

Heritage Capacity and Economic Impact Survey:

Introduction

This report summarizes information gathered from local governments (municipalities and regional districts) in British Columbia through the 2020 Heritage Capacity and Economic Impact (HCEI) Survey. It provides a snapshot in time of heritage conservation activities from the 2020 calendar year, as reported by participating local government staff to BC Stats working on behalf of the Heritage Branch.

The annual survey raises awareness of heritage conservation tools and emphasizes the strategies that are most effective in building heritage conservation capacity at the local level. As well, the survey facilitates the assessment of heritage conservation capacity across the province and provides information to support Heritage Branch policy planning.

We do not have all of the information for all local governments in the province, but the information we do have allows us to know the minimum number of heritage planning tools implemented and the total amount spent by participating local governments on heritage conservation in a calendar year.

2021 Summary Report

Survey Responses

- 56 of 190 local governments (29.47%) responded to the 2021 survey
 - 9 of 28 regional districts (32.1%)
 - 47 of 162 municipalities or local governments (29.0%)
 - 16 of 28 governments (57.1%) with a population over 80,000
 - 24 of 58 governments (41.4%) with a population between 10,000 and 80,000
 - 31 of 104 governments (29.8%) with a population under 10,000
- This has been extrapolated¹ to approximate the responses for all 190 governments. The extrapolated figure is shown below.

¹ Final results were weighted based on government type (municipalities or local government and regional district) and population size (<10,000, 10,000-80,000, >80,000).

Official Community Plan (OCP)

- 152 local governments (84.7%) reported their OCP includes references to heritage conservation

Heritage Advisors to Council

- 102 local governments (53.9%) reported having some group advising on heritage matters
 - 50 local governments (49.2%) reported having a Heritage or Historical Society, Group or Foundation
 - 35 local governments (34.6%) reported having heritage planners
 - 27 local governments (26.6%) reported having a Heritage Advisory Committee
 - 27 local governments (26.2%) reported having a Heritage Commission
 - 4 local governments (4.3%) reported having an Indigenous Advisory Committee
 - 10 local governments (9.7%) reported having a similar entity

Planning Documents

- 140 local governments (74.7%) reported using planning documents
 - 76 local governments (54.7%) reported preparing heritage-related bylaws or policies
 - 49 local governments (34.8%) reported preparing Heritage Design Guidelines
 - 40 local governments (28.5%) reported preparing Heritage Strategic Plans
 - 29 local governments (20.6%) reported preparing Conservation Plans
 - 18 local governments (12.5%) reported preparing Heritage Tourism Plans
 - 9 local governments (6.2%) reported preparing Heritage Context Studies
 - 8 local governments (5.5%) reported preparing Heritage Feasibility Studies
 - 26 local governments (18.4%) reported undertaking 'Other' heritage-related planning activities

Community Heritage Register

- 79 local governments (45.0%) reported having a community heritage register in place
- 10,230 was the total reported number of historic places listed on community heritage registers
 - 36 of these 10,230 (0.4%) historic places were added in 2020
 - 30 historic places were removed in 2020
- 31 local governments (66.9%) notified the BC Register of Historic Places of additions and removals of legal protections and recognitions in 2020

Heritage Designation

- 3,507 was the total reported number of heritage properties that had Heritage Designation protection
 - 37 properties gained Heritage Designation in 2020
- 252 heritage alteration permits were issued in 2020
- 20 heritage revitalization agreements were made in 2020
- 8 conservation covenants were made in 2020
- 56 heritage conservation areas have been established

Standards and Guidelines

- 52 local governments (32.2%) reported that the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*² are referenced in policies and procedures for heritage properties
- 87 local governments (70.8%) reported that the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*³ are helpful

Heritage Promotion/Interpretation

- 57 local governments (30.5%) developed (or funded through another organization) heritage promotion or interpretation activities in 2020. Of these:
 - 40 local governments (69.3%) included heritage content on their websites
 - 33 local governments (57.9%) installed heritage signs or plaques
 - 29 local governments (51.3%) published printed materials, such as brochures and guides
 - 24 local governments (41.8%) had exhibits related to heritage
 - 23 local governments (40.9%) ran heritage tours, workshops, or events
 - 18 local governments (32.2%) conducted heritage social media campaigns
 - \$4,687,119.50 was the total reported annual expenditure by all local governments on heritage promotion/interpretation activities

