

# **Heritage Conservation in Rossland**

***The Corporation of the City of Rossland***

***Our Mission Is...***

***...to provide responsive and democratic civic government to the Citizens of Rossland, to nurture their sense of community and to build on the accomplishments of past generations.***

***Our Vision Is...***

***...a community that honours its heritage, a community that respects civic duty and responsibility, a community dedicated to preserving and building a legacy of community values for future generations.***

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN ROSSLAND***

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### **Why have design guidelines?**

Design guidelines provide a basis for making consistent decisions about the character of downtown. They also serve as an educational and planning tool for property owners and their design professionals who seek to make improvements that may affect heritage resources.

The purpose of these guidelines and the review process through which they are administered is to promote conservation of the heritage of the city. These resources are fragile and are vulnerable to inappropriate alteration and demolition. These guidelines seek to promote their protection and the enhancement of their context.

While these design guidelines are written such that they can be used by the layman to plan improvements, property owners are strongly encouraged to enlist the assistance of qualified design and planning professionals, including architects and heritage conservation consultants.

### **Introduction**

These design guidelines are for heritage revitalization projects, infill construction and signage issues within the Development Permit Area in downtown Rossland. (See map, page 4). They apply in a formal review process to properties in the areas zoned C2 and R3. They also are for voluntary use on other properties in the traditional core of the city.

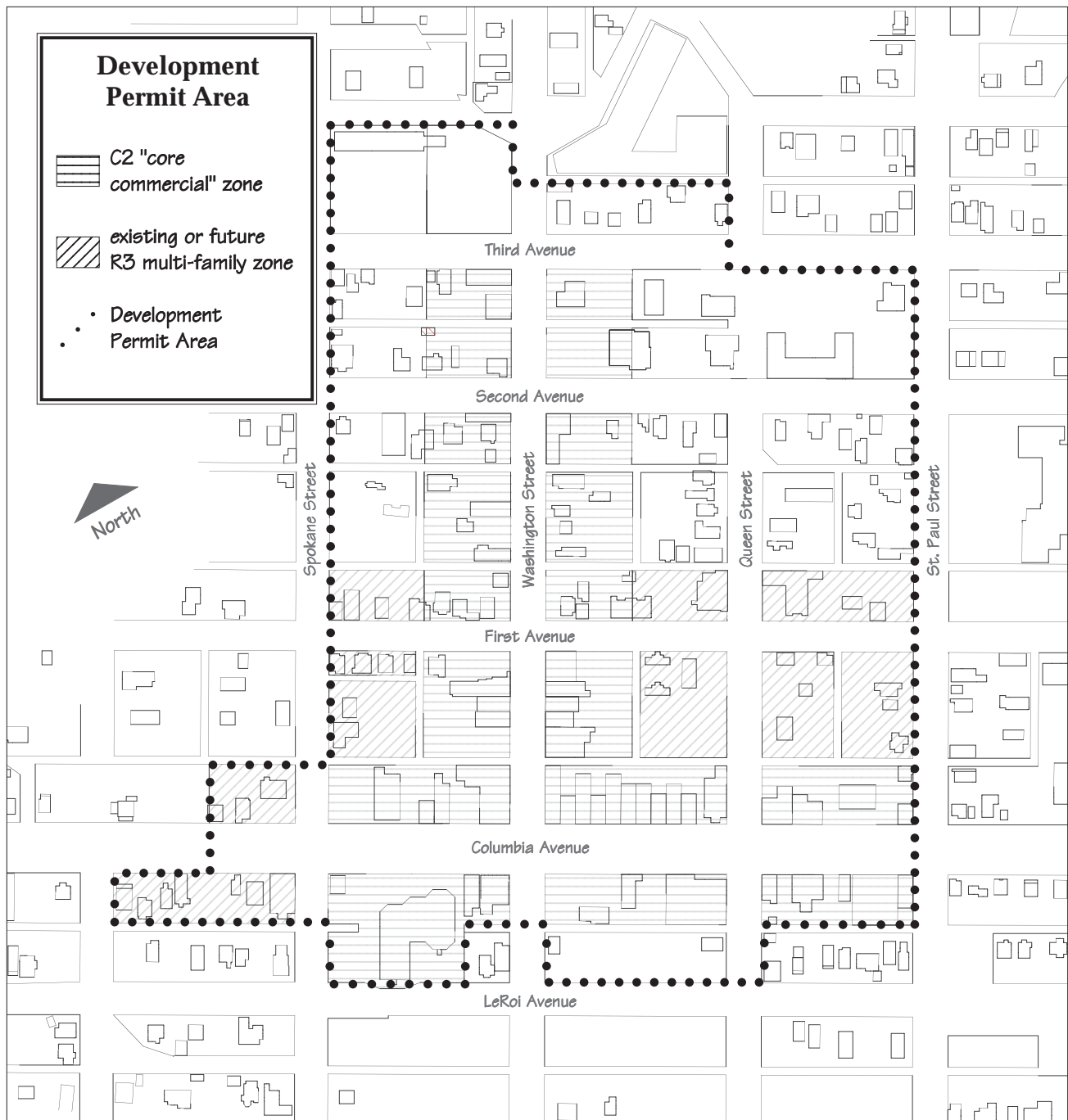
Construction work associated with officially designated Heritage Properties as well as to buildings identified as "contributing" to the traditional character of downtown are addressed in special chapters on the treatment of heritage buildings. Alterations to other existing, "non-contributing" buildings and designs for new buildings also are subject to review and are covered in a chapter on new construction. Site work, colour and sign designs are also addressed.

