

**City of Nelson**  
**Community Heritage Register Update**  
**June 2011**



**Bird's-eye view of Nelson, 1894**

*(BCAR A-02080)*

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## 1.0 Historical Contexts and Themes

The Statements of Significance in this report are part of a wider study undertaken to update the City of Nelson Community Heritage Register. This update initiative involves determining what stories need to be told in order for the community to have a comprehensive and values-based understanding of the heritage of Nelson. This provides direction for determining what resources are needed on the Community Heritage Register to tell those stories.

An analysis of history, including the very recent past, is central to any values-based heritage assessment and management. The historical context of a place ensures that the significance of heritage resources can be understood, logically analyzed and clearly stated. The community's heritage resources need to be considered within the context of the history and historical geography of Nelson and area surrounding it, as well as the underlying historical influences that have shaped and continue to shape the city.

### Historical Contexts

#### **Historical contexts:**

*Identify and explain the major themes, factors and processes that have influenced the history of an area*

*Their objective is to provide a framework to investigate and identify heritage resources*

*They are not intended to be a detailed account of all aspects of the history of an area*

*They are not intended to replace histories designed to serve other purposes*

An historic context statement is a document used in planning for a community's heritage resources. It identifies the broad patterns of historic development in the community and identifies historic property types, such as buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes or districts which may represent these patterns of development. An historic context statement provides direction for evaluating and protecting significant heritage resources. As a planning document, it is meant to be a dynamic work, evolving as community needs and desires change.

Historical contexts, used in conjunction with a thematic framework and information about the physical evidence of a place, can suggest areas requiring more detailed historical research. The use of contexts and themes can draw attention to gaps in an existing heritage register. The historical context developed for Nelson expands the thematic framework into a brief historical narrative about the place.

The historical context statement below is a summary of themes found in the historical record. This framework identifies heritage, social and urban design values important to Nelson's character.

The reader is encouraged to pursue additional resources for specific details on ethnic or national communities, property division, forms of development and other specialty subjects.

Nelson's core heritage themes have deep roots in the past and in the geography of the area. Since the 1890s, Nelson has served as the social, economic and transportation hub for the ever-evolving mining, agriculture and forestry industries. The community began as a rapidly growing industrial centre at the turn of the twentieth century. Its regular economic reinvention ensured its evolution into a sophisticated mix of heritage buildings and infill development that has made it a

centre for tourism and the location of one of the few intact main streets in the province.

Location has been the key to Nelson’s development. Its access to Kootenay Lake’s water transportation routes, the discovery of ore at nearby Toad Mountain and the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway ensured the city would become a navigational hub. The city’s incorporation in 1897 was hastened by the need for civic infrastructure in the booming town. Even as Nelson entered the modern era, and has continued to reinvent itself economically, development has not altered the city’s basic character and distinctiveness.

**Thematic Framework**

Historical themes are ways of describing a major force or process which has contributed to history. The following historical themes create an historical context of provincial, regional, and local history within which the heritage significance of resources found in Nelson and its surroundings can be understood, assessed, and compared.

- |  |
|--|
| <p>Historical themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put a resource historically in place and time</li> <li>Unite a variety of actions, events, functions, people, place and time</li> <li>Prevent the concentration on any one particular type of resource, period or event in history</li> <li>Ensure that a broad range of heritage resources is considered, touching on many aspects of the city’s history</li> <li>Flow across all peoples, places, and time periods</li> </ul> |
|--|

History is complex, and as a result, important historical features, events and/or assets may not be easily slotted into one of the themes. Themes will overlap, and there will be repetition and perhaps ambiguity as to which is the most applicable theme.

The thematic framework summarizes the context and themes identified for Nelson. Essentially, the thematic framework was guided by asking the question, “What do people value about the history of Nelson, and why?”. The framework was developed through a synthesis of the historical context, information collected at the community workshops, and through input from the Community Heritage Commission, Stakeholder Group, Touchstones Nelson Archives, and other knowledgeable researchers, professionals and citizens in the city.

This input generated comprehensive lists that covered the city’s history from the natural environment, Indigenous Peoples, post-contact history, and more recent events.

Historical themes developed for Nelson can be used to inform the management of the area’s heritage. This includes the selection of historic and cultural sites for nomination to the Community Heritage Register. It also includes the ability to sustain the area’s rich diversity of intangible cultural heritage, such as stories, festivals, celebrations, arts, sports, and other valued forms of expression and community building.

Additionally, the themes provide a background on the area’s historic identity and sense of place for consideration in any future economic or tourism initiatives.

Because themes connect the historical context to values and places, they are a good way to organize information so that it has continuity. This information can then be used to move forward with the Community Heritage Register and the writing of comprehensive Statements of Significance.

Together, the themes are intended to:

- Capture the heritage values of the City of Nelson and the evolution of its geographic community over time
- Capture the reader or audience's imagination in their language
- Capture the unique character defining elements of the community and overlaps between one community and elsewhere
- Connect the past to the present
- Connect heritage values to the experience of physical surroundings

These stories of the past and the themes that workshop participants, Community Heritage Commission members, the Stakeholder Group, Touchstones Nelson Permanent Museum Exhibition and others identified as important characteristics of Nelson are the stakeholders' heritage values. Considered against the factual record of the historical context, heritage values were used by the consultant team as the basis for defining the thematic framework.

## **2.0 A Thematic Framework for the City of Nelson**

### **1 The Natural Setting**

This theme captures Nelson's natural setting as the backdrop to the events that have occurred throughout the city's history.

- Role of geology, geography, topography
- Watercourses
- Microclimates

Historical resources that may be associated with this theme include creeks, Kootenay Lake, geological, topographical or ecological features, the Kokanee run, mining features, retaining infrastructure, unique city characteristics as a response to natural features, views, agriculture, and local flora and fauna.

### **2 Diverse Cultural Beginnings**

- Nelson's mix of cultures through its history is expressed by this theme.
- Indigenous Peoples
- Immigrants: Americans, English, Scots, Italians, Chinese, Doukhobors, and many others

Historical resources associated with this theme may include buildings and structures, settlement patterns, streets, landscape features such as trees or gardens, or intangible heritage elements such as traditions, art or systems of belief.

### **3 The Water Resource**

This theme expresses the important role that water, specifically lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands, has played in the development of Nelson.

- Lake and stream natural resources
- Port of Entry
- Hydro-electric power generation
- Recreational history

### **4 Lakefront Hub**

This theme captures the way in which Nelson's origins grew from the lakefront, as the city expanded up the mountain slope and became a major transportation centre due to transportation links between water transportation and the railway.

- Benchland settlement
- Railways
- Steam sternwheeler terminal and transfers
- Roads, highways, ferries, bridges and trails

### **5 Economic Reinvention**

Throughout its history, Nelson continually has had to reinvent itself economically. From the early mining strikes, to regional tourism development, to the current heritage, arts and culture initiatives, the city has taken advantage of its location and character to sustain itself economically.

- Mines and Smelters
- Port of Entry
- Orchard industry
- Early sawmills
- Power generation
- Manufacturing and industry
- Education and government centre
- Forestry, silviculture and other crops
- Tourism, arts, culture and heritage, and recreation
- Heritage revitalization: transformation of the downtown

## **6 Early City Development in Mountainous Terrain**

Nelson's early development involved the placement of survey grids onto steep and mountainous terrain. This theme explores this early city expansion and the resulting physical character of the city.

- Origins and physical expansion
- The early surveys
- Built form
- Social life of a frontier town

## **7 The Queen City**

This theme explores Nelson's important role as the cultural and administration focus of the Kootenay region, as well as addressing its characteristics as a typical British Columbia town.

- Administrative centre
- Cultural and Recreation centre
- Concentration of wealth
- Local and regional institutions
- Small-town Nelson
- Incorporation as a city in 1897

## **8 Cultural and Social Independence**

Nelson's reputation as a city for alternative and unrestricted lifestyles is captured by this theme.

- Roots in isolated geography

- 1960s-70s counter-culture mecca
- Draft dodgers

## **9 Modern Nelson**

This theme captures the city's evolution into a modern entity through its physical and social development.

- Development of Nelson in the 1930s and later
- Educational and cultural centre
- Moderne and Art Deco design aesthetic
- Nelson in World War II
- Rise of the automobile culture and car-oriented tourism
- Live here, work everywhere

## **10 Transforming the Environment**

This theme explores the ways in which the development of the city has influenced the natural environment.

- Development of the lakefront
- Alterations of the creek-beds
- Hydroelectric dams
- Street construction and public transport
- Public housing development
- Creation of public parks

### 3.0 Historical Context Statement for the City of Nelson

#### The Natural Setting

Nelson's origins are as old as its landscapes. The geography of the Central Kootenay determined transportation patterns and the ways in which the city would develop. The Purcell, Selkirk and Monashee mountain ranges created natural east-west barriers effectively forcing transportation routes to follow the natural access corridors along the north-south valleys. This same geography gave rise to the Columbia River system of which the Kootenay River, Kootenay Lake and inflowing lakes and rivers in Canada and the United States are tributaries.

The Quesnellia Terrane, or plate, in which Nelson and the West Arm of Kootenay Lake is situated, "... runs from the US border through the Kootenays and up to Prince George, narrowing as it meets the thin strip of remaining Cassiar Terrane."<sup>1</sup> "This terrane is composed of a sequence of volcanic and sedimentary rocks of the Upper Triassic to Lower Jurassic age"<sup>2</sup>, or approximately 200 million years old. When the Columbia and Rocky Mountains were formed around 150 million years ago, the upheaval affected the Quesnellia Terrane. Later granite intrusions near Nelson and the further shifting of the earth's crust created the large deposits of gold, silver, galena and copper found in the Nelson region, as well as the faults which form Slocan and Kootenay Lakes.<sup>3</sup>

This geology was the source and cause of the mining advances into the West Kootenay. This included the galena-rich Blue Bell outcropping, the silver deposits in Ainsworth, and other claims around the perimeter of Kootenay Lake. Men were mining gold on creeks in the South Kootenay as early as 1854, when gold was discovered on the Pend d' Oreille River where it joins the Columbia. In 1868, mining with rockers was occurring on Forty-Nine Creek west of Nelson. In 1882, there was gold mining near Ainsworth; in 1884 "The Ledge" or Bluebell mine came into existence; and in 1886 the Silver King mine was developed on Toad Mountain with rich deposits of silver, lead, copper, and gold just above the location of Nelson. As noted in the Report of the Minister of Mines for 1889:

*"The work done on the Kootonai [sic], Bonanza, and American Flag, exhibit a similar richness [of ore] to the Silver King on the surface, and, so far as ascertained, may be equally as rich. The lode running through these claims is from 12 to 16 feet wide, six feet of which is of solid ore. The foot and hanging walls are composed of dolomite of lime, the country rock being granite. The course of the ledge is east and west, and has been traced for a distance of four miles over mountains and through intervening depressions."*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al Price, "Geological Diversity, Northern BC Has It All" [http://www.northword.ca/connections/Past\\_Issue/spring%2002/geological.html](http://www.northword.ca/connections/Past_Issue/spring%2002/geological.html)

<sup>2</sup> Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources, [http://propertyfile.gov.bc.ca/PDFTemp/fileid\\_37140.pdf](http://propertyfile.gov.bc.ca/PDFTemp/fileid_37140.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> R.J.W. Turner et. al., *Geotour Guide for the West Kootenay, British Columbia*. Geological Survey of Canada Open File 6135, British Columbia Geological Survey Geofile 1009-06. (Victoria: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, 2009) 4-7.

<sup>4</sup> Province of British Columbia. *Annual Report of the Minister of Mines for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1899, Being an Account of Mining Operations for Gold, Coal, etc in the Province of British Columbia*. (Victoria: Printed by Richard Wolfenden, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, 1900) 280.

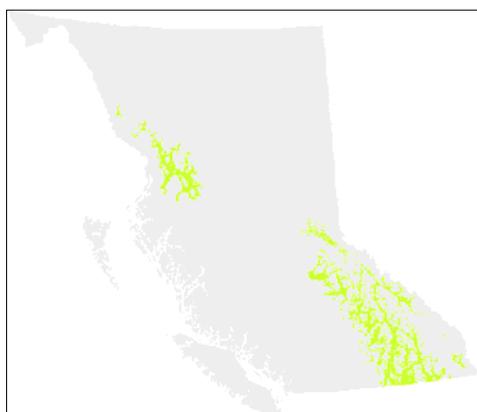
Mining also established the nearby communities of Kaslo, Ainsworth, Rossland, Trail, Salmo, Ymir and the Slocan (Sandon, New Denver and Silverton) in the 1890s.<sup>5</sup>

The steep geography and geological outcrops that held the mineral wealth that created the city would influence the physical form and character of Nelson itself.

