history.<sup>154</sup> The early declaration of support by the federal government coupled with KVA's work marked a pivotal point in the preservation of Dawson's gold rush built heritage resources.

The long-term conservation and management of Dawson was dictated in a four-volume report completed in 1974 by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). Since then, the report has served as the guiding document for policy and development by Parks Canada, successor to DIAND, responsible for the protection of national historic sites and related heritage. Parks Canada's role in Dawson to date has included research, planning, property and artifact acquisition, stabilization and restoration, interpretation and cultural resource management of the site.<sup>155</sup> An important beginning, these efforts left a gap to be filled by community members, municipalities, First Nations and the Yukon Government to ensure the remaining histories and sites in the Yukon also received the attention required for their preservation.

Elsewhere in the Yukon, efforts to safeguard the collective past of Yukoners were underway. The founding convention of the Yukon Historical & Museums Association took place March 12, 1977 with over thirty-five in attendance to support the society's goal of filling a gap in the Yukon's heritage sector. Primarily concerned with information exchange among museums, the group also recognized the need for the society to be able

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<sup>154</sup> Coates & Morrison. *Land of the Midnight Sun*. 279.

<sup>155</sup> *Dawson Historical Complex Management Plan*. 11.



to gather when needed to advocate for the Yukon's heritage and history.<sup>156</sup> Based in Whitehorse, the Association looked to the buildings in Whitehorse as a starting point for promoting the community's history and preserving its buildings. YHMA undertook an inventory of historic buildings in Whitehorse with support from the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings under the Yukon Lifestyles project. Nineteen buildings were surveyed and inventoried and of those a recommendation for special consideration of thirteen of the buildings was made to the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings Research Division, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch in March 1980.<sup>157</sup> This and subsequent research formed the base of YHMA's historical building walking tours. Needing a home for their operations and a location to operate the walking tours from, in 1983 YHMA secured permission from Finning Tractor to use one of the buildings surveyed, the Donnenworth House, which was then purchased by the City of Whitehorse and rehabilitated extensively for use by the YHMA.<sup>158</sup> The Donnenworth House, along with the Smith House and the Captain Martin House, all located in LePage Park, have been designated as municipal historic sites and continue to be owned by the City and managed by YHMA.

The not-for-profit volunteer organization was not equipped to handle the responsibility of protecting the Yukon's historic sites and it seemed that sites outside of Dawson were not receiving the attention they required. A submission to the YHMA

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<sup>156</sup> Peg Crook, Introductory Speech, from the Minutes of the Founding Convention of the Yukon Historical & Museums Association. YHMA office files. 1.

<sup>157</sup> Crook.

<sup>158</sup> Yukon Historical & Museums Association, *Donnenworth House*, [http://heritageyukon.ca/\\_webapp\\_1084430/Donnenworth\\_House](http://heritageyukon.ca/_webapp_1084430/Donnenworth_House) (Accessed August 2, 2010).

newsletter in 1979 by Jim Robb<sup>159</sup>, a local artist and advocate for Yukon history and buildings, made a plea to members not to forget the buildings in southern Yukon. Robb believed that communities such Carcross, Carmacks, Champagne and Whitehorse among others, had buildings that told histories as interesting as those in Dawson City, buildings that should also be slated for preservation.<sup>160</sup>

The growing recognition of the importance of historic sites in the Yukon spoke to the need for Territorial government assistance. The Yukon Historic Sites and Monuments Board also recognized the need for Territorial government support and threatened to resign in protest over the government's refusal to develop a heritage preservation program. What resulted from this ultimatum was the creation of one position, the historic resources officer, under the Parks branch.<sup>161</sup> Due to the lack of heritage expertise and legislation in the Yukon Rob Ingram was hired in 1979 from Alberta. Ingram had experience in heritage inventory, designations, planning and legislation making him an ideal candidate to develop a program for the Yukon. The first task was therefore to begin drafting legislation but disputes between the Minister of Parks and the Minister in charge of Libraries and Culture over which branch had jurisdiction caused the legislation to be

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<sup>159</sup> Jim Robb is a Yukon artist that in 1971 began writing a column for the Whitehorse Start that featured historical buildings and "Yukon Characters" titled The Colourful 5%. The column tells histories of buildings and includes drawings and photographs that have helped document and promote the Yukon's many historic sites around the territory.

<sup>160</sup> Jim Robb, "How About Southern Yukon," *YHMA Newsletter*, Issue No. 4 (Feb. 1979).

<sup>161</sup> Rob Ingram, interview by author, Whitehorse, YT, July 29, 2010.

shelved.<sup>162</sup> The burgeoning historic sites program then had to work without any legislation and no means for designation.

While still under the Parks branch, responsibility for the stabilization of several key sites such as Fort Selkirk, Lower Laberge, Hootalinqua, Big Salmon, Yukon Crossing, Fortymile and Herschel Island was given to the historic resources officer with assistance from Parks branch staff.<sup>163</sup> (Figure 5) However, stabilization work was temporarily halted when the heritage branch was transferred to the new Department of Libraries and Culture in the early 1980s. Now divorced from the Parks branch the use of Parks staff for stabilization projects became off limits and work on historic sites during this time faltered. Emphasis from 1980- 1983 was on the creation of the historic sites inventory and on developing site evaluations and condition reports. By 1984 the department was reorganized under the banner of the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Culture which then started to direct some funds towards historic sites programs. Initially, resources were almost exclusively directed to Fort Selkirk but the increase in funding allowed for some temporary staff to develop the point of interest sign program and for a full time researcher for Fort Selkirk as well as some technical staff. Most importantly though, the increase in funding and staffing allowed for proper research and planning on the sites so the heritage branch would be better prepared for future projects.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Ingram, interview.

<sup>163</sup> Ingram, interview.

<sup>164</sup> Ingram, interview.



*Figure 5: Hootalinqua was one of the first historic sites to receive stabilization work by Yukon Government staff under the Parks Branch. Photo by the author, August 2009.*

After Ingram resigned in 1985, the historic sites program continued to grow getting more permanent staff to meet the demands of the growing number of projects. Richard Collier was hired in 1985, but his tenure was short.<sup>165</sup> M. Douglas Olynyk was then hired and began work on April 17, 1989 as the historic sites coordinator. Given the political climate of the time, Olynyk's early responsibilities had to do more with management than with actual preservation of sites. Turmoil over the management of Fort Selkirk had caused problems with the Yukon Government's relationship with the Selkirk First Nation. In hopes of coming to an agreement the Yukon Government began a

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<sup>165</sup> Ingram, interview.

management planning process which put public consultation at the forefront. What resulted was a realization that community members, First Nation members, heritage organizations and the Government of Yukon all wanted the same thing, the preservation of one of the Yukon's most significant historic places.<sup>166</sup> With this realization the parties involved were better able to work together to achieve their shared goal. The success of the planning process marked the beginning of new procedures in heritage management in the Yukon with planning at the forefront of all decisions.

The success of Fort Selkirk became a model for other First Nations as the *Umbrella Final Agreement* was signed and individual land claim agreements were signed. Chapter 13 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, the chapter that deals with heritage, has also played a significant role in planning. With renewed faith in the process, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation included Rampart House and Lapierre House as co-managed and co-owned historic sites in their land claims agreement. Likewise, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in identified Forty Mile as an important historic site under their land claims agreement.<sup>167</sup> June 11, 2006 the signing of the Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine historic site management plan took place between the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Yukon government. Co-owned and co-managed, the agreement formalized the conservation of heritage resources at the site as required under Chapter 13 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, which was signed in 1999.<sup>168</sup> Other First Nations

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<sup>166</sup> M. Douglas Olynyk, interview by author, Whitehorse, YT, June 29, 2010.

<sup>167</sup> Olynyk, interview.

<sup>168</sup> Yukon Historical & Museums Association, "Forty Mile Management Plan Signing," *YHMA Newsletter*, (Summer 2006), 1.

have identified historic sites in their final agreements which state the basic values of the First Nations that the Government of Yukon and Canada have agreed to.

The establishment of the Historic Resources Act was a long and intensive consultative process. In 1983, the Heritage Branch, Government of Yukon, issued policy recommendations that stated the intentions of the proposed Act. The two main goals were to “provide adequate protection for all classes and types of heritage resources,” and “to enable or assist in establishment of programs designed to develop, interpret and otherwise enhance these resource for the education and enjoyment of all.”<sup>169</sup> The initial proposal was eagerly received and carefully contemplated by Government and stakeholders. After an in-depth examination of pertinent material and similar provincial legislation the Yukon Historical & Museums Association presented a submission of recommendation to the Heritage Branch. The organization stated, “We want the Act to recognize the many-sidedness of the heritage of the Yukon. We want it to reflect the contributions of all people who have lived and who continue to live in this part of Canada. We want it to provide for the protection not only of these people’s artifacts but also of their customs, languages and social structures.”<sup>170</sup> To meet these goals YHMA proposed the legislation be all encompassing with views to address the Archeology, Paleontology, cemeteries and burial sites, historic sites and monuments, landscapes, built heritage and artifact

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<sup>169</sup> Yukon Heritage Branch, *Preserving our Past: Policy Recommendations for the Protection and Management of Yukon’s Heritage Resources*, September 1983. 1-2.

<sup>170</sup> Yukon Historical and Museum Association, *The Yukon Heritage Act: A submission concerning basic proposals with regard to the proposed new heritage legislation* (Unpublished, Whitehorse, February 23, 1984), 4.

collection and conservation of the Yukon.<sup>171</sup> The 1984 consultation extended to include all major Yukon communities and was again revisited in 1988 when further consultations on the legislative proposals were held with YHMA, the Council for Yukon Indians and other special interest groups. The Act was further influenced by the Yukon Land Claim Umbrella Final Agreement which addressed the heritage concerns of Yukon First Nations.<sup>172</sup> The recommendations and detailed examination of provincial heritage acts informed the final document finally bringing the development phase of the Yukon Historic Resources Act to fruition.

With the subsequent passing of the Yukon Historic Resources Act in 1991, the Yukon made great strides in the protection of its historic resources. Dealing with historic and archeological sites, the Act was developed through the recognition that “over the years the Yukon has lost, and is continuing to lose, a large part of its historic resources due to their destruction and export out of the territory. As well, the effect of land-altering actions and vandalism show the need for more effective management of archeological and paleontological resources in particular.”<sup>173</sup> The urgency in protecting the archeological and paleontological resources may have been the main catalyst for the new Act but the need to preserve the over 1500 identified historic sites, dating from 1892 to 1955, was equally important. The benefits were clear in providing Yukoners with a sense

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid. 6.

<sup>172</sup> Yukon Heritage Branch. *Creating Historic Resources Legislation for the Yukon: A Proposed Legislative Framework For Protecting the Yukon's Historic Resources* (Whitehorse: Government of Yukon, 1990), 5.

<sup>173</sup> *Creating Historic Resources Legislation*.

of past and identity, a framework for the future and for their important economic values.<sup>174</sup>

As part of the terms of the *Historic Resources Act*, the Yukon Heritage Resources Board was established with additional duties and responsibilities outlined in Chapter 13 of the Yukon First Nations Final Agreements. The Board is comprised of ten members, five are nominate by The Council of Yukon First Nations and an additional five appointees are nominated by the Government of Yukon, one of whom is chosen with the government of Canada.<sup>175</sup> The Board plays an advisory role to the Minister in charge of heritage and to First Nations. One such advisory role is providing recommendations for historic site designations. The Board takes a holistic approach to heritage that “supports a broad view of heritage that encompasses not only objects, artifacts and buildings, but also trails and routes, oral and written history, and languages.”<sup>176</sup> The Board plays an important role advocating for heritage in the Yukon and in ensuring that the heritage of First Nation people are being equally protected.

During the long development process of the Historic Resources Act the Heritage Branch and other organizations continued to work to preserve the Yukon’s historic sites. The process for identifying historic sites formally began in the early 1980s when Ingram, after having resigned from the Government of Yukon, was subcontracted by Great Plains Research, a Calgary firm that was hired to develop thematic framework and conduct a

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<sup>174</sup> Creating Historic Resources Legislation. 2-3.

<sup>175</sup> *Historic Resources Act*. C. 109, S. 4.

<sup>176</sup> Yukon Heritage Resources Board, <http://www.yhrb.ca/pdfs/YHRB%20brochure.pdf> (accessed September 23, 2010).



preliminary historic sites inventory. Ingram worked with Margaret Archibald of Ottawa to develop the thematic framework and then conducted an inventory of Yukon historic sites with the assistance of David Porter. The initial historic sites inventory included sites from throughout the Yukon with the exception of Whitehorse and remote sites off the highways.<sup>177</sup> This preliminary inventory formed the foundation of historic sites management and the Yukon historic sites inventory has continued to evolve. In addition to continually adding to and updating the inventory, today's modern technology such as GPS and GIS mapping has allowed information included in the historic sites inventory to become much more precise.<sup>178</sup> Today, the historic sites inventory includes 3248 records of sites located all over the Yukon. In addition to the preliminary work conducted by Ingram and Porter in 1987, the inventory was continuously updated through a series of contracts with the Yukon Historical & Museums Association and other individual contracts that were managed by staff.

The inventory serves as a basic management tool, a way to track the condition of sites and assists in determining site significance by providing information for comparative evaluation. The inventory also serves an important tool in land use planning, assisting in development assessment and for selection of site development for interpretation. Additionally, the inventory is an important planning tool that helps identify sites that require protection or are targeted for designation. In the Yukon there are three forms of possible historic site designation: Federal, Territorial and municipal.

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<sup>177</sup> Ingram, interview.

<sup>178</sup> Olynyk, interview.

While federal designations of National Historic Sites are few, it is understandable given the mandate of the program is only to recognize sites of national significance. The onus then falls on the Territorial and municipal governments to utilize designation as a preservation and awareness tool. Still a relatively new management approach, only 18 designations have taken place to date and are listed in Table 3 below. Although enabled in 1991 the first official Yukon historic site designation did not occur until 2003 when the Mabel McIntyre House was designated.<sup>179</sup> Minister of Tourism and Culture Elaine Taylor stated in a press release “I would like to commend the Village of Mayo as owner and nominator of this historic site for respecting our heritage and being willing to invest in its preservation and interpretation.”<sup>180</sup> The sentiments were echoed only three years later when the fourth Yukon Historic Site was also named in Mayo. This time, the Mayo Legion Hall, a 1936 Red River Frame-style building was nominated by the building’s owner, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun. In between, two designations were made in Dawson to Government of Yukon owned buildings, the Dawson City Telegraph Office and the Yukon Sawmill Company, both in 2005. In 2008, the Caribou Hotel in Carcross was designated as a Yukon historic site. The only privately- owned commercial building to have achieved such a designation in the Yukon. Most recently, in 2010, the AF Goddard Shipwreck and Fort Selkirk have also added to the variety of designated historic sites in the Yukon.

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<sup>179</sup> The Old Log Church Museum is sometimes credited as the first territorial historic site although the designation ceremony recognizing it as such took place in October 1978 prior to any enabling legislation.

<sup>180</sup> Government of Yukon, “Designation of Yukon’s First Historic Site,” *YHMA Newsletter*, (Summer 2003), 16.

Table 3: Municipal and Territorial historic site designations in the Yukon.

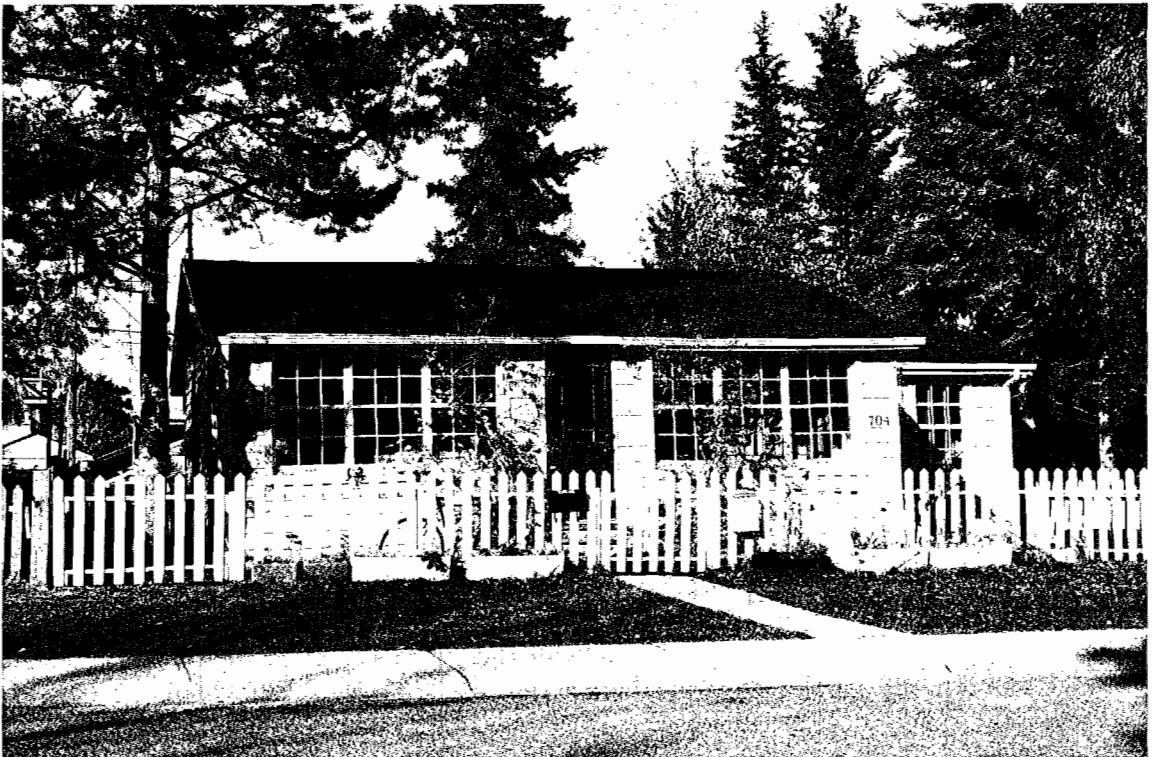
	Municipal		Territorial		
	Public	Private	Public	Private	
1999	3	0	0	0	
2000	1	2	0	0	
2002	7	1	0	0	
2003	0	0	1	0	
2005	0	0	2	0	
2006	0	0	0	1	
2008	0	0	0	1	
2010	0	0	2	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>21</b>

Similarly, municipal designations are few and have mostly been to publicly owned buildings. The City of Whitehorse is the only city to have developed and enacted a heritage bylaw allowing for designation of municipal historic sites although the City of Dawson passed a heritage designation bylaw in 2009 to “provide for the designation and protection of municipal heritage resources.” No designations have been made under this bylaw to date. The *Dawson City Heritage Management Plan* identifies designation procedures and groups the town into five heritage character areas intended to recognize and protect the importance of the community’s collective heritage which are currently being managed through zoning bylaws.<sup>181</sup>

As for the City of Whitehorse, 14 of the 72 sites listed on the heritage registry were designated between 1999 and 2002, many of which were government owned buildings. Seven are owned by the Yukon Government, four by the City of Whitehorse and three are privately owned. The Hullah House is the only municipal historic site

<sup>181</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. 19.

owned and resided in privately. (Figure 6) Interestingly, the City of Whitehorse heritage registry, which was developed to inform the City of the types of heritage resources located within the city, also identifies buildings located within historic neighbourhoods because “it is recognized that heritage resources located in clusters contribute more meaning than resources in solitude.”<sup>182</sup>



*Figure 6: The Hulland House, built circa 1947, in Whitehorse was designated as a municipal historic site January 28, 2002. Photo by the author, September 2010.*

The importance of and foundation for heritage conservation districts is already in place with the City of Whitehorse as it is in Dawson through their concept of “character areas”. However, since 2002 when the City of Whitehorse Heritage Advisory Committee was disbanded and provisions for it were removed from the heritage bylaw, the City has

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<sup>182</sup> City of Whitehorse, *City of Whitehorse Heritage Registry*, Whitehorse: May 2003. 1.

embarked on a “passive approach to heritage preservation.”<sup>183</sup> This passive approach has meant no new designations since 2002. Preservation projects for the city of Whitehorse have instead focused on the restoration of heritage buildings in Shipyards Park.

