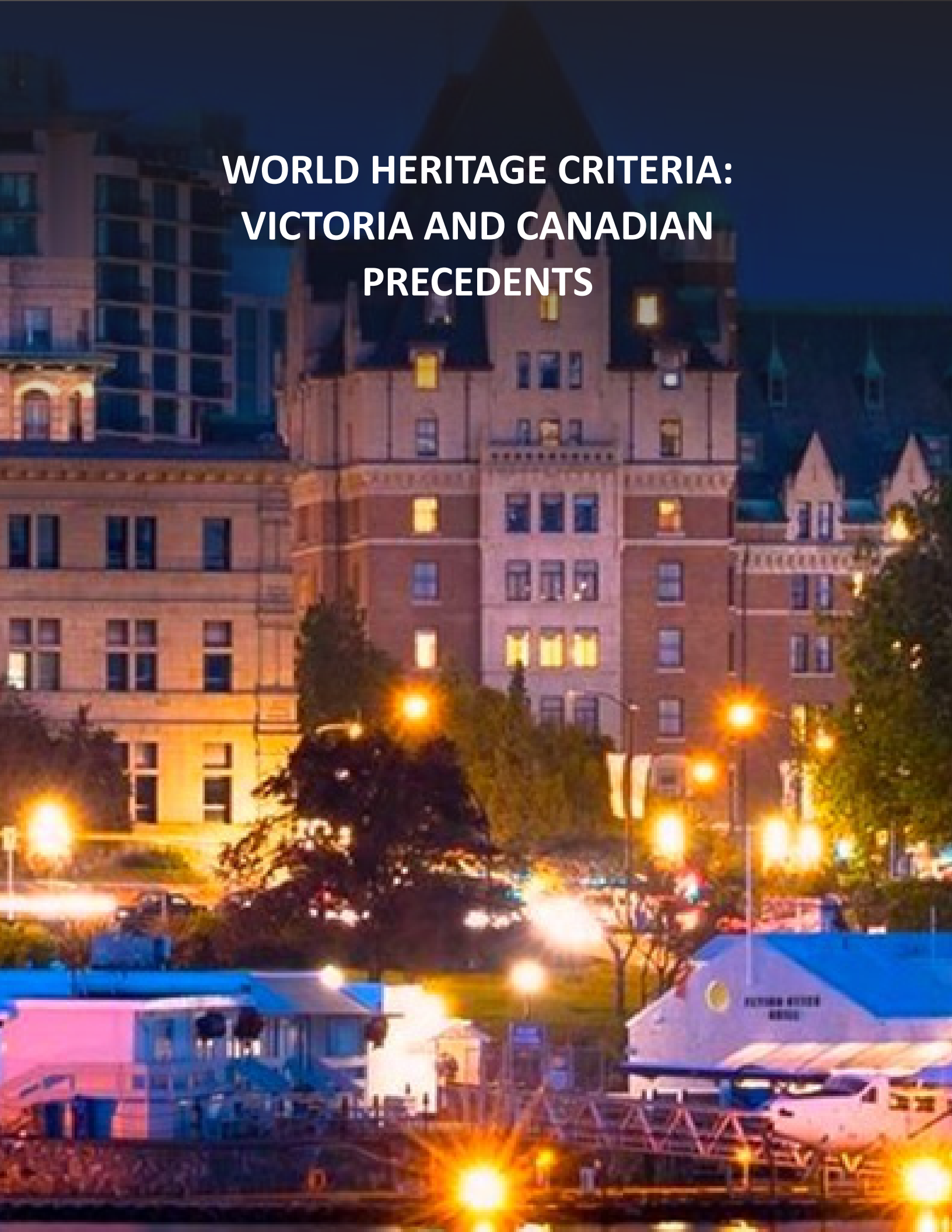


# WORLD HERITAGE CRITERIA: VICTORIA AND CANADIAN PRECEDENTS



# ***WORLD HERITAGE CRITERIA: VICTORIA AND CANADIAN PRECEDENTS***

## **SITUATION BRIEF # 17**

**Contributor: M. Segger**

### **The Criteria for Selection**

To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria.

These criteria are explained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention which, besides the text of the Convention, is the main working tool on World Heritage. The criteria are regularly revised by the World Heritage Committee to reflect the evolution of the World Heritage concept itself.

Until the end of 2004, World Heritage sites were selected on the basis of six cultural and four natural criteria. With the adoption of the revised Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, only one set of ten criteria exists.

In this paper we present a very tentative analysis of where and how Victoria might meet some of these criteria, along with more comprehensive descriptions of Canadian sites that have met the listing standards.

