

Item 10.3.1



HERITAGE TRUST *of* NOVA SCOTIA

The Case for Heritage

Presentation to the
Community Planning and
Economic Development
Standing Committee

April 17, 2025

Why does heritage matter to HRM?

1. Heritage has **economic** value.
2. Heritage has **social** value.
3. Heritage has **environmental** value.



1. The ECONOMIC Value of Heritage

A. Tourism

Tourism generates:

- \$1 billion annually from direct spending
- \$14.5 million annually in municipal tax revenue from hotel and tourism properties
- over 23,000 jobs in 4,000 businesses
- 5.3 million overnight stays in the city



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HRM's Tourism Goals

- *Attract highest yield and growth markets.*
- *Help grow the GDP to \$25 billion by 2027 by supporting tourism growth.*

How can heritage help to reach these goals?



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Heritage is an important part of Halifax's tourism competitive advantage.

- Our rich history, vibrant cultural scene, and picturesque neighbourhoods are 3 of the top things people love about Halifax.
- International tourists spend more money per day and stay longer than other tourists.
- International tourists make up the majority of heritage enthusiasts.

These high-priority tourist markets seek **unique, authentic experiences**, are **interested in history** and want to **immerse themselves in the local culture**.



Tourists are not attracted to things they can see anywhere.



The Capital South Mississauga, ON



Purdy's Wharf, Halifax, NS



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Buildings that are **authentically Nova Scotian** and tell the story of this place are key components of what attracts heritage tourists to our city.



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Not surprisingly, the **most-visited tourist destinations** in Halifax are **historic areas/buildings/sites**.



Peggys Cove



Halifax Waterfront



Halifax Citadel



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If we lose more built heritage, we risk losing tourists.

“From a tourism perspective, heritage and culture impact the quality of communities for Nova Scotia residents and are significant travel motivators for visitors. Nova Scotia has a distinct and competitive advantage, ***if we ensure the protection of our historical and cultural assets***, and leverage these as a medium to tell our story as a destination.”

- Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia

1. The ECONOMIC Value of Heritage (continued)

B. Attracting Residents and Businesses

HRM's Goals

- *Showcase Halifax's quality of life to attract and retain residents, workers, businesses.*
- *Increase population to 525,000 by 2027.*
- *Accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship.*

How can heritage help to reach these goals?



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In vying to attract residents, the quantity and price of HRM's heritage stock give us a competitive advantage over other cities.

Creighton Street, Halifax
\$739,900



South Vancouver, BC
\$1,788,000



Prince Albert Road,
Dartmouth
\$750,000



Victoria, BC
\$1,060,000



Heritage buildings provide **affordable rental options for start-ups, small businesses and culture organizations.** “Businesses located in heritage buildings generate more income compared to comparable businesses not located in heritage buildings.” — *Heritage and the Economy*, 2020



Bus Stop Theatre Street, Halifax



Dee Dee's Ice Cream, Halifax



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Heritage buildings appeal to **entrepreneurial industries** and lend themselves well to conversion to **creative and innovation hubs**.



Verb Interactive (L) and Colour (R), two local companies that chose to locate in downtown heritage buildings.



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1. The ECONOMIC Value of Heritage (continued)

D. Creating Skilled Jobs

HRM's Goals

- *Attract talent to Halifax from across Canada and around the world.*
- *Ensure Halifax has a skilled, diverse and inclusive workforce to grow the economy now and in the future.*

How can heritage help to reach these goals?



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Repairing, re-using and retrofitting old buildings is a highly skilled trade, requiring specialized training.



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Heritage restoration projects create more employment than new construction.

Research shows that:

- Every \$1 million spent on heritage restoration projects creates 20% to 30% more jobs than new construction projects.

Table 1. Person-years of employment resulting from the low carbon pathway over ten years, 2020-2030

SECTOR	PERSON-YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT
Active transportation	597
Local renewable generation	32,763
Commercial vehicles	86
District energy	95
Non-residential buildings -- New	962
Non-residential buildings -- Retrofit	14,578
Non-residential equipment	238
Personal vehicles	2,517
Residential buildings -- New	596
Residential buildings -- Retrofit	33,111
Residential equipment	844
Transit infrastructure	3,746

Source: HalifACT



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2. The SOCIAL Value of Heritage

A. Quality of Life

HRM's Goals

- *Improve and showcase Halifax's quality of life.*
- *Increase residents' well-being on a continuous basis.*

— HRM Inclusive Economic Strategy

How can heritage help to reach these goals?



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2. The SOCIAL Value of Heritage (continued)

A. Quality of Life



Research from other jurisdictions shows that heritage contributes to residents' quality of life.

For a local example, in 2011, Halifax's Hydrostone district was voted one of Canada's ten best neighbourhoods by the Canadian Institute of Planners.



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2. The SOCIAL Value of Heritage (continued)

B. Sense of Place and Belonging

HRM's Goal

- **Express culture through space:** *to help strengthen communities and tell stories through community design and the built form...*
- — HRM Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan

How can heritage help to reach this goal?



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Preserving heritage buildings reflects who we are as a municipality and tells the stories of people and places.



Clinic of Dr. Clement Ligoure (Nova Scotia's first doctor of African descent), Halifax



The Teachery, Bedford



Grace Hiltz House, Dartmouth



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Expressing culture through the preservation of built heritage.



Bicentennial Theatre,
Middle Musquodoboit



Scott Manor House, Bedford



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Expressing culture through the preservation of built heritage.