While federal designations in the Yukon do not carry any weight in terms of protection, the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) Register has been developed to assist federal government departments in the preservation of their heritage buildings. Buildings over 40 years of age are evaluated to determine heritage significance and through this process buildings can be designated as either classified or recognized buildings. To date only 3% of federally owned buildings across Canada have received designation of either kind.<sup>184</sup> In the Yukon there are five classified federal heritage buildings, the highest heritage designation, and 39 recognized federal heritage buildings which have been assigned the second highest heritage designation. The first designations occurred in 1988 and have been added to over the years, all but one building included on the register are located in or around Dawson City. The sole recognized federal heritage building outside of Dawson is the Northwest Highway System Headquarters located in Takhini subdivision, Whitehorse which was recognized in 1992.<sup>185</sup>

Even though First Nation governments also have the ability to create their own legislation to designate historic sites, First Nations in the Yukon have approached

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<sup>183</sup> Ben Campbell, interview by author, Whitehorse, YT, July 16, 2010.

<sup>184</sup> Parks Canada, “Federal Heritage Building Review Office,” [http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/beefp-fhbro/index\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/beefp-fhbro/index_e.asp) (accessed August 11, 2010).

<sup>185</sup> Parks Canada, “FHBRO Register,” [http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/beefp-fhbro/FHB\\_RES\\_E.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/beefp-fhbro/FHB_RES_E.asp) (accessed August 11, 2010).

heritage and historic sites very differently. Their management approach speaks to the differing priorities for how First Nations heritage is managed. To work with First Nation Governments the Government of Yukon has had to adapt the way that they think about heritage. Whereas the Government of Yukon tends to look at it from a more scientific manner of dissecting it into heritage sites, archeological sites and various cultural aspects such as dance and performing arts, the First Nations tend to look at heritage in a more holistic manner where all of the aspects are intertwined. The government's tendency to departmentalize heritage has caused communication difficulties between the two groups and an appearance of "passing the buck" when it comes to assisting First Nation heritage departments.<sup>186</sup> The First Nation heritage included at its foundation such things as language, culture and land rather than on built heritage. To address these differences Yukon First Nations Heritage Group (YFNHG) was established in 2001 and is now comprised of heritage employees working within the fourteen Yukon First Nations and the Taku River Tlingits of Northern British Columbia. The mission of the not-for-profit working group is "to sustain and strengthen Yukon First Nations heritage as a global example of traditional, contemporary and evolving heritage."<sup>187</sup> The YFNHG, through policy development and education work, has helped empower First Nations to manage their own heritage.

In 2002, the Tr'ochëk Heritage site was created out of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement and was recognized to be of national historical significance by the

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<sup>186</sup> Olynyk, interview.

<sup>187</sup> "Traditional Knowledge Policy Framework," [http://www.gordonfn.org/CN\\_obj1\\_project-9.cfm](http://www.gordonfn.org/CN_obj1_project-9.cfm) (accessed August 11, 2010).

Minister of Canadian Heritage on the recommendation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Parks Canada prepared the nomination but to ensure the preservation of the site, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Parks Canada and Yukon Government worked together to develop a management plan for the Site.<sup>188</sup> Initially looking to develop Tr'ochëk as a national park, local heritage consultants were hired to research how aboriginal sites have been managed throughout the world and to provide models and ideas for the site's management. In the end, it was decided to avoid the traditional park structure and make the site a quiet contemplative area with interpretive goals primarily used for education of their own people. Because the area had been so heavily damaged by mining, the idea was not to restore the site but to take it back to how the land was used traditionally, pre contact. The site now includes temporary structures, a trail system and a fish camp in addition to artifacts that remain from the gold rush period.<sup>189</sup> Additionally, other historic resources are included in the site and will be managed accordingly, such as railway artifacts, sawmill artifacts, a bottling factory, tent platforms, middens and the remnants of houses and domestic artifacts are intermingled in the site along remains of streets and a tramway.

In addition to historic sites management plans and designations identified through the Final Agreements, First Nations heritage is being protected through the development of land use plans. Regional land use plans are being developed to resolve land use and resource conflicts throughout the Yukon, ensuring that land use is being managed with

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<sup>188</sup> Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, *2001-2002 Annual Report - Yukon Land Claims and Self-Government Agreements* (Ottawa, 2004), 27.

<sup>189</sup> Ingram, interview.

respect for the social, cultural, economic and environmental values.<sup>190</sup> In January 2009, the North Yukon Planning Commission published the *Final Recommended North Yukon Land Use Plan*. The plan includes sections on the identification and protection of heritage resources important to the Vuntut Gwitchin. These include “camps/cabins, historical fish traps, travel routes, hunting/fishing/trapping areas, and caribou fences.”<sup>191</sup> The plan hopes to safeguard these resources from future land uses that may cause undue harm to the sites. Also, the Yukon Government heritage branch identified other important historic and archeological sites that require protection. While it is still very recent, implementation of the plan will be the next challenge. Land use plans will continue to be developed for the rest of the regions in the Yukon, identifying and creating provisions for protecting the heritage of each region.

The Yukon has made great strides during the past hundred years in preserving its heritage although formal efforts are in many instances still just beginning. With an understanding of the past it is hoped that the stewards of the Yukon’s heritage, be they government departments, First Nations, non-profit organizations or private citizens, will continue to evolve and develop best practices for preservation and promotion of the Territory’s unique history. This examination of the development of historic sites management in the Yukon has also shown that the Yukon is well prepared for heritage conservation districts as many of the principles involved are already being applied.

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<sup>190</sup> Yukon Land Use Planning Council, <http://www.planyukon.ca/> (accessed August 12, 2010).

<sup>191</sup> North Yukon Planning Commission, *Final Recommended North Yukon Land Use Plan* (Whitehorse: January 2009), 5-21.



Establishing guidelines for districts in the Yukon is the next logical step in moving forward with heritage resource management in the Yukon.

### **Yukon Heritage Conservation Districts**

Across Canada various methods have been taken to allow for the designation of heritage conservation districts. Many have chosen to define the process in their heritage legislation, such as Ontario, while others, such as Newfoundland, have elected to leave the legislation brief and have elaborated in policy. For the Yukon, the prospect of reopening the *Historic Resources Act* is not a priority and may not even be necessary for establishing guidelines for the designation of heritage conservation areas. The current Act and the *Municipal Act* can be interpreted to allow for districts as they are.

In Part 3 of the *Yukon Historic Resources Act*, Designation of a Historic Site, Section 15(1) states:

The Minister may designate any site as a historic site when satisfied that the site is, whether in itself or because of historic resources or human remains discovered or believed to be at the site, an important illustration of

- (a) the historic or pre-historic development of the Yukon or a specific locality in the Yukon, or of the peoples of the Yukon or locality and their respective cultures; or
  - (b) the natural history of the Yukon or a specific locality in the Yukon; and
- has sufficient historic significance to be so designated.<sup>192</sup>

Although these criteria are quite broad, the current interpretation of the Act only allows for the designation of individual parcels of land, not districts. To expand beyond individual designation is a common desire across Canada. Recognizing the challenges associated with only allowing individual designations, “[m]any Canadian jurisdictions

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<sup>192</sup> Historic Resources Act, *Revised Statutes of the Yukon, 2002*. C. 109. 15.

have a separate recognition procedure for heritage districts that acknowledges the unique challenges raised by districts.”<sup>193</sup> As in other areas of Canada, such procedures could be implemented in the Yukon. Section 16 of the Act expands the designation criteria to include surrounding properties; it states “A site that has no inherent historic significance may be included in a historic site if its inclusion is advisable for the protection or enhancement of the historic site.”<sup>194</sup> While this does not prove or deny the possibility of allowing heritage district designations, it does open the door to possible districts in the Yukon that contain both contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures. District designation would help protect more buildings as well as the overall historic character of the community.

This section of the Act deals primarily with Territorial designations but the Act also speaks to the possibility of municipal historic districts. However, the section for municipal designations is also broad. In Part 5: Designation of Historic Sites by Municipalities, section 37(1) states:

A municipal council may, by bylaw made in accordance with this Part, designate as a municipal historic site, any site in the municipality that, in the opinion of the council, has sufficient historic significance of the kind described in section 15.<sup>195</sup>

Further provisions that would allow the designation and management of heritage conservation districts are found in the *Municipal Act*. Because districts must be identified in the official community plan prior to designation, an amendment to the plan would be

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<sup>193</sup> Canada’s Historic Places. *Canadian Register of Historic Places: Writing Statements of Significance* (Parks Canada, 2006), 37.

<sup>194</sup> Historic Resources Act. C. 109, S. 16.

<sup>195</sup> Historic Resources Act. C. 109, S. 37.

required in accordance with the procedures established for the amendment of the official community plan. Once identified in the official community plan, management of a heritage district would require zoning bylaws as detailed in Section 289 and 290 of the

*Municipal Act:*

289(1) A zoning bylaw may prohibit, regulate, and control the use and development of land and buildings in a municipality.

290(1) Without restricting the generality of section 289, a zoning bylaw may establish districts, areas, or zones in the municipality and regulate any one or more of the following matters in any or all of the districts, areas, or zones.<sup>196</sup>

In particular, section 290 (1) (k) identifies how zoning bylaws could affect heritage districts:

(k) the design, character, and architectural appearance and facing materials of buildings or structures in those districts or parts of the municipality considered to be of special significance to the heritage of the municipality, or of other governments, as the council considers appropriate.<sup>197</sup>

The character of the areas would need to be identified in the heritage conservation district plan with further procedures on how to manage these resources.

For municipal governments, the possibility of establishing districts for the retention of the heritage character of an area is not a new concept. The City of Whitehorse has already interpreted the *Historic Resources Act* and *Municipal Act* in a way that allows for “district” designations as long as they have public support. The 2010 draft official community plan for Whitehorse states:

Small clusters of heritage resources may be designated as special heritage protection areas only with the full support of the affected residents. These Heritage Districts, Neighbourhood or Areas can only be established through a

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<sup>196</sup> Municipal Act, Revised *Statutes of the Yukon*, 2002. C. 154, S 289-290.

<sup>197</sup> Municipal Act. C. 154, S. 290.

resolution of Council. Council may use zoning regulations to establish guidelines respecting the manner by which the objectives of each Heritage Area shall be met in order to promote redevelopment and/or renovations that are sensitive to the historical character of the area.<sup>198</sup>

So, although no heritage areas have been recognized by the City of Whitehorse they are poised to do so if community consent can be gained.

The paragraph above speaks to another important point when it comes to heritage district designations. A last minute addition to the *Historic Resources Act* states that, “If the site proposed for designation is a residence in which its owner resides, the Minister may not designate the site as a historic site without the written consent of the owner”.<sup>199</sup> When it comes to designating heritage conservation districts with multiple property owners this may be a difficult point to get around. An additional obstacle is the preceding clause which states, “If the site is on settlement land, the Minister may not designate the site as a historic site without the written consent of the governing body of the Yukon First Nation which governs the settlement land.”<sup>200</sup> Neither clause prohibits the possibility of districts rather they speak to the need for open dialogue and transparent process during the nomination process.

The process for nominating a historic site, as detailed in the *Historic Resources Act*, provides all the measures required for both Territorial and Municipal designations. The process will apply to heritage conservation districts as they will for individual buildings with only a few alterations to account for the increased scope of the research, resource identification, delineation of boundaries, public consultation and management

<sup>198</sup> City of Whitehorse, *2010 Official Community Plan*”, City of Whitehorse, draft May 17, 2010. 75.

<sup>199</sup> Historic Resources Act, C. 109, S. 15.

<sup>200</sup> Historic Resources Act, C. 109, S. 15(4).

planning. Heritage conservation districts can provide protection to all or some of the buildings in the district, properties that are protected must be specifically identified in the management plan. These factors are discussed below in greater detail.

After having reviewed the many definitions for heritage conservation districts across Canada I propose the following definition for use in the Yukon:

A heritage conservation district is a defined area with special heritage value and/or heritage character identified for heritage conservation purposes. The district can be made up of buildings, structures and/or landscape features but together comprise a discernable whole. A district may comprise an entire municipality with special heritage significance, a portion of a municipality such as main street, residential or industrial area, or can be a rural landscape with identifiable features. Significant values of a HCD may include views between buildings and landscapes, land use patterns and associative values.

The Canadian Register for Historic Places (CRHP) identifies different types of historic districts to assist heritage planners in determining the heritage value and character-defining elements associated with districts. The distinctions used by the CRHP are based on the use of a district and its degree of change, they include:

*Remnant Districts* are districts that are no longer inhabited. Examples include a former aboriginal settlement, a ghost town, an industrial ruin, or a historic site complex.

*Preserved Districts* reflect a specific period of development or culture. They are almost wholly intact places that for various reasons ceased to evolve at a certain point. Examples include a historic town center or main street that has been bypassed by developments elsewhere, an ethno-cultural or religious community that has reached its maximum size, or a resource extraction town whose primary industry is in decline.

*Designed Districts* have been deliberately designed as a complete entity and are best understood in terms of their overall design. Examples could include a company town, a planned subdivision or a shopping centre.

*Evolving Districts* have integrated successive periods of construction so as to retain evidence of each period. Buildings, structures and spatial arrangements typify successive stages of a district history. Examples could include town

centres, neighbourhoods, villages and outports. In evolving districts the development process is cumulative rather than transformative.

*Historic Centres* are former town centres enclosed within modern communities. Examples could include a town's main street or its traditional centre.

*Discontinuous Districts* are isolated units that provide coherent evidence of the character of the district. Examples could include groupings of historic buildings surrounded by newer development, but connected by an historic street pattern. Often, what ties discontinuous districts together as a district is the historic spatial organization.<sup>201</sup>

Because heritage conservation districts are often complex areas that comprise many aspects and represent different values for different audiences, it is especially important to have a sound understanding of the terms involved in designating and managing them. A comprehension of the following definitions will assist in developing Heritage Conservation Districts in the Yukon and have been taken from *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

**Character-defining elements:** the materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of a historic place, which must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value.

**Heritage value:** the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations. The heritage value of a historic place is embodied in its character-defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings.

**Historic place:** a structure, building, group of buildings, district, landscape, archaeological site or other place in Canada that has been formally recognized for its heritage value.

**Archaeological Sites as Historic Places:** An archaeological site means a place or area where the evidence of past human activity can be recovered and understood using archaeological methods to contribute to a meaningful narrative. The evidence can be or may have been located in situ on, below, or above the ground, or may be lands under water. Archaeological sites fall under two categories:

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<sup>201</sup> Writing Statements of Significance, 39.

- Archaeological sites that are historic places because they have a unique heritage value;
- Archaeological sites that are part of a historic place such as a building, landscape or district, that contribute as character-defining elements to that historic place's heritage value.

### **Designating Heritage Conservation Districts**

Due to the relative newness of heritage conservation district designations, a discussion of some of the key concepts are discussed below. These will assist in the nomination and management of heritage conservation districts. The discussion that follows elaborates on the identification, designation and management process of heritage conservation districts. A review of research and models used in Canada and internationally are included to provide insight into determining the heritage significance of proposed districts, the process of delineating boundaries of districts, the importance of public consultation, and the preparation of district management plans and guidelines.

One of the most important aspects in identifying and managing heritage conservation districts is the ability to determine the significance of the sites. All other factors and decision should stem from the desire to preserve the significant aspects and the values associated with the district. According to the Historic Places Initiative, now Historic Places Program, heritage value is defined as: “the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations.” These values are intended to assist the researcher in understanding the multiple values that are associated with districts. Also, it is important to note that the heritage values rarely exist in isolation from one another and are often intertwined. However, above all, the importance of determining the heritage value of a district is to determine why the historic area is considered to be important and what aspects need to be

conserved and why.<sup>202</sup> The process for determining significance can vary but creating a complete determination of values from a community and stakeholder perspective is important to the success of the district.

Significance of the area can be derived from a number of factors that relate to the heritage value. Areas that have experienced little change can be valued for their presence as an intact community that still portrays the original spatial plan of the area with buildings, structures and linkages intact. Other areas may achieve significance through the area's buildings or structures and the way in which architectural style and detailing relate through the use of materials, height, scale, massing and colour thereby giving the area a distinct sense of place, different from its surrounding areas. Other areas still may be significant for their associative values in relation to an historical event, activity or individual.<sup>203</sup> In other cases still, a combination of the above factors may be present in a district. Additionally, the landscape, views, paths and roadways can contribute to the significance of a district and should be considered during the evaluation of heritage values of an area.

When including a natural area or landscape in a district it is important to thoroughly understand the importance and cultural association of the site as well as how it achieved its significance. These include cultural landscapes, rural landscapes, natural areas, and designed landscapes. Rural landscapes are those areas that have been

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<sup>202</sup> Writing Statements of Significance. 42.

<sup>203</sup> Harris, 16.



influenced by human use over time. These commonly reflect occupational activities such as mining, fishing and agriculture.<sup>204</sup>

Designed landscapes are sites that have been designed by a professional designer according to professional design standards, theories or philosophies of landscape architecture. Conversely, natural areas embody important cultural values but have not been shaped through human use, such as sites having religious meaning for First Nation peoples.<sup>205</sup> Cultural landscapes are broadly defined as a tangible manifestation of human actions and beliefs set against and within the natural landscape and is a collage of elements from various historic periods and continues to change over time. The primary significance may reflect a particular period but additional periods may also achieve significance over time.<sup>206</sup> Understanding the importance of landscapes within historic districts can therefore be very complex issues and require special consideration from heritage planners.

Cultural landscapes have become an important component in the way we view heritage conservation districts and the landscapes within them. The *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* defines cultural landscapes as “cultural properties that represent the ‘combined works of nature and man’...They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their

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<sup>204</sup> National Parks Service, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes* (US Department of the Interior, 1999), 2.

<sup>205</sup> Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes.

<sup>206</sup> Robert Z Melnick, *Cultural Landscapes: Rural Historic Districts in the National Park System* (US Department of the Interior, 1984), 2.

natural environment and of successive social, economic, and cultural forces, both external and internal.”<sup>207</sup> Similar to definitions included above, the World Heritage Convention identifies three categories of cultural landscapes:

1. Clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man.
2. Organically evolved landscape which resulted from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment; and
3. the associative cultural landscape, justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent.<sup>208</sup>

In her article, “Associative Values: Exploring Nonmaterial Qualities in Cultural Landscapes,” Susan Buggey elaborates on the third category of cultural landscapes listed above. Buggey discusses the global change in the way landscapes are being viewed and presents a tripartite frame-work to help recognize and respect the associative values in developing management approaches to cultural landscapes, these include: historical and political associations, literary and artistic associations, and cultural associations with natural resources.<sup>209</sup> Landscapes with historical and political associations are commemorated based on the associative values of an event that took place in the life of the evolving landscape.<sup>210</sup> Other landscapes have literary and artistic associations that have become symbolic images of their respective cultures. Cultural associations with

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<sup>207</sup> ICOMOS, *World Heritage Cultural Landscapes* (Paris: UNESCO-ICOMOS Documentation Centre, 2009), 7.

<sup>208</sup> World Heritage Cultural Landscapes. 7-8.

<sup>209</sup> Susan Buggey, “Associative Values: Exploring Nonmaterial Qualities in Cultural Landscapes,” *APT Bulletin*, Vol. 31, No. 4, Managing Cultural Landscapes (2000), 22.

<sup>210</sup> Buggey. 22.

natural resources are distinguished by their absence of visible cultural evidences; rather they are identified by cultural values connected to natural resources. These are evidenced through land use and the connection between nature and culture.<sup>211</sup> Seemingly complex, site visits, surveys and consultation with area residents, the values should present themselves making the determination of character defining elements more obvious.

Once the process of identifying the types of sites and values associated with a site, the determination of boundaries of potential districts is the next logical step. The leading guidelines for delineating boundaries of heritage conservation districts has come from the 1976 study undertaken by the National Trust for Historic Preservation which studied 20 historic districts in the United States to understand the positive and negative aspects of the boundaries in relation to the historic district.<sup>212</sup> Since then, the results have been used by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Parks Service and other American programs but has also formed the basis for the Canadian Register of Historic Places and the Historic Sites and Monuments Board's research on historic districts and by the Ontario Ministry of Culture as part of their *Heritage Tool Kit*, among others.

The best way of determining potential heritage conservation districts is through examining the result of prior surveys or be sites that have been identified through consultative processes when developing or revising an official community plan, local area plan or other land management plan. Boundaries are often determined by considering the concentration of historic versus modern buildings and intact versus

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<sup>211</sup> Buggy. 23.