The narrow valleys and abundant waterways defined the use of the area by indigenous peoples whose presence dates back to 5,000 years or more, while indigenous habitation dates back to 9,000 years in the Columbia River valley west of Nelson.<sup>6</sup> The presence of Kootenay Lake and its rivers, created by glacial melt after the last ice age, led to the development of a water-based culture, both pre and post contact, that used a variety of watercraft as a primary mode of transportation. The water system also provided a local fishery resource. After the last glaciation, lower Bonnington Falls, between Nelson and Castlegar, became a barrier between Kootenay Lake and the Pacific Ocean. Ocean-going sockeye were unable to leap the falls and headed up downstream creeks to spawn, while those stranded above the falls became the landlocked Kokanee.<sup>7</sup>

**Interior Cedar-Hemlock  
biogeoclimatic zone**

(<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca>)



Most of the West Kootenay is located in the Interior Cedar-Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone characterized in part by an interior wet belt. This results in relatively high rainfall and winters that are milder than in other parts of the interior. Nelson and its surrounding area are part of a unique system of interior temperate rain forest, with enough moisture in the Pacific air masses to create a coastal microclimate.<sup>8</sup> As noted in 1910: "... the

presence of a body of water in the vicinity of an orchard is in itself a guarantee of climatic conditions that are conducive to the production of good fruit."<sup>9</sup>

This climate is also conducive to the productive coniferous forests that cover most of the Interior Cedar-Hemlock Zone. While the Western red cedar or Western hemlock predominate in these forests, there are more tree species in this zone than in any other ecological zone in the province. Ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, Western larch, Lodgepole pine and Western white pine all grow in this biogeoclimatic zone<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Commission on Resources and Environment, *West Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan* (Victoria: Province of British Columbia, 1994) 25.

<sup>6</sup> Information provided throughout this context statement and the statements of significance with regard to Indigenous Peoples and their traditional use of Nelson and area is drawn from the publications, field notes, diaries and/or oral testimony of: 1) geologist George Dawson and ethnographers James Teit, Verne Ray and Harry Holbert Turney-High; 2) archeologist Harlan I. Smith; 3) West Kootenay historian E.L. Affleck; 4) Lower Kootenay Chief John Alexander and Sinixt Chief James Bernard (circa 1910-30) (Eileen Pearkes, personal communication, 04 July 2009). Full citations can be found in the bibliography.

<sup>7</sup> Royal BC Museum. "The Kokanee Salmon Heritage Project." <http://www.livinglandscapes.bc.ca/thompson/kokaneesalmon/view-life.html>

<sup>8</sup> Commission on Resources and Environment, *West Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan* 31.

<sup>9</sup> "Queen City of the Kootenay," *Man to Man Magazine* 6, no. 7 July/August (1910): 578.

<sup>10</sup> British Columbia Ministry of Forests Research Branch. *The Ecology of the Interior Cedar-Hemlock Zone*. (Victoria: Province of British Columbia, n.d.) 2.

## Diverse Cultural Beginnings

The first newcomers to the Nelson area did not come to an empty land. The Sinixt, an Interior Salish people known as the Arrow Lake Indian Band, and the Yaqan nu-kiy, known as the Lower Kootenay Indian Band, a band of the Ktunaxa, used the local landscape for sustenance.

First Nations people used the West Arm of Kootenay Lake as a means of supplementing their diets with the plentiful fish stocks and plant foods. They occupied seasonal camps at various places along the West Arm over the years, with archeological materials found at Lakeside Park beach, Grohman Point and near the Canadian Pacific Railway grounds. It is possible that the blocking of anadromous (ocean-going) salmon from the West Arm by Bonnington Falls downstream resulted in seasonal rather than year-round use of the area. Nelson's Cottonwood Creek was used by First Nations for fishing kokanee salmon, bull trout, rainbow trout and other species. Pictographs are located on the West Arm, and on both the north and south arms of Kootenay Lake.<sup>11</sup>

One of the characteristics of Nelson's history is the continued immigration of people of a variety of cultures. In the Fur Trade period (1807-1870) and the placer gold rush period that followed (1855-1870), the Métis played an important role in the opening of the region to settlement and development by non-indigenous people. Of mixed European and aboriginal heritage, the Métis served as guides, *voyageurs* and trade officers.<sup>12</sup> The earliest non-aboriginal arrivals in Nelson were of European descent, mostly from the United Kingdom and the United States, originally descending upon the city to take part in the mining industry, and remaining as the town became a major supply and distribution centre for the West Kootenay region. Over the course of its history, Nelson and its environs have been home to Americans, Eastern Canadians, European, Asian, Russian Doukhobors, Scandinavians and others.

With only north-south transportation being feasible due to the local terrain, transportation links to the mining areas in B.C. were through the American railway networks. It was inevitable that many Americans would not only settle in Nelson and other areas of the West Kootenay but would be a primary factor in the economic development of the region. Canadian mines were directly linked with the American so-called inland empire with its centre at Spokane<sup>13</sup> while American and Canadian railroad companies and industrialists competed for control of the Kootenay's rich resources. In 1891 the Canadian Pacific Railway opened a branch line from Robson to Nelson which connected with the Columbia and Kootenay Steam Navigation Company steamboats. These steamboats ran on the Columbia River north to the main line of the CPR at Revelstoke and south into the United States, and on Kootenay Lake and the Kootenay River to centres on the lake, and across the border to Bonners Ferry, Idaho. In 1893 the Nelson and Fort Sheppard Railway ran between the U.S. border at Waneta and Nelson, terminating with a lake connection and turnaround point at 5 Mile Point on Kootenay Lake. Many of the mines were

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Baravalle. *Final Report on a Survey of Kootenay Lake Pictograph Sites*. Submitted to the Heritage Advisory Board of British Columbia, 12 January 1981 and Eileen Pearkes (personal communication). Please see also rationale submitted under separate cover.

<sup>12</sup> Eileen Pearkes (personal communication, 10 December 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Heritage Conservation Branch. *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation* (Victoria, Province of British Columbia, 1980) 18.

registered as American companies in the state of Washington, and the American flag often flew alongside the Union Jack.<sup>14</sup>

A number of immigrants from Britain arrived as “remittance men”, so called because they were second sons of prominent British families that received a regular stipend from home. They settled near Nelson and other Kootenay communities, enticed by advertising describing the area as a beautiful land of plenty. While some participated in get rich quick schemes, others eventually became orchardists, ranchers or businessmen.<sup>15</sup> Many military veterans also arrived in the area having left Britain and other Empire outposts to settle in Canada.

Chinese contract workers, along with Italians and other groups, were drawn to the West Kootenay by the promise of jobs. The Chinese worked on the C.P.R. mainline construction and later as cooks on the trains and steamboats. Nelson eventually had one of the largest Chinatowns in British Columbia. Originally located on Vernon Street, it was relocated to Lake Street between Hall and Ward Streets in the early 1900s, as the vicinity of Vernon and Baker streets developed into a commercial and residential area with retail stores, banks and other businesses, as well as the homes of mine managers and the professional class.<sup>16</sup> By the 1950s, Nelson’s Chinatown was nearly gone due to fires, migration to larger cities and the integration of Chinese families into mainstream Nelson.

Racial attitudes at the turn of the 20th century discriminated against the Chinese, who were considered a threat to European workers because they accepted lower wages in the mines and sawmills. The cheap labour of Chinese gardeners, laundry workers and cooks made the prosperous lifestyle of many European settlers possible.<sup>17</sup> Chinese market gardens were once a fixture in Nelson, supplying produce to many of the city’s merchants.

First arriving in Canada in 1899, Doukhobors left Russia after facing increasing persecution for their beliefs and seeking land and freedom on their own terms. Some 7,427 sought refuge in Canada at this time, a country where settlers were welcomed,<sup>18</sup> with most settling in present day Saskatchewan. “Between 1908 and 1922, some 5,000 Doukhobors communally purchased over twenty thousand acres [of land] in the West Kootenay and Boundary regions.”<sup>19</sup> They built roads, bridges, brickworks and sawmills, and developed communal enterprises such as orchards, jam and honey production, under the umbrella of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood.<sup>20</sup> In Nelson, the Doukhobors operated a jam factory, the Kootenay and Columbia Preserving Works, between 1911 and 1915.<sup>21</sup> During the

<sup>14</sup> N.L. Barlee. *West Kootenay, Ghost Town Country*. (Surrey B.C.:Canada West Publications, 1984) 21.

<sup>15</sup> “Kootenay: An Exploration of Historic Prejudice and Intolerance,” <http://www.fortsteele.ca/exhibits/kootenay/ethnic/rmen.asp>.

<sup>16</sup> Kenneth Morrow. *Ladies of Easy Virtue in the West Kootenay, Regional History in a Global Context*. (Bellingham, Washington: Morrow, Kenneth, 2007) 26.

<sup>17</sup> “Kootenay: An Exploration of Racial Prejudice and Intolerance,” <http://www.fortsteele.ca/exhibits/kootenay/ethnic/chinese.asp>.

<sup>18</sup> Harry B. Hawthorn ed., *The Doukhobors of British Columbia*. (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia and J.M. Dent & Sons Canada Ltd., 1955) 7.

<sup>19</sup> Jean Barman. *The West Beyond the West*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 144.

<sup>20</sup> Hawthorn p. 50-51.

<sup>21</sup> Greg Nesteroff. “The Doukhobor Jam Factory in Nelson British Columbia.” <http://www.doukhobor.org/Nelson-Jam-Factory.htm>

World Wars the Doukhobors were resented by some of their fellow citizens for their pacifist beliefs.<sup>22</sup>

Unlike other communities in the West Kootenay, Nelson, while not the site of an internment camp, was a transit point for Japanese-Canadians interned from the West Coast during World War II. The Nelson Retail Merchants Association advocated that Japanese not be allowed to own real estate or take out business licenses.<sup>23</sup> The position taken in many Kootenay communities was that the Japanese should only stay in the area for the duration of the war, and then be re-settled elsewhere in the province. Nelson today does not have a large Japanese population, although in the 1990s, the city hosted hundreds of Japanese students at the Canadian International College.

### **The Water Resource**

Nelson's water resources, including Kootenay Lake, Kootenay River and the city's urban creeks have been critical in the development of the city as an important regional hub.

Due to the north-south regional geology, the Kootenay River flows south from its origins in the Rocky Mountains through Montana and Idaho in the United States, and back north into Canada. The river enters Kootenay Lake at its south end. Bordered by the Selkirk and Purcell mountain ranges,<sup>24</sup> the lake, approximately 100 kilometres in length, is one of the province's largest fresh water bodies.<sup>25</sup> The West Arm is the outflow of Kootenay Lake, carrying the main flow of the river past Nelson to join the Columbia River near Castlegar. The difference in elevation in this short section of river was developed early on to produce hydro-electric power.<sup>26</sup> The waters of Kootenay Lake are augmented at its north end by the Duncan and Lardeau rivers, while the Kootenay River below Nelson is augmented by the waters of Slocan Lake and the Slocan River.

As mining and smelting flourished in the region, Nelson grew and civic leaders and investors realized the value of the hydro-energy flowing in Cottonwood Creek and the Kootenay River.<sup>27</sup> A hydro-electric plant, the first in the province, was established on Cottonwood Creek in 1896 to service the city, while in 1897 the West Kootenay Power and Light Co. Ltd. built a dam and power plant on the north side of the river at Lower Bonnington Falls.<sup>28</sup>

Today the Kootenay River between the communities of Nelson and Castlegar is used by six dams - the Lower Bonnington (1898), the Upper Bonnington (1907), the City of Nelson Power Plant (1910 – Upper Bonnington Falls), the South Slocan (1928), the Corra Linn (1932) and the Brilliant (1944) near the Kootenay-Columbia River confluence. Also the B.C. Hydro and Power Authority maintains the Kootenay Canal (1974) and Power Plant.

<sup>22</sup> Sylvia Crooks. *Homefront and Battlefield, Nelson B.C. in World War II*. (Vancouver: Granville Island Publishing, 2005) 110.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> "Kootenay Lake." <http://www.britishcolumbia.com/regions/towns/?townID=4108>

<sup>25</sup> "Kootenay Lake." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kootenay\\_Lake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kootenay_Lake)

<sup>26</sup> "Kootenay River." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kootenay\\_River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kootenay_River)

<sup>27</sup> Touchstones Nelson. "Water Layout." Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, © Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History.

<sup>28</sup> Jeremy Mouat. *The Business of Power, Hydro-Electricity in Southeastern British Columbia 1897-1997*. (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1997) 50.

**"Kootenay Falls near  
Nelson B.C." ca.1900**

(BCAR H-01663)



The Columbia River itself originates in two lakes that lie between the Continental Divide and the Purcell mountain ranges in British Columbia. As with the Kootenay, the river's course is convoluted, first flowing north, then turning south and flowing to the international border, but maintaining the north-south pattern of the regions' watersheds.

The Kootenay River has always been important as a means of transportation. David Thompson, a trader, surveyor and mapmaker for the North West Company, used the river as a transportation route during his exploration of the Columbia region between 1807-1811. It was critical for navigation to Nelson in the 1890s prior to the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway Crowsnest Pass route. Originating in Lethbridge, the railway ran westward through the Rocky Mountains into British Columbia via the Crowsnest Pass, originally ending at Kootenay Landing at the southern end of Kootenay Lake. Between 1898 and 1930 sternwheelers, steam tugs and barges provided key transportation connections from Kootenay Landing through to Nelson.<sup>29</sup> The Kootenay River and Kootenay Lake were used as a transportation corridor until 1930 when the C.P.R. was extended from Procter to Kootenay Landing.