### **Submittal requirements**

The amount and type of information an applicant supplies is crucial to a project review. Applicants should always provide photographs and or drawings of the property as well as photographs of its context. One should also provide manufacturers' brochures if possible for items such as windows and doors, and samples of materials if they are available. The more information that an applicant provides in the beginning of the process, the more quickly the project can be reviewed.

The illustrations on the page five indicate the types of plans that should be submitted.

**HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...**

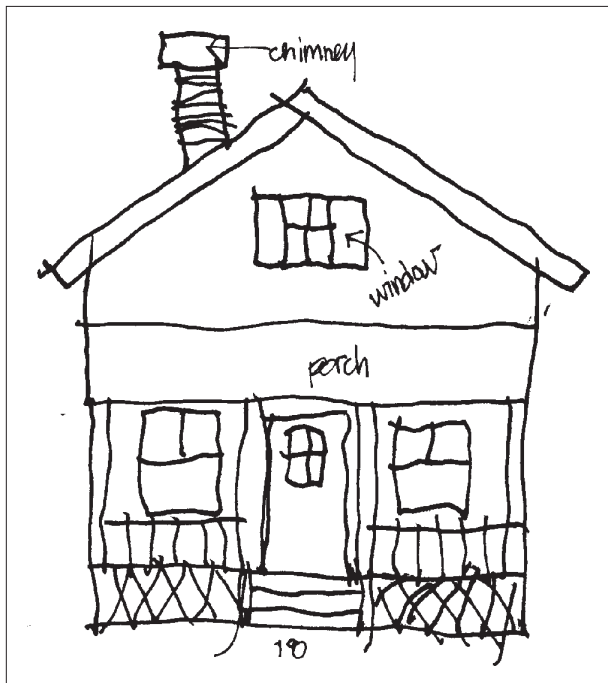


Map of the boundaries of the Development Permit Area.