## Selection criteria

(i) to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; *n/a*

(ii) to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

*Victoria's story of over 10,000 years of human habitation, changing in response to climate, migrations, political, ideological and technological circumstances over time.*

(iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

*Survival and adaption of the Lekwungen Speaking Peoples over time, language, linguistic, spiritual and artistic traditions including reconciliation process today.*

(iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

*Response and adaption to the geography and climate of the Pacific Northwest as a function of human migrations, settlement, agrarian and food gathering*



*practices through to industrialization and the arrival of the modern conurbation.*

(v) to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

*From foundation in First Peoples food cultivation, land and shoreline food management practices through migrant settlement and agricultural adaptations to influences upon European land planning and landscape aesthetics and their role in the urbanization of the Victoria region.*

(vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);

*The range from Coast Salish knowledge and belief systems, traditional arts and crafts imbedded in the historic and contemporary arts and rituals; contributions of European and Indo-Pacific migrant settlers evident in surviving institutional, commercial and domestic architecture over three centuries; collections of documents, trade goods and artistic products in local public museum and archival collections.*

(vii) to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;

*Evident in the geography of the region, particularly the defining geoscape of Victoria and its spectacular setting as a woodland peninsular set against the majestic backdrop of the surrounding Salish Sea and mainland Coast Range mountains: a quintessential example of the mid-Victorian Romantic Picturesque landscape tradition.*

(viii) to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history,

including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features; *An outstanding lesson in the geological evolution of the earth's crust, the Cascadia Subduction Zone is a rare tectonic collage of three compacted ancient plates which can be read from the lower Vancouver Island peninsular surface and ongoing seismic activity – all of which continues to influence land use, settlement patterns, and construction technologies to the present day.*

(ix) to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; *Over the last fifty years through local community effort and a network of non-profit charitable foundations significant amounts of the Victoria traditional habitats have been conserved, protected and documented - over 4 millennia of climate history: including coastal marine estuaries, savannah grasslands, and Garry Oak and Arbutus woodlands, elevated Pine and Douglas Fir rain forests.*

(x) to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation. *Ongoing conservation efforts that include the revival of First Nations estuary marine farming, the formation of Canada's first migrant water-fowl sanctuary in 1923, restoring the marine ecosystem of the Gorge Waterway - to community-based efforts today to revive traditional Garry Oak habitats, daylight small urban rivers and streams, and re-wild parts of the regional traditional oak and pine-forest woodlands.*

The protection, management, authenticity and integrity of properties are also important considerations. Since 1992 significant interactions between people and the natural environment have been recognized as **cultural**



## landscapes.

Three precedents of urban World Heritage Sites in Canada can be studied for comparative purposes:

- Historic District of Old Quebec, P.Q.
- Old Town Lunenburg, Nova Scotia
- Rideau Canal, Ontario
- Sgang Gwaay, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia

## Canadian World Heritage Sites Comparatives

### Historic District of Old Québec

Québec was founded by the French explorer Champlain in the early 17th century. It is the only North American city to have preserved its ramparts, together with the numerous bastions, gates and defensive works which still surround Old Québec. The Upper Town, built on the cliff, has remained the religious and administrative centre, with its churches, convents and other monuments like the Dauphine Redoubt, the Citadel and Château Frontenac. Together with the Lower Town and its ancient districts, it forms an urban ensemble which is one of the



best examples of a fortified colonial city.

## **Outstanding Universal Value**

### **Brief synthesis**

Founded in the 17th century, Québec City bears eloquent testimony to important stages in the European settlement of the Americas: it was the capital of New France and, after 1760, of the new British colony. The Historic District of Old Québec is an urban area of about 135 hectares. It is made up to two parts: the Upper Town, sitting atop Cap Diamant and defended by fortified ramparts, a citadel, and other defensive works, and the Lower Town, which grew up around Place Royale and the harbour. A well-preserved integrated urban ensemble, the historic district is a remarkable example of a fortified colonial town, and unique north of Mexico.

**Criterion (iv)** : A coherent and well-preserved urban ensemble, the Historic District of Old Québec is an exceptional example of a fortified colonial town and by far the most complete north of Mexico.

**Criterion (vi)** : Québec, the former capital of New France, illustrates one of the major stages in the European settlement of the colonization of the Americas by Europeans.