Heritage Conservation Incentives

- 37 local governments (20.9%) reported that they provided incentives to owners of heritage property in 2020
- 14 local governments (7.6%) reported that they had provided tax incentives for owners of residential and commercial heritage properties:
 - \$3,311,508.71 was the reported total value of property tax that will be forgiven for 2020 tax incentive projects
 - \$43,597,685.40 was the reported total value of projects receiving tax incentives in 2020

² Available free online at <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes.aspx>

³ Available free online at <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes.aspx>

- \$40,286,176.69 was the reported total private investment resulting from 2020 tax incentive projects
- 21 local governments (11.8%) and 5 grant organizations (41.7%) reported that they had provided grants to owners of heritage properties:
 - \$22,857,467.58 was the reported total value of grants provided (\$2,797,750.03 – local governments; \$20,059,717.55 – grant organizations)
 - \$34,509,476.72 was the reported total value of projects receiving heritage grants in 2020 (\$7,024,982.17 – local governments; \$27,484,494.55 – grant organizations)
 - \$11,652,009.14 was the reported total private investment resulting from 2020 grant programs (\$4,227,232.14 – local governments; \$7,424,777.00 – grant organizations)
- 18 local governments (10.2%) reported that they had provided other heritage conservation incentives:
 - \$5,671,159.09 was the reported total value of other heritage incentives provided
 - \$8,444,833.87 was the reported total value of projects receiving other heritage incentives in 2020
 - \$2,773,674.78 was the reported total private investment resulting from 2020 other heritage incentives.
- \$11,780,417.82 was the total cost of all heritage-related incentives provided by local governments in 2020
- \$59,067,501.44 was the total value of all projects receiving heritage-related incentives in 2020
- \$47,287,083.62 was the total private investment resulting from heritage-related incentives in 2020

Heritage Investment

- 79 local governments (44.3%) reported that their local government owns or manages historic places
 - \$9,629,204.41 was the reported total expenditure for the preservation, rehabilitation or restoration of heritage property owned and/or managed by local government in 2020
- 574 historic places were reported to be owned by local governments
- 49 local governments (75.7%) reported that historic places are a source of revenue for their local government
 - \$375,854.16 was the reported estimated annual income generated by these historic places
- The local government-owned historic places had the following uses:
 - 37 local governments (57.3%) reported public space
 - 31 local governments (47.0%) reported non-profit
 - 18 local governments (27.8%) reported commercial

- 3 local governments (4.9%) reported residential
- 2 local governments (2.5%) reported other
- Employees of local government reported spending 13,800 hours a month working on heritage planning and projects
 - This is equivalent to 99 full-time⁴ employees

Challenges of Protecting and Promoting Historic Places

- When asked about the most challenging aspects of protecting and promoting historic places in 2020,
 - 112 (65.4%) reported a lack of local government staff resources
 - 85 (49.8%) reported local government lacks heritage expertise
 - 83 (48.5%) reported a lack of local government financial resources
 - 77 (44.8%) reported concerns surrounding designating heritage buildings and what the designation brings with it
 - 66 (38.6%) reported a lack of external financial resources (federal, provincial, private)
 - 53 (31.1%) reported not a priority for Council
 - 35 (20.2%) reported a lack of heritage sites or the community was new
 - 33 (19.5%) reported a lack of heritage conservation knowledge in the community
 - 18 (10.8%) reported difficulty in finding qualified contractors
 - 3 (1.6%) reported difficulty in finding information about protecting heritage properties
 - 21 (12.2%) reported other challenging aspects

First Nations Partnerships

- 103 local governments (59.0%) reported working with Indigenous governments, organizations, or individuals on heritage conservation matters in 2020
 - 72 local governments (41.1%) participated in consultation
 - 69 local governments (39.5%) participated in engagement
 - 43 local governments (24.5%) participated in partnerships
 - 8 local governments (4.3%) participated in contracting
 - 18 local governments (10.1%) participated in other capacities

Heritage and Sustainability

- 100 local governments (55.0%) factored in the following environmental benefits of conserving historic buildings into planning decisions in 2020
 - 76 local governments (41.5%) considered “adapting under-used or vacant buildings”

⁴ Full-time employee is categorized as working 140 hours a month.

