

Heritage Conservation in Calgary

Progress Snapshot December 2019

Strategic Vision

Through the 2008 *Calgary Heritage Strategy*, Council established a municipal vision “as a Canadian leader in historic preservation” and outlined stakeholders, goals, and actions in achieving that vision. Since the *Strategy’s* adoption, a majority of its 30+ identified action items have been completed, including the following major accomplishments:

- Establishment of the current **Historic Resource Conservation Grant Program** in 2012—systematizing funding for heritage sites.
- Approval of the **City-Owned Historic Building Management Strategy** in 2011 (REDS) and **Cultural Landscape Strategic Plan** in 2012 (Calgary Parks).
- Creation of the online **Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources** in 2010—among the best of its kind in North America.

Approval of the *Calgary Heritage Strategy* also introduced a set of 3 principles – **Identify, Protect, and Manage** – with the understanding that a successful overall approach to heritage conservation requires attention to all 3. With that in mind, the below information attempts to provide a high-level ‘snapshot’ of current progress towards Calgary’s heritage conservation vision through reporting on each principle.

How is Calgary doing?

“Identify”

- The *Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources* currently has 865 listings, including 80 demolished resources (784 unique extant sites).
- The Calgary Heritage Authority added an average of 40 sites/year to the *Inventory* from 2009-2015, after which a Provincial funding source was eliminated. Subsequently, the CHA adds approx. 16 new sites annually.
- The *Inventory* Evaluation System moved to a ‘values-based’ model in 2008 (LPT2008-24), and has seen a fuller range of resources added including worker’s cottages, cultural landscapes, etc.
- The distribution of resource age on the *Inventory* is broadly reflective of Calgary’s major development periods.

“Protect”

- Heritage Planning strives to achieve the designation of 7 historic resources per year. This number was exceeded in 2017 (11 sites) and 2018 (8 sites) - but being owner-driven, is difficult to anticipate.
- An additional 10 sites are protected by legal agreements negotiated as part of comprehensive development projects affecting a historic resource.
- As of this report, 97 sites have been designated as Municipal Historic Resources, or roughly 12% of the extant *Inventory*.
- Including 2019, an average of 4 *Inventory* sites were demolished annually over the past three years. Heritage Planning does not have authority to withhold demolition permits for non-protected resources.

“Man-

- As part of Planning & Development, Heritage Planning has created conservation policy for the Municipal Development Plan, Developed Areas Guidebook, and various Area Plans.
- All planning applications impacting historic resources are reviewed by Heritage Planning. Changes to Municipal Historic Resources are assessed and approved prior to permit issuance.
- To date, 22 historic resources have received funding through the *Conservation Grant Program*, totaling approx. \$3.7 million in investment.
- The grant program reserve is currently at-capacity for 2019, but will more than double in 2020 from \$225K to 500K through *One Calgary*.
- Where density transfer policies apply (Downtown, East Village, Beltline), 16 resources have designated and sold unused density.