### **Integrity**

The boundaries of the property encompass all necessary elements to express the outstanding universal value of the Historic District of Old Québec. The historic centre, confined within the current boundaries of the district, is the product of more than four centuries of history. During this period, the fortified town retained the integrity of its essential historical components, particularly from the standpoint of its architecture and urban spatial organization. The property is of

adequate size (135 ha) to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance. It has not suffered unduly from adverse effects of development and/or neglect. Over the years, many integration, restoration, rehabilitation, redevelopment and protection and stabilization projects have been carried out. Overall, the projects undertaken in the Historic District of Old Québec have not compromised its integrity.

### **Authenticity**

The Historic District of Old Québec is authentic in terms of its form and design, materials and substance, and location and setting. Since the time of its inscription, the property has changed considerably, particularly with respect to the organization of its historic urban landscape. However, the attributes of the property express its outstanding universal value in a truthful and credible manner.

### **Protection and management requirements**

The Historic District of Old Québec enjoys strong legal protection and the support of all levels of government concerned. An intergovernmental committee, called the Comité de concertation du patrimoine de Québec, was created to coordinate the activities of the different levels of government.

The area of the Historic District of Old Québec, designated by the provincial authority as the *site patrimonial du Vieux-Québec* (Old Québec heritage site), is legally protected under the Province of Quebec's *Cultural Property Act*, which was adopted in 1963. Its boundaries were established by provincial decree in 1964.

Since its inclusion on the World Heritage List in 1985, a number of buildings in Old Québec have been added to the list of properties protected



under the *Cultural Property Act*, including the Site historique et archéologique de l'Habitation-Samuel-De Champlain, the Ursuline Convent of Québec and the archaeological reference collection of Place Royale.

The City of Québec assumes all management responsibilities under its jurisdiction relating to land use and urban planning (zoning bylaws). Moreover, the *Règlement sur la politique de consultation publique* (bylaw on the public consultation policy) adopted in 2007 stipulates that the Conseil de quartier Vieux-Québec–Cap-Blanc–Colline-Parlementaire (district council) must be consulted before any amendments are made to urban planning and traffic bylaws. Furthermore, any construction, renovation, restoration and signage interventions in Old Québec must have the prior authorization of the Commission d'urbanisme et de conservation of the City of Québec.

The Quebec government and the City of Québec routinely enter into cultural development agreements making it possible to offer grant programs and major financial contributions to support the restoration of the heritage buildings in Old Québec.

The federal government, through various departments and Parks Canada, manages a large number of heritage properties. All federal departments, except Crown corporations, are required to comply with the Treasury Board Policy on the Management of Real Property. The Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) of Parks Canada is mandated to assist them in this task. The Department of National Defence, which is responsible for the Citadel, and Public Works and Government Services Canada play a role in ensuring heritage preservation in the Historic District of Old Québec. As the owner and manager of national historic sites of Canada, Parks Canada invests in the preservation and presentation of its properties, and consequently in the historic district. With nearly 70 persons, places and events of national historic significance under its responsibility, the

Agency helps to raise public awareness concerning the significance of the Historic District of Old Québec.

Special attention will be given over the long term to monitoring proposed changes and additions to the property that could, for example, impact its visual integrity and appropriate measures will continue to be implemented to ensure the protection, integrity and authenticity of the property.

### **Old Town Lunenburg**

Lunenburg is the best surviving example of a planned British colonial settlement in North America. Established in 1753, it has retained its original layout and overall appearance, based on a rectangular grid pattern drawn up in the home country. The inhabitants have managed to safeguard the city's identity throughout the centuries by preserving the wooden architecture of the houses, some of which date from the 18th century.



## **Outstanding Universal Value**

### **Brief synthesis**

Old Town Lunenburg is the best surviving example of a planned British colonial settlement in North America. Established in 1753, it has retained its original layout and overall appearance, based on a rectangular grid pattern drawn up in the home country. The inhabitants have safeguarded the town's identity throughout the centuries by preserving the wooden architecture of the houses and public buildings, some of which date from the 18th century and constitute an excellent example of a sustained vernacular architectural tradition. Its economic basis has traditionally been the offshore Atlantic fishery, the future of which is highly questionable at the present time.

**Criterion (iv):** Old Town Lunenburg is a well-preserved example of 18th century British colonial urban planning, which has undergone no significant changes since its foundation, and which largely continues to fulfil the economic and social purposes for which it was designed. Of special importance is its diversified and well-preserved vernacular architectural tradition, which spans over 250 years.

**Criterion (v):** Old Town Lunenburg is an excellent example of an urban community and culture designed for and based on the offshore Atlantic fishery which is undergoing irreversible change and is evolving in a form that cannot yet be fully defined.