The early sternwheelers, run by the Columbia & Kootenay Steam Navigation Company (formed by Captain Robert Sanderson, J. Fred Hume and William Cowan of the Columbia River Transportation Company, and Captain John Irving, F.S. Barnard, and John Andrew Mara) barged ore south into the United States, the location of the earliest smelters, and brought supplies back north.<sup>30</sup> This continuous north-south traffic between British Columbia and the U.S. resulted in Nelson being declared a customs port in July 1895.<sup>31</sup> After the purchase of the Columbia & Kootenay Steam Navigation Company by the Canadian Pacific Railway, these cross

<sup>29</sup> Canadian Museum of Rail Travel. "The Crowsnest Pass Railway Route." [www.crowsnest.bc.ca](http://www.crowsnest.bc.ca)

<sup>30</sup> Heritage Conservation Branch. *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation* 20.

<sup>31</sup> John Norris, *Historic Nelson, the Early Years* (Lantzville B.C.: Oolichan Books, 1995) 283.

border trips ceased, and Trail's smelter was used to process local ores.<sup>32</sup> Eventually the sternwheelers became obsolete, as they could no longer compete with faster and more efficient railway travel. Daniel Chase Corbin's Nelson and Fort Sheppard Railway and its immediate successor the Great Northern Railway served Nelson until the 1980s.

Nelson's location on the West Arm came about because of its water access and proximity to the Silver King mine at Toad Mountain. The West Arm's position up-river of Bonnington Falls meant that it was relatively remote. This isolation has become a theme in Nelson's history, with the result that it has become known as a place of refuge for those fleeing less than desirable circumstances elsewhere.

In 1961, the United States and Canada signed the Columbia River Treaty; in 1962 the provincial government created BC Hydro to develop hydroelectric projects in the Peace and Columbia River regions. Three dams were constructed in British Columbia under the treaty, the Duncan, Mica and High Arrow (later called Hugh Keenleyside) to provide water storage for flood prevention and maximum power generation for the United States.<sup>33</sup> The Treaty also allowed the United States to build the Libby Dam on the Kootenai River in Montana for additional water storage in that region.<sup>34</sup>

Urban creeks have played an important role in the development of Nelson. All of Nelson's urban creeks – Cottonwood Creek, Hume Creek, Ward Creek and its tributaries, and Anderson Creek - have been modified in the service of town growth and development. Cottonwood Creek was dammed in 1895-96<sup>35</sup> for power production (B.C.'s first hydro-electric plant).<sup>36</sup> The creek was diverted below the falls to suit the industrial development at the western end of the city. The original mouth of Cottonwood Creek where it entered Kootenay Lake was near the foot of Slocan Street. Today wetland traces still exist, marking the creek's former riparian verges. Anderson Creek was also diverted for development. Anderson Creek originally flowed down the Fairview hill and across the area taken up by the present-day highway to enter the West Arm through Lakeside Park. Before diversion, Ward Creek entered Kootenay Lake near the west end of today's airport runway; its tributaries were gradually confined to culverts and covered over during the settlement and development of Nelson. Portions of Ward Creek are still seen on an 1899 fire insurance map; Ward Creek was diverted into Cottonwood Creek via Houston and Innes Streets by 1899 as seen on the 1899 fire insurance plan. By that time, culverts were used to control runoff, but earlier there had been bridges on Victoria, Silica, Baker, Carbonate and Vernon Streets near present day Ward Street. By 1912, the creek does not appear at all on a city plan<sup>37</sup>, an indication that the creek was gradually buried quite early on in the city's history.

<sup>32</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist. By 1896 Nelson's smelter had opened, making a concentrate "matte" which was shipped to the main C.P.R. line at Revelstoke and then to Walls for treatment.

<sup>33</sup> Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program. *Backgrounder: An introduction to the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program*. (Victoria: BC Hydro and BC Ministry of the Environment, n.d.) 1.

<sup>34</sup> Nigel Bankes. "The Columbia Basin and the Columbia River Treaty: Canadian Perspectives in the 1990s." Faculty of Law, The University of Calgary Research Publication PO95-4 (Calgary: Northwest Water & Policy Project, 1996), 14-15.

<sup>35</sup> Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History. "Balance of Power: Hydroelectric Development in Southeastern British Columbia,"

<http://virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Hydro/en/dams/?action=cottonwoodcreek>

<sup>36</sup> Alan Ramsden, Historian.

<sup>37</sup> Plan of the City of Nelson. (Winnipeg: Stovel Company, Map Engravers and Publishers, 1912).

The city's creeks were integral to its domestic and industrial water supply. Established in 1890 Nelson's first waterworks system was originally privately owned by the Consumers Waterworks Company,<sup>38</sup> with its original source of water controlled by a dam across Cottonwood Creek. Complaints of inadequate water and the fact that "the Consumers' Water Supply Company had lost its license due to inadequate supply"<sup>39</sup> led the city to acquire the system and subsequently tap into Ward Creek to increase supply. The city acquired water rights on Anderson Creek (1897), 5 Mile Creek and Selous Creek and expanded the system, thereby solving the local water situation.<sup>40</sup>

All of the urban creeks at their mouths would have been used by local Indigenous Peoples for trout fishing and the annual Kokanee spawning.

The water resource is not only an industrial or transportation asset. The lakes, rivers and creeks around Nelson have, since the early 1900s, provided recreational opportunities for the city and surrounding communities. Along the West Arm, racing sculls competed in a course running from the City wharf to Lakeside Park. Lake boats and pleasure craft plied the waters, there was a Launch Club (the first registered in Canada)<sup>41</sup>, and boathouses built along the lakeshore. Sternwheelers collected passengers for pleasure trips on the lake, while people gathered "on the city wharf every evening to watch the C.P.R.'s *Moyie* or *Kokanee* race the Great Nothern's *International* into port every night."<sup>42</sup>

Nelson had ice rinks on land by 1896 which were used for curling, hockey and skating, with the first public skating rink created by water diverted from Ward Creek. These sports were also played outside on the frozen lake in the winter when the ice was solid.<sup>43</sup> The game of hockey dominated the sports scene in Nelson for many years.<sup>44</sup>

The focus on the water resource for recreation and transportation also supported local construction of small boat and pleasure craft.<sup>45</sup> In 1909, Nelson had four commercial boat manufacturers; boatbuilding continued on Nelson's waterfront until the 1950s.<sup>46</sup> Sternwheelers and tugs of the Columbia and Kootenay Steam Navigation Company/Canadian Pacific fleets were constructed at the shipyard originally located at the west end of the Nelson waterfront. The shipyard was moved to an area east of the present Nelson Bridge in about 1900. The Kootenay Lake Ferries: M.V. Anscomb (1946), M.V. Balfour (1954) and M.V. Osprey (2000) were also built in Nelson.

<sup>38</sup> Molly Cottingham. *The History of the West Kootenay District in British Columbia*. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1947) 157.

<sup>39</sup> David Scott and Edna H. Hanic. *Nelson: Queen City of the Kootenay* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press Ltd., 1972), 59.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 66.

<sup>41</sup> Alan Ramsden, Historian.

<sup>42</sup> George V. Ferguson, "Queen of the Kootenays," *The Beaver*, March 1960, 20 and "Sternwheelers of Kootenay Lake," <http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Kootenay/en/boats/>, © Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, © Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History.

<sup>43</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>44</sup> Scott and Hanic, *Nelson, Queen City of the Kootenay* 92.

<sup>45</sup> Shawn Lamb Archivist.

<sup>46</sup> "More Boats than Ever," *Nelson Daily News*, 03 April 1909, quoted in Shawn Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years, A Century of Nelson's Top News Stories* (Nelson B.C.: Nelson Daily News, 1997), 26.

## Lakefront Hub

From its beginnings, Nelson functioned as a terminus and the commercial capital of the Kootenays. The 1890s were boom years in the Kootenays, and Nelson grew along with many other communities in the region. The town's central location and growing importance as a railway and shipping nexus helped it to become the regional centre.<sup>47</sup>

Settlement began on the lower reaches of the town near the lakefront, the site of the early settler tents and log structures. The lakeside location of the Canadian Pacific Railway yards, tracks and station cemented the industrial uses of the waterfront, as did the location of the steamship wharf, taken over by the C.P.R. in 1909. As the city expanded, commercial, institutional and residential development crept up the hillside and out toward Fairview (the Hume Addition), establishing buildings on the benchlands in the Uphill and Rosemont neighbourhoods. The benchlands were also the location of the city reservoir and of industrial/manufacturing facilities due to their land-use needs, including the smelter and the brewery, which was located near Ward Creek, a supply of fresh water.

The lucrative silver, lead, copper and gold finds at Toad Mountain in 1886 and 1887 led to the foundation of Nelson as the burgeoning centre of the West Kootenay. In 1890, the Canadian Pacific Railway leased the Columbia and Kootenay Railway and Transportation Company and in 1891 built a branch line to the new city, which was completed along the West Arm to Procter in 1901.<sup>48</sup> As a result of a rivalry between the Canadian Pacific and the Great Northern Railways making their way into the Nelson region, there were two competing railway companies operating ships on the Kootenay and Arrow Lakes.

The Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railway arrived in Nelson from Marcus, Washington in 1893.<sup>49</sup> Constructed by American Daniel C. Corbin, the rail line provided Nelson with uninterrupted rail service to Spokane, Washington.<sup>50</sup> Since the Canadian Pacific Railway was already established on the lakeshore below Nelson, the railway had to use a siding known as Mountain Station, located up the mountainside above the city, and then continued to the Five Mile Point terminus east of the city. In 1896-97, the rail line was extended along the lakeshore to Nelson Station in Fairview near the present Lakeside Park. In 1900, the railway was continued into downtown Nelson where it shared the railway station with the C.P.R. Corbin also operated the Columbia and Western Railway into Trail.<sup>51</sup> In 1898, James J. Hill acquired a controlling interest in the Nelson & Fort Sheppard, the Columbia and Western (and the Spokane Falls and Northern Railway) to create the Great Northern Railway. The Burlington Northern (formerly Great Northern) rail line from Salmo to Troup Junction was abandoned in 1989.<sup>52</sup> The original rail bed was developed into a recreational trail called the Nelson Salmo Great Northern Trail.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Mouat, *The Business of Power*, 51.

<sup>48</sup> Heritage Conservation Branch, *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 20.

<sup>49</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>50</sup> Daniel Corbin also operated the Columbia and Western Railway into Trail. Corbin eventually sold out and J.J. Hill took over his railway operations which became the Great Northern Railway.

<sup>51</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>52</sup> Alastair B. Fraser, "Kootenay Lake Chronology," <http://kootenay-lake.ca/seasons/chronology/>

<sup>53</sup> [http://www.rdck.bc.ca/community/parks/nelson\\_salmo/nelson\\_salmo\\_great\\_northern\\_trail.html](http://www.rdck.bc.ca/community/parks/nelson_salmo/nelson_salmo_great_northern_trail.html)

The lack of roads along the steep shores of Kootenay Lake meant that most local transportation was conducted by water. Boats, tugs, barges and sternwheelers carried passengers, freight and mail, making mining, agriculture and settlement possible at remote points. From 1884 until 1890, small screw-propelled steamboats and small wooden barges were used for transport. These gave way to sternwheelers and larger wooden (later steel) barges between 1891 and 1896,<sup>54</sup> by 1891, “four steamers plied the waters of Kootenay Lake between Nelson, Ainsworth, Balfour, Pilot Bay, and Bonner’s Ferry”<sup>55</sup> in the U.S. The main ship line was the Columbia & Kootenay Steam Navigation Company, acquired by the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1897.<sup>56</sup> Its fleet faced competition from a series of rivals, including the Kootenay Railway & Navigation Company, a subsidiary of the Great Northern Railway.

By 1897, steam driven sternwheelers, tugboats, steel barges and other craft were the primary means of water transport; the use of these continued into the 1950s when they were succeeded by diesel ferries and tugs.<sup>57</sup>

“As mining interests decreased in the region, the fortunes of the Great Northern also decreased and eventually the Kootenay Railway & Navigation Company withdrew from the lake,” going out of business in 1911.<sup>58</sup> This left the Canadian Pacific Railway Company with a virtual monopoly on Kootenay Lake.<sup>59</sup> From the 1890s onward, the railways and water travel together provided the transportation network that brought people to Nelson to take advantage of the mining boom. Steamship travel and shipping ended in 1931 when the railway line was completed along the west shore of Kootenay Lake<sup>60</sup> from Procter to Kootenay Landing, effectively eliminating the need for passenger and freight cars to travel by water from Kootenay Landing to Nelson.<sup>61</sup> Lake travel continued, however, as the sternwheeler *Moyie* served the upper main lake communities until 1957 while the *Nasookin* became the Kootenay Lake ferry from 1931 until 1947, succeeded by the *Anscomb*, *Balfour* and *M.V. Osprey 2000*. Tugboats continued to operate on Kootenay Lake until the early 1990s.

