

# Effective Heritage Building Advocacy in the Climate Century

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# Introduction

- Environment – heritage building nexus
- Heritage building protection successes
- Heritage building protection challenges
- Advocacy lessons from environmentalists movement
- Building stronger advocacy for heritage building protection



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# Environment and Heritage Protection Values

- Protecting ecosystems and built heritage spring from same “faint intimations of deprivation”
- Support for values beyond consumerism and progress (drive to create and recreate human and non-human nature through technology)
- Heritage building protection fits with low-carbon economy



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# The Low-Carbon Economy

- The fossil fuel era is starting to wind down
- High fossil fuels prices driven by carbon pricing policies, diminishing oil supplies will be the key economic driver
- Heritage building protection will depend on successful adaptation to low-carbon economy



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# Greener than New?

- Heritage buildings have inherent energy efficient characteristics
- Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings enabled by their durable materials/structural characteristics
- Easy retrofits can make heritage buildings as energy efficient as newer buildings
- LEED standards recognize energy efficiency value of reusing building materials



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# What are Environmentalists doing right?

- Note: we are still losing the biosphere
- Successes: Acid Rain Coalition, National Parks
- Public awareness of climate change, biodiversity
- Youth engagement – Sierra Youth Coalition
- Effective coalition building – Tomorrow Today, Greenprint for Canada
- Effective carrots and sticks - Greenpeace demos and WWF corporate engagement



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# Heritage Building Protection Advocacy Successes

- Heritage Canada Foundation's Lists:
  - Top ten endangered heritage buildings
  - Worst losses
- Area Conservation Program, Main Streets Program, Heritage Regions Program
- Landmarks Preservation Program – assisting local groups raise funds for heritage projects
- Messaging heritage buildings as green



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# Heritage Building Protection Challenges

- Advocacy: often effective locally, has not translated into sustained regional, national movement
- Marginally relevant in national/provincial politics: not enough sticks, not enough street fighters
- “Heritage”: old, elderly, antiquated, decrepit, old-fashioned, uncool
- “Heritage” how to link with concepts such as “innovation”, “eco-friendly”



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# Identify National Advocacy Goals

- A national heritage building protection movement?
- Greener than new?
- Environmental Reasons to Encourage Heritage Building Rehabilitation through tax incentive:
  - Curb landfill - reduce Canada's annual 10 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste
  - Reduce emissions and energy consumption - rehab uses less than half the energy of new construction
  - Optimize Existing Infrastructure – rehab avoids new road, sewer, and hydro infrastructure



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# Strategies for Stronger Heritage Building Advocacy

- Hitch heritage wagon to climate horse
- Sharpen sticks, peel carrots
- Leverage the building to community to provincial and national policy change
- Build strange bedfellow alliances
- Engage youth
- Use web-based social media  
(Avaaz, Democracy in Action)



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# Sharpen Sticks, Peel Carrots

- Politicians motivated by fear of losing elections but also by:
  - Ideas, Knowledge, Science
  - Investments to be made
  - Jobs to be created
  - Friendships
  - Embarrassment, shame, praise
- Focus on becoming relevant to them



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# Leverage Local to Regional and National

- Leverage passion for protecting local heritage buildings into regional, national action through overarching frameworks
- Thematic Frameworks – National Historic Sites (churches, schools, historical periods)
- Representative Ecosystems – Parks Canada
- Reformulation of Main Streets Program?



# National Historic Sites – System Plan Thematic Framework

FIGURE TWO – NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES OF CANADA THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

## PEOPLING THE LAND

- Canada's Earliest Inhabitants
- Migration and Immigration
- Settlement
- People and the Environment

## DEVELOPING ECONOMIES

- Hunting and Gathering
- Extraction and Production
- Trade and Commerce
- Technology and Engineering
- Labour
- Communications and Transportation

## BUILDING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

- Community Organizations
- Religious Institutions
- Education and Social Well-Being
- Social Movements

## GOVERNING CANADA

- Politics and Political Processes
- Government Institutions
- Security and Law
- Military and Defence
- Canada and the World

## EXPRESSING INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

- Learning and the Arts
- Architecture and Design
- Science
- Sports and Leisure
- Philosophy and Spirituality



# Engaging Youth

- HCF's youth internship and other programs
- Links to Sustainable Campuses, Sustainable High Schools
- Street action and theatre
- Pedal for the Planet



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# Web-based Social Media

- Political advocacy is increasingly web-based
- Democracy in Action, Avaaz
- Action alerts mobilize emails, faxes, letters and phone calls by the thousands



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# Sierra Club Canada

- Mission - protect integrity of global ecosystems
- Five overriding threats:
  - loss of animal and plant species
  - deterioration of the planet's oceans and atmosphere
  - ever-growing presence of toxic chemicals in living things
  - destruction of our remaining wilderness
  - spiralling population growth and over consumption
- Canada's only democratic national environmental group, with a board of directors elected in contested elections
- Active chapters and local groups in every region, with offices in Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary, Victoria, as well as Sierra Youth Coalition



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# One Earth, One Chance

