

Heritage NL

Activity Plan 2020–2023



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Chairperson's Message

As Chair of Heritage NL, I am pleased to submit the Activity Plan for the Board for the next three fiscal years (2020-2023). This Plan is prepared in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act** pursuant to which Heritage NL was a category 3 government entity. This requires the preparation of a multi-year performance-based activity plan.

As the Chairperson of Heritage NL, I have reviewed this activity plan that has considered the strategic directions of the Provincial Government and supports its priorities in areas such as: the Cultural Action Plan; action on climate change; healthy aging; craft development; and community economic development. The priorities identified in this plan also resulted from a Board strategy session held in the fall of 2019 that considered long-term needs and opportunities for fulfilling its mandate. The Board accepts accountability for the preparation of the plan and for the achievement of its objectives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DL', with a large, stylized loop at the beginning.

Dave Lough
Chairperson

Introduction

This plan lays out the strategic issues, objectives, and indicators for Heritage NL for the period of 2020-23. These focus on:

- Integrating the tangible and intangible values of designated heritage places to ensure greater meaning for local residents and visitors;
- Identifying and inventorying heritage properties likely to become at risk and sharing this information with municipalities and stakeholders to support their protection and adaptive reuse; and,
- Generating information to quantify the economic impacts of investments in built heritage preservation and adaptive reuse of historic places in Newfoundland and Labrador.

These align with the strategic direction of Provincial Government to preserve, enrich, celebrate and promote our cultural heritage.

Overview

Heritage NL, formerly known as the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, is a Crown agency established in 1984 under Part IV of the **Historic Resources Act** (the Act) that operates under a Board of Directors appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The website for Heritage NL is <https://heritagefoundation.ca>.

Mandate

Heritage NL has a mandate to:

- a) Stimulate an understanding of and an appreciation of historic places in the province;

- b) Support and contribute to the preservation, maintenance, and restoration of buildings and other structures of architectural significance in the province; and
- c) Support and promote the safeguarding of the province's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

Responsibility Areas

The Act confers on Heritage NL, the authority to preserve the built heritage through:

- Commemoration and conservation of historic places (structures and districts); and,
- Educational initiatives to stimulate an understanding and appreciation of the architectural, cultural and historic value of the cultural landscape.

Additionally, Heritage NL houses the Provincial ICH Office, which seeks to safeguard, strengthen and celebrate Newfoundland and Labrador's distinctive traditional cultural knowledge, skills, beliefs, and practices that are seen as cornerstones for sustaining the province's innate creativity and sense of identity.

Heritage NL's work is guided by the national Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Canada's national benchmark of conservation principles and practices.

Heritage NL sees the protection and safeguarding of its tangible and intangible heritage assets as not only a means of supporting pride and identity but as a tool for community, social, and economic well-being.

Lines of Business

Heritage NL delivers the following programs and services to fulfill its mandate:

1. Designation of heritage structures and districts;

2. Funding programs for heritage conservation;
3. Technical advice on heritage conservation;
4. The maintenance of a provincial registry of provincially and municipally designated historic places;
5. Education and outreach;
6. The management of the Provincial Historic Commemorations Program; and,
7. The operation of the ICH Office.

Primary Clients

Heritage NL serves a variety of clients that include:

- Owners of heritage properties (technical advice/funding);
- Municipalities (support for heritage resource identification, protection and development);
- Schools (database on historic places in Newfoundland and Labrador and heritage awareness);
- Seniors groups (help with projects to support seniors' engagement);
- Community Groups (help with ICH initiatives);
- General public (information and raising awareness); and,
- Building Professionals (training and technical advice on heritage conservation).

Budget

The budget of Heritage NL for 2020-21 is \$398,000. Provincial appropriations provide for the operational funding for the Heritage NL, which supports the preservation of built heritage through: the designation of heritage buildings, structures and districts; the provision of grants to assist with the preservation of designated buildings; and, the provision of professional advisory services to individuals and organizations.

