



CITY OF VANCOUVER

Community Services

Planning: Current Planning

City of Vancouver Search Help

Planning Home

Heritage Program: General Information

Heritage Register

Heritage Policies and Procedures[pdf]

Transfer of Density

Heritage Incentives for Gastown, Chinatown, Victory Square, Hastings Street

Heritage Case Studies

Heritage Awards

Online Walking Tours

Vancouver Heritage Commission

Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee

Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee

Vancouver Heritage Foundation

Heritage Links

Community Services Home

Heritage Conservation Program

Introduction

In April 1983, City Council initiated a Heritage Conservation Program. Both Council and the Vancouver Heritage Commission (then known as the Heritage Advisory Committee) realized that a comprehensive management program was necessary to identify the city's heritage resources, to develop incentives to assist in the conservation of those resources, and to create a greater awareness and understanding of our built heritage. There are three main components to the Heritage Program.

Vancouver Heritage Register

By the end of 1986, Vancouver's centennial year, City Council adopted the Vancouver Heritage Register (then known as the Heritage Inventory) which included buildings, landscapes, monuments and archaeological sites that have heritage significance. A site does not have to be designated to be included on the Register. There are approximately 2,400 resources listed on the Register ranging from workers cottages and utilitarian warehouses to elaborately decorated mansions and commercial buildings. The Vancouver Heritage Register [pdf] is a valuable record of the development and change that has occurred in Vancouver's history. Approximately 21% (about 500) sites are municipally designated [see the Heritage Bylaw].

Heritage Management Plan

The Heritage Management Plan includes a program of incentives and protective measures that are aimed at promoting the conservation of our heritage resources. Incentives such as zoning by-law, subdivision by-law and parking by-law relaxations, density bonuses and transfers, and permit fast tracking encourage the restoration and continued use of heritage buildings. Protective measures include designation, heritage revitalization agreements, heritage alteration permits, heritage inspections, impact assessments, temporary protection, the withholding of approvals and permits, heritage control periods and heritage site maintenance standards.

Public Education and Information Program

This aspect of the Heritage Conservation Program provides information to the public on heritage issues and appropriate conservation techniques. Initiatives such as the annual Heritage Awards which recognize efforts that further the goal of heritage conservation are also an important part of the Heritage Program. The Heritage Plaque Program identifies municipally designated heritage sites with a distinctive bronze plaque and serves to acknowledge conservation efforts of building owners. It also increases public awareness of our built heritage and of our history.

[top]

Questions or Comments? E-mail: planning@vancouver.ca

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What's New

Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program and Transfer of Density Review.

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