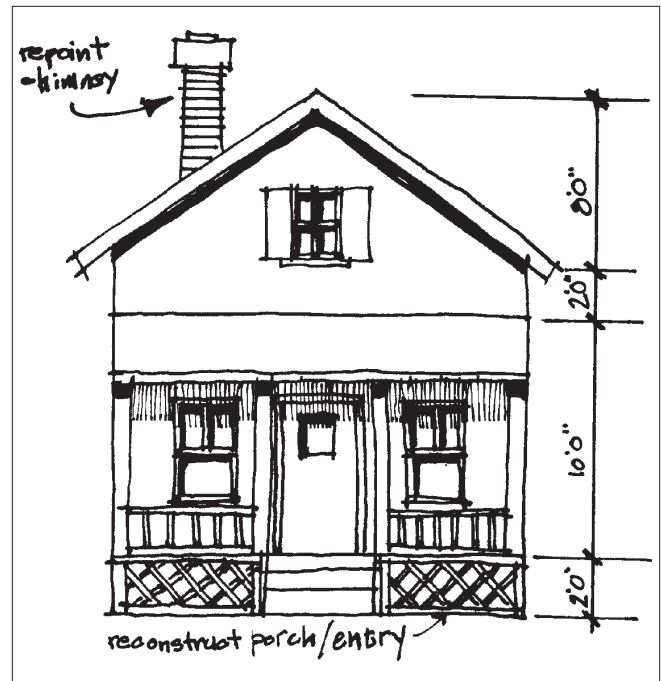
## HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...

### Submittal documents

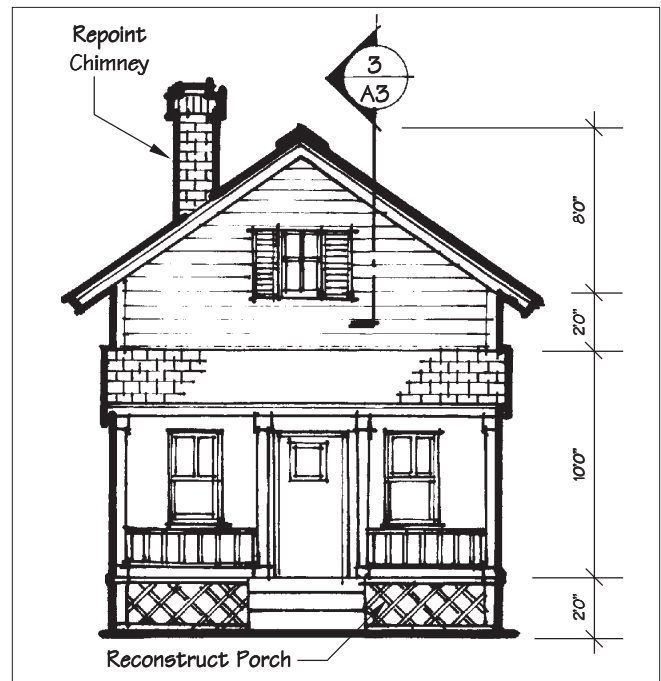
Submittal drawings should adequately convey the character of the work proposed. The first sketch immediately below is inadequate, in that the scale and character of the proposed work cannot be accurately interpreted. The middle and bottom sketches do adequately convey the information.



**Inadequate drawing:**  
Scale and character are not clearly conveyed.



**Appropriate drawing:**  
While in free-hand, this drawing does adequately convey the scale and character of the proposed work.



**Appropriate drawing:**  
Mechanically drafted to scale, this drawing best conveys the character of the proposed work.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Determining compliance with the guidelines**

The City's Design Review Committee and the staff of the City Administrator determine whether a proposed project meets the guidelines. In doing so, they will consider how each proposed project meets the guidelines and how the proposed work would therefore help to accomplish the design goals set forth in this document and in the Rossland Official Community Plan. A project is deemed to merit a Development Permit when they determine that a sufficient number of the guidelines have been adequately met.

### **The Design Review Committee**

The City Council appoints members of the Design Review Committee (DRC). The Design Review Committee reviews all applications for alterations and new construction on C2 and R3 zoned properties within the downtown Development Permit Area. They do not review interior work, only exterior alterations. They then recommend formal action by City Council.

The majority of projects presented to the Design Review Committee are either recommended for approval as submitted or for approval with modifications.