Employees

The staff of Heritage NL is composed of five permanent staff (four male, one female): an Executive Director, two Heritage Officers, one of which fulfills the role of Provincial Registrar, a part-time accountant, and one ICH Officer. The Foundation generally employs other staff as students or interns with assistance from government-run student employment programs.

Board of Directors

Heritage NL is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. As of September 30, 2020, the Board consisted of:

Chairperson: Dave Lough (St. John's)

Vice Chair: Lloyd Kane (Cupids)

Treasurer: Sarah Wade (St. John's)

Secretary: Jim Miller (Trinity)

Members: Lisa Daley (St. John's)

Elizabeth Murphy (Parker's Cove)

Philip Wood (Bay Roberts)

Gerry Osmond, Dept. of Tourism, Culture, Arts, and Recreation (ex-officio)

In addition to the members listed above, there are currently two vacancies on the Board.

Physical Location

The Newman Building

1 Springdale Street

P.O. Box 5171

St. John's, NL A1C 5V5

Strategic Issue

Support Cultural Heritage of the Province

Support for the cultural heritage of the province by Heritage NL has a number of different facets, all of which are intertwined and build on one another. These include: 1) advocacy, education and outreach in terms of the value of heritage; 2) strengthening the protection and safeguarding of the province's heritage assets; and 3) supporting and promoting heritage as a tool for community economic development.

1) For people to appreciate the value of heritage it must be relevant to them. In the case of historic places/structures, this is about more than simply describing architectural or historical significance. It also includes intangible values of place such as personal stories; community associations; how places have changed; and, how people lived their lives in these places in the past. Communicating these values helps to create meaning and value for residents and makes them more evocative for tourists. Heritage NL will undertake efforts to better integrate the tangible and intangible values of designated heritage places to ensure greater meaning for local residents and visitors.

2) Heritage resources such as historic buildings and structures across the province are at risk from a variety of factors:

- demolition in order to redevelop the land on which they are situated (e.g., historic houses on large properties);
- lack of appreciation/understanding of their historic value and potential for redevelopment (e.g., historic industrial buildings); and,
- under-utilization or impending redundancy (historic church buildings and institutional structures).

These may lead to:

- a gradual erosion or hollowing out of a special sense of place in our communities;
- the diminishing of familiar touchstones that contribute to a sense of belonging to a neighbourhood or community;
- missed opportunities for repurposing structures as community attractions and assets; and/or,
- the loss of the “embodied energy” in existing buildings and the creation of additional greenhouse gases to demolish them and build new structures.

When a building is slated for demolition, it is generally too late to save it as decisions have already been made. In order to retain more of our heritage structures we need to be more proactive, namely, to have plans in place well in advance of their impending loss. Heritage NL has a number of tools that it can share with communities and the owners of heritage properties to adaptively reuse them. Heritage NL will work with municipalities and stakeholders to identify and inventory heritage properties likely to become at risk; share this information with municipalities and stakeholders; share its adaptive reuse tools; and, support planning efforts to adaptively reuse heritage structures.

3) It is useful for community players and various levels of government to understand the role that heritage revitalization can play in supporting employment and community economic development and the value of investing in it. While there are some very good examples of communities that have been revitalized through heritage preservation and adaptive reuse (e.g., Trinity, Port Union, Bonavista), there is little data for Newfoundland and Labrador that quantifies the benefits and impacts of investment in heritage. Heritage NL will generate information to quantify the economic impacts of investments in built heritage preservation and adaptive reuse in Newfoundland and Labrador. Where possible, it will partner with other organizations in this undertaking. This information will be broadly disseminated in order to help build the case for public and private investment in built heritage.

Heritage NL will report on the same objective for the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 fiscal years, with priority indicators developed for each year.

Objective 2020-2021

By March 31, 2021, Heritage NL will have supported and promoted heritage; safeguarded and developed the province's heritage assets; and advocate/educate the public on the subject of cultural heritage.

Indicators:

- Heritage NL will have funded initiatives to support cultural heritage of the Province.
- Heritage NL will have undertaken oral history projects on Registered Heritage Structures or Districts and shared these with the public.