Internal transportation systems were developed early in Nelson’s history. The Nelson Electric Tramway Company was incorporated in October 1899 and capitalized by the British Electric Traction Company. Leased and operated by the City of Nelson after January 1905, the system was closed due to a car barn fire in 1908. It was succeeded by the Nelson Street Railway Company which was incorporated in September 1909 and acquired by the City of Nelson in 1914. The streetcar service was terminated in 1949.<sup>62</sup> Along with Vancouver and Victoria,

<sup>54</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>55</sup> Garnet Basque, *West Kootenay, The Pioneer Years* (Surrey, B.C.: Heritage House Publishing, 1990), 44.

<sup>56</sup> “Kootenay Lake, British Columbia,”

[http://www.greatcanadianlakes.com/british\\_columbia/kootenay/index.htm](http://www.greatcanadianlakes.com/british_columbia/kootenay/index.htm)

<sup>57</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>58</sup> Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History. “Sternwheelers of Kootenay Lake,”

<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Kootenay/en/history/companies.php>

<sup>59</sup> Shawn Lamb notes that there were always a few other boats in service on Kootenay Lake but no major competition for the C.P.R.

<sup>60</sup> Alan Ramsden, Historian.

<sup>61</sup> Fraser, “Kootenay Lake Chronology,” <http://kootenay-lake.ca/seasons/chronology/>

<sup>62</sup> “Memories Recalled as Streetcars Halt,” *Nelson Daily News*, 21 June 1949 quoted in Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years*, 80.

Nelson was the only city in the province to have a sophisticated electric street railway system.

While the first car in Nelson appeared in 1908,<sup>63</sup> the city entered the automotive era in earnest in 1949 with the advent of the Interior Stage Lines bus service which operated until 1950, and the Nelson Transit System which began in the early 1950's and still operates today. Highway development in the area proved to be a detriment to Nelson, with the completion of the Salmo-Creston highway in 1964 and the Salmo-Castlegar bypass in the 1980s effectively skirting vehicular traffic around the city.<sup>64</sup>

### **Early City Development in Mountainous Terrain**

Nelson has evolved as a series of stages of bench-land settlement influenced by its topography. It is representative of typical frontier town development, which for administrative ease extended existing survey grids with little adjustment to account for topography. The town's early beginnings occurred on the flat lands of the lakeshore, eventually climbing the steep slopes of the surrounding mountains, with neighbourhoods laid out in a grid pattern regardless of the steep terrain with its numerous creeks.

In step with this development was the need for street improvements. By 1898, contracts were being awarded for street construction. Because of the steep terrain and local creeks, the development of streets often entailed the construction of bridges as well as the construction of retaining walls to support the steep grades. Walls were constructed from concrete, or with stone which was sometimes quarried from the city's road beds.<sup>65</sup>

Originating in the commercial areas, street construction spread as the neighbourhoods were developed. Retaining walls made of stone or concrete created terraces suitable for commercial and residential construction, such as those at the northeast end of Baker Street. Later retaining walls, including those on Cedar and Victoria streets, were often of massive scale. Steps, pathways and railings followed to allow for pedestrian access, giving the city its distinctive character as it climbs up the hill, along with the network of pedestrian thoroughfares.

Vernon and Ward streets were the starting point for the development of Nelson, by virtue of their strategic location near the steamer landing, with nearby Ward Creek as a water source. In the early 1890s, Vernon Street contained stores, a mining recorder's office, hotel, blacksmith shop and several shacks. Its greater width and central boulevard indicates the intent for the street to remain a principal thoroughfare of the city, and it became the administrative centre and location of government offices. The business community of Nelson located its shops and services on Baker Street, one block uphill, and intended for this purpose.

Settlement patterns in Nelson were established in the years between 1887 and 1914, and the town took form through a series of surveys, each of which consolidated more land for sale and development. "The Nelson area was first surveyed in 1883 as part of J.C. Ainsworth's proposed railway route by the Columbia and Kootenay Railway and Transportation Company"<sup>66</sup> which was never constructed. While a town plan

<sup>63</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>64</sup> Heritage Branch, *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 30.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>66</sup> Heritage Branch, *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 35.

had been developed earlier by Gilbert Malcolm Sproat, the first professional survey of the present town-site of Nelson was made by Alexander Stanhope Farwell in the fall of 1888, which included blocks 1, 2, 3, and 4, and the north half of blocks 5, 6, 7, and 8.

The sale of lots from this survey took place in the latter part of October 1889. Another survey was conducted by Garden, Hermon and Burwell of an additional six whole and six half lots between Baker and Silica streets in 1890.

#### Nelson's District Lots

*(Plan of the City of Nelson, 1912, Stovel Company, Map Engravers and Publishers, Winnipeg)*



District Lot 150, the Hoover addition, was also surveyed in 1890. Lot 58A, commonly known as Bogustown or the City of Nelson Addition, later became the city's Fairview neighbourhood, and was surveyed in 1888. It was incorporated in the city proper in 1921. The Hume addition, District Lot 96, was surveyed in 1891. The city expanded its boundaries further in 1961, 1974, 1975, 1991, 1992 and 1993.<sup>67</sup> The City later acquired the area adjacent to the Nelson Bridge access on the north shore of Kootenay Lake.

The Uphill neighbourhood was identified in the earliest surveys as land suited to residential development above the commercial core. As its name suggests, the area sits above the downtown core and gracefully steps down the slope. It represents housing and development trends in Nelson, in which houses were constructed earlier lower down the slope near the commercial areas, while the houses further uphill were constructed later, reflecting growth

outward from the commercial core as the local population swelled.

Annexed in 1961, the grids of the city's Rosemont and Upper Fairview areas are typical examples of street layouts in the early 20th Century often associated with land speculation, in which whole areas are opened up for development in response to a demand for residential or commercial property, or to spur land improvement. Fairview, laid out on its own grid, and Rosemont, are representative of this association of grid surveys and speculative expansion of a settlement.

Early Nelson was also representative of a typical British Columbia frontier town. Until 1899, brothels were located on Baker Street east of Ward Creek, and Chinese

<sup>67</sup> City of Nelson, Composite Map, City Expansion by Years (Nelson: City of Nelson Public Works Dept., 1997).

businesses on the western part of Vernon Street.<sup>68</sup> These businesses were relocated to West Lake Street as a means of isolating “undesirable” entities in the city.

**Nelson in 1910**  
(BCAR B-04057)



### The Queen City

Nelson’s reputation as the “Queen City of the Kootenays”, so named by a visiting journalist from eastern Canada,<sup>69</sup> was cemented in the early 1900s as the city began to evolve into an elegant and upscale entity. The presence of head offices and residences of company managers, combined with a stable economy, allowed Nelson to emerge as a cosmopolitan centre. This was reflected in its architecture, building materials, craftsmanship, public amenities and civic, religious, social, artistic and recreational opportunities. “Nelson had a hydro-electric plant in 1896 and a coal gas plant or “gasworks” in 1900 that provided heat and light”<sup>70</sup> which contributed to the city’s development.

The combination of the local jobs – mining, logging – in a frontier town with the growing business elite made Nelson in the early 1900s a bit of a dichotomy. The lower streets and the waterfront were dominated by industry and businesses catering to the workers, including Chinatown and a red light district. Baker and Vernon streets were the commercial centre, while

*“...the upper town grew more and more respectable as one climbed the mountain ... the higher one got, the further one was removed from the roaring, lusty*

<sup>68</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>69</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>70</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

*regions where the miners and the lumberjacks periodically spent their pay-day money.”<sup>71</sup>*

A magazine article from 1910 also sums up the character of the Queen City:

*“... with Nelson, the beauty of the location is only an incident. It possesses the more tangible things which go to build up a city. By geographical location and the enterprise of its citizens, it has established itself as the commercial capital of the interior of British Columbia. The mining, lumbering and fruit growing industries claim it as a headquarters. It is acknowledged as the distribution centre of a wide and rich territory.*

*The city boasts 25 miles of sidewalks, 16 miles of water mains and 10 miles of sewer. It owns its own lighting, heating and power plant.*

*Mining laid Nelson’s foundation and there are not a few who claim that the mining industry will yet give it the largest share of the place it seems destined to occupy in the commercial world.”<sup>72</sup>*

Hotels were constructed early on to take advantage of the scenic beauty and tourism possibilities of the area and the city. Industry was growing and “by 1914, the “Queen City” was a Divisional Point for the Canadian Pacific Railway, Canada Customs, central Post Office and Supreme Court. The community boasted two high schools (public and private), a city-owned hydro electric plant on the Kootenay River at Bonnington, a waterfront sawmill, sash and door, mattress and box factories, a C.P.R. shipyard and a number of boat works.”<sup>73</sup>

Also during these early decades “community life was growing steadily as fraternal, national, community and scouting organizations flourished, along with two high schools. Nelson had championship rowing, hockey, curling and football teams and a public library. Due to the development of the Opera House in 1898 and the Capitol Theatre in 1927, numerous performing arts groups were also thriving”<sup>74</sup> and Nelson started to be known as a centre for the arts. Nelson also became home to many churches representing a wide variety of religious denominations.

Scenic parks and opportunities for recreation characterized early Nelson. Its citizens have enjoyed an all season park since 1900 when the Nelson Electric Tramway Company developed picnic facilities known as Tramway Park at its Fairview terminus. In 1906 the land which became present day Lakeside Rotary Park was acquired by the City.<sup>75</sup> The park would be a destination for the electric tramway and

<sup>71</sup> Ferguson, “Queen of the Kootenays,” 21.

<sup>72</sup> “Queen City of the Kootenay” *Man to Man Magazine*, 576.

<sup>73</sup> Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History. “A Condensed History of Nelson”, [www.touchstonesnelson.ca/community/history\\_of\\_nelson.php](http://www.touchstonesnelson.ca/community/history_of_nelson.php) © Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, © Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

have recreation facilities for baseball and lacrosse, bandstand, dancing pavilion and bath house.<sup>76</sup>

Construction on the Lakeside Park concrete wall and promenade began in June 1931. By May 1932, the park was an elegant public open space:

*“... a striking picture set off against a background of green lawns and tall poplars ... three flights of fan-shaped stairways lead down from the walk to the water’s edge, giving an appropriate finishing touch to the somewhat winding contour of the wall. This park is undoubtedly the only one of its kind in the interior and will aid in making Nelson one of the most popular tourist resorts in the province.”<sup>77</sup>*

Other recreational initiatives included the 1904 acquisition of land between Vernon and Front streets from the Canadian Pacific Railway. This area became the Hall Street Recreation Grounds and later the Civic Centre, with its distinctive Art Deco style theatre and arena building replacing the Nelson Fair building which was destroyed by fire in the 1920s. Also significant was the development of Gyro Park in the 1930s with funds raised by the Nelson Gyro Club. Originally called Houston Park, the name was changed when the Gyro Club took over its maintenance and development in the 1920s and 1930s, constructing the pool and other amenities.<sup>78</sup>

After establishing itself as a key service centre to the rich mining and logging industries in the region, the city’s prosperous early decades resulted in the presence of many substantial and attractive commercial and residential buildings throughout the City designed in High and Late Victorian style.

Nelson had only a small number of professional architects practicing in the city which had an effect on the overall look of the city. Economic stability meant that architects were able to establish local practices. Early architects included Arthur E. Hodgins, George Dillon Curtis, Henry Cane, James A. MacDonald, W. George Taylor, and Alexander Ewart.<sup>79</sup> Alexander Carrie, who worked briefly with Ewart until late 1900,<sup>80</sup> carried on after that date to become one of the most prolific and important local architects in Nelson. Also important were the buildings of Francis Rattenbury, which included the Bank of Montreal, the cold storage facility in the Burns Building and the Nelson Courthouse. Also visible are speculative houses, recognizable standardized homes constructed by one developer to meet the demands of a growing population.

Over time the City has evolved through numerous cultural, economic, and architectural stylistic periods that have altered the community’s appearance. Design trends in the mid-twentieth century added examples of the Art Deco, Mission Revival, and the Moderne and International styles to the City’s streets.<sup>81</sup> While many of these styles are associated with British architectural tradition, there was also an American influence, seen in architectural examples from similar-sized American communities in

<sup>76</sup> “Lake Park,” *Nelson Daily Miner*, 02 May 1900, quoted in Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years*, 13.

<sup>77</sup> “New Promenade Completed,” *Nelson Daily News*, 11 May 1932, quoted in Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years*, 61.

<sup>78</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>79</sup> Heritage Branch, *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 72.

<sup>80</sup> P. Rogers, Historian.

<sup>81</sup> Corporation of the City of Nelson. *Schedule G, City of Nelson Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3114, Development Permit Area Building Design Guidelines* (Nelson: City of Nelson, 2008), 6.

nearby Washington State, and in embellishments such as iron storefront castings from foundries in Spokane<sup>82</sup> and Spokane pink brick used on the original historical Post Office and Customs House.<sup>83</sup>

As well as building style and decoration, the use of fine and local materials helped to give the city its architectural distinction.