### **The scope of design review**

The guidelines are “reactive,” in that they apply to proposed actions initiated by the property owner. While they guide an approach to certain design problems by offering alternative solutions, they do not dictate a specific outcome and they do not require a property owner to instigate improvements that are not contemplated. For example, if a property owner wishes to repair a deteriorated cornice of a heritage property, the guidelines indicate appropriate methods for planning such work. If cornice repair is the only work proposed by the property owner, the process does not require that other deteriorated features, such as a roof that is in poor condition, be repaired.

The design guidelines address the following categories of work:

- **Rehabilitation and alterations to heritage buildings:**

These may be individually designated heritage structures or they may be properties designated as “contributing” in a locally adopted survey. Alterations to the exterior of a heritage building, including construction of an addition, are subject to review.

- **Alterations to “non-contributing” structures in the downtown:**

These are properties that may be old but have lost their integrity as heritage structures, or they may be newer buildings that have not achieved heritage significance. In general, the guidelines for new construction apply to these properties.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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- **Site work:**

This includes landscaping of grounds as well as new grading and construction of driveways.

- **New building:**

Construction of new, freestanding structures, either as primary or secondary buildings within the C2 and R3 zone properties in the Development Permit Area, are subject to review.

- **Sign work:**

Installation of a new sign or alteration of an existing one in the Development Permit Area is also subject to review.

Note that these guidelines apply in addition to provisions in the City's Zoning By-laws and building codes for construction of buildings, site work and signs.

### **Policies underlying the design guidelines**

The guidelines are founded on the City's goals of the Rossland Official Community Plan. While these goals relate to the city as a whole, here they provide direction to infill projects executed within an heritage context.

The goals are:

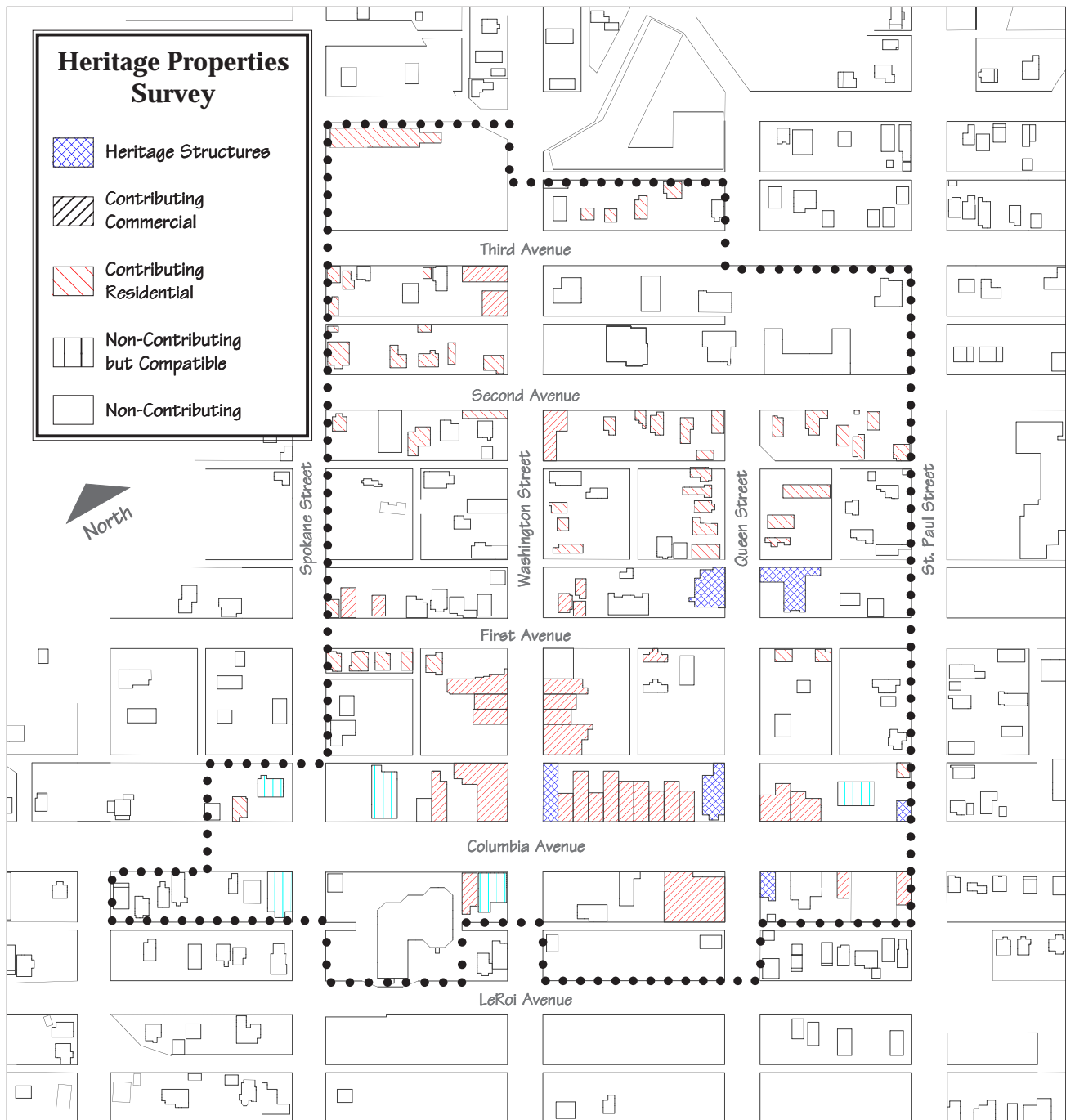
- To preserve, protect and enhance heritage resources within the city, which reflect Rossland's importance historically, architecturally and in terms of neighbourhood development and to foster pride in the City's heritage.
- To make property owners aware of and, where possible, assist them with technical information relating to the conservation, protection and rehabilitation of heritage resources.
- To preserve and protect the integrity of heritage areas.
- To provide both community and economic incentives for the property owners to assist with the protection and rehabilitation of the heritage resources.