<sup>212</sup> Russell V. Keune, and Russell Wright. *A Guide to Delineating Edges of Historic Districts* (Washington: Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1976), 6.

altered buildings within communities or towns with identified heritage character. Where a mix exists within a district, the buildings can be classified by identifying contributing and non-contributing buildings within a district. A combination of archival research, field surveys and community consultations may be required to identify potential districts. Once a potential district is identified, a more intensive survey is required to define the exact boundaries of a potential district. This can be determined by using one, or a combination of, several identifying factors including historic factors, visual factors, physical factors and established legal and planning zones which are defined as:

*Historic Factors:* Can include the boundary of an original settlement, a planned community or a site with a concentration of early buildings or sites.

*Visual Factors:* Identified through architectural surveys that highlight areas based on a concentration of buildings of architectural significance, or an area defined by natural features such as hillsides, cliffs, forests etc.

*Physical Factors:* Transportations routes (roadways, trails or railways), open spaces (parks and cemeteries), natural features (rivers, lakes, marshlands, and treelines), gateways and entrances to and from potential districts, or limits of a settled area.

*Established Legal & Planning Zones:* These can be determined by following streets, property lines, setbacks and planning zones established in an official community plan.<sup>213</sup>

By considering the above definitions to determine boundaries for potential districts the boundaries required to protect the heritage character of an area should become clear but may require adjustments as research and planning continues.

After initial surveys and early attempts at defining boundaries, one of the main challenges in developing heritage conservation districts is, as described earlier, the

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<sup>213</sup> Keune and Wright. 13-17.

process of determining significance, identifying values and applying those criteria to determine which buildings and sites best portray these values and characteristics. When undertaking this process it is important to use a broad approach. Randall Mason emphasizes a collaborative approach to determining values:

Preservationists do not have to advocate all the values of a heritage site, but they should have to understand them, and this requires not only collaboration among professionals and laypeople but familiarity with the valuation methods of many disciplines (economics, anthropology, architecture, history). Without this broad understanding, preservationists will only act on what is valuable to them, not why the environment does or does not have meaning for society at large.<sup>214</sup>

With this in mind, an intensive level survey with additional archival research and community consultation should be taken to determine all the contributing resources within the district as a follow up to research that took place while determining the potential boundaries of the heritage conservation district. The historic, visual and physical factors should be expanded upon to determine the full significance of the district and the resources within it. Boundaries may often require adjustment as research and public input reveal new character defining features and associative meanings that make up a district. Mason argues that each site's significance requires period revision as significance cannot be viewed as a fixed criteria. With the periodic revision of significance, the boundaries of a district may too evolve.

For conservation districts that have a concentration of built heritage within their boundaries, the question of what buildings to include in the district nomination can be a difficult one. The idea of contributing and non-contributing buildings is a popular one,

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<sup>214</sup> Randall Mason, "Fixing Historic Preservation: A Constructive Critique of Preservation," *Places* Vol. 16, No. 1 (2003). 70.

and is the method used by the National Register of Historic Places in the United States. In the US, contributing and non-contributing buildings are identified in the nomination and once included in a district all buildings, whether contributing or not are subject to regulations.<sup>215</sup> The US Department of the Interior, National Parks Service defines contributing and noncontributing buildings as follows:

A **contributing** building, site, structure, or object adds to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a property is significant because a) it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is capable of yielding important information about the period, or b) it independently meets the National Register criteria.

A **noncontributing** building, site, structure, or object does not add to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a property is significant because a) it was not present during the period of significance, b) due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is incapable of yielding important information about the period, or c) it does not independently meet the National Register criteria.<sup>216</sup>

Although specific to the National Register nomination process, the above definitions provide valuable insight into the process of identifying potential sites that could contribute to a historic district and should be preserved as well as those sites that may lack significance and do not warrant the same level of protection.

The *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Town and Urban Areas*, written by the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns, takes a slightly different approach to identifying and protecting buildings within historic towns. The Charter states: “The conservation plan should determine which buildings must be

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<sup>215</sup> Schmickle, 2.

<sup>216</sup> Anne Derry et al., *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*, (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1985), 45

preserved, which should be preserved under certain circumstances and which, under quite exceptional circumstances, might be expendable.”<sup>217</sup> This method is similar to ranking systems used in many Canadian cities that have A, B and C list buildings or Level I and II buildings based on their significance and priority level for preservation. While all of these approaches have benefits and disadvantages they share the same fundamental goal: ensuring that the integrity of the district is maintained while recognizing the importance of a district is in the sum of its parts and not the individual sites. Also, district designations are not intended to halt progress in a community, rather seeks to protect the most significant aspects while making allowances in other areas for new development. Therefore, determinations of which buildings to include in a heritage district management plan are essential to the long term success of the district.

Determining boundaries of districts and identifying significance of the site and buildings cannot be undertaken in isolation. Public consultation is a key component in both identifying the heritage values of districts but also in gaining public support for potential districts. Traditionally, heritage identification and management has been undertaken by professionals but a growing realization that public participation is paramount has begun to emerge. In his critique of Canada’s leading heritage management guidebook, *The Evaluation of Historic Buildings* by Harold Kalman, Alastair Kerr identifies the following problems with Kalman’s method:

Without public input, the result of a survey and evaluation will lack both inclusiveness and collaboration. It leaves the evaluation open to charges of elitism

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<sup>217</sup> International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns, “*Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas*,” (Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka National Committee of ICOMOS, 1993), 12. <http://www.international.icomos.org/publications/93towns1.pdf> (accessed September 20, 2010).

and paternalism. Rarely do such assessments reflect a broad consensus of community values...If a community is not involved in determining its heritage, it will have little ownership of the results. And if there is little public support for these results, chances are there will be little political support either.<sup>218</sup>

This principle may be even more critical when dealing with heritage conservation districts as the number of stakeholders increase and in so doing, so do the values and associations of a given district.

Although the *Historic Resources Act* does not specifically require public meetings during designations, research indicates that meetings are essential to gaining public support for districts. By gaining public support from the beginning of the process and by creating clear and open lines of communication it will be easier to overcome any perceptions that district designations will take away private property rights, decrease the value of properties or have other negative consequences. At least two, but more likely more, public meetings should be held. The first will inform the public about initial research and the possibility of a district designation. Where districts fall within a municipality this process may take place as part of Official Community Plan revisions. The initial meeting will discuss the proposed boundary and early findings about the district and should clearly explain the process for designation, potential benefits and possible restrictions, and to solicit comments. A second public meeting may be required if further explanations are required or further public input on the proposed designations are required prior to submitting the application for review.

The last step in the process is to develop a heritage management plan which incorporates all of the findings from early research, surveys and public consultations to

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<sup>218</sup> Alastair Kerr, "A Critique of Harold Kalman's, *The Evaluation of Historic Buildings: Theory and Practice*," (Unpublished. November, 2005), 13.



develop a concise plan designed to manage the values and heritage resources. In *Heritage Planning: A Guide for Local Governments*, developed by the Province of British Columbia, the role of heritage management plans are presented:

If heritage conservation is about the management of a community's past for the future, heritage planning is the process through which to decide how best to manage that inheritance, and through which a heritage management plan is prepared to guide future decisions.<sup>219</sup>

The heritage management plan is therefore the culmination of efforts to identify, manage and protect a heritage conservation district. The plan will lay out the character defining features and existing attributes that are to be maintained as well as detailing what alterations can be made and how new development should be incorporated so as not to detract from the characteristics the plan is trying to protect. In other provinces in Canada, plans have proven particularly useful in setting clear policies and guidelines that protect the area from potentially harmful projects or development. In Ontario, "once the district plan is adopted, its policies and objectives will take precedence in the event of a conflict with existing municipal zoning and other bylaws that were in place before the designation of the district."<sup>220</sup> This is an important point as it separates district zoning from ordinary zoning and makes City Council more accountable to the protection of heritage areas.

In the United States, where districts are often managed through historic district commissions, the imposed controls "provide neighborhood groups with some of the police power authority over the aesthetics of neighborhood environmental design usually

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<sup>219</sup> Alastair Kerr, *Heritage Planning: A Guide for Local Governments* (British Columbia: Province of British Columbia, 1992), 8.

<sup>220</sup> Ontario Heritage Toolkit. 28.

lacking in comprehensive community plans, zoning regulations, and subdivision and site review procedures.”<sup>221</sup> Heritage conservation district plans in Canada have the same effect as long as a governing body, such as a heritage advisory committee, is in place to oversee the management of the plan and is not left to the discretion of City Council and staff.

Heritage advisory committees also have the added benefit of ensuring continued community involvement and support of the district. In the UK, the establishment of a conservation area advisory committee can assist with the management of a specific area or a conservation advisory group can be established to cover several related conservation areas.<sup>222</sup> The creation of regional conservation advisory groups may be particularly useful in the Yukon for providing management assistance to districts located outside of municipal zones or in areas that do not have heritage advisory groups established. Limiting the number of heritage advisory groups would also have the added benefit of being better able to recruit knowledgeable or committed members in an area with a small population base.

The district plan and guidelines are a pivotal point in the management of the district and is the way to keep the heritage character of an area intact while allowing for new growth and development. English Heritage defines two principle areas for the enhancement of districts that can be equally applied to districts in Canada, and specifically in the Yukon. These include the sympathetic redevelopment of sites deemed

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<sup>221</sup> Gale. 337.

<sup>222</sup> English Heritage. 9.

to be detracting from the character of the area and “pro-active proposals, such as the management and repair of a designed historic landscape, a scheme for the restoration of distinctive architectural features or traditional shop fronts, the reinstatement of historic surfaces, or the reduction of traffic intrusion and the rationalization of street signage.”<sup>223</sup> The importance of developing clear and easily understood guidelines that speak to both the existing heritage features and equally to new development will determine the success of the area management. English Heritage continues:

One of the most common problems in conservation areas is the lack of understanding by many developers and/or their designers of the urban context, resulting in crude or debased imitations of adjoining buildings, or token gestures towards the local architectural style. Where the character of the area derives from its diversity, the imposition of imitative or ‘in keeping with existing’ styles runs counter to the way in which the area has traditionally evolved. The aim of site-specific design guidance therefore should be to encourage new development that complements the established urban grain or settlement pattern, whilst representing the time in which it is built and the culture it accommodates.<sup>224</sup>

Further to the above recommendations for new construction, an emphasis on promoting and utilizing the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* for historic sites should be included in the management plan.

One example that may prove useful in understanding the contents of a heritage management plan has been excerpted from the Nova Scotia “Heritage Conservation District Regulations.” It states:

4 (1) A conservation plan may include statements of policy with respect to the following:  
 (a) the conservation, preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, alteration or redevelopment of buildings or structures and their settings based upon their historic or architectural value;

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<sup>223</sup> English Heritage. 21.

<sup>224</sup> English Heritage.

- (b) the demolition or removal of buildings or structures in the district;
- (c) the effects of any alteration or redevelopment of the service infrastructure upon the heritage value of the district;
- (d) the location and architecture of new developments and their settings in relationship to existing developments and their settings within the district;
- (e) the conservation of settings;
- (f) tourism and community improvement undertakings in the district;
- (g) relationship of the proposed conservation plan and conservation by-law with other municipal, provincial or federal community planning or heritage planning policies, regulations or programs, other than those referred to in clause (e) of subsection (2);
- (h) the use of agreements as provided for under Section 20 of the Act; and
- (i) any other matter relating to the conservation of the historical, architectural or cultural value of the district.<sup>225</sup>

While the Yukon may have additional requirements for developing heritage management plans, the approach taken by Nova Scotia provides a basis for determining the components required to effectively manage heritage conservation districts.

While the discussion above details some of the considerations that need to be made when considering the possibility of establishing and managing heritage conservation districts in the Yukon, they do not deal directly with how designations could be made while respecting the procedures identified for designation of historic sites detailed in the *Historic Resources Act*. Unique challenges presented by the complexities of district designations require modification to the current designation method and at the same time, unique factors to the Yukon preclude the duplication of procedures used in other provinces in Canada.

The procedures outlined below have been developed as a starting point in determining the best process for designating municipal and territorial heritage

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<sup>225</sup> Province of Nova Scotia, “Heritage Conservation Districts Regulations” (2009), <http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/hpcondis.htm> (accessed October 10, 2010).

conservation districts. In both cases the *Municipal Act* and the *Area Development Act* come into play in the designation and management of districts. For municipalities, the main process includes identifying sites in the Official Community plan and then managing the district through the use of heritage bylaws, zoning bylaws and regulations. In unincorporated communities the determining the proper process become more difficult and may have to be tailored to fit the situation of each community.

### **Designation Procedures**

As per Part 3: Designation of Historic Sites of the Yukon Historic Resources Act, the following procedures are proposed for use when designating a territorial heritage conservation district. It should be noted that before any districts are proposed a territory wide education campaign would alleviate some of the apprehension that might surface when targeting an area for district designation. A site specific communication plan should also be implemented when nominating a district so that the community feels part of the process from the beginning.

Procedures for designating districts in the provinces generally rely on the municipal governments taking the lead. In the Yukon, the number of unincorporated communities and sites outside of municipalities will require modified procedures. Section 36 of the *Municipal Act* defines the process for establishing a local advisory area and Section 38-40 details the establishment of a local advisory council and their duties. The main purpose of the local advisory council is to advise the Minister on:

- (a) what works or services are required in the local advisory area and how they should be supplied;
- (b) the regulations considered desirable for the benefit of the residents; and

(c) on any other matter of local concern.<sup>226</sup>

These matters are generally expressed through the development of a Local Area Plan (LAP), which guides land use planning in the area. A broad policy document only, the LAP is developed with input from the local advisory council, local first nation governments and community members.

It is during this land planning process that potential districts could be identified and provisions for their management would be stated in the LAP. Recommendations could include the development of a heritage conservation district plan or the development of regulations under the *Area Development Act* that would address how the district would be managed, including heritage permits, zoning and restrictions. The establishment of a heritage advisory committee to help manage the district could also be identified in the LAP to provide advice and guidance on managing the heritage conservation district.

In order to formally designate a heritage conservation district the following procedures would help guide the final process, after the LAP was developed, to meet the requirements of the *Historic Resources Act*. Some of the steps included below may have already been undertaken during the LAP development process but are included ensure all aspects of the designation process are included.

Research Phase:

1. Consult with heritage branch staff to discuss feasibility of the designation
2. Delineate the boundary of the study area and potential Heritage Conservation District (HCD)

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<sup>226</sup> Municipal Act, Revised Statutes of Yukon 2002, c. 154. S. 40.

3. Determine if the potential HCD is on settlement land or federal land to determine if the nomination can proceed.
4. Undertake an evaluation of cultural heritage resources and attributes to determine heritage significance through, site surveys and public outreach and involvement.
5. Incorporate comments from the first public outreach process into the district nomination including the determination of district boundaries and a list buildings to be managed as part of the designation.
6. Incorporate additional feedback from public consultation into nomination, Yukon Heritage Resources Board (YHRB) to review the nomination and make a recommendation to the Minister on the designation.
7. If the Minister supports the designation:
  - a. Notice of the intended designation (Notice of Intent) shall be sent to all property owners and lessees, identified in the designation at least sixty (60) days prior to the designation and advertise as per s. 17 of the *Historic Resources Act* (HRA).
    - i. If objections served on Minister:
    - ii. If objections served on Minister as in Section 18 of the HRA, the Minister shall refer objections to the Yukon Historic Resources Appeal Board (YHRAB) who will set a hearing date at least 21 days prior, serve notice of the hearing on the Minister, objecting person, owner/lessee of site, and publish notice of the hearing as in 17a and 17b of the HRA.

- iii. After the hearing, will submit to the Minister, a summary of recommendations.
- iv. The Minister shall vary the nomination as required taking into account property owner living rights to not have their property included in the designation if they are resident in the proposed designated place.
- v. If the majority of owners file objections, the district designation will be shelved and a notice of cancellation published as in 17a and 17b of the HRA, and served on owner/lessee

**Review Phase:**

- 8. If YHRAB recommends, the Minister may vary designation, proceed with the designation, or not proceed with the designation.
- 9. When designation of a Heritage Conservation District occurs the Minister shall:
  - a. Serve notice to property owners/lessees and affected Yukon First Nations of the designation
  - b. Publish notice of the designation as in s. 17a and 17b of the HRA.

**Implementation Phase:**

- 1. Registration on land titles of all properties included in the designation
- 2. Preparation of the HCD plan and guidelines and development of the Statement of Significance document with community input.
- 3. Public consultation meeting to present the proposed plan and guidelines to property owners and community members.
- 4. Adoption of the HCD plan



5. Implement the HCD plan
6. The designation shall be included in the Yukon Register of Historic Places and may be included in the Canadian Register of Historic Places.

Similar procedures would be required for municipal designations of heritage conservation districts but the impetus for designation would be identified in the Official Community Plan rather than a Local Area Plan. As per Part 5: Designation of Historic Sites by Municipalities of the *Historic Resources Act*, the following procedures are proposed for use by municipal councils when designating a heritage conservation district.

Research Phase:

1. Consult with municipal planning staff to discuss feasibility of the designation under the Official Community Plan.
2. Delineate the boundary of the study area and potential heritage conservation district
3. Determine if the potential HCD is on settlement land, federal or territorial land, if so, seek consent from appropriate government
4. Develop a research report which identifies the heritage significance and values of the area through community consultations.
5. Inform property owners within the proposed district and a public consultation meeting on the intended designation.

Review Phase:

1. Incorporate feedback from public consultation into the nomination

2. Municipal heritage advisory committee (or appointed staff person(s)) to review the nomination and advise council on the designation
3. Council will then review the recommendations from the municipal heritage advisory committee (or staff) and determine whether or not to proceed with, alter or cancel the designation.
  - a. If yes, the municipal council will prepare a bylaw to that effect and advertise first reading, and publish Notice of Intent as in s. 39, 1, 2 of the HRA, including a copy of the bylaw and date, location and time for public consultation.
  - b. Notice of the intended designation (Notice of Intent) and attached bylaw would then be sent to all property owners and lessees, the Minister and Land Titles Office at least sixty (60) days prior to the designation and advertise as per s. 39(2) of the HRA.
  - c. If Objections:
    - i. The municipal council shall review any objections and vary the nomination as required taking into account property owner rights to not have their property included in the designation if they live in the proposed designated property.
    - ii. Council may decide not to proceed, and pass resolution
    - iii. The municipal council may refer objections to the Yukon Historic Resources Appeal Board (YHRAB) who will set a hearing date at least 21 days prior and will submit to the municipality after the hearing a summary of recommendations. YHRAB will submit

proposed bylaw and objections to Minister, owner/lessee and objector of date, time place of hearing and publish in papers as indicated in s. 41c of the HRA.

- iv. If council feels that opposition to district designation is too great the nomination shall be shelved and serve a copy of the resolution or the bylaw revoking designation on the Minister, owner/lessee of site and publish notice as in 39.2.b and inform the Land Titles Office.

4. If proceeding with designation

5. Have second and third reading and pass the bylaw and publish notice of the resolution and bylaw of the Heritage Conservation District:

- a. Serve notice of resolution and bylaw on Minister, property owners/lessees and affected Yukon First Nations or other governments of the designation

6. Registration on land titles of all properties included in the designation

#### Implementation Phase:

7. Preparation of the Statement of Significance document and the HCD plan and guidelines

8. Public consultation meeting to present the proposed plan and guidelines to property owners and community members.

9. Implementing the HCD plan

10. A statement of significance, bylaw and documentation shall be sent to the historic sites registrar and included in the Yukon Register of Historic Places.

## **Conclusion**

It is recognized that the procedures outlined above may not work in all situations but are presented merely as a starting point for determining the best method of incorporating heritage conservation districts as a preservation and management tool in the Yukon while respecting the current *Municipal Act* and *Historic Resources Act* and *Area Development Act*. The most important factor that must be stressed for the successful implementation of these plans is the need for a clear and transparent process that includes involvement from stakeholders and community members throughout. The discussions presented above and the designation procedures will be factored into the case studies presented in the following chapter. Challenges to meeting the proposed procedures will be discussed and will inform the final recommendations of this study.

## CHAPTER IV

### YUKON HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT CASE STUDIES

#### **Introduction to Case Studies**

The three case studies examined herein have been selected to reflect three unique scenarios for potential district designation. They have been chosen as a guide to discuss factors in place such as local bylaws and legislation and financial incentives available to each area and not because they have been deemed the three most worthwhile heritage conservation districts. An examination of how boundaries may be defined and an overview of the cultural and architectural history will help to illustrate what values, cultural significance and character defining features may be included in a district. Supplemental materials such as maps, photographs, and architectural plans are included where applicable. The scope of this study did not include an in-depth examination of the case study areas that would be required if an actual designation would occur. Time did not allow for surveys of each case study site, therefore, brief site visits and a reliance on the Yukon Historic Sites Inventory managed by Yukon Government, have informed this research. The three sites selected for this study are the Downtown Heritage Character Area in Dawson City, which is part of the Dawson Historical Complex National Historic

Site of Canada, in a town with heritage bylaws in place; Takhini North in Whitehorse, which does not have any previous designation but is located in a city where heritage bylaws are in place; and Carcross, an unincorporated community with land use regulations and a local advisory council.