*“One of the very latest additions to the mineral shipping list is a species of a very beautiful facing stone known as ‘Kootenay Marble’. It has been much in demand for building purposes locally, the new Methodist Church and the Court House being constructed of this material. Large deposits of the marble are found near Lardo [sic] ...”<sup>84</sup>*

Nelson’s street and boulevard trees are one of the most important aspects of its character. The practice of planting deciduous shade trees along residential streets began in 1897. Originally left up to individual home owners, an 1898 bylaw served to regulate tree planting, including species and spacing.<sup>85</sup>

Nelson also has an important military history. The city’s Rocky Mountain Rangers were a key force in the Boer War, which led to the construction of the Nelson Armoury (Drill Hall) in 1902. In WW1 the 54<sup>th</sup> Kootenay Battalion, CEF, was mustered in Nelson on May 1, 1915, followed by the reinforcement Battalion, the 225<sup>th</sup>, in 1916. Balfour was home to a sanatorium for injured men from World War I which was located in the C.P.R. hotel.<sup>86</sup> Many veterans of WW1, including those who died at the Balfour Sanatorium, are buried in the Nelson Memorial Cemetery.<sup>87</sup> As well as sending many recruits to both the First and Second World Wars, Nelson participated on the home front with activities undertaken to raise money, supplies and support for the war effort. During World War II,<sup>88</sup> the Boeing Company of Canada established a sub-assembly plant at Nelson in the Civic Centre in 1943-44, and to assemble belt frames and other small assemblies for aircraft.<sup>89</sup> Nelson residents Rowland Bourke and Robert Hampton Gray were both recipients of the Victoria Cross, in World War I and World War II respectively.<sup>90</sup>

### **Economic Reinvention**

Throughout its history, Nelson has continued to reinvent itself economically, through a variety of means. The origin and growth of Nelson and the West Kootenay generally is rooted in the larger mining history of western North America. After the late 1850s, with the decline of the California gold rush, fortune-seeking miners with

<sup>82</sup> Robert Inwood, personal communication, May 2009.

<sup>83</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>84</sup> “Queen City of the Kootenay” *Man to Man Magazine*, 577.

<sup>85</sup> Heritage Branch, *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 65.

<sup>86</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>87</sup> Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History. “A Condensed History of Nelson”, [www.touchstonesnelson.ca/community/history\\_of\\_nelson.php](http://www.touchstonesnelson.ca/community/history_of_nelson.php) © Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, © Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History.

<sup>88</sup> Alan Ramsden, Historian.

<sup>89</sup> “Boeing Plant suggested for Nelson”, *Nelson Daily News*, quoted in Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years*, 74.

<sup>90</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

gold fever were looking for the next strike in the region west of the Rockies. Gold was discovered at the mouth of the Pend d' Oreille River in 1854.<sup>91</sup>

Mineral production in British Columbia received an important boost late in the 19th century through the spectacular opening up of the East and West Kootenays. The first advance into the Kootenays occurred with the discovery in 1864 of placer gold on Wild Horse Creek in the East Kootenay. Most of the prospectors were American who arrived from the south, following the natural access routes along the north-south valleys between the mountain ranges.

The exploitation of major deposits of silver, copper lead and gold in the Nelson region related more to “shifts in the global economy and changing technology than to events within British Columbia. Hard rock mining began in the western mountain states of the United States as part of a world-wide revolution in metal technologies occurring in the second half of the nineteenth century.”<sup>92</sup> Demand for metals was fuelled in part by the growing need for copper-wire telegraph lines and railway construction.

Mining activity proceeded quite slowly in the Nelson area until ore deposits, including silver, lead, copper and gold, were discovered on Toad Mountain. In 1886 a group of prospectors led by the Hall brothers discovered an outcrop of silver ore on Toad Mountain “at the 6,000 foot level by climbing up Hall Creek.”<sup>93</sup> Returning in 1887 via Bonner's Ferry and Kootenay Lake, they landed at the future town-site of Nelson.<sup>94</sup> This famous Silver King claim helped establish Nelson as the supply centre for the Kootenay region.<sup>95</sup> “By the winter of 1887-88, 300 to 400 people, living mostly in tents, were scattered along Ward Creek...<sup>96</sup> at the foot of the mountain and near the steamship landing, later to become the centre of the city of Nelson. A pack train was used to transport the ore to the waterfront, bound for smelters in the United States. Soon after, general merchants and a post office opened up, and by 1890 there were a number of buildings along Nelson's waterfront, including government agents, hotels, stables, restaurants, clothing stores, a laundry and other businesses.<sup>97</sup>

The Silver King mine also generated the construction of the Hall Mines smelter, built in 1895, along with an aerial tramway to bring ore from the mine down to Nelson for smelting.<sup>98</sup> Mining had evolved from gold panning along creeks and streams into advanced processes of extraction, refining, geological knowledge and mass transportation of ore and goods by rail.<sup>99</sup>

The increasing pace of industrialization continued to spur the mining industry in Nelson and the region. “...rapid advances in technology...”<sup>100</sup> in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries led to a “...growing demand for metals such as copper, lead and zinc...”<sup>101</sup> Steam or electrically driven engines were necessary for the

<sup>91</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>92</sup> Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West, A History of British Columbia*, revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 123.

<sup>93</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>94</sup> Basque, *West Kootenay, The Pioneer Years*, 35.

<sup>95</sup> Commission on Resources and Environment, *West Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan*, 25.

<sup>96</sup> Basque, 39.

<sup>97</sup> Basque, 41.

<sup>98</sup> Norris, *Historic Nelson, the Early Years*, 284

<sup>99</sup> Nelson, *A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 18.

<sup>100</sup> Moutat, *The Business of Power*, 23.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

growth and technological development of the mining industry, for extraction, smelting and transport.<sup>102</sup>

As a result, Nelson has been in the power generation business since 1896 at Cottonwood Falls, through the Nelson Electric Light Company. The Cottonwood Creek plant's capacity was modest and the electrical supply often erratic.<sup>103</sup> This was resolved by the City with the construction of the City of Nelson Power Plant at upper Bonnington Falls in 1907, although "the plant was not fully operational"<sup>104</sup> until 1910.

Place names, such as Hall Mines or Silver King Road, homes and hotels dating from Nelson's mining boom years and wooden electric power poles in the downtown back alleys are important historical markers of the city's industrial past.

There has always been an American presence in economic matters in Nelson and the West Kootenay. The impetus for mineral exploitation in the region was American, forcing the Government of British Columbia to expand the Dewdney Trail east from Osoyoos to provide an all-Canadian access route from the west coast. Spokane and Bonner's Ferry were important American towns on the North-south transportation routes which were dictated by both the local geography and the location of the early smelters.<sup>105</sup>

The general prosperity and building boom of the early 1900s in British Columbia and North America generated a demand for all kinds of timber products. The province's interior had dense forests with an ample supply of merchantable timber along the creeks and hillsides including fir, cedar and white pine.

As noted as early as 1910,

*"With the prosperity of the prairie country, and the consequent heavy demand for all kinds of timber products, the lumber industry is in a flourishing condition ... [in the area near] Nelson, a large number of new mills have been erected during the past few years. A competent authority claims that on the various creeks which enter into Kootenay Lake, there is ten billion feet of merchantable timber."*<sup>106</sup>

While originally seen as a hindrance to development or agriculture, forestry soon became the West Kootenay's key economic producer. In the early 1900s, a building boom on the prairies occurred as new settlers arrived. "The lumber industry was established for local construction first – wood for homes, bridges, railway ties, mine construction and sidewalks."<sup>107</sup> This local demand for timber got a boost on demand from the Prairies and established the West Kootenay lumber industry.<sup>108</sup> Several prominent Kootenay sawmill owners lived in Nelson even though their primary operations were in the Slocan Valley or along the Kootenay or Arrow Lakes. This

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>104</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>105</sup> Barman, *The West Beyond the West, A History of British Columbia*, 123.

<sup>106</sup> "Queen City of the Kootenay," *Man to Man Magazine*, 580.

<sup>107</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>108</sup> Commission on Resources and Environment, *West Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan*, 26.

concentration of wealthy businessmen in the city contributed to the physical and social development of Nelson, further cementing its reputation as the Queen City.

Many small-scale sawmills were constructed throughout the region. The Kootenay Forest Products mill, W.W. Powell Lumber, B.C. Veneer Works and Glacier Lumber all appeared on Nelson's waterfront after 1920. Glacier Lumber, later called Kootenay Forest Products and then Westar Timber, was a major employer, operating in Nelson until 1984.<sup>109</sup>

The fruit ranching industry in Nelson began in the early twentieth century largely as a result of the advertising in Britain of an idyllic lifestyle as an orchardist in the scenic Kootenays. While the terrain was steep and rocky, there was an enthusiasm for the venture, particularly among the so-called remittance men who could no longer afford the gentlemanly lifestyle in England and retired English soldiers looking for a new lifestyle.<sup>110</sup> These pioneers planted fruit varieties that would travel well back to Britain.

While prospective fruit growers were attracted to lake or riverfront orchard lands, many found their promised orchards lands consisted of heavily forested, steep and rocky slopes. Access to the prairie fruit market, advances in refrigerated transport, decreased mining activity in the area, and award winning fruit harvests were all factors that encouraged the fruit ranching industry in Nelson. Land was cleared, and irrigation put in place, and "usually several growers joined together to look after their irrigation flumes."<sup>111</sup> Small fruits were planted for a cash crop while waiting for the trees to mature that were planted in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the Provincial Department of Agriculture. While trees were originally purchased from "England, the Maritimes and Ontario," nurseries were located in Nelson, the Riverside Nursery in Grand Forks and firms on the West Coast.<sup>112</sup> There were jam factories in the city that took advantage of the fruit crop, including the McDonald Jam Factory and the Doukhobor Jam Factory, and, earlier, the Kootenay Jam Factory.<sup>113</sup> But by the end of World War II, overproduction, crop disease - primarily the Little Cherry disease, which, by 1942, had "...appeared in every fruit section of the Kootenay District except Kaslo"<sup>114</sup> and Renata<sup>115</sup> - and high shipping costs led to the collapse of the local fruit orchard industry. A compulsory agricultural marketing board introduced in B.C. in the late 1920s<sup>116</sup> and improved irrigation systems in the Okanagan which allowed more fruit to be grown and to ripen earlier were also factors in the industry's demise.<sup>117</sup> Today, the old trees from early orchards and the organic movement have helped spawn a resurgence of new orchards in the area.

Because of its thriving logging industry, Nelson became involved in silviculture research beginning in the 1950s through the silvicultural systems research arm of the Ministry of Forests, Nelson Region. In the 1970s and 80s, the city evolved into a centre for the tree planting community, adding to its laid back and environmentally

<sup>109</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>110</sup> Shawn Lamb Archivist.

<sup>111</sup> Joan Lang, *Lost Orchards: Vanishing Fruit Farms of the West Kootenay* (Nelson: Ward Creek Press, 2003) 68.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* 70.

<sup>113</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>114</sup> Ron Welwood. "Big Little Cherry", *BC Historical News*, 33 no. 2 (2000): 4.

<sup>115</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>116</sup> "Agricultural Marketing Board," <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index>

<sup>117</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

aware reputation. As well as reforestation, local tree planting companies contribute to such practices as wildfire fighting, ecosystem protection and restoration, and recreational trail construction.<sup>118</sup> These activities contributed to Nelson's concern for environmental protection and to its development as an outdoor hiking and mountain biking mecca, as well as to the creation and development of community forest operations in the area.<sup>119</sup>

Tourism has long been important to Nelson and the surrounding region. The natural environment was and is a draw for outdoor recreationalists in both winter and summer. From early on the city and region also provided cultural events and tourist amenities.

*"As an evidence of the fact that the scenic beauty and the tourist possibilities of the district surrounding Nelson is beginning to be recognized, the Canadian Pacific Railway are calling for tenders for the building of a large tourist hotel at Procter<sup>120</sup> ... When it is completed a substantial growth in the volume of tourist traffic that will swing through the Kootenay may be expected".<sup>121</sup>*

*[Nelson's] hotels are up to date and its retail and hotel business sections are laid out in the same manner as in the larger cities of Canada. Its accommodation and park facilities mark it as one of the leading convention cities of British Columbia".<sup>122</sup>*

Nelson's organized skiing began in 1932 with the formation of the Nelson ski club; in 1957 the Silver King hill was developed for skiing, evolving from a 750-foot rope tow to a 2,500-foot slope with two T-bar lifts in 1965,<sup>123</sup> succeeded by the Whitewater ski resort beginning in 1974.<sup>124</sup> Hiking, angling, hunting, canoeing, scenic drives, mountain biking and other outdoor recreational opportunities have been important to Nelson since its inception. Kokanee Glacier Park was established by the Province of British Columbia at the incentive of the Kokanee Mountaineering Club. The continuing tradition of a vibrant arts community in Nelson, such as the Kootenay School of the Arts, Selkirk College Music Programme, Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History, the Oxygen Arts Centre, the city's many festivals and events, and the population of local practicing artists are an important draw for visitors.

