

Village of Cumberland Heritage Management Plan

Community Open House

This Open House is a chance for the community to review a proposed Heritage Management Plan for the Village of Cumberland. The formation of the plan has been guided by the community's own vision of its heritage, developed using input from the community at workshops, in interviews, and the review of questionnaires submitted by the community.

Volume 1: Management

An over-arching policy framework to guide heritage conservation now and into the future

Volume 2: Heritage Inventory

Supplements two earlier Village of Cumberland inventory documents: *Cumberland Heritage* and the *Draft Tree Inventory*

Volume 3: Toolkit

A detailed description of heritage conservation tools available under Part 27 of the *Local Government Act*

KEY FINDINGS

There is a wealth of buildings and non-built features within the Village that the community finds to be important for appreciating aspects of its heritage. Many of these were not listed in earlier inventory documents, and with this report are compiled in the Heritage Inventory, found in Volume 2 of the Management Plan.

Section 2.0

Aspects of Cumberland's heritage are organized under six themes, which describe the physical character and central stories found in its history. These themes, developed through research and community consultation, underscore the many ways properties, landscapes, artifacts and other features are important to the community's sense of its heritage.

Section 3.0

Section 3.0 lays out the mechanism for establishing and adding to the Heritage Register; the central tool in the management of heritage in Cumberland.

Section 4.0

At the very heart of the Heritage Management Plan is a step-by-step guide of strategies and actions to promote the conservation of heritage in Village, including sections such as guiding principles, the creation of a Community Heritage Register, and ways to regulate and conserve properties considered to have heritage value. These recommended actions, and the conservation principles that support them, outline what Cumberland's Council, staff, Heritage Commission and citizens can do to promote the conservation of Cumberland's heritage.

Section 5.0

Appended to the previous sections is back-up information that can assist in the shared work of conserving Cumberland's heritage, including a glossary of heritage terms, two case studies, and a list of heritage conservation approaches.

Heritage Inventory – Heritage Management Plan Volume 2

There is a wealth of building and non-building features within the Village that the community finds to be important for appreciating aspects of its heritage, but have only now with this report been listed together in the Heritage Inventory. The full inventory listing can be found in the Heritage Management Plan Volume 2 - Heritage Inventory.

VISION FOR CUMBERLAND

What is a vision?

A vision starts as an uncensored blue-sky dream for the future: if all were possible, what would you want to see happen? What would the future place and community be like?

Visions help a community understand where they want future actions to take them.

Create a heritage program for the Village of Cumberland that promotes a greater understanding of the region as a unique place.

Achieving the Vision ...

- Heritage in the Village of Cumberland will focus on recognizing and conserving all aspects of the history of the place, including the natural environment, First Nations history, and the diversity of other arriving cultures.
- Heritage in Cumberland over the next one, and two-to-five years, will fully contribute to defining overall planning and development goals, objectives and actions for the Village, with heritage embedded into all future planning initiatives and throughout all Village departments.
- Heritage will always be considered when undertaking official land use planning processes.
- Heritage conservation will be integrated into the conservation of natural and cultural lands by the understanding of and application of effective heritage conservation policies and programs.



CUMBERLAND'S HERITAGE VALUES

What are Heritage Values?

The ecological, aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual values held by a community for past present or future generations.

Historical value - relationship to events which happened in the past

- Cumberland's history is considered complex and endlessly interesting, and is important for creating a unique community.
- Cumberland's diverse history, in part the result of historical events and activities such as settlement, mining and logging, is important to the community.
- A wide range of resources represent historical value, such as Camp Road, historical cemeteries, Community Forest, historical commercial buildings, mining structures and many other sites relating to the history and settlement of Cumberland.

Aesthetic value – visual appeal in design, form, structure, materials

- Natural landscapes are important in part for their aesthetic value, including Comox Lake, the various creeks and wetlands and views along with historical geographical features such as glacial landscapes, hillsides and mountain ranges.
- Unparalleled scenery and views are considered important for their aesthetic values.
- Small houses with neighbourly porches and interesting gardens are important for their aesthetic values.