### **Integrity**

Within the boundaries of the 33.85 ha property are located all the elements necessary to express the Outstanding Universal Value of Old Town Lunenburg. The property encompasses the intact original town plan in its entirety, missing only the fortifications that surrounded the town in its early years, but of which there are no surviving above-ground remains. Its boundaries adequately ensure

the complete representation of the features and processes that convey the property's significance, and there is a 32.44 ha buffer zone. The property does not suffer unduly from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

### **Authenticity**

Old Town Lunenburg is authentic in location and setting, forms and designs, materials and substances, and uses and functions. The original British colonial town plan remains evident, including the regular layout of property parcels in a grid pattern with geometrically regular streets, central public spaces, and key community structures, with a functioning waterfront as its focus. In terms of forms and materials, there is a harmony of scale, siting and materials (predominantly wood) throughout the property, and a regional architectural vocabulary that includes the 'Lunenburg bump', an indigenous five-sided dormer. While a continuing vernacular architectural tradition is integral to the property's Outstanding Universal Value, there has been very limited infill in the modern era. Many of the property's historic uses and functions survive.

Most of the recent changes to the property are renovations to specific buildings, some of which have better conveyed the heritage value of Old Town Lunenburg than others. Due to long-term economic circumstances, there are also ongoing pressures on property owners in terms of rising property values, maintenance costs, and the challenges of retaining historical accuracy in restoration planning.

### **Protection and management requirements**

Old Town Lunenburg, which is almost entirely in private ownership, is commemorated by the Government of Canada as a National Historic Site (1991) and protected under two key pieces of provincial legislation, the *Municipal*

*Government Act (1998)* and the *Heritage Property Act (1989)*, which enable the municipality to create, respectively, land-use and heritage bylaws. In this context, the municipality adopted the *Heritage Conservation District Plan, Bylaw and Guidelines* in 2000 (consolidated in 2001). In order to better manage the community as a World Heritage property and ensure the continuing protection of the town's heritage resources, the Town of Lunenburg Heritage Sustainability Strategy (2010) has been developed to guide its development, including the identification of heritage, culture and tourism prospects that may produce economic opportunities for the community.

Sustaining the Outstanding Universal Value of the property over time will require managing, to the degree possible, ongoing pressures on property owners related to rising property values, maintenance costs, and the challenges of retaining historical accuracy in restoration planning. It will also require developing and implementing mechanisms to encourage building renovations that fully respect the heritage value of Old Town Lunenburg. Special attention will be given over the long term to monitoring and taking appropriate actions related to a number of factors in and near the property. Specifically, these include the potential impacts of climate change, and the impacts of tourism and visitation.

### **Rideau Canal, Ottawa**

The Rideau Canal is a large strategic canal constructed for military purposes which played a crucial contributory role in allowing British forces to defend the colony of Canada against the United States of America, leading to the development of two distinct political and cultural entities in the north of the American continent, which can be seen as a significant stage in human history.



## Outstanding Universal Value

### Brief synthesis

**Criterion (i):** The Rideau Canal remains the best preserved example of a slackwater canal in North America demonstrating the use of European slackwater technology in North America on a large scale. It is the only canal dating from the great North American canal-building era of the early 19th century that remains operational along its original line with most of its original structures intact.

**Criterion (iv):** The Rideau Canal is an extensive, well preserved and significant example of a canal which was used for a military purpose linked to a significant stage in human history - that of the fight to control the north of the American continent.

The nominated property includes all the main elements of the original canal together with relevant later changes in the shape of watercourses, dams, bridges, fortifications, lock stations and related archaeological resources. The



original plan of the canal, as well as the form of the channels, has remained intact. The Rideau Canal has fulfilled its original dynamic function as an operating waterway without interruption since its construction. Most of its lock gates and sluice valves are still operated by hand-powered winches.

All the elements of the nominated area (canal, associated buildings and forts) are protected as national historic sites under the Historic Sites and Monuments Act 1952-3. A buffer zone has been established. Repairs and conservation of the locks, dams, canal walls and banks are carried out directly under the control of Parks Canada. Each year one third of the canal's assets are thoroughly inspected by engineers. A complete inventory thus exists of the state of conservation of all parts of the property. A Management Plan exists for the canal (completed in 1996 and updated in 2005), and plans are nearing completion for Fort Henry and the Kingston fortifications. The Canal Plan is underpinned by the Historic Canals Regulations which provide an enforcement mechanism for any activities that might impact on the cultural values of the monument.



## **SGang Gwaay, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia**

The village of Ninstints (Nans Dins) is located on a small island off the west coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii). Remains of houses, together with carved mortuary and memorial poles, illustrate the Haida people's art and way of life. The site commemorates the living culture of the Haida people and their relationship to the land and sea, and offers a visual key to their oral traditions.