The author recognizes the shortcomings of these discussions as public consultations were not included as part of the district studies, however, interviews were held with municipal government staff where applicable and representatives of affected first nation governments wherever possible. Additionally, interviews with representatives from Yukon Government Land Planning Branch, Yukon Historical & Museums Association and Yukon Heritage Resources Board have factored into the discussions below.

While the case studies are designed to provide insight into different management aspects, all three case studies share a few common factors. These include financial incentives and technical assistance for historic properties offered by the Yukon Government, access to the Yukon Historic Sites Inventory for researchers and municipal staff, and training opportunities to assist with the identification and management of heritage sites.

Incentives offered by the City of Whitehorse and the City of Dawson are available to historic properties located within those two cities, Carcross does not have regionally specific funding opportunities. Most areas in the Yukon do not have community funding opportunities. Therefore, the Yukon Government offers the Historic Properties Assistance Program (HPA), which provides technical and financial assistance on a matching basis to eligible applicants. Eligibility is applied to any site where its heritage

values are recognized by the Cultural Services Branch. Heritage conservation projects must be in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.<sup>227</sup> The HPA program would therefore be available to sites within heritage conservation districts that met the defined criteria. Currently, the HPA program distributes \$100,000 per year on a 50% matching basis. The fund is currently oversubscribed and does have a positive effect in Yukon communities.<sup>228</sup> Also, the Heritage Property Tax Exemption program offers tax exemptions to heritage properties outside of municipalities which is a proven tool for encouraging property owners to reinvest the savings from tax payments into preservation of buildings.

Other opportunities for funding include the Heritage Training Fund, administered by the Yukon Historical & Museums Association which provides funding for individuals seeking to improve employment related training in the heritage sector. This fund provides up to 90% of eligible costs. Similarly, Yukon Community Training funds are available for municipal and first nation government employees. Though not heritage specific, the training fund can be used to cover heritage training courses. Other applicable funds offered by the Yukon Government include the Yukon Historic Resources Fund and the Community Development Fund which may be used for the development of heritage management plans for designated districts.

With these common factors in mind, the following three case (indicated on Figure 7) studies provide fodder for discussion about the many opportunities and challenges that

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<sup>227</sup>Government of Yukon, "Historic Properties Assistance Program Application Guidelines," [http://www.tc.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Application\\_Guidelines\\_Word6.pdf](http://www.tc.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Application_Guidelines_Word6.pdf) (accessed September 21, 2010).

<sup>228</sup> Olynyk, interview.

may present themselves if heritage conservation districts were introduced in the Yukon. Through these brief case studies the collective data will help determine the suitability of districts in the Yukon.

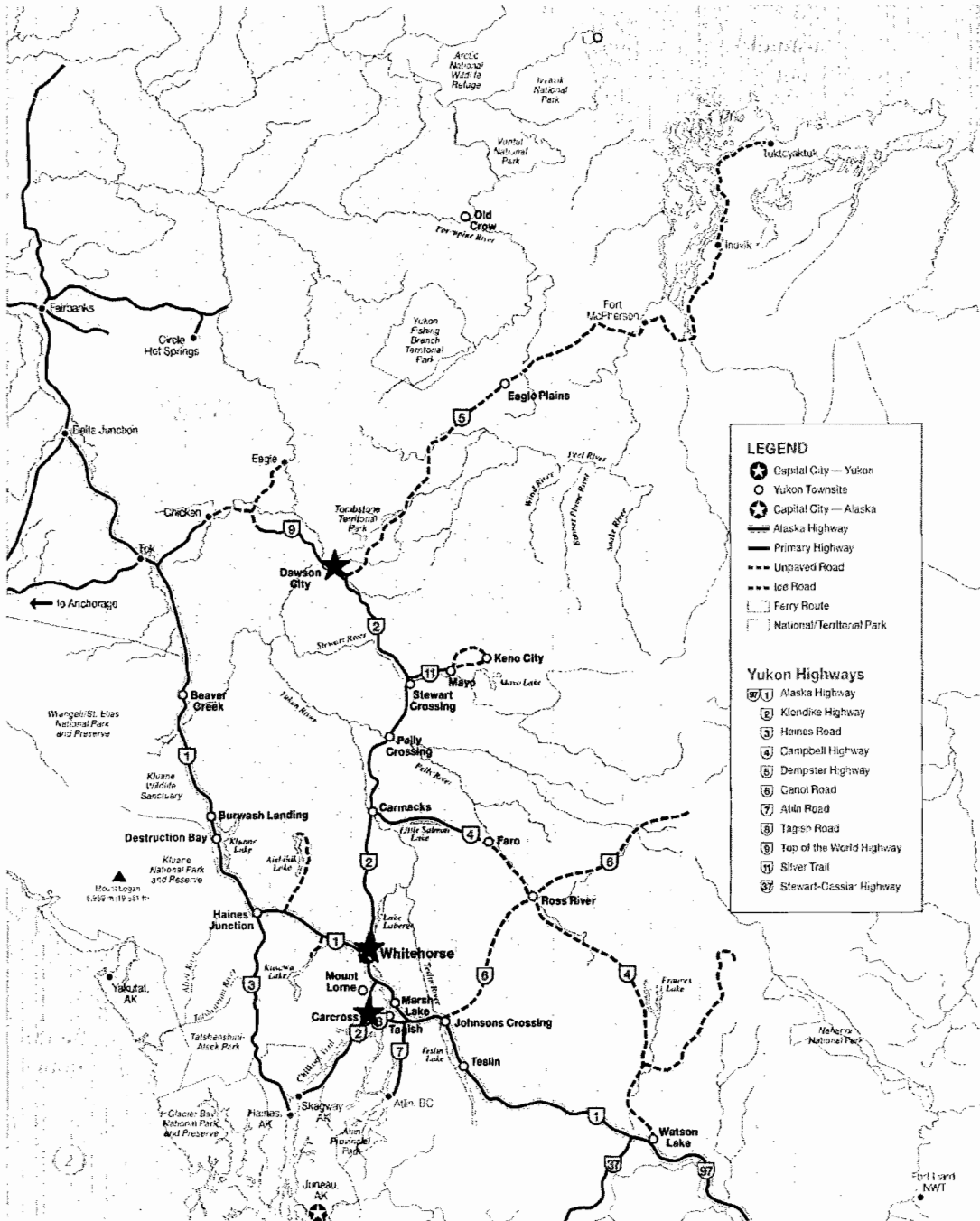


Figure 7: Map of the Yukon showing the location of the three case study sites: Dawson City, Takhini North in Whitehorse and Carcross. Map courtesy of Government of Yukon.



### **Case Study I: Downtown Heritage Character Area, Dawson City, Yukon**

This first case study explores the opportunities and challenges associated with designating Dawson's commercial core as a heritage conservation district. Located approximately 538 km (333 miles) north of Whitehorse on the North Klondike Highway and the Yukon River, the town of Dawson City had a population of 1,923 as of December 2008.<sup>229</sup> Located at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike river, the area is part of the traditional territory of the Hän Nation, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in makes up approximately 27 percent of the town's population.<sup>230</sup> The community relies on tourism as the main economic contributor but government services and mining still play a large role in the community's employment.<sup>231</sup> A community that is no stranger to heritage conservation programs, Dawson City, in theory, has all of the elements required to designate and manage heritage conservation districts. The following pages will examine how this new management approach could come to fruition in Dawson's downtown heritage character area.

Dawson City first gained notice for its potential as a historic tourist town in April 1959, by Prime Minister John Diefenbaker during his visit to the small northern town. Conversely, Alvin Hamilton, Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, was concerned about the potential problems that may occur if the town was turned into a commercial tourist community, but regardless of his apprehension, in November 1959

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<sup>229</sup> Yukon Fact Sheet. 3.

<sup>230</sup> Yukon Community Profiles.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

Dawson was named a historical complex of national importance by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC).<sup>232</sup> The roots of Dawson's recognition as a historic town were motivated by the possibility for successful tourism ventures; however, the first attempt was not successful. The Gold Rush Festival in 1962 was not able to draw the number of visitors required for it to succeed.<sup>233</sup>

From the early declaration of Dawson as a historical complex, the HSMBC has designated an additional 15 buildings to the Dawson Historical Complex National Historic Site of Canada, including the Robert Service Cabin, the Palace Grand Theatre (Figure 8), the Commissioner's Residence and the Bank of British North America. Parks Canada has been joined in heritage conservation efforts in the community by the Yukon Government through the Historic Properties Assistance Contribution Program and through technical expertise and through the purchase and restoration of three historic properties, the Yukon Sawmill, Dawson Telegraph Office and the Old Territorial Administration Building. The municipality, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Chamber of Commerce, the Dawson City Museum and the Klondike Visitors Association (KVA) have also played a key role in maintaining the heritage of the community.

Despite the collective efforts to preserve and promote the community's heritage, more needed to be done. In 2004 Parks Canada completed the *Dawson Historical Complex National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan*, which states:

The surviving heritage structures are threatened by potential demolition (a municipal jurisdiction) and the integrity of designated place is threatened by commercial, domestic and waterfront development. Some privately owned

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<sup>232</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. 10.

<sup>233</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. 10.

buildings which have been designated nationally significant, and some heritage structures owned by Parks Canada which are not nationally significant are declining significantly, and their long-term survival is at risk.<sup>234</sup>

The intent of the plan was to address these shortcomings but the mandate of Parks Canada could not cover much of the historic resources in Dawson, therefore it was up to the municipality and other parties to become more accountable.



*Figure 8: The Palace Grand Theatre was torn down and reconstructed in 1962 to assist in turning Dawson into a viable heritage tourism destination. Photo by the author, June 2010.*

For their part, the City of Dawson sought the creation of a heritage management plan that could guide the city's planning and future development in a way that would respect the historic resources while allowing for growth and development. Safeguarding the remaining resources and sympathetic new development became a glaring problem the

<sup>234</sup> Dawson Historical Complex National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan, 1.

town needed to address. In addition, Dawson City is on Canada's tentative list for nomination as a World Heritage Site. Believing that such a designation would bring global exposure to the small town while preserving the heritage values, they undertook the development of a heritage management plan to prove their commitment to the active management of heritage resources required as part of the world heritage evaluation.

In the introduction to *Dawson City: Heritage Management Plan*, the authors explained the current situation:

Many buildings and landscape features that supported the Gold Rush remain intact. Municipal heritage regulations have managed change since 1977, and the present *Zoning and Historical Control Bylaw* since 1997. The bylaws have worked to a considerable extent. Nevertheless, about 60 per cent of the community's historic buildings have been lost in the past 25 years – not a reassuring statistic in terms of long-term stewardship. Another issue is that the *Design Guidelines* that help with alterations and new construction have caused confusion, and some outcomes have been questioned by the community.”<sup>235</sup>

The plan sought to address these problems and was successful to the extent that was possible within the current interpretation of the *Yukon Historic Resources Act*.

In the Heritage Management Plan, Commonwealth Resource Management recognized the need to protect both the significant buildings, but also the supporting buildings. These structures may not say much on their own but help add to the character of the neighborhood and provide insight into aspects of Dawson's history. By working within the scope of the current Act, the recommendations given in the plan include nominating all buildings and structures, including deteriorated derelict structures and that demolition of buildings and structures of 40 or more years may occur only in extreme circumstances. The plan divided Dawson City into five “Heritage Character Areas” that

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<sup>235</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. iii.

grouped areas with similar histories, styles of construction and architecture. These include: Downtown Character Area, Downtown Transitional Character Area, Government Reserve Character Area, East Slope Character Area, and North End Character Area. Additionally, three Character areas were identified outside of the townsite: Klondike Valley Character Area, Confluence Character Area, and Bowl Character Area.

Further, recommendations for the suitability of heritage conservation districts are included in the Heritage Management Plan which states:

Consideration is given to enabling the identification and designation of Heritage Conservation Areas in the *Yukon Historic Resources Act*. This could follow the British Columbia model. Should this territorial legislation be introduced, we recommend that Dawson's Heritage Management Areas be converted by municipal bylaw to become Heritage Conservation Areas.<sup>236</sup>

The character areas therefore have been designed specifically with this possibility in mind, making the Downtown Character Area an ideal candidate for a successful heritage conservation district in the Yukon. However, it is recognized that any of the above listed character areas could yield similar results.

Because Parks Canada has been so influential in the management and preservation of the heritage resources in Dawson for so long, much of the work being conducted today, including the Dawson Heritage Management Plan, is based on the research and efforts of Parks Canada. Parks Canada Superintendent, David Rohatensky, believes that “no one level of government or sector can shoulder the burden, a combined

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<sup>236</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. 78.

effort will be what protects the resources.”<sup>237</sup> Therefore, the importance lies in ensuring that all parties are working together and not in isolation from the rest of the community. They must ensure that their heritage plans are not static documents but change to meet the needs of the community.

In 2009, the Town of the City of Dawson passed Heritage Bylaw 09-04. The bylaw was written in accordance with the vision developed in the Heritage Management Plan which states:

The built and natural heritage features of the Klondike Valley Cultural Landscape, of which the Historic Townsite form an important component, will be managed in a way that improves the quality of life for residents of the City and the region and which provides an enhanced destination attraction for international tourism. The heritage management program will tell the story of the entire human history of the Klondike Valley, with particular emphasis on the Gold Rush era of 1897-1918.<sup>238</sup>

In keeping with the vision, zoning bylaws were updated to create Heritage Character Areas as identified in the management plan. Further, the heritage bylaw dictates that the City must maintain an inventory of municipal historic sites, as well as a general inventory of all heritage resources and establishes guidelines for designation of historic sites. Under the bylaw, a “Municipal Historic Site” is defined as “an area or place, parcel of land, building or structure, or the exterior or interior portion of a building or structure that by itself, or by reason of containing a heritage resource, designated by Council as a Municipal Historic Site.”<sup>239</sup> This definition would then allow for the designation of heritage conservation districts as a municipal historic site even though the *Yukon Historic Resources Act* does not specifically acknowledge the possibility. The procedures for

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<sup>237</sup> David Rohatensky, interview by author, Dawson, YT, June 7, 2010.

<sup>238</sup> The Town of the City of Dawson, “Heritage Bylaw #09-04,” 1.

<sup>239</sup> Heritage Bylaw #09-04.

designating a municipal historic site are in the *Historic Resources Act*, including the clause which requires written consent to designate from owners, if they are residing in the nominated property. This clause may pose the largest problem in achieving district designations.

Heritage Advisory Committee Bylaw 09-06 established a heritage advisory committee that reviews development permits that may impact the town's heritage resources. Together, these two heritage bylaws provide for the designation and protection of municipal heritage resources and for governance of the Heritage Advisory Committee, all components that should be in place for the successful management of heritage conservation districts.

### **Rationale for Designation**

The Downtown Character Area is the area that represents what remains of the commercial core of Dawson during the Klondike Gold Rush. It contains the town's principal commercial and industrial buildings and features a nationally significant collection of gold-rush-era commercial architecture, as well as post-gold rush historic buildings in the vernacular of the day and more recent buildings in the "Dawson Style".

The once bustling Front Street has retained a sampling of buildings that once lined the street. The BYN Co. ticket office, the S.S. Keno and the reconstructed N.C.C co office are representative of the shipping and transportation industry that Dawson relied upon. The industrial core that was once at the north end of the Downtown Character Area is represented through the Yukon Sawmill Company Office; the only remaining building from the three sawmills that once filled an entire block.

The extant historic structures from the gold rush period are now interspersed between more recent structures that attempt to emulate gold rush period architecture. These historic and contemporary structures are concentrated primarily on Second and Third Avenues between Church Street at the south and York Street in the north. The wood frame and log structures showcase Dawson's eclectic mix of Victorian and Edwardian styles fused with vernacular construction techniques and represent the accommodation, dining, banking, laundry, repair, grocery, hardware and dry goods outlets as well as the saloons, dancehalls, theaters and gambling halls that occupied the commercial district.

### **Boundaries**

The boundaries were identified in the Dawson City Heritage Management Plan based on the historic downtown commercial center, they include the most attractive and intact streetscapes, particularly First, Second, and Third Avenues, and King Street. The commercial core which comprises the area from Church Street at the south to Albert Street at the north, and from Front Street and the dike eastward to an irregular boundary of mid-block of Second and Third Avenues (from Albert Street to York Street) and mid-block of Fifth and Sixth Avenues (from York to mid-block between King and Queen Streets). Figure 9 identifies the boundaries of the proposed district. A dynamic and evolving community, this area represents the gold rush era and beyond.

### **Buildings To Be Included**

In the Downtown Heritage Character Area, determining which buildings should be included requires careful thought. If the method of identifying contributing and non-



contributing buildings is used it may not be sufficient to meet the requirements of the management plan which argues that “all buildings and structures, including deteriorated and derelict structures, are protected by designation under the provisions of the *Yukon Historic Resources Act*” and that “buildings and structures 40 or more years old may be demolished only in exceptional circumstances...only after issuance of a Demolition Permit.”<sup>240</sup> For this reason it is recommended that the method used by the ICOMOS *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas* be used and that all buildings be included in the district.

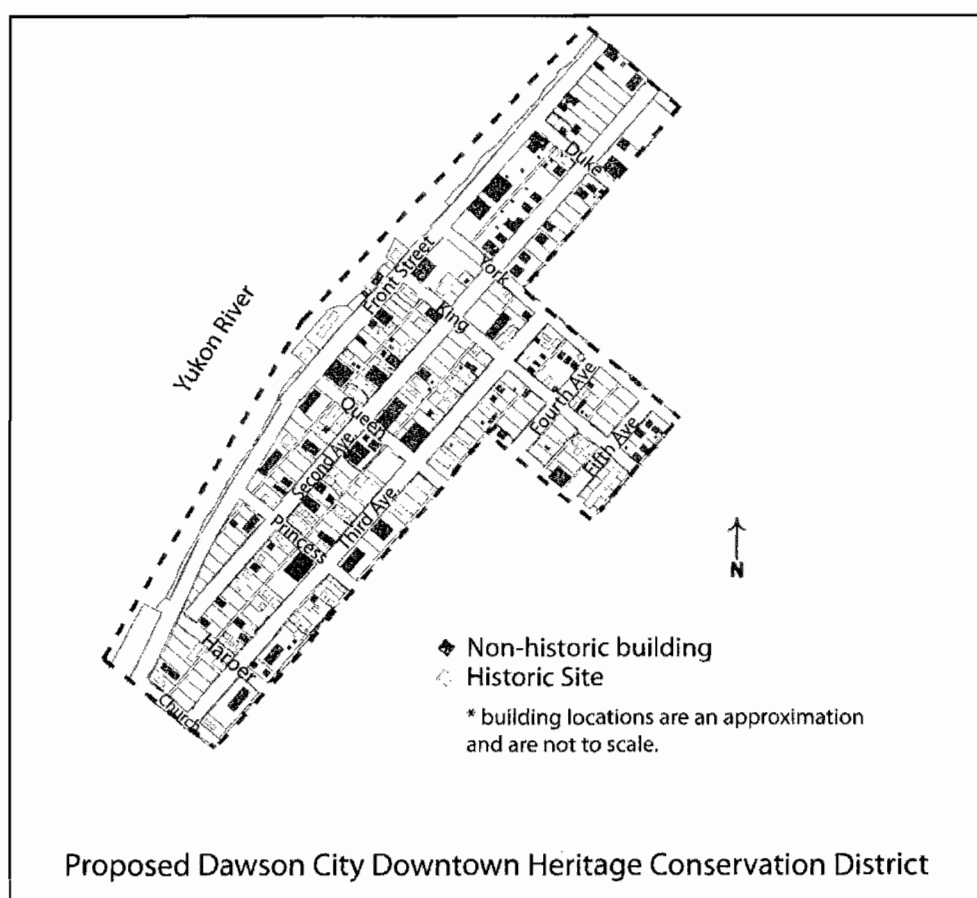


Figure 9: Proposed boundaries of the Dawson Downtown Heritage Conservation District.

<sup>240</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. 37.