Cultural value - related to a distinct culture or cultural group

- Mention of cultural value related to cultural groups generally that have contributed to the growth and character of the place, such as Chinese, Japanese, Black and other mine workers. Also mentioned were museums and their archives and collections.
- The overall character and sense of place of Cumberland, its people, and being “a village in the forest” represent cultural value for people.

Spiritual value – a belief in something greater than what is seen

- This value was primarily found in the meanings and beliefs behind the many local churches and cemeteries.

Social value – the collective attachment to places or events

- The small town atmosphere of the region, the spirit of the locals and a real sense of community were mentioned as an important social values. The ability of kids to walk to school, and surrounding landscape and forest is considered an important value.
- Other qualities of Cumberland with social value include local, independent businesses, small shops run by locals, festivals and events, and the opportunity to be involved in the community and outdoor life.

Scientific value – knowledge or information about natural and cultural history

- All aspects of the natural world including geography, geology, wetlands, animals and plants were acknowledged as having scientific value.
- Old mining remnants - buildings, railways, slag heaps, artifacts - are important for their scientific values, for example, by revealing past industrial processes.

Educational value – the potential of heritage to teach people

- Heritage generally - both cultural and natural - was cited as having important educational values.

Economic value – potential for economic development, tourism, or relationship to the economic history of the area

- Many people value the economic potential of heritage in Cumberland, particularly as a tourism draw.
- Re-using Village-owned properties for viable businesses is considered a way to conserve Cumberland's heritage, such as the re-use of the old Fire Hall when the new one is built.

Recreational values – recreational aspects of Cumberland, such as outdoor recreation, interpretation, events

- People highly value the recreational opportunities of the region, including the Community Forest, hiking and mountain biking trails, camping, lake and river activities, places such as Maple Lake, Comox Lake, Coal Beach, and Village Park are important recreational amenities.
- Recreational values are found in Cumberland's sports history when it was “famous for its sports teams” and the venues where sports activities take place.

Environmental values – natural areas valued for their own sake, and the contribution of natural heritage to quality of life

- Protection of natural areas from development is seen as an important value. Preserving the wetlands and leaving natural habitat for wildlife was mentioned often, bears in particular were mentioned. Environmental features such as Comox Lake, Perseverance Creek, Coal Beach and the swamp were listed.
- Key glacial features such as kettles and eskers are important for illustrating Cumberland's geological history and for influencing the development and location of mines and railways.
- Natural values of the air, water and soil are important for preservation. The lakes and rivers are

CUMBERLAND THEMES

Heritage Themes:

Heritage themes express the physical character in Cumberland and the central stories found in its history. A group of heritage themes should comprehensively represent the heritage of the place and its community.

A. LAND OF PLENTY

The natural environment is of great importance to Cumberland, first as a source of sustenance for the First Nations throughout the Comox Valley, then as a coal and forest-rich resource to support the building of a British colony, and more recently as a recreational playground.

B. QUIET LIFE, ACTIVE PURSUITS

Typical of small communities throughout the province, citizens of Cumberland savour a friendly quiet community life in town, while at the same time, the residents have historically enjoyed an active and sporting lifestyle in the beautiful landscape in and around the Village.

C. MINING COAL, CUTTING WOOD

Cumberland's economy was founded on the mining and shipping of coal. Later, the harvesting of the surrounding forest lands contributed to the sustained economy of the Village until recent years.

D. DEVELOPING A VILLAGE

The Village's origins are displayed in its infrastructure, including the mining camps and transportation corridors such as rail and road right-of-ways. Its rise as an economic centre is seen in the commercial development focused along Dunsmuir Avenue, and subsequent expansion to surrounding areas.

E. CREATING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

As with most early settlements in B.C., Cumberland was a diverse community. Schools, community centres and ethnic institutions provided the community with meeting places, were a foundation for a shared culture, and remain a touchstone to the community's identity today. Many ethnic groups held classes for children to learn about their culture of origin.

F. GOVERNING CHANGE

An important part of the Village's history is its adaptation to its changing fortunes, its relationship with First Nations, its connection to the surrounding environment, and its ethnic diversity.

HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The following are six over-arching principles that can be used to guide the management of heritage resources in Cumberland.