One of the most important contributions to the economic re-invention of modern Nelson was the revitalization of its downtown. In the 1980s the City of Nelson became the focus of a pilot project for Heritage Canada's Main Street program of heritage restoration and downtown revitalization. A catalyst for this process was the construction of the Chahko Mika shopping mall. Merchants from the downtown core, where the majority of the important historic buildings were located, petitioned city

<sup>118</sup> Western Silviculture Contractors Association, [www.wsca.ca/index.php](http://www.wsca.ca/index.php).

<sup>119</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>120</sup> The hotel was built at Balfour and was called the Kootenay Lake Hotel. Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>121</sup> "Queen City of the Kootenay," *Man to Man Magazine*, 580.

<sup>122</sup> Nelson Board of Trade, *Kootenay and the City of Nelson, British Columbia* (Nelson: City of Nelson, 1934) 9.

<sup>123</sup> Ed Sikula, "Nelson, Queen City of the Kootenays," *B.C. Digest*, December 1965, 43.

<sup>124</sup> "Whitewater Full Steam Ahead," *Nelson Daily News*, 26 April 1974, quoted in Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years*, 92.

council to adopt a heritage revitalization strategy to help the downtown businesses compete.<sup>125</sup> At the same time, the province's Heritage Branch was studying and documenting the city's wealth of heritage buildings. The result was the appointment of a downtown development officer to oversee the project and raise the profile of heritage in the community.<sup>126</sup>

This process linked historic preservation with economics by returning the covered-over historical buildings to their more impressive original appearance and helping to shift the community's economy to a more tourism and culturally oriented base. Between 1980 and 1988, Nelson underwent a period of heritage revitalization, setting the stage for economic development based on tourism and the gradual transformation of heritage buildings to new uses.<sup>127</sup>

Nelson today has a well diversified economy and its vibrant city centre, dominated by stone, brick and marble heritage buildings from 1896 to 1930. The city has been profiled in newspapers and magazines, on television and in films, all of which have contributed to a strong base for the tourism business. The city is home to technological entrepreneurs who operate businesses and consultancies thanks to modern technology, and to many artists and educators. Lifestyle and cultural opportunities are important to many people who seek to relocate and the cosmopolitan feel of the city is an additional incentive to attract young families, retirees and new business ventures.

### **Cultural and Social Independence**

Nelson's roots in an isolated geography and a growing reputation as a thriving city amongst natural beauty encouraged its evolution into a 1960s-70s counter-culture mecca. Nelson became a haven for those escaping unsatisfactory political experiences elsewhere. The Vietnam War brought a wave of young political refugees resisting the American draft to the West Kootenay in the 1950s and 1970s. The back-to-the-land movement also found a home in Nelson and the surrounding area, as did the Doukhobors, a non-violent society suited to the isolation of the Kootenays "who came to the West Kootenay area starting in 1908."<sup>128</sup> Also seeking refuge here was "a group of Quakers who moved to the Kootenay Lake area in the McCarthy era of the 1950s."<sup>129</sup>

### **Modern Nelson**

Nelson continued to be a distribution centre for the rich mining and logging industries and was recognized for its tourism potential. Buildings such as the Civic Centre (built 1935-36), Woolworth's (c.1960) and other downtown buildings, Moderne style residences in the Uphill and Fairview neighbourhoods and even the Dairy Queen represent this new era in the city.

The city kept up its reputation for fine and contemporary architecture. According to the Nelson Board of Trade in 1934,

<sup>125</sup> Robert Inwood, "Restoring the City Core – Nelson's Main Street Project," *Heritage West*, Summer (1982) 19.

<sup>126</sup> Inwood, "Restoring the City Core", 19.

<sup>127</sup> Robert Inwood, personal communication, May 2009.

<sup>128</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>129</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

*“... for the most part its residential sections are built up with modern structures kept in excellent state of repair ... Latest architectural designs are used by Nelson home builders, and there has been very little slackening off in house building activity in the city ... Modern in every way, homes are for the most part furnace heated, and all are electrically lighted.”<sup>130</sup>*

*“Spacious grounds, green lawns, well kept hedges, flowers of all descriptions and fruit trees of many varieties surround the homes”.<sup>131</sup>*

Nelson’s citizens have long maintained support for the arts. The city’s many festivals and events, and the population of local practicing artists and crafts people continue the tradition of a vibrant arts community in Nelson. The privately owned Opera House (1898) and the Capitol Theatre (1927) were an early part of this artistic culture. The Capitol Theatre’s renovation in the 1980s was a public initiative. “A municipally funded and operated public library was founded in 1921, and a public theatre was located in the Civic Centre in 1935 and leased to Famous Players soon after.”<sup>132</sup>

The Nelson museum, a public entity, operated in the former post office from 1955 until 1959, relocated to a former brothel (Kansas City House) from 1960-1971 and a fire-proof museum from 1974-2006.<sup>133</sup> The museum moved again in 2006 and opened its doors as Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History at, again, the former historical Post Office and Customs House.<sup>134</sup>

Modern Nelson also saw the creation of post-secondary institutions, more, in fact, than in any other similar-sized town in the province. In 1952, Notre Dame College was established and with its charter in 1963, it became the province’s second university.<sup>135</sup> Other city post-secondary institutions were also established including the Canadian International College, Kootenay School of the Arts and the Provincial Vocational School (today Selkirk College). “The Kootenay School of the Arts (KSA) started in the 1960s in a Baker Street store, later moving to the B.C. Vocational School (later part of Selkirk College).”<sup>136</sup> KSA became part of David Thompson University Centre in 1979 which closed in 1984. A new iteration of the Kootenay School of the Arts formed in the 1990s. This became KSA - Centre of Craft and Design and, after losing provincial government funding, became once again part of Selkirk College in 2002.<sup>137</sup>

The Canadian International College (CIC) leased the empty David Thompson University Centre campus to host Japanese students until the Japanese economic downturn which forced the CIC to consolidate its operations in North Vancouver and close the Nelson operation. Following the closure of CIC, Selkirk College signed a 25

<sup>130</sup> Nelson Board of Trade, *Kootenay and the City of Nelson British Columbia*, 1934, 14

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>132</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>134</sup> Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, [http://www.nelsonmuseum.ca/about\\_us/chronology\\_of\\_museum.php](http://www.nelsonmuseum.ca/about_us/chronology_of_museum.php)

<sup>135</sup> P. Rogers, Historian.

<sup>136</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>137</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

year lease for the city-owned campus and buildings and moved various programs there.<sup>138</sup>

Educational institutions continue to thrive in Nelson with the Kutenai Art Therapy Institute<sup>139</sup> which formed in 1995, and the Academy of Classical Oriental Science, established in 1996.<sup>140</sup> Public schools are augmented by the Waldorf School, French Language School, Distance Education School of the Kootenays and a number of Christian elementary schools as well as Self Design High.<sup>141</sup>

Modern Nelson saw new highway construction which contributed to the rise of the automobile culture and car-oriented tourism in the city and elsewhere. The result was a change in the character of Nelson and in the development of a number of services and businesses catering to the automobile. In 1952, the Social Credit party was elected with a mandate centred around transportation, hydro-electric power development and industrial growth as a base for much needed social programs.<sup>142</sup> Infrastructure projects provided the theme for the 1950s and Nelson reaped the so-called benefits, with new highway construction and a bridge spanning the West Arm of Kootenay Lake. The bridge was completed in 1957, replacing a series of cable ferries that dated from 1913. Toll booths (removed in 1963) located at the west end

of the bridge necessitated the widening of Nelson Avenue, paving the way for the location of the Dairy Queen, the previous A&W drive-in on the north shore side, and other automobile oriented businesses.

It was inevitable that the West Arm waterfront would continue to be developed as Nelson entered the modern era. The original electric tramway route that ran

through Fairview to Lakeside Park became the major thoroughfare through the neighbourhood.<sup>143</sup> In 1980, the Chahko Mika shopping mall was constructed, at 200,000 square feet, the city's largest commercial development ever.<sup>144</sup> Named in 1971, when the airport was licensed by the Department of Transport, Nelson's Norman Stibbs Airport was developed parallel to the lakeshore on landfill beginning in 1947, expanding the flat lands adjacent to Kootenay Lake. The Norman Stibbs Airport officially opened in June of 1972. "The Nelson Pilots' Association was formed in 1947 and enjoys a long history of providing volunteer support to the City of Nelson

**Nelson bus turning  
onto Baker Street,  
1974  
(BCAR G-03140)**



<sup>138</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>139</sup> Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, [www.touchstonesnelson.ca/community/history\\_of\\_nelson.php](http://www.touchstonesnelson.ca/community/history_of_nelson.php) © Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, © Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History, 2009.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

<sup>142</sup> Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West, A History of British Columbia* 281.

<sup>143</sup> *Nelson, A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation*, 66.

<sup>144</sup> "Mall Construction Underway," *Nelson Daily News*, 22 November 1979, quoted in Lamb, *100 Days, 100 Years*, 94.

in the construction and operation of the airport,” including improvements such as runway paving and the construction of the terminal building.<sup>145</sup>

### **Transforming the Environment**

The development of Nelson as a mining town, commercial centre and Queen City has not gone without environmental impacts. The surrounding treed mountains and the town-site were already razed by forest fires when the future City of Nelson began in 1888.<sup>146</sup> While no original trees remain, today Nelson and its region has a rich and diverse environment. However, dam construction on urban creeks and the Kootenay River have negatively impacted riparian health and valley bottom wetlands. The development of the lakefront and infilling along the lake edge for industrial and recreational development has changed the ecology of the lake. While the stepped nature of the residential development is part of Nelson’s character, street construction on the steep terrain necessitated tree removal and cut-and-fill to develop land flat enough for road building.

For all this, the City of Nelson remains an attractive city set within an outstanding natural landscape, probably greener now than it ever was.<sup>147</sup> For over a century it has been the centre of the West Kootenay and still deserves the name Queen City. Rooted in Nelson’s history, the core heritage themes resonate with both the city and the province as a whole.

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<sup>145</sup> “A Brief History of the Nelson Pilots’ Association,” [http://www.nelsonpilots.ca/history\\_npa.htm](http://www.nelsonpilots.ca/history_npa.htm)

<sup>146</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist, Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, A Division of the Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society.

<sup>147</sup> Shawn Lamb, Archivist.

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## **5.0 Heritage Register Implementation**

One of the most important concepts in current heritage planning and assessment is that of values-based management. Heritage value describes how communities such as the City of Nelson recognize the significance of the resources which embody its heritage character. Heritage values extend beyond the physical aspects of an historic resource. Rather, they answer the question “why is this resource important to our heritage?” by assessing the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual values which are embodied in the heritage resource, and which are important for past, present and future generations. Identifying heritage values ensures the appropriate conservation of these historic places, which in turn protects the heritage character of a community.

A Community Heritage Register is a planning tool which allows a local government to monitor and manage change in its historic places. As a tracking tool, the Community Heritage Register informs the local government when changes may occur to a registered historic place, and gives legal authority to guide that change to allow for the most effective form of conservation to occur.

For registered historic places, a local government may consider and, if necessary, undertake protective action such as temporarily withholding demolition permits and building and development approvals, ordering heritage inspections, or monitoring changes in properties through a licensing and permit application process.

Properties that are placed on a Community Heritage Register are added to the British Columbia and Canadian Registers of Historic Places once they are submitted to the Province of British Columbia.

While the Community Heritage Register legally permits the local government to manage and guide changes that occur to its historic places, the Community Heritage Register does not put a limit on the changes a heritage property owner may make to his or her historic place. Heritage registration does not constitute designation or any other type of formal protection of an historic place.

The ongoing expansion of the Community Heritage Register is an important tool that will allow the City of Nelson to manage change while retaining the heritage value and character of its historic places.

### **5.1 Integrating the Heritage Register**

The following are steps that can be taken to fully integrate the Community Heritage Register into the city’s planning and policy.

#### **Ongoing update of the heritage register**

- Continue the initiative of updating the Community Heritage Register each year.
- Set aside funding for 2011 - 2012 immediately and set up an ongoing mechanism for continued funding applications each year.
- Regularly review the context, themes and existing Statements of Significance as new research or information is revealed.
- Consider preparing historical context statements for Nelson’s individual neighbourhoods, as a way of better understanding their overall significance and that of individual resources. These contexts can also be used as a way

of retaining heritage value through the thoughtful application of conservation measures based on the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

- Consider establishing heritage conservation areas in Nelson to further safeguard the City's unique character.

### **Selection of sites to the heritage register**

- Apply selection criteria to the Community Heritage Register by adapting the criteria listed in section 3.1.
- Continue to select a wide variety of resources to the register.
- Ensure the inclusion of threatened resources on the heritage register.
- Establish a nomination process for the register to involve the general public. A nomination form could be developed and placed on the city's website.
- Use the themes developed during this process to ensure the Community Heritage Register is comprehensive. Subthemes can continue to be added to the list.
- Regularly consult with a varied cross-section of the community to capture additional heritage values and places.
- Determine which 'ghost sites' may be eligible for the Community Heritage Register, for example, places of significant events, important meanings or cultural associations.