As outlined in the Charter, determinations should be made in the district management plan that identifies which buildings must be preserved, buildings that may be altered under certain circumstances and which buildings, under exceptional circumstances may be demolished. This will help guide the heritage advisory committee when reviewing development permits and in determining what types of alterations may or may not be allowed to certain buildings. However, the emphasis is on ensuring that all buildings within the district are protected under the district designation.

### **Incentives**

Stemming from recommendations given in the Dawson City Heritage Management Plan, the City of Dawson passed Bylaw 09-05 to “authorize the establishment of a Heritage Fund for the receipt of money or property in order to support the conservation and management of heritage resources in the City of Dawson.”<sup>241</sup>

Recognizing that grants and loans are not the only form of incentives that can be offered, the Heritage Management Plan also recommended the use of property tax exemptions, planning relaxations, building code equivalencies and technical assistance to encourage building owners to undertake heritage conservation measures on their buildings.<sup>242</sup> All of the above stated incentives would provide extra motivation for property owners to invest the time and resources required to maintain and preserve the heritage values of their buildings. Experience in other areas of Canada indicates the success of offering

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<sup>241</sup> The Town of the City of Dawson, *Heritage Fund Bylaw #09-05*, <http://www.cityofdawson.ca/Documents/Bylaws/HeritageFundBylaw09-05.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2010).

<sup>242</sup> Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. 44.

incentives to owners of heritage buildings to preserve the historic character of homes and commercial buildings.<sup>243</sup>

### **Cultural History**

The Dawson region was first inhabited by the Hän people who traveled the Yukon River and its tributaries, spending much of the summer season at fish camps taking advantage of the abundant salmon. The discovery of gold in 1896 drastically affected the Hän people's traditional lifestyle and the land they once occupied at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike rivers was quickly overrun by miners and those who mined the miners.<sup>244</sup>

Joseph Ladue, rather than setting his sights on gold, set out to make his fortune another way. He chose the only possible townsite in the area, a swampy flat at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike Rivers, only 10 miles from Discovery Claim. Ladue quickly brought his sawmill downriver from Sixty Mile, along with all the dressed lumber available to begin erecting the new town. He set up his sawmill, general store and saloon on the land that now comprises the Downtown Character area.<sup>245</sup> By the spring of 1897 he was surrounded by a collection of small cabins and canvas dwellings and by July, after word of the gold discovery reached the outside world, the Alaska Commercial Company (A.C.Co) and the North American Transportation and Trading Company

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<sup>243</sup> The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, *Heritage Districts Work* (Unpublished, May 2009); Helen Cain, interview by author.

<sup>244</sup> Helene Dobrowolsky, *Hammerstones: A History of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in* (Whitehorse: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, 2003), xxi.

<sup>245</sup> Hal Guest, *Dawson City, San Francisco of the North, or Boomtown in a Bog: A Literature Review* (Parks Canada, 1978), 5.

(NAT&T Co) set up their stores, warehouses and living quarters next door.<sup>246</sup> The AC Co Store, its name changing to Northern Commercial Company Store (NC Co) after 1901, dominated the corner of Front Street and King Street for nearly 55 years, until it was destroyed by fire in 1951.

As more trading companies arrived their warehouses became a dominant feature in the north end of the Downtown area. Over fifty were built to house the vast amount of supplies brought in by river that were needed to get the town through the long, isolated winters. The Northern Commercial Company's warehouse on the corner of Fifth Avenue and King Street is the only remaining warehouse in its original form and use. The Dawson Daily News building was converted into the newspaper plant in 1910 and another warehouse became the home of the Klondike Thawing Machine Co. building. These two provide lasting examples of the warehouses in their converted uses. Today they have been converted for storage by Parks Canada.<sup>247</sup>

By 1897, Front Street was lined with two-storey log buildings interspersed with cabins and tents that advertised saloons, restaurants and hotels as depicted in Figure 10. The buildings on Second Avenue were backed by a row of brothels.<sup>248</sup> By October there were nearly 500 houses in town and the commercial section extended all along the riverbank from the mouth of the Klondike to the hillside. In an attempt to keep some semblance of social decorum, the brothels were moved in 1898 to less favorable land in

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<sup>246</sup> Margaret Archibald, *Grubstake to Grocery Store: The Klondike Emporium, 1897-1907* (Parks Canada, 1973), 46.

<sup>247</sup> Yukon Historic Sites Inventory.

<sup>248</sup> Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. "Vol. 4: History," *Dawson City, YT Conservation Study* (Government of Canada, March 1974), 15.

the swampy section of town on Fifth Avenue and later still, in 1902, moved across the Klondike River to Lousetown.



*Figure 10: False fronted log buildings and small frame buildings lined Dawson's busy commercial streets as depicted in this 1899 photograph. Source: Yukon Archives, W.A. Chisholm fonds, #5624.*

Newspapers such as the Dawson Daily News, the Klondike Nugget and the Yukon Sun were quickly established, documenting the changing scene and airing the complaints of the miners. Public health concerns were paramount, with disease being rampant in the summer due to the unsanitary conditions of the mucky streets and lack of

water and sewer services.<sup>249</sup> The presence of the newspapers helped ameliorate these problems by advocating for cleaner streets and the construction of more fire resistant buildings in the downtown core.

By 1899 new developments in technology further shaped Dawson as telegraph lines were extended into Dawson and the White Pass and Yukon Route began construction of a railway from Skagway to Whitehorse which would connect with a large fleet of sternwheelers, thus providing easier transportation into the Klondike.<sup>250</sup> While most buildings from the early gold rush era no longer exist those that have survived are predominantly from the 1900-1905 era when the town was rebuilt after fires swept away most of the early buildings.<sup>251</sup> Confidence in Dawson's future led business owners to construct a more permanent town, little different from any Canadian Edwardian town. At this time, businessmen also moved their living quarters out of their stores and established homes in the residential sections of town. Log buildings were replaced with more permanent "fireproof" structures.<sup>252</sup> A remaining example is the Bank of British North America which replaced its original log building after it burnt in 1899, by a two storey-frame building with corrugated metal siding with metal trim and a metal gable roof.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Edward F. Bush, *The Dawson Daily News: Journalism on Canada's Last Frontier* (National and Historic Parks Branch, 1971).

<sup>250</sup> Archibald, *Grubstake to Grocery Store*. 68

<sup>251</sup> Joan Mattie. *Nineteen Dawson buildings*. Building Report 88-12 (Government of Canada, Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office. No date), 2.

<sup>252</sup> Guest. 23.

<sup>253</sup> Yukon Historic Sites Inventory. "Bank of British North America".

The Downtown Character Area still portrays its roots as the distribution and supply center for the Klondike gold fields, though it was greatly reduced in size after the appearance of large industrialized mining companies. The first dredge began working in 1905 and by the First World War a dozen were working the creeks, doing the jobs of hundreds of men. The population dropped drastically during this time and Dawson became a company town, as the administrative service center for the region. The Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation, the largest of the dredge operators, ended operations in 1966 but continues to be represented through their contribution to Dawson's post-gold rush built heritage.

By 1909, only forty or so stores occupied Dawson's downtown commercial buildings; grocers, general merchants, dealers in dry goods, hardware and secondhand traders and fruit, candy and tobacco sellers were all that remained. After the NAT&T Company withdrew in 1919 the sole remaining large commercial company was the NC Company. Dawson continued to serve as the main service center in the Yukon until the 1940s when the construction of the Alaska Highway made Whitehorse the main distribution centre as the connection point between rail and sea. Today, Dawson remains a mining community and a service center for tourists who have come to experience the historical townscape, Gold Rush attractions and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in heritage.

### **Architecture & Construction**

Most buildings in the Downtown area reflect late nineteenth century frontier architecture in their small scale, simple massing and wood construction and were designed in the frontier vernacular of the day with Victorian and Edwardian influences.

The additions and renovations exhibited in some of the remaining structures reflect changes in ownership and building use common during the gold rush-era and beyond.

The townsite's beginnings were centered roughly around what is now the Downtown Character Area. However, few extant buildings remain from the first years as early crude buildings were replaced with more modern buildings that were often burnt to the ground as fires raged through the town on a regular basis from 1896 to 1905, leveling portions of the commercial district. The buildings that remain are generally from the turn of the century or later and represent the optimism that Dawson would become a permanent town. The declining population left many buildings abandoned but a reinvestment and population growth in the 1950s and 1960s saw many of the buildings torn down and/or replaced. Additionally, many buildings burned down over the years, leaving few more than 50 buildings from the 1896-1905 period. Reconstructions and new construction in a period style continue to portray the gold rush era architecturally in the Downtown Character Area.

Commercial buildings were generally symmetrical, vertical in emphasis and with rhythmic fenestration. The Edwardian Classical Style was a common favorite in the commercial center, as it was in southern Canada at the time. However, due to expensive property costs, buildings were generally rectangular with zero set-backs and the narrow portion fronting the street. Multiple buildings were constructed on one lot and often crossed lot boundaries leading to a densely constructed downtown. Never more than 3 storeys in height, with the upper floor(s) serving as office, residential or storage space, the generally false fronted buildings had ground floor commercial storefronts with large multi-pane display windows with mostly inset entranceways, sometimes with flush storm



doors. Caley's store, shown in Figure 11, provides an excellent example of the types of buildings being erected in downtown Dawson at the turn of the century. To compensate for the lack of building set-backs, truncated corner entranceways with overhangs were a common feature on corner buildings to allow views down roads. Second and third stories had bays, wood sash windows, and less frequently oriel windows. Windows on all floors had narrow muntins. The façade was then complete with corner boards and capped with an entablature with cornice. Positioned close to the property line and abutting one another, only an occasional space punctuated the streetscape. A variety of building heights, architectural details and streetscape components, such as the wooden boardwalks and gravel streets, provided visual interest to the commercial core.



*Figure 11: Commercial buildings in the downtown character area were generally false fronted frame buildings with rhythmical fenestration, large display windows below and office or living space above as exhibited in the Caley's store shown here. Photo by the author, June 2010.*

Residential buildings in the Downtown Character Area were constructed similarly to commercial buildings but were smaller in size and did not require the elaborate false fronts. Early residential buildings were utilitarian and were often small log cabins or canvas tents later framed over. Twentieth century houses in the area are primarily in the vernacular of the time; some houses are in the Queen Anne style or have Victorian and Edwardian influences in the detailing on the porch, windows and other ornamentation such as imbrication in the gable.

Exceptions of styles include the Post Office (Figure 12) and the Canadian Bank of Commerce. More grand in appearance both were still constructed with wood because the permafrost and transportation costs of Dawson did not allow for traditional masonry construction. The few brick buildings constructed in Dawson did not last. To give it the look of a stone building, the Bank of Commerce used metal cladding to shape quoins, pediments over windows, pilasters and hood molding brackets and the cornice and brackets and decorative finials along the front facade. Also constructed of wood, the Post Office was designed by T.W. Fuller in the neoclassical style common to public buildings in the Government Reserve.<sup>254</sup>

Construction of buildings in Dawson varied according to construction period and use. Dawson sprang up seemingly overnight with a reliance on materials available in the region and with little regard for fire safety; often being log buildings or canvas lined crude frame structures. The Dawson sawmills offered varied styles and qualities of materials and as transportation routes improved, were able to offer finishing materials,

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<sup>254</sup> Margaret E. Archibald, *A Structural History of the Administration Building, Dawson, Yukon Territory*. (Parks Canada, 1977), 11-13.

fittings, trim, mouldings, doors and sash made of oak, ash, hickory, cedar, fir, and redwood in addition to local structural and dimensional spruce lumber. It was during the construction boom at the turn of the century, which these superior building materials were available to those who could afford them at high costs.<sup>255</sup>



*Figure 12: The Old Post Office is the only known architect designed building in the Downtown Character Area. Photo by the author, June 2010.*

At first, locally milled materials were roughly milled and green but as Dawson grew, better quality milled lumber became available, enabling the construction of impressive facades over crude log buildings and eventually whole frame buildings. Various sheet metal building products also became available; including mass produced metal ornaments and corrugated sheet steel used extensively for roof coverings and at times as wall cladding. Most early frame construction was balloon or combination

<sup>255</sup> Claire Eamer & Antonio Zedda. *The Yukon Saw Mill Company: Last of the Gold Rush Sawmills* (Whithorse: Yukon Government, 1997).

balloon and platform construction. A limiting factor in construction was the availability of long and large enough lumber from the local mills to span two storeys. The arrangement of buildings closely together reflects the high property and rental costs which eliminated the presence of side yards and property setbacks. This gave the streets in the Downtown area a densely constructed appearance and provided visual interest.

Residential construction did not differ much from commercial, however, the scale of residential buildings is smaller and was frequently not as detailed as the commercial buildings. The residential homes did not require the elaborate facades or prevalence of windows found in commercial structures looking to attract customers. Primarily consisting of front gable, rectangular plan homes, the buildings that remain today have often received shed or gable roof additions, new porches and, at times, a second storey. While some homes are still of log construction, most have cove siding and metal roofs.

### **Integrity**

The Downtown Character Area contains most of Dawson's gold rush-era buildings. The number of buildings remaining from the period is not large but the extant buildings are representative of the types and styles of buildings that once lined the downtown streets. The area's heritage character has been enhanced with compatible new construction and the reconstruction of buildings based on historic photos and research.

Although the roads have been raised and a dike constructed, the Downtown area still follows the original grid pattern, with gravel roads and wooden boardwalks that evoke the atmosphere of the gold rush era. Over time the downtown lots have become

increasingly less occupied, perhaps nowhere more visible than along Front Street where buildings once lined both sides of the street. The west side is now limited to only one block of structures between King and Queen Streets.

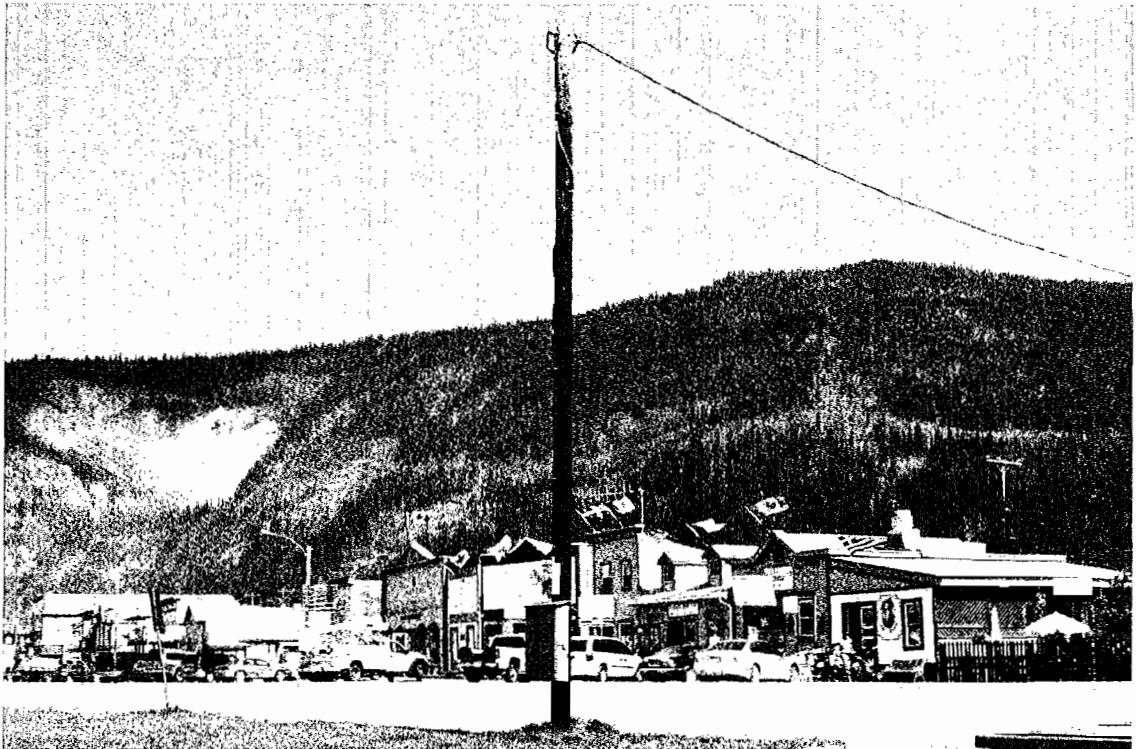
### **Character Defining Elements**

The downtown character area of Dawson City contains a number of character defining features that contribute to the historic significance of the area. These elements should be retained wherever possible and should help guide new development.

- Road levels have been raised along Front Street are situated (about one meter) higher, as it was the original dike.
- The land rises sharply at the present dike, which was built in the early 1980s; the rest of the area is generally flat.
- Views from the downtown area are contained by the Bowl, except facing up or downriver from the dike
- Good views of the Bowl, including the mountains to the east (the ridge that leads to the Dome), the north (including Mooshide Slide) and the west (Top of the World Highway) are present. (Figure 13)
- Important views from the principal streets to certain public buildings that have become landmarks: eg. St. Mary's Church, Post Office, Bank of Commerce, and Danoja Zho Cultural Center
- Gridiron street pattern
- Park-like setting of the landscape along the dike, which provides a pedestrian walkway along the Yukon River.

- Multiple historic buildings occupy a single lot at times and/or straddle property lines
- Lanes running north-south, parallel to the numbered avenues
- No setbacks, buildings typically built close to the side lot lines and the street line
- Gravel roads and wooden boardwalks
- Informal pedestrian ways between avenues
- Contains a high concentration of Dawson's gold rush-era commercial buildings
- The dominant character of all buildings is that of the gold rush era
- Commercial buildings typically have false fronts, with elaborate and well-defined cornices, masking gabled or shed roofs whose ridges are perpendicular to the street
- Mixture of 1 and 2-storey buildings, with a few 3-storey buildings; building heights are rarely consistent from property to property
- Older buildings tend to be sited close to ground level. Many newer buildings have been raised as high as 1.5 metres above grade, often on gravel and wood pads, to create a crawl space that minimizes damage from freeze-thaw cycles, enables easy access, and rises above the street level.
- Generally wood frame construction with some examples of log construction
- Predominantly wood cladding, with some metal cladding
- Many corrugated and standing seam metal roofs
- Wood windows and doors
- Inset entrances on storefronts and corner entrances on corner buildings
- Treatments of ground and upper floors are distinct, with fascia signage and other details often providing a transition zone between the two

- Street-level glazing with large windows and multiple panes on commercial buildings.
- Fire escapes generally on the sides or rear of buildings



*Figure 13: The view to the bowl dominates the landscape behind the mix of historic and contemporary buildings along Front Street. Photo by the author, June 2010.*

### **Case Study II: Takhini North, Whitehorse, Yukon**

The capital of the Yukon, Whitehorse developed because of its ideal location as a transportation hub for the White Pass & Yukon Route railway and the sternwheelers that plied the Yukon River between Dawson and Whitehorse. The town's permanence was solidified with the construction of the Alaska Highway next to the community. As of December 2008 Whitehorse's population was at 25,403 with the Yukon's entire

population only reaching 33,928.<sup>256</sup> The Ta'an Kwach'an Council and the Kwanlin Dun First Nation's traditional territory is found in and around present day Whitehorse, today, both have their administrative offices in Whitehorse. Whitehorse's economy is based on its position as the government centre for the Yukon and has a large business sector which serves the rest of the Territory. Additionally, mining still plays a large role in Whitehorse's economy.<sup>257</sup> The City of Whitehorse is also a large employer in the community. As such, the City of Whitehorse is actively involved in the planning of the community and has stewardship over the community's historic resources.

To reiterate what was discussed in Chapter III, the City of Whitehorse has identified the possibility of establishing special heritage protection areas. The 2010 Draft Official Community Plan's inclusion of a provision to designate special heritage protection areas with support of residents allows Heritage Districts to be established through a resolution of Council and be managed through zoning regulations.<sup>258</sup> Therefore, if Takhini North was to be designated through a resolution of council the heritage character of the area could be maintained. However, recent events surrounding Takhini North planning may complicate the issue of proposing such a designation. From 2003 to 2009 planning work was carried out for Takhini North which addressed infrastructure upgrades, altered the historic street plan and increased density through the sale of single and multiple housing lots. New zoning bylaws were passed by Council on January 26, 2009. The bylaw created three new zones within Takhini North which

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<sup>256</sup> Yukon Fact Sheet. 3.

<sup>257</sup> Yukon Community Profiles.

<sup>258</sup> City of Whitehorse, *2010 Official Community Plan*, 75.



included design guidelines. The design guidelines were created with public consultation but do not include any mention of new construction needing to respect the current heritage character of the area.