- Balance regulation and protection with the rights of a property owner
- Commit to regular reviews of heritage management in Cumberland
- Consider a variety of conservation approaches
- Be guided by appropriate conservation standards such as the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*
- Include and complement a wide range of community heritage values
- Engage the community with heritage conservation

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION

The strategies outline an overall plan for action and the implementation of the Heritage Management Plan over one to five years.

Understand and recognize a wide range of heritage resources to support community identity and character

- Year 1
 - Identify and plan for the recognition and potential protection of Cumberland's heritage resources
 - Promote an understanding of heritage in Cumberland that reflects the major historical themes, and represents the broad variety of resource types
- Year 2-5
 - Continue to develop Cumberland's heritage register
 - Provide time and expertise for Cumberland to update and expand the heritage inventory
 - Ensure that the community as a whole is aware of and educated about the importance of heritage conservation in Cumberland

Make heritage conservation an integral part of community planning and part of any future change in Cumberland

- Year 1
 - Promote an understanding of heritage in Cumberland that reflects the major historical themes, and represents the broad variety of resource types (buildings, landscapes, water features, events, etc.)
 - Integrate heritage conservation into day-to-day Village planning and decision-making throughout all municipal departments
- Year 2-5
 - Ensure that heritage resources on the register are acknowledged and cared for
 - Provide ongoing local government support for heritage conservation in Cumberland through the application of its heritage policies

Coordinate public and private-sector partnerships and conservation opportunities

- Year 1
 - Identify those incentives with the best history of acceptance and effectiveness that do not involve cash outlay or lost revenue by the municipality.
 - Identify ways of conserving heritage and keeping Cumberland's commercial core vital. Increase density to generate additional property tax revenue while maintaining the character of the downtown.
 - Begin the process of retaining and revitalizing commercial properties along Dunsmuir Street
 - Educate the community about the heritage register and what it does and doesn't do.
- Year 2-5
 - Explore ways to conserve the over 400 heritage character houses that have been identified as being important to the history and identity of Cumberland
 - Establish an annual award for private property owners who are successful in the conservation of their heritage property
 - Facilitate the Heritage Alteration Permit process
 - Identify and conserve access to trails and hiking corridors that have heritage value
 - Explore alternative sources of funding for heritage conservation throughout Cumberland

Present and communicate the value of heritage conservation in Cumberland

- Year 2-5
 - Integrate a level of interpretation into public and private development projects.
 - Promote an understanding of heritage in Cumberland by integrating heritage into outdoor recreation and community events.
 - Support and take part in festivals and events with a heritage component.
 - Develop protocols and guidance for the commemoration of heritage resources to recognize the diversity of buildings, places, events and persons of historical significance.

Conserve Village-owned heritage resources

- Year 1
 - Identify the heritage values associated with Village-owned sites.
- Year 2-5
 - Take advantage of any Village-owned heritage assets that have development potential.
 - Use Cumberland resources as demonstration projects using incentives for heritage conservation.
 - Build capacity to manage Village-owned heritage resources.

CUMBERLAND'S HERITAGE INVENTORY

VOLUME 2 of the Heritage Management Plan is today's Village of Cumberland Heritage Inventory. It is a compilation of features that the community has identified in past reviews of Village heritage as having heritage value, plus features identified this year in open houses, interviews and online questionnaire responses that were part of the process to create the Heritage Management Plan.

The Inventory is a starting point for focusing on adding places and features to the Heritage Register, an action that opens the way to facilitate the conservation of community heritage values.

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Cultural Landscape

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BRIDGES' HOUSES


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CAMP ROAD STREETSCAPE, HOUSES AND PROPERTIES

| Value | Theme | Resource Type / Description |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique relationship between street and houses Repetitive house form Location bridging between Downtown Avenue and original mining sites and river neighborhoods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing A Village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical urban landscape |

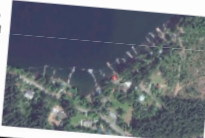
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1980S EGREMONT SUBDIVISION WITH STREET PATTERNS

| Value | Theme | Resource Type / Description |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape is a major contributor to the character of Cumberland's residential areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing A Village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban landscape |

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COTTAGE COMMUNITY, COMOX LAKE

| Value | Theme | Resource Type / Description |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic recreational landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiet Life, Active Pursuits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical recreational landscape |