Other regulations that guide development are:

- The Official Community Plan
- The Heritage Conservation Statutes Amendments Act of 1994.
- The Community Heritage Register
- The British Columbia Building Code
- Zoning By-law

In addition, a preliminary survey of properties provides a basis for determining the significance of an existing building with respect to the heritage of Rossland. This survey considers the age, character and integrity of each building in the Development Permit Area and identifies those that contribute to the overall history of the community. This includes those properties formally designated as Heritage Properties in the Official Community Plan as well as many other buildings that also are of importance.

### HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...



*This map illustrates the results of a preliminary survey of properties in the Development Permit Area for their potential to "contribute" to the heritage of the area. Those buildings identified as contributing are likely to date from the early period of development in the community and retain a sufficient amount of their original character to help convey the heritage of downtown. Conservation of these properties is strongly encouraged.*



## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Conservation Theory**

#### **The concept of heritage significance**

What makes a property significant to the heritage of Rossland? In general, properties must be at least 50 years old before they can be evaluated for potential heritage significance, although exceptions do exist when a more recent property clearly is significant. A property may be significant for one or more of the following reasons:

- Association with events that contributed to the broad patterns of history, the lives of significant people, or the understanding of Rossland's prehistory or history.
- Construction and design associated with distinctive characteristics of a building type, period, or construction method.
- An example of an architect or master craftsman or an expression of particularly high artistic values.
- Integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association that form a district.

#### **Period of Significance**

In most cases, a property is significant because it represents or is associated with a particular period in its history. Frequently, this begins with the construction of the building and continues through the peak of its early occupation. Building fabric and features that date from the period of significance typically contribute to the character of the structure. In downtown Rossland, the period of significance is from 1895 to 1920.

#### **Concept of Integrity**

In addition to being significant to the heritage of the community, a property also must have integrity, in that a sufficient percentage of the early materials and features that date from the period of significance must survive. These may include architectural details, such as dormers and porches, ornamental brackets and mouldings and materials, as well as the overall mass and form of the building. These elements allow a building to be recognized as a product of its own time.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Selecting a Conservation Approach**

Each conservation project is unique. It may include a variety of treatment techniques, including the repair and replacement of features and maintenance of those already in good condition. Some of the basic conservation treatments are described in the section that follows. In each case, it is important to develop an overall strategy for treatment that is based on an analysis of the building and its setting.