Given the newness of these design guidelines and the rapid pace of personalization being done to the Takhini duplexes, the opportunity for protecting the heritage of the area may have been missed. Construction of new single family and duplex homes began during summer 2010 and without historic design guidelines it has resulted in houses built out of scale and design of the historic homes. (Figure 14) If designation were to occur, the homes within the boundary of the historic area could be maintained but changes to the entrance of Takhini North and surrounding new development have already altered the context of the neighbourhood.

In addition, the City of Whitehorse amended the heritage bylaw in 2000 to remove the condition for the creation of a heritage advisory committee. The advisory committee was disbanded because of disconnect between the committee and city council. Since that time heritage has been assigned part time to one member of the planning staff. Heritage has not been a priority for city council and heritage activities have primarily been reactive rather than proactive.<sup>259</sup> Since the disbandment of the heritage advisory committee very few new heritage designations have taken place and none have occurred since 2002. If heritage conservation districts were to be designated, their success would require a greater level of support and guidance from the City of Whitehorse. Heritage Advisory Committees are also strongly encouraged as for overseeing the management of districts; therefore, council's willingness to begin a more proactive approach is required.

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<sup>259</sup> Ben Campbell, interview.



*Figure 14: New construction shown in the front of the picture has been developed without respect of the scale, material and density of the historic neighbourhood pictured in the distance. Photo by the author, October 2010.*

### **Rationale for Designation**

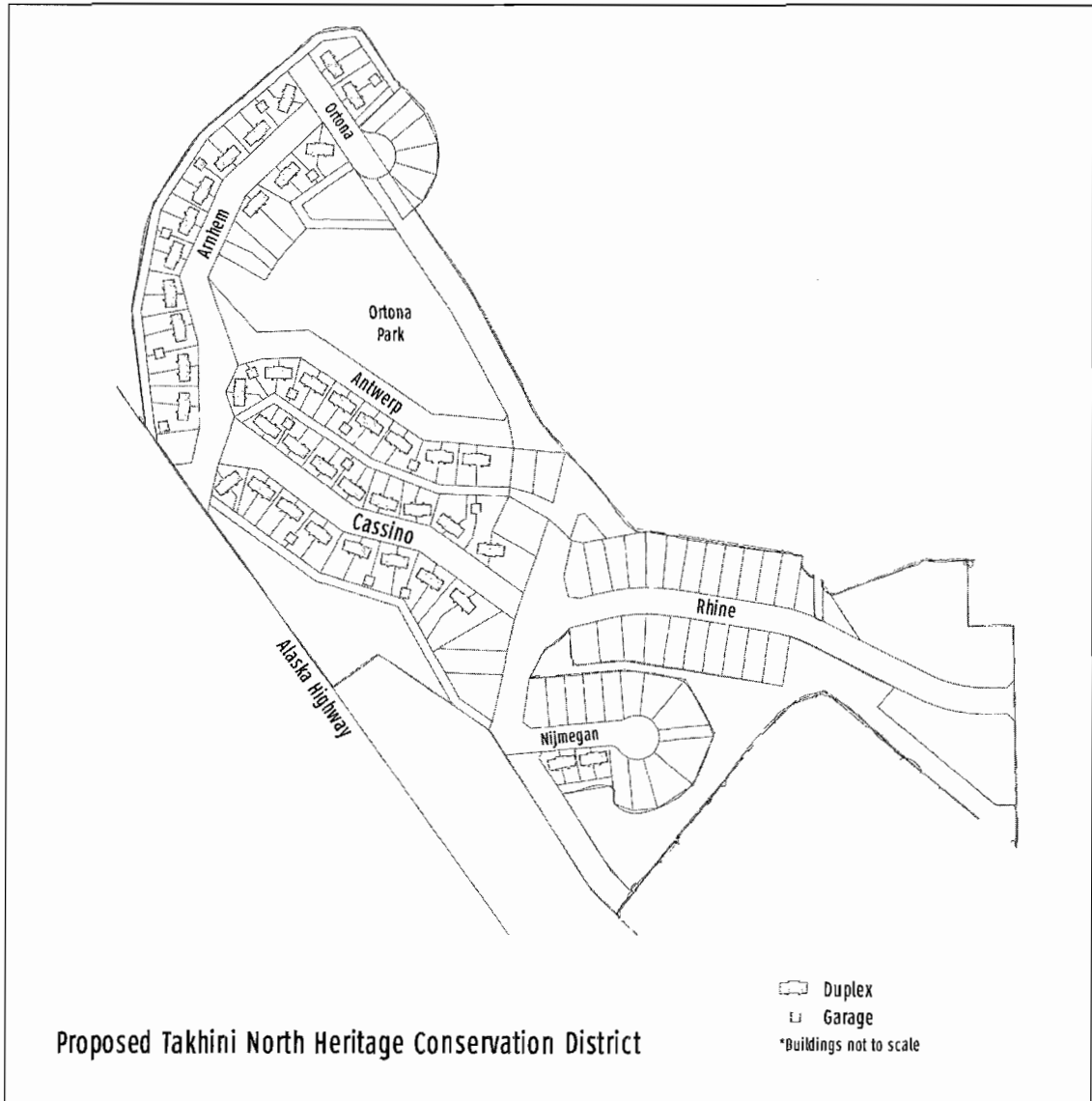
The Takhini North residential neighbourhood has achieved significance as the first planned neighbourhood in Whitehorse. Prior to the Second World War Whitehorse had developed more organically and was comprised of vernacular homes. The Department of National Defense developed neighbourhoods represent the growing importance of Whitehorse as the administrative capital of the Yukon with a large population of public servants taking up residence.

By choosing the Takhini North neighbourhood as a potential heritage conservation district, designation could assist with promoting sympathetic new construction and providing incentives to homeowners to maintain or replace in-kind the

cladding and retain the original plan, symmetry and fenestration of the duplex. Also, for the homes that have been clad in unsympathetic materials, incentives could be given to homeowners wishing to restore their homes with more compatible materials in the future. Design and alteration guidelines for existing homes and new development will help retain the heritage character of the neighbourhood.

### **Boundaries**

Takhini North is a Department of National Defense designed residential neighbourhood located at the top of the two mile hill above the Whitehorse city centre off of Range Road. The historic residential area includes Nijmegen Road, Cassino Street, Antwerp Street, Arnhem Road and Ortona Avenue. Rhine Way is included within the district because of its prominent location as the entrance to the district even though the street is lined solely with new construction. The boundaries are based on the historic organization of the neighbourhood which includes the residential buildings, streetscapes and greenspace. (Figure 15) Cassino Street, Arnhem Road and Antwerp Street have the largest concentration of historic homes. Alleys behind the main roads are also included within the boundaries as they are part of the historic development of the community and provide access to the garages. The most notable greenspace is Ortona Park which includes a modern playground and natural greenspace with native trees and some walking trails.



*Figure 15: Proposed boundaries for the Takhini North Heritage Conservation District indicating the location of original duplex buildings and garages.*

### **Buildings To Be Included**

The intention of an HCD is not to prohibit development or change; it is to promote sympathetic development that does not detract from the heritage character of the neighbourhood. For this reason, it is recommended that all of the DND designed duplexes and garages be included in the HCD regardless of their current state. The

original buildings that remain in Takhini North are identified in Figure 15. Buildings that have the highest degree of historical integrity remaining should be identified for increased protection.



*Figure 16: Takhini North neighbourhood looking East from the Alaska Highway. Photo by the author, August 2010.*

## **Incentives**

The City of Whitehorse adopted the Heritage Incentive policy in December 2002 to provide incentives to owners of buildings listed on the Heritage Registry, designated as a municipal historic site or that is in the process of receiving designation. The incentives are designed to assist with the retention and rehabilitation of sites within the city boundaries. Incentives are available for restoration, enhancement and for renovation to meet code requirement of heritage properties. Incentives are also available for projects that will increase public awareness of heritage issues or other projects as specified by

Council. Financial incentives may cover 50% of project costs up to a maximum of \$10,000 but are only available once per property. Eligible costs can be applied to conservation costs, which include:

- (a) Stabilization – This basic structural preservation includes, but is not limited to, the repair or replacement of roofs and foundations, sealing to the weather, installation of additional bracing or material conservation.
- (b) Exterior Restoration – This includes, but is not limited to, repair or reproduction of doors and windows, repair or replacement of cladding, historically sensitive refinishing or, in general terms, returning the building's exterior to its original or historical period appearance.
- (c) Exterior Interpretation – This includes funding for research and sign construction and installation.<sup>260</sup>

Construction costs covering materials, equipment rental and for skill labour are also eligible for funding. Currently, the incentive fund is underutilized averaging only about one application a year, if any at all.<sup>261</sup> Each year new funds are added ensuring that the fund will not be depleted. It is expected that if districts are designated the number of application would be significantly increased.

### **Cultural History**

Prior to 1939 the City of Whitehorse was confined to the valley floor along the Yukon River but the construction of the Whitehorse Airport by the Canadian Government precipitated new development on the bench above the city. During the Second World War, Whitehorse experienced significant growth as a result of an influx of construction workers and military personnel assigned to build the Alaska Highway.<sup>262</sup> By 1943, a year

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<sup>260</sup> City of Whitehorse, *Heritage Incentive Policy # 2002-22-11*. 4.

<sup>261</sup> Ben Campbell, interview.

<sup>262</sup> Regional Heritage Committee. *Background for FHBRO Review: PWC Takhini Subdivision, Whitehorse, Yukon* (Public Works Canada, 1991), 2.

after construction began on the highway, Whitehorse's population had grown from 350 to nearly ten thousand people. Ill equipped to deal with the influx of people; Whitehorse experienced a severe housing shortage. Initially, soldiers and construction workers lived in tent cities but dozens of barracks, office buildings and other facilities were constructed by civilian contractors working under the Public Roads Administration.<sup>263</sup> As the administrative headquarters for the Canadian and American military, Whitehorse's landscape was drastically altered by the erection of hundreds of buildings eventually built to house personnel and equipment. The Canol Pipeline project contributed to the number of personnel and buildings required and a refinery to process the crude oil piped from Normal Wells was built on the river outside of town. Housing for personnel was constructed by the Standard Oil Company in 1944 on the bench above town in the area that would later become Camp Takhini.<sup>264</sup>

The Alcan Highway was renamed the Alaska Highway in July 1943 and remained under the control of the US Army until six months after the end of the war as per the construction agreement with Canada. Once the US Army had met the terms of the agreement, maintenance of the Canadian portion of the highway was transferred to Canada on April 1, 1946 under the banner of the North-West Highway system.<sup>265</sup> The Canadian Army moved into the administrative and residential buildings left behind by the US Army in 1946 but most were not built to last or to withstand the frigid northern

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<sup>263</sup> Coates & Morrison. *Land of the Midnight Sun*. 247.

<sup>264</sup> Ingram, *DPW Housing*. 2.

<sup>265</sup> FHBRO. 2.

temperatures. Buildings were slowly vacated, torn down and replaced by more modern administrative and residential buildings.

The small community built by Standard Oil included temporary living quarters called “Cemestos” which housed the refinery workers. Long one storey frame buildings, the community of Cemestos was located at the top of Refinery Hill (now the Two Mile Hill), overlooking the CANOL refinery.<sup>266</sup> The area was targeted for redevelopment starting in 1951 when the Camp Takhini project was first proposed but federal reorganization of highway responsibilities in the Yukon put the project on hold for two years.<sup>267</sup> On streets named after famous battles, the Canadian military constructed Camp Takhini with “a headquarters building, barracks, a power plant, mess hall and new housing called PMQs, or permanent married quarters.”<sup>268</sup> The new, organized and isolated community added to the feeling of separation of classes in Whitehorse that had emerged when the US Army first set up camp in Whitehorse in 1942.<sup>269</sup> The new neighbourhood stood in sharp contrast to the “often-ramshackle construction in the town-site” below and was punctuated by the economic division between the more transient residents of Upper

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<sup>266</sup> Hope Morritt describes the residential buildings that existed in the area that was replaced by Camp Takhini and includes a map of “Upper Whitehorse” as it was in 1949 which identifies the location of “Cemestos”, bungalow living quarter for officers and NCO’s, Army living quarters for NCOs and lower ranks and living quarters for RCAF and Signal Corps personnel. Hope Morritt, *Land of the Fireweed: A Young Woman’s Story of Alaska Highway Construction Days* (Edmonds: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1985), 22-23.

<sup>267</sup> Ken Coates and W. R. Morrison, “The Federal Government and Urban Development in Northern Canada After World War II ” *BC Studies*, no. 104, (Winter 1994), 34.

<sup>268</sup> Les McLaughlin, “Camp Takhini,” accessed on October 1, 2010 from [http://www.hougengroup.com/yukonhistory/facts\\_year/1940s.aspx?year40=1946](http://www.hougengroup.com/yukonhistory/facts_year/1940s.aspx?year40=1946)

<sup>269</sup> Morritt recounts a conversation with a local upon her arrival in Whitehorse in November 1946 who describes the feeling of two separate towns and resentment by locals of the intrusion they felt when the US Army was in Whitehorse. Morritt. 18.



Whitehorse and the permanent residents in the townsite below.<sup>270</sup> To make matters worse, after Camp Takhini was constructed a sign at its entrance warned outsiders of the restricted access of the neighbourhood giving it an air of exclusivity.

The new attractive community and the thousands of Canadian military personnel that were required to maintain the Alaska Highway did eventually integrate themselves into the community. Families shopped in downtown Whitehorse, sent their children to the same schools and shared in social activities around town.<sup>271</sup> This shift in attitude and more permanent community development marked the end of the “us” and “them” mentality that the US Army had created. Finally becoming part of the City of Whitehorse, the City assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the infrastructure of Camp Takhini which was built and maintained by the Canadian Army until the early 1960s. Soon after, the Canadian Army’s presence in Whitehorse was further diminished when on June 29, 1964 the Army seceded to the federal Department of Public Works (DPW) responsibility for maintenance of the Alaska Highway.<sup>272</sup> The houses were maintained by the DPW until the early 1990s when announcements were made that DPW was going to dispose of its housing portfolio.<sup>273</sup> Today, the duplexes are privately owned and Takhini has become a desired neighbourhood with residents expressing their pleasure about the close community feeling and well built homes.

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<sup>270</sup> Coates and Morrison. “Urban Development in Northern Canada.” 34.

<sup>271</sup> Les McLaughlin, “Canadian Army Leaves Whitehorse,” accessed on October 1, 2010 from [http://www.hougenroup.com/yukonHistory/nuggets\\_year/2000s.aspx?nugget=1964](http://www.hougenroup.com/yukonHistory/nuggets_year/2000s.aspx?nugget=1964)

<sup>272</sup> McLaughlin, “Canadian Army Leaves Whitehorse”.

<sup>273</sup> FHBRO. 1.

## **Architecture & Construction**

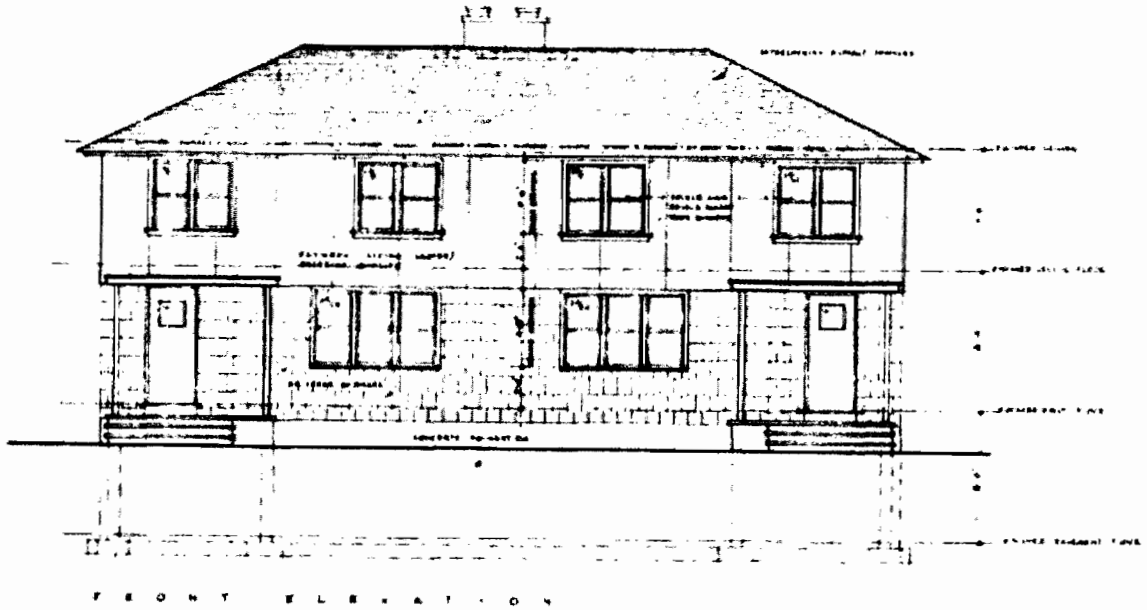
With the administrative headquarters of the Northwest Service Command being erected above Whitehorse on the bluffs near the newly constructed Alaska Highway, residential subdivisions also began to appear. Camp Takhini replaced the previous housing built by the Standard Oil Company, and featured homes built for long term use, unlike the poorly constructed barrack style buildings that had first occupied the area.

Designed by and constructed as part of a Department of National Defense (DND) employee residence neighbourhood, Camp Takhini included 85 duplexes constructed according to three standard designs. Forty of those duplexes were included in Takhini North, the westernmost section of Camp Takhini. Takhini North was constructed using the same design adapted from the DND Standard Northern Double Type house illustrated below in Figure 16. The DND architect is unknown but the majority of buildings in the Takhini area said to have been built between 1951 and 1953.<sup>274</sup>

The duplexes in Takhini North were constructed by DND with quality materials designed to last in the north's harsh climate. The homes are frame buildings with concrete foundations and full basements. The duplexes were clad in one of two alternating designs with either asbestos shingles or 8" bevel siding on the upper portion and cedar shingles on the lower portion. Windows were originally double hung, double glazed multi-pane wood but have all been replaced with vinyl windows. The interior house plan, shown in Figure 17, had formally divided rooms, front and rear entrances and featured hardwood flooring throughout.

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<sup>274</sup> FHBRO. 1.



*Figure 17: The Takhini North duplexes are a variation of the Department of National Defense Standard Northern House Plan shown here. Source: Department of Public Works, NMC- 198652 excerpted from Rob Ingram, "DPW Housing: An Overview of federal government post-war housing in Whitehorse," unpublished, January 2005.*

Although the duplexes do not fit into any one architectural style, they exhibit architectural traits from the Colonial Revival (Georgian) architectural style which had primarily fallen out of fashion by mid-century. The homes differentiate most notably from the style in their modesty and the fact that they are duplexes. However, the side-gabled roof, plain rectangular plan, central entryway, formal symmetry, rectangular double hung sash windows and eave returns point to a simplified version of the style. Some properties feature a single car duplex style garage (Figure 18) that straddle property lines at the rear of the property off of the alleyways. The garages are rectangular in plan and have side gabled roofs clad in asbestos shingles. Garage doors are paneled wood.