- 60 local governments (32.8%) considered “reduced demolition waste in landfills”
- 48 local governments (26.2%) considered “reusing and recycling building materials”
- 42 local governments (23.1%) considered the conservation of “resources (including building materials) in existing buildings”
- 37 local governments (20.1%) considered “reduced energy consumption versus energy to construct new buildings”
- 34 local governments (18.6%) considered “reduced emissions conserving existing buildings versus new construction emissions”
- 23 local governments (12.6%) considered “reduced urban sprawl”
- 5 local governments (2.7%) considered other environmental benefits

Impact of COVID-19

- 87 local governments (50.2%) reported their heritage activities were impacted by COVID-19
 - 43 (24.8%) reported a loss of revenue from visitors or programming
 - 42 (24.2%) reported a reduction of staff time on heritage planning, conservation, and/or programming
 - 40 (23.4%) reported a cancellation or postponement of heritage-related events or programming
 - 30 (17.1%) reported cancelled or delayed heritage conservation work
 - 25 (14.7%) reported increased costs for materials for heritage conservation work
 - 16 (9.5%) reported a lack of volunteers
- 25 local governments (16.4%) applied for COVID-19 recovery funding related to heritage, with 17 (11.3%) receiving funding and 8 (5.2%) not receiving funding
- When asked what would have helped secure funding or encouraged applying:
 - 72 (75.4%) mentioned staff capacity to apply
 - 56 (58.1%) mentioned more knowledge about funding programs
 - 32 (33.8%) mentioned eligibility for funding programs
 - 5 (5.2%) mentioned more time to apply

Economic Impact

Grant organizations (5 or 41.7%) and local governments (21 or 11.8%) that provide grant incentives were asked additional questions on their grant programs.

- The following types of heritage-related projects and/or programs were reported:
 - 22 groups (83.9%) reported heritage preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration projects
 - 10 groups (37.0%) reported collections management
 - 9 groups (33.0%) reported archives and records management

- 8 groups (30.7%) reported heritage planning
- 8 groups (30.7%) reported heritage research and documentation
- 7 groups (28.4%) reported heritage interpretation, awareness, or promotion
- 5 groups (20.0%) reported Indigenous cultural heritage projects and programs
- 3 groups (12.3%) reported operating or organizational sustaining grants
- Recognition and/or protection requirements for heritage properties were reported by 23 (90.0%) of groups
 - 9 groups (74.6%) required designation
 - 8 groups (61.9%) required being on the Community Heritage Register
 - 5 groups (41.3%) required a Heritage Revitalization Agreement
 - 3 groups (20.6%) required being within Heritage Conservation Areas
 - 2 groups (12.7%) required a Heritage Conservation Covenant
 - 3 groups (20.6%) reported other requirements
- The following types of applicants were reported eligible for heritage-related funding:
 - 20 (82.8%) reported not-for-profit organizations were eligible
 - 19 (77.0%) reported private organizations were eligible
 - 18 (72.1%) reported individuals were eligible
 - 10 (41.0%) reported charities were eligible
 - 5 (18.9%) reported Indigenous governments were eligible
 - 4 (17.2%) reported local governments were eligible
 - 3 (10.7%) reported school boards were eligible
- Out of the 316 applications received for heritage-related programs in 2020, 276 (87.2%) applications were funded in 2020
 - \$83,739,456.35 was the total reported amount requested by applicants for heritage-related programs in 2020
 - 5 (25.9%) groups reported an increase in the total amount of funding available for heritage-related grant programs in 2020
 - 3 (14.6%) reported a decrease in the total amount of funding available
- When asked about the most challenging aspects as a granting organization of heritage programs in 2020,
 - 10 (55.1%) reported project costs exceed maximum grant contribution
 - 8 (48.3%) reported difficulty in finding qualified contractors
 - 7 (40.1%) reported a lack of staff resources to manage program
 - 7 (40.1%) reported a lack of heritage conservation knowledge among applicants
 - 5 (29.9%) reported difficulty for applicants to get funding quotes
 - 4 (24.2%) reported a lack of awareness of grant programs in community
 - 3 (17.3%) reported not enough grant funding for eligible projects