This research should begin with an investigation of the history of the property. This may identify design alterations that have occurred and may help in developing an understanding of the significance of the building as a whole as well as its individual components.

This historical research should be followed on an on-site assessment of existing conditions. In this inspection, identify those elements that are original and those that have been altered. Also determine the condition of individual building components.

Finally, list the requirements for continued use of the property. Is additional space needed? Or should the work focus on preserving and maintaining the existing configuration?

By combining an understanding of the history of the property, its present condition, and the need for actions that will lead into the future, one can then develop a conservation approach. In doing so, consider the terms that follow:

#### **Adaptive Use**

Converting a building to a new use that is different from that which its design reflects is considered to be "adaptive use." For example, converting a residential structure to offices is adaptive use. A good adaptive use project retains the heritage character of the building while accommodating its new functions.

#### **Maintenance**

Some work focuses on keeping the property in good working condition by repairing features as soon as deterioration becomes apparent, using procedures that retain the original character and finish of the features. In some cases, preventive maintenance is executed prior to noticeable deterioration. No alteration or reconstruction is involved. Such work is considered "maintenance." Property owners are strongly encouraged to maintain their properties in good condition so that more aggressive measures of rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction are not needed.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Conservation**

The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity and material of a building or structure is defined as "conservation." It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the heritage building materials. Essentially, the property is kept in its current good condition.

### **Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a state which makes a contemporary use possible while still preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its heritage, architectural and cultural values. Rehabilitation may include the adaptive reuse of the building and major or minor additions may also occur. Most good conservation projects in Rossland may be considered rehabilitation projects.

### **Renovation**

To renovate means to improve by repair, to revive. In renovation, the usefulness and appearance of the building is enhanced. The basic character and significant details are respected and preserved, but some sympathetic alterations may also occur. Alterations that are made are generally reversible, should future owners wish to restore the building to its original design.

### **Restoration**

To restore, one reproduces the appearance of a building exactly as it looked at a particular moment in time; to reproduce a pure style--either interior or exterior. This process may include the removal of later work or the replacement of missing heritage features. A restoration approach is used on missing details or features of an heritage building when the features are determined to be particularly significant to the character of the structure and when the original configuration is accurately documented.

### **Remodeling**

To remake or to make over the design image of a building is to remodel it. The appearance is changed by removing original detail and by adding new features that are out of character with the original. Remodeling is inappropriate for heritage buildings in Rossland.

### **Combining Conservation Strategies**

Many successful rehabilitation projects that involve heritage structures in Rossland may include a combination of conservation, restoration, and other appropriate treatments. For example, a house may be adapted to use as a restaurant, and in the process, missing porch brackets may be replicated in order to restore the original appearance, while existing original dormers may be preserved.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Conservation Principles**

The following conservation principles should be applied to all heritage properties in Rossland:

#### **Respect the heritage design character of the building.**

Don't try to change its style or make it look older than it really is. Confusing the character by mixing elements of different styles may be considered an example of disrespect as well.

#### **Seek uses that are compatible with the heritage character of the building.**

Building uses that are closely related to the original use are preferred. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for the building that will require minimal alteration to the building and its site. An example of an appropriate adaptive use is converting a residence into a bed and breakfast establishment. This can be accomplished without radical alteration of the original architecture.

These uses may aid in interpreting how the building was used historically. Check the Zoning By-law to determine which uses are allowed.

When a more radical change in use is necessary to keep the building in active service, then those uses that require the least alteration to significant elements are preferred. It may be, that in order to adapt your building to the proposed new use, such radical alteration to its significant elements would be required that the entire concept is inappropriate. Experience has shown, however, that in most cases designs can be developed that respect the character of the building while also accommodating new functions. Note that more radical changes in use can make projects more expensive or result in the loss of significant features. Carefully evaluate the cost of alteration as adaptation for a radical change may prove too costly or destroy too many significant features.