### **Policy development for the heritage register**

- Establish a policy formally outlining the City's commitment to, and process for, the continuation of the heritage register.
- Establish policy and protocol for the inclusion of sites significant to Indigenous Peoples on the heritage register. This should be done in consultation with representatives from local Aboriginal groups (see also section 3.2).
- Consult with the Regional District of Central Kootenay to establish policy for sites outside the city's jurisdiction but which are critical to Nelson's history and heritage value. It may be possible to coordinate Community Heritage Registers between the City of Nelson and the Regional District of Central Kootenay for important sites such as Pulpit Rock. Currently, Electoral Areas A, D, G and H have passed enabling legislation for heritage conservation, and Electoral Areas A and D have conducted heritage context planning. Encourage other electoral areas to pass similar legislation and embark upon the completion of context planning and a Community Heritage Register.

### **Heritage conservation and city planning**

- Ensure the ongoing integration of heritage conservation into city planning procedures using the Community Heritage Register as an important tool.
- Investigate current approaches to heritage conservation from other levels of

government to expand the use and relevance of the Community Heritage Register as a cornerstone of community heritage program.

- Investigate funding and other opportunities from other levels of government to implement at community heritage program eg. using tools as supplied by the Provincial Heritage Branch.
- Expand heritage planning process and awareness beyond the planning department by including parks and recreation, engineering and building departments and Public Works departments.
- Initiate a strategic planning process for heritage conservation in the City of Nelson.

### **Community-wide heritage**

- Initiate a workshop or event with the express purpose of articulating community values. During the current project, the focus was primarily on establishing the Community Heritage Register and thus on specific places. Low turnout at the workshops precluded a comprehensive statement of values from a wide variety of people: “What do you value in your community”?. Community values express a fundamental understanding of the region’s unique heritage as articulated by the community and provide a starting point for understanding the significance of individual heritage resources. This could be a fun event, held outdoors in a park and designed to draw in a wide variety of people (funding may be available through the Heritage Legacy Fund or could be included as part of next year’s Community Heritage Register program).
- Expand the community’s identified heritage values into a series of guiding principles to address heritage conservation in the city. These principles should focus on conservation, protection, recognition and public awareness of heritage resources and provide a framework for public and private decision-making activities.
- Establish initiatives for community outreach and education with regard to heritage and the Community Heritage Register.
- Focus on getting input from non-heritage specialist groups, for example, business, environmental groups, recreationalists, naturalists, arts and heritage organizations, schools, etc.
- Encourage the initiation of heritage projects in the community, for example, heritage trail planning with interpretation.
- Set up a system of commemoration or interpretation for ‘ghost sites’ deemed to be not eligible for the Community Heritage Register and based on the city’s heritage markers and heritage plaques program.
- Investigate and implement opportunities for the interpretation, commemoration and celebration of heritage resources and their significant associations between people and place.

## 5.2 Criteria for Site Selection

The selection criteria below offer guidelines for site selection to the Community Heritage Register. They have been developed based on generally acknowledged criteria found in the various heritage charters, and Nelson's historical context and thematic framework.

These criteria should be used in conjunction with identified themes, community heritage values and a broad spectrum of opinion from community members to select resources for Nelson's Community Heritage Register in upcoming years.

Which places get onto the Community Heritage Register first? In any given year, the heritage program's past and current activities, and a review of other objectives of the City of Nelson will likely provide some direction as to those resources that should be placed on the register next. Or, a criteria or theme could be chosen as the basis for that year's Community Heritage Register selection.

For example:

- It may be evident that a specific resource or group of resources should be placed on the Community Heritage Register because they are under threat
- A new and unique heritage place or group of places has been brought to the attention of the City of Nelson and the Community Heritage Commission, through the community or a nomination form
- There may be an opportunity to develop a resource or group of resources to fulfill tourism policy objectives
- It may be decided that natural heritage resources will be selected to fulfill sustainability objectives
- It may be decided that a certain type of site is under-represented on the Community Heritage Register
- It may be decided that a certain neighbourhood or area in the City of Nelson is under-represented on the Community Heritage Register

A place may be entered in the Community Heritage Register if it is of cultural or natural heritage significance and satisfies one or more of the following criteria. A place is not to be excluded from the Community Heritage Register on the grounds that places with similar characteristics have already been entered in the Community Heritage Register. A place may be excluded from the Community Heritage Register because of its status as an archaeological site (see Section 3.2).

- The place is under threat from damage or loss through proposed development, neglect, or other reasons
- The place illustrates the heritage of, or is located in, regions or areas in the City of Nelson that are under-represented on the Community Heritage Register
- The place corrects disparities in the Community Heritage Register by representing themes, styles or types of heritage places that are under-represented
- The place is important in demonstrating the evolution, theme, pattern or

community identity in the pre-contact period and the history of the City of Nelson

- The place demonstrates unique, uncommon or endangered aspects of cultural or natural heritage in the City of Nelson
- The place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the region's history
- The place is important because of its aesthetic significance or is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period
- The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons
- The place has a special association with the life or work of a person, group or organization of importance in the city's history
- The place is associated with an historical event, or has a particular meaning or cultural association important to the city
- The place has the ability to demonstrate the general characteristics of a particular type of resource, either natural or cultural
- The place has the potential to contribute to economic development and to be used in the everyday lives of people in the region
- The place has the ability to contribute to the well-being of the community
- The place has the ability to contribute to the biodiversity of the community, area or region

### **5.3 Sites of Importance to Indigenous Peoples**

Aboriginal traditional use sites and archaeological resources may be found on public and private lands within the jurisdiction of local governments. Local governments are thus often the first to become aware of such heritage values and are encouraged to consider archaeological and aboriginal traditionally used sites in official land use planning processes. This information is also of interest to the provincial Archaeology Branch.

While the Province has primary responsibility for protecting and managing these sites, local governments need to be aware of sensitive, or potentially sensitive, archaeological and aboriginal traditional use sites in their jurisdictions.

Types of heritage resources with protected status under the Heritage Conservation Act Include:

- all pre-1846 archaeological sites
- all sites designated by Provincial Order in Council which may include archaeological or aboriginal sites
- all rock art sites, such as petroglyphs and pictographs
- all burial sites of historic and archaeological value
- all wrecks (ship, aircraft, etc.) more than two years old
- aboriginal heritage sites which have been included in a schedule adopted by agreement between the Province and a First Nation

- archaeological sites of unknown origin

Indigenous Peoples sites may be included on a Community Heritage Register, although they must have a specific location as opposed to being a traditional activity. In consultation with Indigenous Peoples, it should be determined which non-archaeological sites - traditional use areas, culturally modified trees, or other sites with heritage value - can and should be placed on the Community Heritage Register.

Currently, with the exception of professional consulting archaeologists, archaeological information held by the province is not available to the general public. A site can be nominated by Indigenous Peoples for inclusion on the Community Heritage Register, with the goal of public recognition or interpretation.

For Indigenous Peoples sites to be placed on the Community Heritage Register, a system of review on a case by case basis should be implemented to determine whether or not a site should, or can, be placed on the Community Heritage Register.

A possible process is as follows:

- The site is nominated by the Indigenous Peoples community.
- Identify the reason for the nomination - recognition, commemoration, protection or other. The site may already be protected automatically (pre-1846), or by designation. The Community Heritage Register provides a good venue for recognition, as does commemoration by a sign, marker, or inclusion on the Regional District's Community Heritage Register website.
- Identify whether the proposed site is a known archaeological site recognized by the Archaeology Branch. Such sites would likely not be eligible for the Community Heritage Register
- Determine whether the location of the site can be made public. While the exact location of the site (latitude and longitude) must be provided to the Province to create the Community Heritage Register record, this information may be excluded when the Community Heritage Register record is nominated to the Canadian Register of Historic Places. It should be noted that information about any Indigenous Peoples sites placed on a Community Heritage Register may be subject to Freedom of Information legislation.<sup>148</sup>

As legislation and protocols may change, information in this section should be verified by contacting the Heritage Branch:

Susan J. Green  
 Registrar, BC Register of Historic Places  
[Susan.J.Green@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Susan.J.Green@gov.bc.ca) (250) 356-1434

#### **5.4 Heritage Conservation Tools**

The following information provides a brief introduction to the key heritage conservation tools for British Columbia's local governments. For complete citations of each of the following topics, and for further conservation tools, please refer to Part 27 of the Local Government Act.

<sup>148</sup>Adapted from Cook, D. and B. Jonker, Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Heritage Register Implementation Plan 2007.

**Community heritage commissions – Division 2, Section 953**

A local government may designate an existing organization to act as a community heritage commission.

A heritage commission may:

- (a) operate regional district services,
- (b) undertake operation and enforcement in relation to the board's exercise of its regulatory authority, and
- (c) manage property or an interest in property held by the city.

The local government may delegate its powers, duties and functions, including those specifically established by an enactment, to the committee or its members.

**Community heritage register – Division 2, Section 954**

A local government may, by resolution, establish a community heritage register that identifies real property that is considered by the local government to be heritage property.

The community heritage register must indicate the reasons why property included in a community heritage register is considered to have heritage value or heritage character, and may distinguish between heritage properties of differing degrees and kinds of heritage value or heritage character.

Within 30 days after including a property in a community heritage register or deleting property from a community heritage register, the local government must give notice of this to the owner of the heritage property in accordance with section 974, and to the minister responsible for the Heritage Conservation Act in accordance with section 977.

The protection of heritage property is not affected by an error or omission in a community heritage register.

**Heritage recognition – Division 2, Section 955**

A local government may recognize the heritage value or heritage character of a heritage property, an area or some other aspect of the community's heritage. The local government may have a plaque or other marker installed to indicate recognition subject to the requirement that permission for this must be obtained from the owner of the property on which the marker is installed.

**Heritage inspection – Division 2, Section 956**

For the purposes of assessing the heritage value, heritage character or the need for conservation of real property, a local government or its delegate may order a heritage inspection of the property in the following circumstances: the property is or may be protected heritage property; the property is identified as heritage property in a community heritage register; or the property is or may be heritage property according to criteria that the local government may, by bylaw, establish.

**Local government requests for Provincial protection – Division 2, Section 959**

If, in the opinion of a local government, real property owned by the Provincial government has heritage value or heritage character, the local government may, by resolution, request that Provincial protection be provided for the property.

**Withholding of approvals – Division 3, Section 960**

A local government may, by bylaw, direct or authorize the officers or employees of the local government who issue approvals to withhold the issuance of any approval for an action that, in the opinion of the person responsible for issuing the approval, would alter or cause an alteration to any of the following:

- (a) protected heritage property;
- (b) property subject to temporary heritage protection under another section of this Part;
- (c) property in a community heritage register.

#### **Withholding of demolition permits – Division 3, Section 961**

A local government may, by bylaw, direct or authorize the officers or employees of the local government who issue permits for demolition to withhold approval for demolition in the following circumstances:

- (a) in the case of protected heritage property, until a heritage alteration permit and any other necessary approvals have been issued with respect to alteration or redevelopment of the site;
- (b) in the case of real property identified in a community heritage register, until a building permit and any other necessary approvals have been issued with respect to the alteration or redevelopment of the site.

#### **Orders for temporary protection – Division 3, Section 962**

A local government may order that real property is subject to temporary protection if the local government considers that the property is or may be heritage property, or protection of the property may be necessary or desirable for the conservation of other property that is heritage property.

#### **Heritage revitalization agreements – Division 4, Section 966**

A local government may, by bylaw, enter into a heritage revitalization agreement under this section with the owner of heritage property. A heritage revitalization agreement may include provisions regarding the phasing and timing of the commencement and completion of actions required by the agreement, or include other terms and conditions that may be agreed on by the local government and the owner.

#### **Heritage designation protection – Division 4, Section 967**

A local government may, by bylaw, on terms and conditions it considers appropriate, designate real property in whole or in part as protected under this section if the local government considers that the property has heritage value or heritage character, or designation of the property is necessary or desirable for the conservation of a protected heritage property.

A heritage designation bylaw may:

- (a) apply to a single property or to part of a property;
- (b) apply to more than one property, including properties owned by different persons;
- (c) apply to affixed interior building features or fixtures identified in the bylaw;
- (d) apply to landscape features identified in the bylaw;
- (e) establish policies or procedures regarding the provision of financial or other support for the conservation of the heritage property;
- (f) specify types of alterations to the property that are allowed without a heritage

- alteration permit;
- (g) establish policies regarding the issuance of heritage alteration permits in relation to property covered by the bylaw.