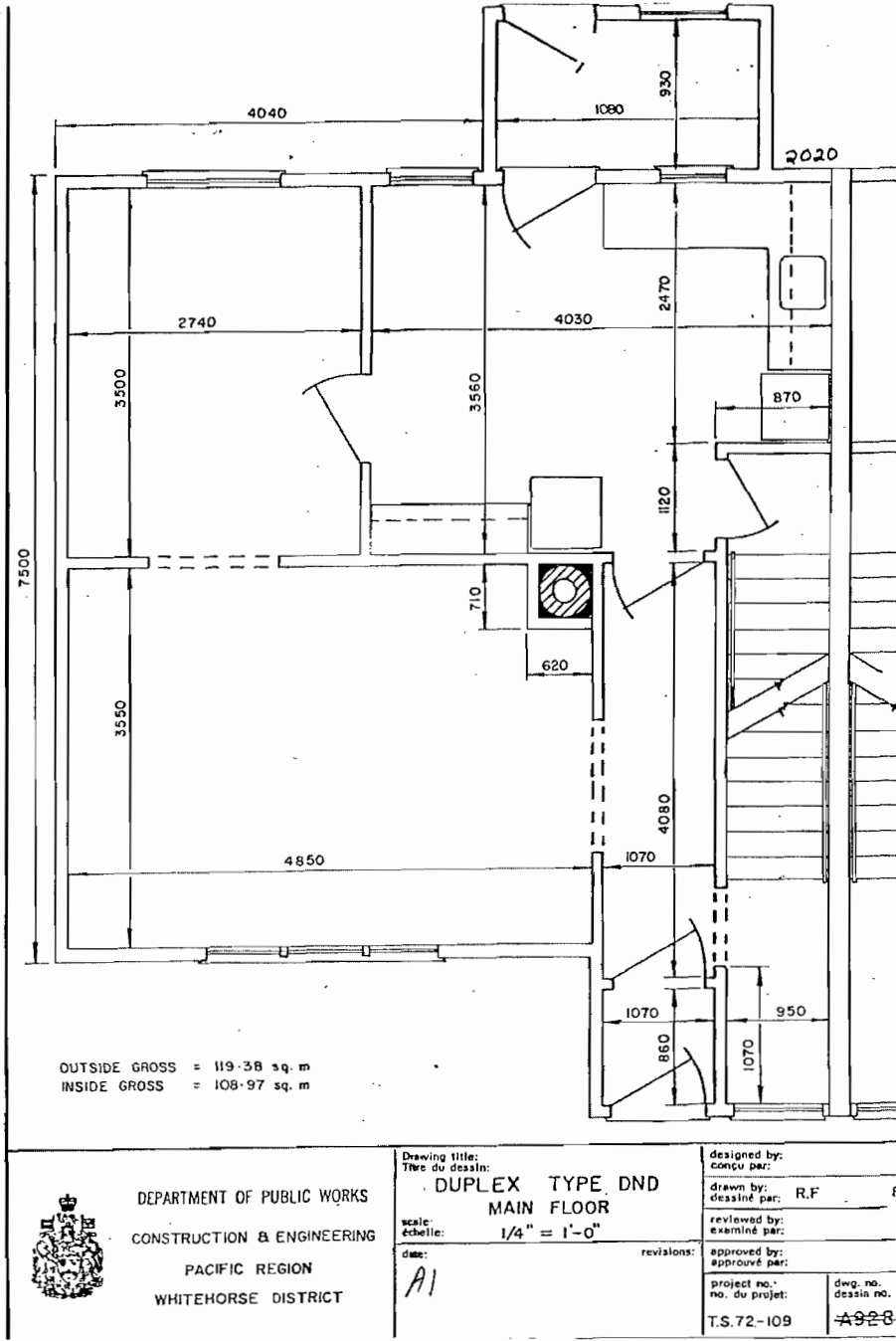
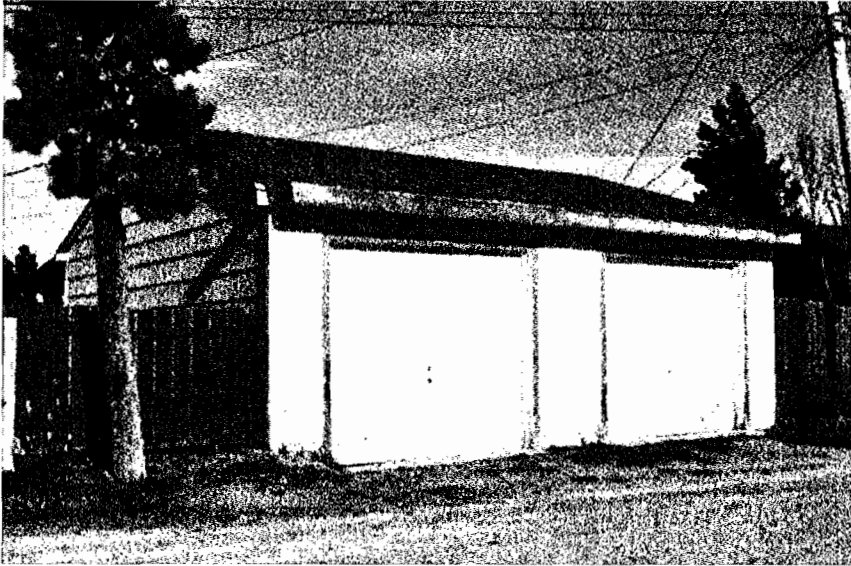


Figure 18: Floorplan of Takhini North DND duplexes. Source: Department of Public Works, Construction and Engineering, Pacific Region, Whitehorse District, excerpted from Ingram, DPW Housing.



*Figure 19: A typical example of the detached garages found in Takhini North. Photo by the author, September 2010.*

### **Integrity**

The Takhini North area contains primarily 1950s Department of Northern Defense duplexes with some new residential buildings being constructed. While all the original duplexes were of one plan, no pristine examples remain. However, the neighbourhood does retain context, scale and many of the homes still feature original exterior finishes. Cladding has been replaced on some of the homes with wood or vinyl siding. Windows have been changed in almost all buildings but the fenestration primarily remains the same.

An infrastructure upgrade project that took place in summer 2009 necessitated the removal and repaving of the historic streets but the original plan was primarily retained with exceptions at the entrance to the community through the newly created Rhine Way and an extension to Ortona Avenue. New infill has extended the size of the neighbourhood and has added new single detached, duplex and multiple-family housing

units to the neighbourhood. The new construction is primarily confined to one area at the entrance and does not detract significantly from the historic neighbourhood.

Figure 20 shows a nearly intact example of a Takhini North duplex clad in asbestos shingle and Figure 21 shows a an excellent example of a duplex clad in bevel siding and cedar shingles.



*Figure 20: An example of an asbestos shingle clad duplex that retains a high degree of integrity. Photo by the author, August 2009.*



*Figure 21: An example of bevel and cedar shingle clad duplex that retains a high degree of integrity. Photo by the author, September 2010.*

### **Character Defining Elements**

The character of Takhini North that should be retained are exhibited in the street plan, built forms, size of lots and greenspaces. The character defining elements are further detailed below:

- historic street plan of the area with curving roads and greenbelts rather than the traditional grid pattern. Lack of sidewalks on streets.
- Varied setbacks and angles to the street. Rather than following a consistent line, houses follow the curving lines of the street and additionally, many of the

duplexes at the end of each street which are angled away from the street toward greenspace. (Figure 22)

- 2 storey duplexes of the same plan and alternating cladding of homes with asbestos shingle and homes with cedar shingles on the lower half and 8" bevel wood siding on the upper half.
- Side gable homes with gabled front entry at center
- Eave returns on gables
- Symmetrical fenestration
- The neighbourhood features a large amount of greenspace and most properties contain large native tree species.
- Detached single car "duplex" garages straddling property lines at the rear of the property clad in asbestos shingles.



*Figure 22: The Takhini North duplexes follow the angled streets as opposed to a traditional grid pattern. Photo by the author, August 2010.*

### Case Study III: Carcross, Yukon

Located in southern Southern Lakes Region of the Yukon, Carcross is a small unincorporated community located between Lake Bennett and Nares Lake. As of December 2008 the population was 436.<sup>275</sup> First Nation people account for up to half of the local population. Its location between Whitehorse and Skagway, AK makes it a popular tourism destination, accounting summer tourism as the main employment base. Government services and administration of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation account for the other main economic contributors in the community.<sup>276</sup>

Carcross has a long history of being a popular tourism destination and today it continues to be a viable tourism destination which emphasizes the community's heritage and history. Through the "Destination Carcross" planning process, an expressed desire from the community to maintain the look and feel of the community. This willingness could translate into the designation of a heritage conservation district to protect the historic core of the community while allowing for sympathetic new development. The combination of heritage buildings, breathtaking views and continued tourism destination planning all contribute to the success of a potential heritage conservation district in Carcross.

Whereas Carcross is an unincorporated community, regulations governing land use are established in the *Carcross General Development Regulations*. These regulations include the identification and description of zones and uses and details the process for

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<sup>275</sup> Government of Yukon, *Yukon Fact Sheet*. 3, <http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/stats/yukonfactsheet.html> (accessed October 16, 2010).

<sup>276</sup> Yukon Community Profiles: Carcross and Tagish, <http://www.yukoncommunities.yk.ca/communities/carcross-tagish/> (accessed October 19, 2010).



securing a development permit where required. Normally, a local area plan would be developed by Yukon Government with input from a Local Advisory Council such as the South Klondike Local Advisory Council that was established in October 2006, however, the Carcross Tagish First Nation (CTFN) Final Agreement altered the usual procedures.

The Yukon government, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the community are working together to develop a local area plan as outlined in the CTFN land claim Final Agreement. A separate steering committee was established with three members appointed by the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and three from the Yukon government, one of which is a representative of the South Klondike Local Advisory Council. After consultations, the plan will be developed and incorporate provisions for protecting important cultural landscapes and historic sites among the usual zoning and land use bylaws. If identified in the local area plan, procedures for designating and managing historic district could be included. Once completed, a development officer of Yukon Government Land Planning Branch would oversee the plan. The Local Advisory Council would maintain a watchdog and advisory role but would not have any enforcement powers.

As part of community consultations that have taken place for *Destination Carcross*, the following vision has been presented to guide local tourism planning: “Carcross is a sustainable year-round tourism destination where we celebrate and share the beauty and richness of our land, First Nations culture and gold rush history.”<sup>277</sup> Heritage and culture are therefore in the forefront of planning priorities for tourism.

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<sup>277</sup> Destination Carcross, Vision Statement, <http://www.destinationcarcross.com/>(accessed on October 1, 2010).

In October 2007, “many people expressed a desire to see downtown Carcross developed in such a way that it maintains its genuine character and doesn’t look like a theme park.”<sup>278</sup> Further, when asked if community members were open to having historic guidelines in place an overwhelming majority of respondents said yes. However, community members are moving ahead with extreme caution. Some people were concerned that guidelines would restrict building activities and wanted to ensure that if implemented, the guidelines would reflect all layers of Carcross’ history.<sup>279</sup>

Results from the consultations also yielded information about what historical/cultural elements should be preserved and what design elements should be included in historic guidelines. Some responses included maintaining the current scale of buildings, materials, period signage, and the historic and rustic look of the town as it is now. Respondents were also clear that they wanted to avoid any large generic developments such as chain stores, “fake” historic buildings and out of scale gold rush architecture like the Westmark complex in Dawson City.<sup>280</sup> The feedback received indicates a willingness from the community to take protective measures to safeguard their heritage. This willingness could translate well into a heritage conservation district as it would allow the community to take part in the process of identifying the values and

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<sup>278</sup> *Carcross Downtown Core Plan: Summary of Community Consultation Results*, [http://www.destinationcarcross.com/downtowncore/carcross\\_consultation\\_summary.pdf](http://www.destinationcarcross.com/downtowncore/carcross_consultation_summary.pdf) (accessed October 1, 2010).

<sup>279</sup> Jane of all Trades Consulting, *Community Consultation Summary Report: Carcross Downtown Core Planning Process* (November 2007), 6 <http://www.destinationcarcross.com/downtowncore/carcross%20consultation%20full%20reportPublic.pdf> (Accessed October 1, 2010).

<sup>280</sup> Jane of all Trades Consulting. 18.

attributes of their community that they wish to protect and those aspects of new development they hope to avoid.

A massive investment in Carcross has taken place since the 2007 consultations. *Destination Carcross* has resulted in numerous waterfront projects designed to make improvements to the community that will benefit both visitors and residents alike. The projects financed by federal and Yukon governments were divided into two phases for a combined investment of \$6.75 million. Examples of projects include the construction of boat launches, viewing platforms, a pedestrian bridge, a carving facility, welcome signs, landscaping and a memorial to the burned sternwheeler, SS Tutshi.<sup>281</sup> To ensure the retention of the heritage character of the community it is hoped that provisions to protect them are included in the local area plan and through the development of regulations.

### **Rationale for Designation**

The community of Carcross is being proposed to have a designated Heritage Conservation District for its concentration of extant historic buildings that depict the history and evolution of the community. Carcross maintains the historic character of a pre-1940s community in the Yukon. Located on the picturesque shores of Bennett Lake and Nares Lake, the community is an important stopping point along the White Pass & Yukon Route and contains both a territorial historic site and a federally designated heritage railway depot in addition to a collection of vernacular buildings that showcase Carcross' cultural heritage and development.

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<sup>281</sup> Government of Yukon, "Carcross waterfront investments celebrated during Golden Spike Day 2010" (July 29, 2010), <http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/2010/files/10-139.pdf> (accessed October 1, 2010).

The home of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, a stopping point during the Klondike Gold Rush and an association with discoverers of the Klondike Gold Rush, Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, Kate Carmack and Patsy Henderson, and home to world famous Big Game hunting guide, Johnny Johns, the community's significance is related closely to its people and history. Also, the location of the driving of the last spike for the White Pass & Yukon Route, a supply centre for mining ventures and a long time tourism destination, Carcross has important territorial associations that can be shared through heritage conservation measures and the interpretation of the community's historic sites and cultural landscapes.

### **Boundaries**

The proposed boundaries (Figure 23) of the Carcross heritage conservation district include the historic town site with the majority of Carcross' historic buildings and structures. The boundaries begin at Austin Street in the north and extend south across the Nares River to include the Carcross/Tagish First Nation old village along Waterfront Drive. The western boundary follows the shoreline of Lake Bennett next to Bennett Avenue as far south as the pedestrian bridge and extends across the Nares River to include Waterfront Drive. An irregular boundary on the east comprises the area from the train tracks west in the northern section and along Tagish Avenue to the South Klondike Highway in the southern half.

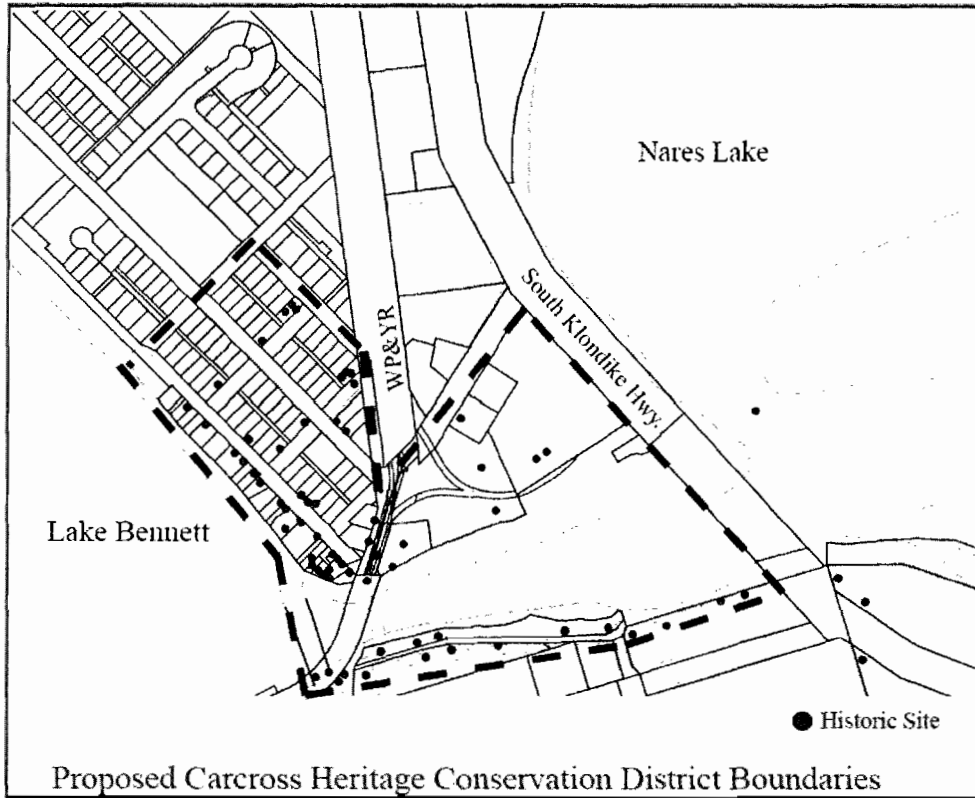


Figure 23: Proposed boundaries for the Carcross Heritage Conservation District. Base map courtesy Historic Sites Unit, Government of Yukon.

### **Buildings To Be Included**

Because the strength of a heritage conservation district lies in its assemblage of buildings, it is again recommended that all buildings within the boundaries be included in the district with a further identification of the most significant buildings. Again, utilizing the ICOMOS *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas*, the importance of all buildings in the community should be emphasized but also recognize that not all buildings can be saved. By laying out which buildings should be preserved most diligently and which, under exceptional circumstances, could be altered.

Determinations of important heritage character elements to be preserved in the district

would be in the District Management Plan to assist with ongoing heritage conservation of the district.

### **Incentives**

Currently there are no incentives specific to the community of Carcross other than the Historic Property Assistance program delivered by the Yukon Government. It should be noted however, that the Caribou Hotel has undergone substantial exterior restoration with the assistance of this program and through technical expertise provided by Historic Sites Unit staff. Additionally, the Caribou Hotel benefited from the Yukon Historic Site Property Tax Exemption which provides tax exemptions to Yukon historic sites outside of municipalities. This is made possible under the *Assessment and Taxation Act*, 51(1) and is designed to “assist the owners by freeing disposable income to encourage maintenance of the historic site.”<sup>282</sup> Through financial incentives and private owner initiative, the Caribou hotel has become the showpiece of the community.

### **Cultural History**

The area surrounding present day Carcross was the traditional territory of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. Ancestors of the Tagish people had hunting and fishing camps in and around the lakes and mountains of the area which they call *Todezzane* “blowing all the time” whereas the local Tlingit call it *Naataase Heen*, “water running through the narrows”.<sup>283</sup> In the early nineteenth century access to southern Yukon was

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<sup>282</sup> “Yukon Historic Site Property Tax Exemption Policy,” Government of Yukon.

<sup>283</sup> Government of Yukon, *Carcross Historic Buildings Walking Tour*, <http://www.tc.gov.yk.ca/publications/publications-carcross.pdf> (accessed September 15, 2010).

restricted as the Chilkoot and Chilkat Tlingit people refused to allow passage through the mountain passes on their traditional trails. Instead, the coastal Tlingit facilitated in the trading of furs for European goods between Europeans and the inland Tagish people until the late 1870s when the Tlingit finally opened up their trails into southern Yukon.<sup>284</sup> However, the community of Carcross would not develop for several more years.

It was the Klondike Gold Rush that had the first major impact on the Tagish people's homeland. The first posts were set up by the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) at Lake Bennett and on the Tagish River to monitor the thousands of people entering the territory.<sup>285</sup> Initially named Caribou Crossing because of the herd of caribou that frequently passed through the area, the community was a popular stopping point for stampede on their way to the Klondike. The King Mill, opened early 1897, was for a short time the largest sawmill in the Yukon. Mike King, the mill owner, also constructed boats and scows for gold rush stamperders.<sup>286</sup> The King's Mill, who primarily constructed barges for use on the southern Yukon lakes and rivers, was also moved there from Bennett.<sup>287</sup> As depicted in Figure 24, the town began very modestly and in addition to King's Mill and the NWMP post, tent structures dotted the landscape on the north side of the narrows and a First Nation community was located on the south side.<sup>288</sup> It was the

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<sup>284</sup> Brenda Carson et al, *Carcross Region Heritage Report: Carcross Dunes, Carcross Village and Conrad City and District* (Department of Renewable Resources, 1992), 13.

<sup>285</sup> Carson et al. 14.

<sup>286</sup> Ken Spotswood, *The History of Carcross, Yukon Territory*, <http://explorenorth.com/yukon/carcross-history.html> (accessed October 15, 2010).

<sup>287</sup> Carson et al. 19.

<sup>288</sup> *Carcross Historic Buildings Walking Tour*.

construction of the White Pass & Yukon Route (WP&YR) that secured the town's permanence. Surveyed by J.H. Brownlee in 1899 on behalf of the WP&YR, the company thought the area an ideal location for a stop on its way to and from Whitehorse and Skagway. The driving of the last spike of the WP&YR took place on July 29, 1900 in Caribou Crossing marking the completion of the rail line between Skagway and Whitehorse.<sup>289</sup> The community's placement on the railway made it the gathering point for the region, including the Tagish people who gradually moved to the more permanent settlement of Carcross.<sup>290</sup>



*Figure 24: By the spring of 1900, only the NWMP post, the King's Mill and a few other structures comprised the small community of Carcross. Source: Yukon Archives, H.C. Barley fonds, #4667.*

<sup>289</sup> Stan Cohen, *The White Pass and Yukon Route: A Pictorial History* (Missoula: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1980), 22.

<sup>290</sup> Carson et al. 14.



The train stop in Caribou Crossing then prompted new construction in the community with the erection of the Upper Yukon Consolidated Co. sawmills, a train station and the Caribou Hotel. By 1904, Carcross also served as the distribution and supply point for the nearby Windy Arm silver-gold properties and the Conrad mining district. However, high transportation costs and inconsistent ore quality caused the decline of Conrad City and the nearby Venus Mine closed in 1912.<sup>291</sup> Many buildings from Conrad were subsequently relocated to Carcross.