#### **Protect and maintain significant features and stylistic elements.**

Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best conservation procedure is to maintain heritage features from the outset so that intervention is not required. Protection includes the maintenance of materials through treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and re-application of paint.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Preserve original site elements, building materials and features.**

Preserve original site features such as grading, rock walls, etcetera. Avoid removing or altering original architectural materials as well. Also preserve original doors, windows, porches and other architectural features.

### **Repair deteriorated features, and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired.**

Upgrade existing material, using recognized conservation methods whenever possible. If disassembly is necessary for repair or restoration, use methods that minimize damage to original materials. Replace the original configuration whenever possible.

## **Guidelines Format**

The chapters containing the design guidelines that follow are organized in a format that provides background information as well as specific regulatory language. Each of these chapters contains the following components:

### **1. Policy statement**

A broad statement explaining the City's basic approach for the treatment of the design feature being discussed is presented. This statement provides the basis for the more detailed background information and design guidelines that follow. In cases in which special conditions in a specific project are such that the detailed design guidelines do not appear to address the situation, then this broad policy statement should serve as the basis for determining the appropriateness of the proposed work.

### **2. Background information**

A discussion of the issues typically associated with the specific design topic is presented next. This may include technical information, such as factors associated with the conservation of a heritage building material, as well as general conservation theory that is relevant to the topic at hand.

### **3. Pertinent sub-topics**

The sections following the background information are divided into pertinent sub-topics. For example, in the chapter addressing *New Construction*, the sub-topic, "Ground level windows of commercial buildings," is among those discussed. This organization allows the user to quickly select the specific design topics within a section that are relevant.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

### **4. Design guidelines**

The specific design guidelines are presented as **bold face** statements under each sub-topic. These are also numbered to indicate their relative position within the chapter and to aid in specific reference in the review process. The city must determine that these guidelines have been adequately met in order to issue a Development Permit for the proposed work.

### **5. Maintenance tips**

Special information about the appropriate maintenance of selected heritage building materials and features is provided occasionally at the bottom of a page. This is separated from the design guidelines by a bold line. This information is provided as an aid to property owners who seek to preserve their buildings in a manner that will maintain the character and finish of heritage building materials.

### **6. Additional information**

Finally, a separate section provides a brief list of other publications that may be particularly useful for readers who desire more information about the treatment of a specific building element in more detail.

## **Building Scale Guidelines**

*A typical design guideline in this document contains three components:*

The design guideline itself. This sets forth a basic principle for treatment of a selected design topic.

Supplementary requirements, listed under the guideline. These clarify the primary design guideline statement and may suggest specific methods for complying with it.

An illustration, in the form of a sketch or photograph that depicts a method of complying with the guideline.

### ***Mass and scale***

#### **8.9 Construct a new building to reinforce a sense of human scale.**

A new building may convey a sense of human scale by employing techniques such as these:

- Using building materials that are of traditional dimensions,
- Providing a one-storey canopy or porch that is similar to that seen traditionally, and
- Using a building mass that is similar in size to those seen traditionally.



*Construct a new building to reinforce a sense of human scale.*

*A sample design guideline for new construction projects.*

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Why conserve heritage resources?**

Across North America, thousands of communities promote heritage conservation because doing so contributes to neighbourhood livability and an enhanced quality of life, minimizes negative impacts on the environment and yields economic rewards. Many property owners are also drawn to heritage resources because the quality of construction is typically quite high and the buildings are readily adaptable to contemporary needs. These same reasons apply in Rossland.

#### **Economic benefits**

Generally, conserving heritage resources creates a climate for investment. Historic resources are finite and cannot be replaced, making them precious commodities that many buyers seek. Therefore, conservation adds value to private property. Many studies document that, where heritage areas are protected, property values typically rise, or at least are stabilized. In this sense, a heritage area appears to help establish a climate for investment. Property owners within the district know that the time and money they spend on improving their properties will be matched with similar efforts on surrounding lots; these investments will not be undermined by inappropriate construction next door.