Except as authorized by a heritage alteration permit or as authorized by the local government, a person must not do any of the following:

- (a) alter the exterior of a building or structure protected under this section;
- (b) make a structural change to a building or structure protected under this section;
- (c) move a building or structure protected under this section;
- (d) alter, remove or take an action that would damage an interior feature or fixture that is identified in the designation;
- (e) alter, remove or take an action that would damage a landscape feature that is identified in the designation;
- (f) alter, excavate or build on land protected under this section.

#### **Heritage designation procedure – Division 4, Section 968**

Before a heritage designation bylaw is adopted, the local government must hold a public hearing on the proposed bylaw for the purpose of allowing affected parties and the general public to make representations respecting matters contained in the proposed bylaw.

At least 10 days before the public hearing, a notice in the prescribed form must be given to all persons who, according to the records of the land title office, have a registered interest in real property that would be designated, and all occupiers of real property that would be designated.

A notice must also be published in at least 2 consecutive issues of a newspaper, with the last publication to be at least 3 days but not more than 10 days before the public hearing.

The local government must have a report prepared regarding the property to be designated that includes information respecting the following matters:

- (a) the heritage value or heritage character of the property;
- (b) the compatibility of conservation with the official community plan and any other community planning objectives in the area in which the property is located;
- (c) the compatibility of conservation with lawful uses of the property and adjoining lands;
- (d) the condition and economic viability of the property;
- (e) the possible need for financial or other support to enable appropriate conservation.

At least 10 days before the public hearing, the report must be available for public inspection at the local government office during its regular office hours. Within 30 days after a local government adopts or defeats a heritage designation bylaw or determines not to proceed with the bylaw, the local government must give notice of this to the owners.

Within 30 days after adopting a heritage designation bylaw, the local government must give notice of this to the land title office, and to the minister responsible for the Heritage Conservation Act.

**Compensation for heritage designation – Division 4, Section 969**

If a heritage designation bylaw causes, or will cause at the time of designation, a reduction in the market value of the designated property, the local government must compensate an owner of the designated property in an amount or in a form the local government and the owner agree on or, failing an agreement, in an amount or in a form determined by binding arbitration.

The owner of a designated property may apply to the local government for compensation for the reduction in the market value of the designated property. An application must be made, in order for the owner to be entitled to compensation under this section, no later than one year after the heritage designation bylaw is adopted, and may be made before the heritage designation bylaw is adopted.

If the local government and an owner are unable to agree that the owner is entitled to compensation, or on the amount or form of compensation, then either the local government or the owner may require the matter to be determined by binding arbitration under the Commercial Arbitration Act.

**Heritage site maintenance standards – Division 4, Section 970**

A local government may, by bylaw, establish minimum standards for the maintenance of real property that is designated as protected by a heritage designation bylaw, or within a heritage conservation area.

Different standards may be established for different areas or for different types or classes of property.

**Designation of heritage conservation areas – Division 4, Section 970.1**

For the purposes of heritage conservation, an official community plan may designate an area as a heritage conservation area.

If a heritage conservation area is designated, the official community plan must describe the special features or characteristics that justify the designation, state the objectives of the designation, and either the official community plan or a zoning bylaw must specify guidelines respecting the manner by which the objectives are to be achieved.

If a heritage conservation area is designated, the official community plan may do one or more of the following:

- (a) specify conditions under which certain alteration restrictions do not apply to property within the area, which may be different for different properties or classes of properties;
- (b) include a schedule listing buildings, structures, land or features within the area that are to be protected heritage property under this Act;
- (c) identify features or characteristics that contribute to the heritage value or heritage character of the area.

At least 10 days before the public hearing on an official community plan that includes heritage conservation area, the local government must give notice to the owner of each property that is to be included in the schedule, unless the property was already included in the schedule.

Within 30 days after the adoption of a bylaw that includes a property in or deletes a property from a heritage conservation area schedule in an official community plan,

the local government must file a notice in the land title office, and give notice to the minister responsible for the Heritage Conservation Act.

#### **Heritage conservation areas – Division 4, Section 971**

If an official community plan designates a heritage conservation area, a person must not do any of the following unless a heritage alteration permit authorizing the action has been issued:

- (a) subdivide land within the area;
- (b) start the construction of a building or structure or an addition to an existing building or structure within the area;
- (c) alter a building or structure or land within the area;
- (d) alter a feature that is protected heritage property.

The above restrictions do not apply if specific conditions for alteration established by the local government apply.

If a heritage alteration permit is required a delegate may only act in relation to such a permit if the property is protected heritage property, or the permit relates to a feature or characteristic identified in the schedule of listed buildings and features.

#### **Heritage alteration permits – Division 5, Section 972**

A local government or its delegate may issue a heritage alteration permit authorizing alterations or other actions if the authorization is required by the Local Government Act, a heritage revitalization agreement, or a covenant.

A local government or its delegate may refuse to issue a heritage alteration permit for an action that, in the opinion of the local government or delegate, would not be consistent with the purpose of the heritage protection of the property.

If the refusal to issue a heritage alteration permit prevents the use of land that is allowed under the applicable zoning bylaw or the development of land to the density that is allowed under the applicable zoning bylaw in respect of that permitted use, the local government or delegate must inform the applicant of the requirements or conditions under which a use or density proposed by the applicant would be allowed.

#### **Requirements and conditions in a heritage alteration permit – Division 6, Section 973**

A heritage alteration permit may be made subject to the terms, requirements and conditions that the local government or its delegate considers consistent with the purpose of the heritage protection of the property.

Without limiting the terms, requirements and conditions established by the local government, a heritage alteration permit may include one or more of the following:

- (a) conditions respecting the sequence and timing of construction;
- (b) conditions respecting the character of the alteration or action to be authorized, including landscaping and the siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and structures;
- (c) a requirement that the applicant provide a specified amount of security, in a form satisfactory to the local government, to guarantee the performance of the terms, requirements and conditions of the permit.

#### **Assistance – Division 5, Section 176, 181, and 185**

A local government may provide assistance for the purpose of benefiting the community or any aspect of the community. Assistance may be providing a grant, benefit, advantage or other form of assistance, including an exemption from a tax, fee or charge, or any of the following:

- (a) disposing of land or improvements, or any interest or right in or with respect to them, for less than market value;
- (b) lending money;
- (c) guaranteeing repayment of borrowing or providing security for borrowing;
- (d) assistance under a partnering agreement.

## Appendix A: List of Current and Potential Resources

The following is a list of all of the potential heritage register resources generated during the community consultation phase of this project.

The first 70 resources listed are those which have had statements of significance prepared for them in this first phase of the heritage register implementation. These statements of significance can be found in Appendix B.

1. Cottonwood Creek and Falls
2. City of Nelson Waterfront
3. Nelson Street Grids
4. Uphill Neighbourhood
5. Orchard Trees
6. Vernon and Ward Intersection
7. Baker Street
8. Front Street
9. 700 Block Hoover Street
10. 724 Hoover Street
11. Nelson Daily News Building
12. Dairy Queen
13. Canadian Pacific Railway District Superintendent's House
14. Tenth Street Campus
15. Nelson Coke and Gas Works
16. 306 Silica Street
17. Touchstones Museum of Art and History
18. 810 Hendryx Street
19. The Preserved Seed
20. 515 Silica Street
21. Nelson Court House
22. Evangelical Covenant Church
23. Trinity Presbyterian Church
24. St. Saviour's Pro-Cathedral
25. Cathedral of Mary Immaculate
26. Scandinavian Church
27. Nelson United Church
28. Kootenay School of the Arts
29. Vernon Street
30. Carbonate Street
31. Victoria Street
32. Ward Street
33. Stanley Street
34. Silica Street
35. Hoover Street
36. Observatory Street
37. Mill Street
38. Josephine Street
39. 1024 Front Street
40. 924 Observatory Street
41. 819 Vernon Street
42. 311 Cedar Street
43. Royal Canadian Legion

44. Gyro Park
45. Lakeside Rotary Park
46. Nelson West Arm Bridge
47. C.P.R. Flats
48. Upper Bonnington Falls & Alexander Carrie Hydro Electric Power Plant
49. Civic Centre
50. "Catacombs"
51. Nelson Memorial Park
52. Edgewood Avenue, Park Street and High Street Retaining Walls
53. Mount St. Francis
54. 801, 803 and 805 Victoria Street
55. Mara-Barnard Block
56. Bank of Montreal
57. Burns Building
58. Hume Hotel
59. Nelson Fire Hall
60. Capitol Theatre
61. Western White Pine
62. Lake Street
63. New Grand Hotel
64. Anderson Creek
65. Central School
66. 704 Hoover Street
67. Kerr's Apartments
68. The Jam Factory
69. 817 Baker Street
70. 823 Baker Street
  
71. Pictographs
72. Choquette's Grocery
73. Heritage Trees
  - Old Ponderosa Pines in Gyro Park
  - Specimen Trees in Lakeside Park and on City boulevards
  - Trees on High Street
  - Boulevard Trees on Vernon Street
74. Urban Creeks
75. Modern / flat roofed houses
76. Ghost List: Buildings, structures, features, landscapes and places that are no longer present in the urban landscape.
  - First Nations sites
  - Kokanee in Cottonwood Creek
  - C.P.R. Ice House
  - C.P.R. Roundhouse
  - Transfer Wharf
  - Opera House
  - Kootenay Forest Products Factory Site
  - Commercial water transportation
  - Orchards and orchard trees, eg. in Uphill and Rosemount
  - Chinese Gardens
  - Wetlands and natural floodplain

- French Complex Ore Reduction Company
  - First A&W on the North Shore
  - Smelter above highway
  - Shipyard / Nelson Quays
  - Paddlewheelers
77. Hoover Point
  78. Cave in the Rock
  79. Ladybird Speedboat
  80. Streetcar and tram right-of-way
  81. The Gray Building
  82. 1109 Hall Mines Road
  83. Mountain Station
  84. C.P.R. Station House
  85. C.P.R. Diesel Shop
  86. Downtown lanes
  87. Nurse's Residence
  88. Nelson Avenue Corridor
  89. Trail from Cottonwood Falls over Apex and south to Salmo
  90. Pulpit Rock
  91. Herridge lane
  92. Hendryx Street Forest Garden
  93. Stairs at Holy Smoke
  94. Gerick Cycle Building
  95. Chrysler Building
  96. Houses and Gardens next to Civic Centre (805 Vernon Street and others)
  97. West Arm of Kootenay Lake
  98. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Fairview
  99. Schools
  100. High Street Campsite
  101. Row of houses on 8<sup>th</sup> Street
  102. Last Red Light District House
  103. Anglican Church
  104. Blaylock Mansion Estate
  105. Hidden suburban sprawl
  106. Mail order houses
  107. Old mansion on Silica Street next to Presbyterian Church
  108. Maternity Hospital
  109. Concrete walls throughout City
  110. Former North Shore Ferry landings on either sides of the lake
  111. Trails to Troop/Troupe junction
  112. Winter sledding run from Mountain Station down to Observatory to Trafalgar
  113. Above grade telephone and hydro poles
  114. Heritage roses in OSO Negro garden
  115. Innes Street
  116. Views
  117. Gardens in Uphill
  118. 702 Victoria Street
  119. 1023 Stanley Street
  120. Savoy Hotel

121. 211 Willow Street
122. Hume School
123. Seating and amenity areas on Baker Street
124. Cluster of houses on Hamilton Street
125. Gibbon Park
126. Rosemount Park
127. Kootenay Street
128. Gordon Road
129. View Street near the High School – repetition of houses for returning WW2 veterans
130. Kokanee Street
131. 504 Nelson Avenue
132. Soccer Fields
133. Commercial water transportation
134. Boat Houses
135. Rowing Club
136. Cottonwood and 2nd Street
137. Small office buildings on Herridge Lane
138. Lakeside pictures by Dick Spurway and JH Allen
139. Watersheds
140. Place of Hangings in front of Hume Hotel and the Courthouse
141. Steep canyons in the City
142. Created land along waterfront
143. Sculptures around town
144. Concrete wall, at the end of Baker Street
145. Concrete walkway at Lakeside Park
146. Concrete Terrace apartment
147. Medical Arts Building
148. Concrete pool at Gyro Park
149. Steps at Hall Street (near Baker)
150. Mansion at 202 Silica Street
151. Roxanne mural and movie
152. Bandshells in Gyro and Lakeside Park
153. Highway Bypass
154. Cultural and political refuges
155. Heritage buildings and economy
156. Schools
157. Musical life in Nelson
158. Artwork on heritage buildings
159. Old Brewery Building
160. Manager's Houses
161. 702 Carbonate Street
162. 810 Hendryx Street
163. 418 Hoover Street
164. 424 Hoover Street
165. 706 Victoria Street
166. 519 Cedar Street
167. 924 Vernon Street
168. Postmaster J.A. Gibson's house
169. Roderick Robertson's house
170. Trafalgar School Principal Floyd Irwin's house

- 171. Trafalgar School Principal B.B. Crawford's house
- 172. H. Croasdaile, Manager Silver King Mine's house
- 173. Monty Davys, Manager Silver King Mine's house
- 174. J.J. Campbell, Manager of Hall Mines Smelter's house
- 175. Fairview Station House at the foot of Cottonwood Street