In addition to mining, Carcross history is closely associated with mission work in the Yukon. In 1901, Bishop Bompas, Church of England, left northern Yukon in favour of Carcross. Upon his arrival he built a small church and started a mission school where he could “minister to the local first nations and educate indigenous children from across his diocese.”<sup>292</sup> Bishop Bompas retired in 1905 and then died a year later. He was replaced by Bishop Stringer who continued Bishop Bompas’s vision of building a school to serve greater numbers of children. In 1909, Stringer received federal funds to build a school for 30 boarders and one year later the ‘Chooutla Indian School’ was built on 100 acres, two miles from Carcross.<sup>293</sup> The school remained closely linked to the community, housing the residents and the school in town from April 1939 to October 1944 when the school burned down. The former rectory became the girls’ residence and Matthew

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<sup>291</sup> Dick McKenna, “John Howard Conrad,” <http://north-land.com/ypa/JohnHowardConrad.html> (accessed September 18, 2010).

<sup>292</sup> H. A. Cody, Kenneth Coates, and William R. Morrison. *An Apostle of the North: Memoirs of the Right Reverend William Carpenter Bompas* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2002), 69.

<sup>293</sup> Carson et al. 21.

Watson, owner of the general store, provided accommodations in some of his empty houses. The WP&YR donated its section house for use as a temporary kitchen and dining hall. The school was later rebuilt on its original site and accommodated up to 120 students at its peak, eventually closing for good in 1969 when native children were integrated into territorial schools.<sup>294</sup>

Carcross has also relied on tourism as a main economic driver in the community. Big game hunting was becoming a popular activity in drawing people into the country before the First World War, increasing steadily during the 1920s and 1930s. Small numbers of Americans were willing to pay large amounts for the opportunity to hunt in the Yukon. The most famous Yukon guide was Johnny Johns, a First Nation man from Carcross. First Nations were pivotal in the success of big game hunting but a 1923 regulation barred them from serving as Chief Guides. Johns was forced to give up his traditional rights and become enfranchised in order to operate his own guiding company but most other First Nation guides resorted to working for white guides.<sup>295</sup> The publicity brought by big game hunting helped promote the region as a tourism destination.

With mining dependent on fluctuating world prices, the White Pass & Yukon Route sought additional business opportunities. A river division of the WP&YR, the British Yukon Navigation Co. constructed the sternwheeler SS Tutshi in 1917 for use as both a freight carrier and a tourist vessel that travelled the southern lakes. The SS Tutshi continued providing trips to Ben-My-Chree at the end of Tagish Lake, Atlin and other

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<sup>294</sup> Carson et al. 22.

<sup>295</sup> Coates and Morrison. 196.

nearby locations until 1955 when cruise ship excursions from Skagway to Carcross ended. The SS Tutshi was left on the Carcross waterfront until it was acquired by the Yukon Government in 1971 where it continued to serve as a tourist attraction until it burned in July 1990.<sup>296</sup> Recent projects designed to revive Carcross as a premiere tourism destination have seen the reopening of the WP&YR from Carcross-Skagway as scenic railway trip in 2006 and the construction of a memorial with remains of the S.S. Tutshi in fall 2010 reinstating the important role tourism has played in Carcross' history.

### **Architecture & Construction**

Surveyed in 1899 for the White Pass & Yukon Route, construction of buildings in and around Carcross began around the same time. A fire in 1909 leveled the majority of the commercial buildings in town. Of the pre-1909 period buildings, only the White Pass swing bridge, White Pass warehouse, the North West Mounted Police Barracks, Bishop Bompas house, Bobby Watson residence, customs office and the Phelps house remain. However, a number of pre-1909 buildings were moved in after the fire from Conrad and other nearby abandoned mining communities. The majority of the historic buildings in the study area are therefore constructed between 1909 and 1939. A smaller amount of buildings were constructed during the 1940s, including the pumphouse buildings that were constructed when the US Army installed a water system in Carcross.<sup>297</sup> Other 1940s era buildings were moved in from Whitehorse, such as the Johnny John's cabin and the Lawrence Dickson Garage in the CTFN village which was a pre-fab building used by the

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<sup>296</sup> Yukon Historic Sites Inventory, "S.S. Tutshi".

<sup>297</sup> Yukon Historic Sites Inventory, "Pumphouse."

Army in Whitehorse and moved to Carcross during the late 1950s for use as the Baptist Church.

Very few of the historic sites in Carcross can be described as truly belonging to any one architectural style and most are best described as vernacular architecture. A few buildings were constructed with false fronts as was common in communities throughout the Yukon at the turn of the century. These false fronts range from minimalist designs with few details to more elaborate with an entablature and molded trim at the cornice. Architectural details in the remaining buildings were generally more minimalistic.

Of Carcross' stock of historic buildings a variety of construction techniques were employed. Many buildings are a combination of frame and log, with only slightly more being frame construction. The presence of local mills at Bennett, Carcross and Conrad allowed for construction of frame buildings from a very early time. The abundance of nearby trees that could be used to quickly construct homes with minimal technical skills also accounts for the large number of log buildings that continued to be built during the 1906-1939 period.

Both frame and logs buildings are predominantly one storey with gable roofs and wood sash windows. Only five of the historic buildings are above 1.5 storeys in height. These are primarily the commercial buildings along Dawson Charlie Street, including the Matthew Watson Store and White Pass Railway Station. The Caribou Hotel is the only 3 storey building in town. Dawson Charlie Street is recognized as one of the last Yukon streets composed entirely of historic buildings relatively unchanged since 1910.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Yukon Historic Sites Inventory, "Caribou Hotel."

Elsewhere, many buildings have one or more additions showing the evolution of the community over time and the changing use of buildings.

Log buildings are primarily constructed with small round logs chinked with rope, burlap, moss and/or mortar. Some have saplings covering the chinking. Many of the log buildings found in Carcross have “Yukon corners,” constructed by butting logs at corners to vertical 2x6 boards at a 90°. Roofing is a combination of wood sawn shingles, roll roofing and corrugated metal. A few instances of flattened cans for roofing are found around town.

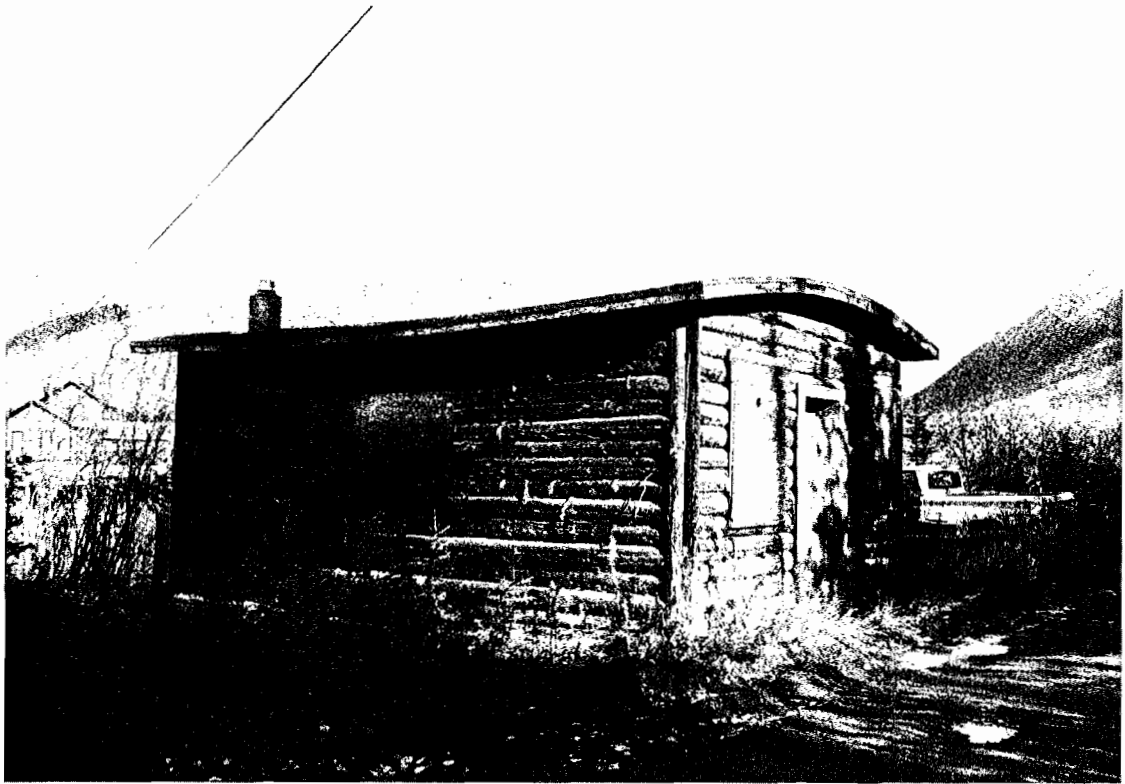
Interestingly, there is a collection of single storey log buildings with arched roofs. The buildings were constructed in the 1920s by Johnny Williams who was a section foreman for the WP&YR. The buildings, including the Barracks and Johnny Williams’ home (Figure 25) are said to have been built with small logs because the larger trees in the area had been used for boat building.<sup>299</sup> Barry’s Garage was of similar design but is a frame building with vertical planks for cladding and board and batten garage doors.

### **Integrity**

As noted earlier, Dawson Charlie Street has achieved significance as one of the only remaining intact streetscapes in Yukon of pre-1910 buildings. Although this is the only entire street intact, Carcross has a number of other areas that retain high levels of integrity. Bennett Avenue is also noted for its historic residential streetscape. The street is lined with residential buildings that retain the historic density, scale, massing and materials.

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<sup>299</sup> Yukon Historic Sites Inventory, “The Barracks.”

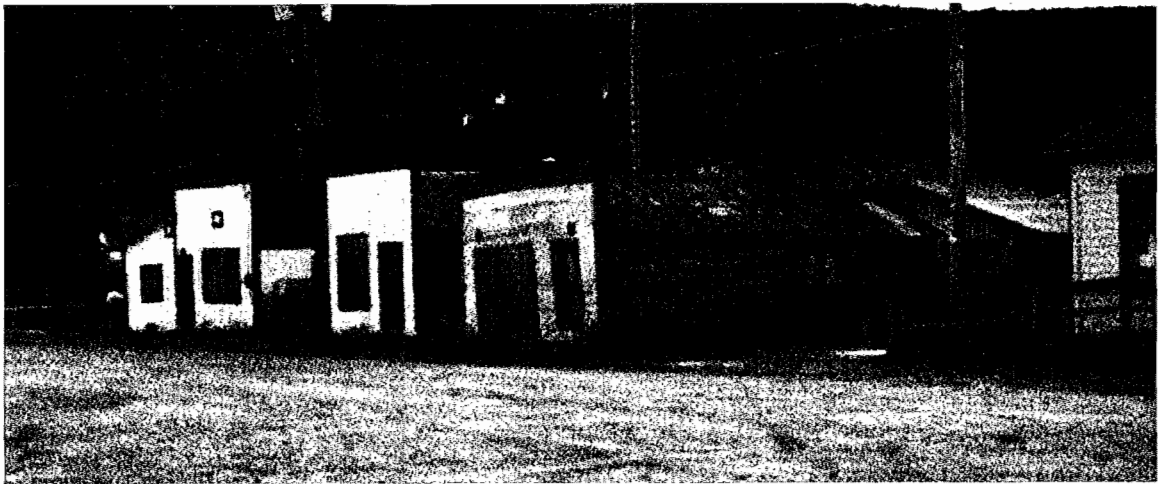


*Figure 25: The Johnny Williams home is one of several buildings constructed with an arched roof in Carcross. Photo by the author, October 2010.*

In many locations around Carcross it is possible to compare historic photographs with contemporary ones without noticing drastic changes. Figure 26 show the south end of Bennett Avenue in 1922 and Figure 27 shows a similar view taken in October 2010. Although a few minor changes, such as the addition of an access ramp in front of the Post Office, the buildings and the streetscape retains remarkable integrity. Similarly, the buildings along Waterfront Drive, despite many being in poor condition, still convey the historic setting, materials and scale of homes.



*Figure 26: Bennett Avenue, 1922. Source: Yukon Archives, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds, #7783*



*Figure 27: Bennett Avenue, 2010. Photo by the author, October 2010.*

### **Character Defining Elements**

The historic significance of Carcross is based on the number of historic buildings that retain their heritage character. The following character defining elements are important components of the proposed historic conservation district that should be retained.

- The heritage character of the Dawson Charlie Streetscape of pre-1910 buildings including the railway tracks

- The concentration of historic residential buildings on Bennett Avenue and Waterfront Drive that are predominately round log construction or wood frame with wood drop siding.
- Waterfront Drive's association with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. Houses are placed close to the waterfront and the gravel road without any formal arrangement. Houses along Waterfront drive are more widely spaced than along Bennett Avenue.
- Simple roof lines; roofs are clad with corrugated metal, sawn wood shingles or roll roofing
- Irregular placement of buildings along Bennett Avenue and beachfront that developed from the organic construction of squatter residences.
- Closely spaced houses along Bennett Avenue.
- Varied setbacks, particularly along Bennett Avenue, buildings typically built close to the side lot lines and the street line
- Predominance of 1 storey residential buildings
- Concentration of historic buildings along or near the waterfront
- Views from the waterfront to important community landmarks such as the White Pass Swing Bridge, the Caribou Hotel and S.S. Tutshi Memorial
- Viewscapes from the downtown core of surrounding landscape features including Montana Mountain, Nares Mountain, Bennett Lake, Nares Lake.
- "Yukon Corners" on many log buildings
- Mixture of wood sash and wood casement windows



- Combination of paved roads in the community and unpaved roads across the river along Waterfront Drive. Absence of sidewalks throughout.
- Community's placement at the Narrows between Bennett Lake and Nares Lake.
- Undeveloped shorelines.

### **Conclusion**

By examining three case studies of potential heritage conservation districts in the Yukon, this study was able to identify some of the challenges and opportunities that exist in Dawson City, Whitehorse and Carcross. These case studies, though site specific should provide an accurate depiction of potential scenarios that may occur if district designations were permitted in the Yukon. Most notably, the case studies have shown that despite the legislation in place, all three communities have, or are developing, procedures to both identify and protect sites and portions of communities that are essentially heritage conservation districts. Conclusions obtained from the case studies presented here will inform the recommendations for the formalization of heritage conservation districts as a management tool for Yukon communities.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Recognizing that heritage conservation is an ever evolving field and that a more holistic approach to historic sites management in the Yukon is required, the aim of this thesis was to determine the suitability of heritage conservation districts in the Yukon. As historic sites are threatened with demolition and neglect, the desire to do more to protect sites of historic and cultural significance has led to a realization that individual sites are not representative of all facets of our history. The *Yukon Historic Resources Act* exists as legislation to govern the many aspects of historic resources management but the current interpretation of the act allows designation of historic sites only individual parcels of land. This study sought to explore the possibility of working within the current Act and the *Municipal Act* to develop procedures for heritage conservation district designations.

Chapter II examined the history of heritage resources management in Canada and the emergence of heritage districts as a preservation planning tool. This provided context for the evolution of districts to explore what aspects of district designation and planning should be considered when assessing their suitability in the Yukon. Chapter III provided an introduction to Yukon history and the progression of historic sites management in the Yukon. Finally, the chapter examined how best practices in heritage conservation district designations and management could inform procedures in the Yukon, including: the

process for identifying heritage values that may exist within a district; methods for determining boundaries; how to identify buildings for protection within a district while allowing development; and determining character defining elements. They were examined to inform recommendations for heritage conservation district management.

Although the main question of this thesis was to explore the possibility of establishing guidelines for the designation of heritage conservation districts, a simple yes or no answer would not suffice and in itself was not the main goal. As the title of this study suggests, providing strategies for the successful identification and management of heritage conservation districts was the primary motivation. Through several subquestions, strategies for success were explored by examining how other provinces and countries are using districts as a preservation and planning tool. The study draws on their experiences to consider what aspects might best relate to the Yukon situation. Research revealed that not only will heritage conservation districts work, but in many cases, are already being utilized in the Yukon as planning tools under different names.

Chapter IV introduced three case studies that could test the findings and procedures described in earlier chapters. The case studies revealed that Yukon communities are looking for new and innovative ways to identify and protect aspects of our collective history. With an understanding of the many aspects involved in designating and managing districts elsewhere, the case studies collectively reinforced many of the opportunities and threats to successful heritage conservation districts in the Yukon. The downtown heritage area in Dawson City, Takhini North in Whitehorse and Carcross, Yukon have revealed several key findings. Most importantly from a preservation standpoint, they all represent unique aspects of the Yukon's history and would be ideal

candidates for designation. However, the case studies identified a few challenges as well. In the case of the Dawson City downtown heritage area, with the number of designations, heritage management plans, heritage bylaws and regulations already in place, adding yet another layer of designation and management could cause confusion and resistance from community members.

In Takhini North, the main challenge is time itself. After having undergone a community planning process over the past few years, the opportunity for preserving the heritage character of the area may have already passed. Also, the rapid rate at which buildings within the proposed district are being altered could compromise the integrity of the neighbourhood in the time it would take to develop a district designation.

The difficulty presented in Carcross would apply equally to all unincorporated communities. Questions surrounding who would develop and implement a heritage conservation district plan is partially unresolved. The Local Advisory Councils do not have the power to manage districts and the Land Planning Office development officer may not have the time or expertise to address the increased number of heritage alteration permits that would come as a result of district designations.

Another conclusion that resulted from the background research and case studies was the importance of public willingness. The requirement under the *Historic Resources Act* that owner consent be given prior to designation may be the largest hurdle in the successful implementation of district management. The scope of this study did not allow for extensive public consultation so conclusions on whether or not the public would support heritage conservation districts are unknown. Lessons learned from areas that do allow district designations has shown that through public participation in the planning

process, establishing clear and consistent design controls and by offering incentives to building owners, many fears are abated.

Stemming from these conclusions a number of recommendations are included here as strategies for successfully implementing heritage conservation districts in the Yukon. The primary recommendation is that the Government of Yukon develop regulations for the designation and management of districts. However, for districts to be successful a few additional recommendations must be addressed.

The research has identified a few key aspects that have informed recommendations of this study. These include education, public participation and resource allocation. Education may prove to be one of the most important factors in successfully implementing heritage conservation districts in the Yukon. Due to the negative stigma attached to districts by some, an education and public awareness plan should be developed to ensure that Yukonners are receiving a clear and consistent message that negates their fears before they even emerge. The Yukon Historical & Museums Association has played this role on behalf of the Government of Yukon in the past and could be a suitable candidate again. Similarly, recommendations for public participation will help alleviate fears that property owners have at the beginning of the process. Also, through public participation, the local values are better incorporated into the plan and will consequently increase buy-in from the community.

Heritage conservation districts would, in theory, drastically increase the number of designated sites in the Yukon, therefore; the current resources available to manage historic sites could quickly prove inadequate. Resources include both human and financial resources. Human resources would be affected most notably in the Historic

Sites Unit. The duties of the registrar, those providing technical expertise and the interpretive planner would all expectedly see an increase in their workload as the number of districts increased. The economic impact of districts was beyond the scope of this current study and would be recommended as a next step. As part of the economic assessment, projections for increased applications to the incentive funds should be undertaken to determine if funds available would be enough to entice property owners and contribute to the preservation costs of districts. These recommendations extend beyond the Government of Yukon to municipal governments interested in designating heritage conservation districts as well.

The final recommendation is the establishment of heritage advisory committees to help develop district management plans, make recommendations to government and to serve as watch-dogs over the districts. The committees could be community specific, such as the committee already established in Dawson, or a regionalized approach could be taken where local committees are not possible or desired. A heritage foundation could also be established to serve as an arm's length non-profit society that, in addition to the role stated above, could raise and distribute funds as heritage incentives to property owners within districts.

Through education, promotion, incentives and proper management heritage conservation districts have the ability to preserve larger aspects of the Yukon's heritage. If successful, districts can, as research has shown, have a positive social and economic impact on communities by encouraging investment in historic sites, increasing community pride and satisfaction, generating increased tourism activity and by safeguarding the heritage character elements that make the area significant. To

paraphrase the title of a recent study completed in Ontario, “Heritage Districts Work!”

Now, let us put them to work in the Yukon today to preserve our heritage for tomorrow.

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