#### **Construction quality**

Most of the heritage structures in the city are of high quality construction. Lumber used came from mature trees and was properly seasoned and it typically was milled to “full dimensions” as well, which often yielded stronger framing. Masonry walls were carefully laid, resulting in buildings with considerable stability. These structures also were thoughtfully detailed and the finishes of materials, including fixtures, wood floors and trim were of high quality, all features that owners today appreciate. By comparison, in today’s new construction, materials of such quality are rarely available and comparable detailing is very expensive. The high quality of construction in heritage buildings is therefore a “value” for many people.

#### **Adaptability**

Owners also recognize that the floor plans of heritage buildings easily accommodate comfortable life-styles and support a diversity of populations. Rooms are frequently large, permitting a variety of uses while retaining the overall heritage character of each structure and open space often exists on a lot to accommodate an addition, if needed.

## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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### **Livability and quality of life**

When older buildings occur in groups, as they do in downtown Rossland, they create a street scene that is “pedestrian friendly,” which encourages walking and neighbourly interaction. Masonry walls and decorative architectural features, which also contribute to a sense of identity that is unique for the city, are attributes that are rare and difficult to achieve in newer areas of the city.

### **Environmental benefits**

Conserving a heritage structure is also sound environmental policy because “recycling” it saves energy and reduces the need for producing new construction materials. Three types of energy savings occur: First, energy is not consumed to demolish the existing building and dispose of the resulting debris. Second, energy is not used to create new building materials, transport them and assemble them on site. Finally, the “embodied” energy, that which was used to create the original building and its components, is preserved.

By “reusing” older materials as a heritage building, pressure is also reduced to harvest new lumber and other materials that also may have negative effects on the environment of other locales where these materials are produced. Because older buildings are often more energy-efficient than new construction, when properly used, heating and cooling needs are reduced as well.

The condition of neighbouring properties also affects the value of one’s own property: People invest in a neighbourhood as much as the individual structure itself and, in heritage areas where investment is attracted, property owners recognize that everyone benefits from the commitment of their neighbours.

Conservation projects also contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a conservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labour and to purchase of materials available locally. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside of the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported as well. Therefore, when money is spent on rehabilitating a building, it has a higher “multiplier effect,” keeping more money circulating in the local economy.



## ***HERITAGE CONSERVATION, continued...***

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Rehabilitating a heritage building also can cost less than constructing a new one. In fact, the guidelines for rehabilitation of heritage structures presented in this document promote cost-saving measures: They encourage smaller and simpler solutions, which in themselves provide savings. Conserving building elements that are in good repair is preferred, for example, rather than replacing them. This typically is less expensive. In some instances, however, appropriate restoration procedures *may* cost more than less sensitive treatments.

### **Incentives for conservation**

While the economic benefits are substantial, special incentives also exist to help offset potential added costs of appropriate rehabilitation procedures. These may include the following:

- Non-monetary support (i.e. technical advice, program coordination, commemoration, public works projects, etc.)
- Development permits may waive or relax some portions of land-use bylaws
- Density bonuses and new uses can be permitted
- Special consideration under the British Columbia Building Code for registered and protected properties

### **Responsibility of ownership**

Ownership of a heritage property carries both the benefits described above and also a responsibility to respect the heritage character of the property and its setting. While this responsibility does exist, it does not automatically translate into higher construction or maintenance costs.

In the case of new construction, for example, these design guidelines focus on *where* a building should be located on a site and what its basic scale and character should be. The guidelines do *not* dictate the style of the new building or the degree of detail that it should have, factors which could affect building costs. (In fact, imitating heritage building styles is discouraged in these design guidelines.) Ultimately, residents and property owners should recognize that heritage conservation is a long-range community policy that promotes economic well-being and overall viability of the city at large and that they play a vital role in helping to implement that policy through careful stewardship of the area's heritage resources.