### **Outstanding Universal Value**

#### **Brief Synthesis**

On the island of SGang Gwaay, the remains of large cedar long houses, together with a number of carved mortuary and memorial poles at the village of SGang Gwaay Llnagaay (formerly Nan Sdins), illustrate the art and way of life of the Haida. The property commemorates the living culture of the Haida and their relationship with the land and sea. It also offers a visual key to their oral traditions. The village of SGang Gwaay was occupied until shortly after 1880. What survives is unique in the world, a 19th-century Haida village where the ruins of houses and memorial or mortuary poles illustrate the power and artistry of Haida society.

**Criterion (iii):** SGang Gwaay bears unique testimony to the culture of the Haida. The art represented by the carved poles at SGang Gwaay Llnagaay (Nan Sdins) is recognized to be among the finest examples of its type in the world.

#### **Integrity**

The property is wholly contained within the natural boundaries of the island on which all remains are located, thus ensuring the complete representation of the features and processes that convey the property's significance. There is some degradation of the ruins and mortuary poles due to natural processes, but the

property is protected from adverse effects of human development and invasive species. There has been no permanent settlement on the property since the early 19th century.

While no formal buffer zone is associated with this property, it is within the 147,000 ha Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site (created in 1993) and the Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site (created in 2010).

### **Authenticity**

SḠang Gwaay is unquestionably authentic in terms of its location and setting, forms and designs, materials and substances as well as spirit and feeling. The property is an authentic illustration of the evolving Haida culture, as can be seen in the relationships between the forms and designs of the art and structures at the property, and contemporary Haida art. The property continues to hold significant spiritual value for the Haida and is still used today.

After consultation with chiefs and elders, in 1995 four poles were straightened and stabilized and in 1997 an additional pole was stabilized in an effort to prolong the period before they return naturally to the earth. Identified and potential threats to the authenticity of the property include the general decomposition of the cedar poles and house remains, the impact of deer on the in-situ artefacts (the situation is reviewed on a regular basis and culling happens as required), and unsupervised visitors who may inadvertently damage the fragile cultural resources by touching or walking on them.

### **Protection and management requirements**

SḠang Gwaay is commemorated by the Government of Canada as a National Historic Site (1981) and is protected under the *Constitution of the Haida Nation*

(2003), the *Canada National Parks Act* (2000), and related management systems. Situated within the boundaries of the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site, the property is cooperatively managed by the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation. Cultural resource management requirements for the property are currently addressed under the management plan for the entire Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site (2008).

An Archipelago Management Board (AMB), comprised of Haida and Government of Canada representatives, determines all operational, planning and management actions, using a consensus-based decision-making model. The AMB examines all initiatives and undertakings related to the planning, operation, and management of SGang Gwaay. The Haida Hereditary Leaders have moral authority over the village sites and are consulted; solutions are based on advice provided by the Haida Hereditary Leaders. The Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program of site guardians and guides is managed by the Skidegate Band Council and is an essential part of the management structure.

Special attention will be given over the long term to monitoring and taking appropriate actions related to a number of factors in and near the property. Specifically, these include the following: potential impacts of climate change; potential building development; marine pollution; local conditions affecting physical fabric including wind, humidity, and temperature; impacts of tourism, visitation and recreational activities; deliberate destruction of heritage; effects of climate change and severe weather; possible sudden ecological and geological events; and invasive species.

## **Observations**

- While a more in-depth study of the comparatives above might reveal higher

qualitative aspects of UNESCO's inscription criteria than this summary analysis indicates, Victoria exhibits a rich heritage of scientific and cultural components that would justify and nomination attempt.

- The normal “stove-pipe” approach to the husbanding, management, and public awareness of this Victoria's richly woven fabric of interlinked heritage assets has mitigated against it being assembled into a comprehensive narrative, particularly in support of any civic identity of place. This needs to change and one unifying baseline could be the underappreciated First Nations regional heritage.
- The national comparatives presented here indicate the extensive work needed at the popular and educational levels, as well as in the spheres of political support, urban planning, and academic investigations to develop a comprehensive heritage narrative. In short, Victoria needs an identity/image/branding make-over.

### **Resources:**

[World Heritage in Canada](#)

[Report on the State of Conservation \(Parks Canada\)](#)

[Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site](#)

[SGaang Gwaii \(Parks Canada\)](#)

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/741/>

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/300/>

[Rideau Canal National Historic Site of Canada](#)