Fultz House, Sackville



Cow Bay Hall, Cow Bay



Meeting House, Cole Harbour



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Expressing culture through the preservation of built heritage.



Beechville United Baptist Church, Beechville



68 Hawthorne Street, Dartmouth



United Baptist Church, Lucasville



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Expressing culture through the preservation of built heritage



782 East Chezzetcook Road, East Chezzetcook



Elsie Hume House, Black Point



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Expressing culture through the preservation of built heritage



Stella Maris Church, York Redoubt



Hallisey House, Beaver Bank



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The SOCIAL Value of Heritage (continued)

F. Affordability

Housing affordability is one of the municipality's most pressing needs.

How can heritage help with the affordability crisis?



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Heritage buildings provide affordable housing where it is most needed.

- ✓ The **most affordable housing** is the housing that's **already been built**.
- ✓ Many historic buildings are large and well-suited to accommodating multiple units.



Killam REIT apartment, Halifax

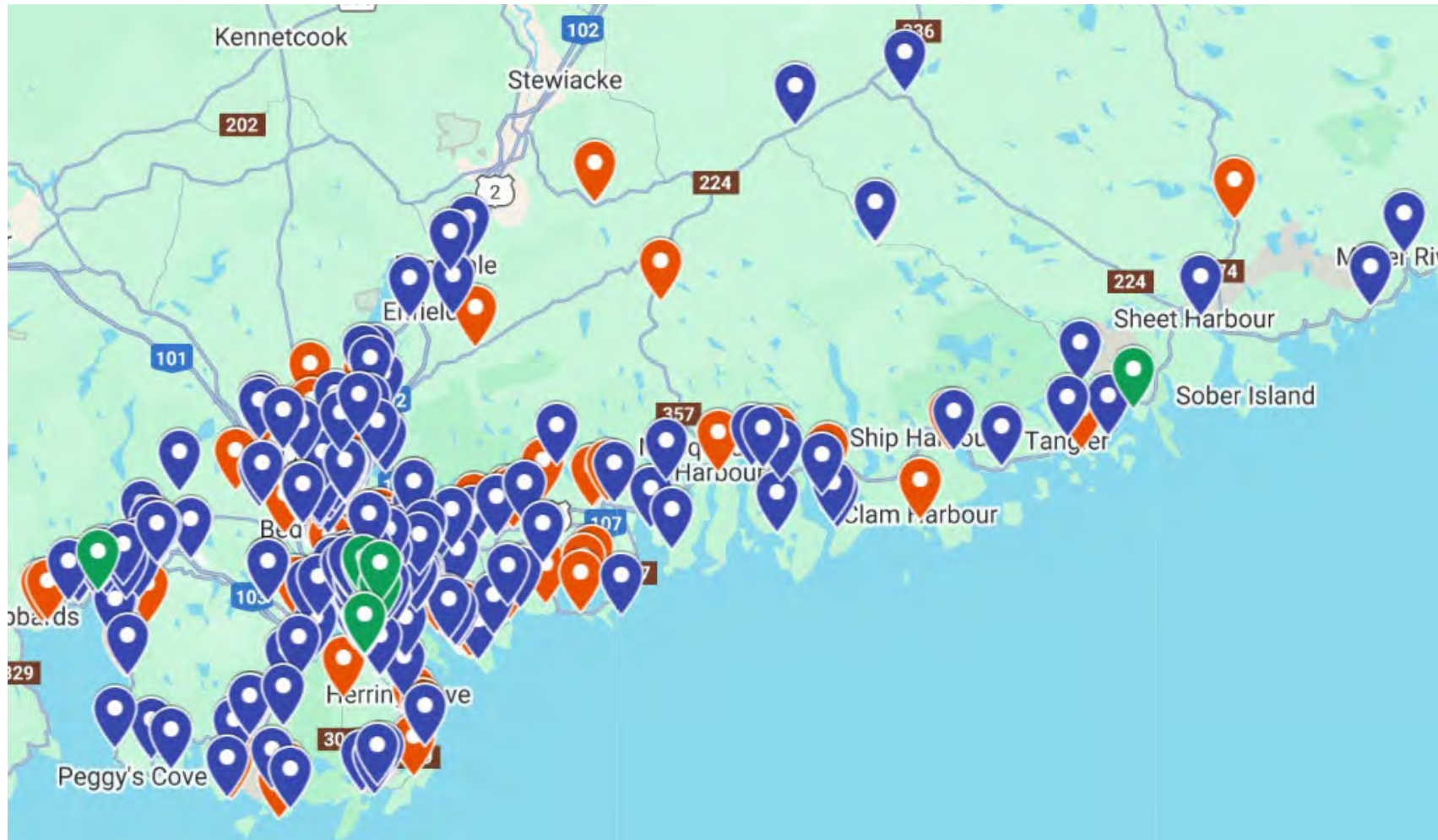


Victoria Hall, Halifax



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The recent spate of demolitions has included numerous historic buildings that contained many affordable units. When new units are eventually built, they are not as affordable as those they replace.



Demolition permits issued in
HRM 2021-2023.

3. The ENVIRONMENTAL Value of Heritage

HRM's Environmental Goals

Reduce emissions

- > to 1.4 MtCO₂e by 2030 (75% by 2030 from 2016), and*
- > to net-zero MtCO₂e by 2050 (100% by 2050 from 2016)*
- > to align with a 1.5°C pathway.*

— Source: HalifACT

How can heritage help to meet this goal?

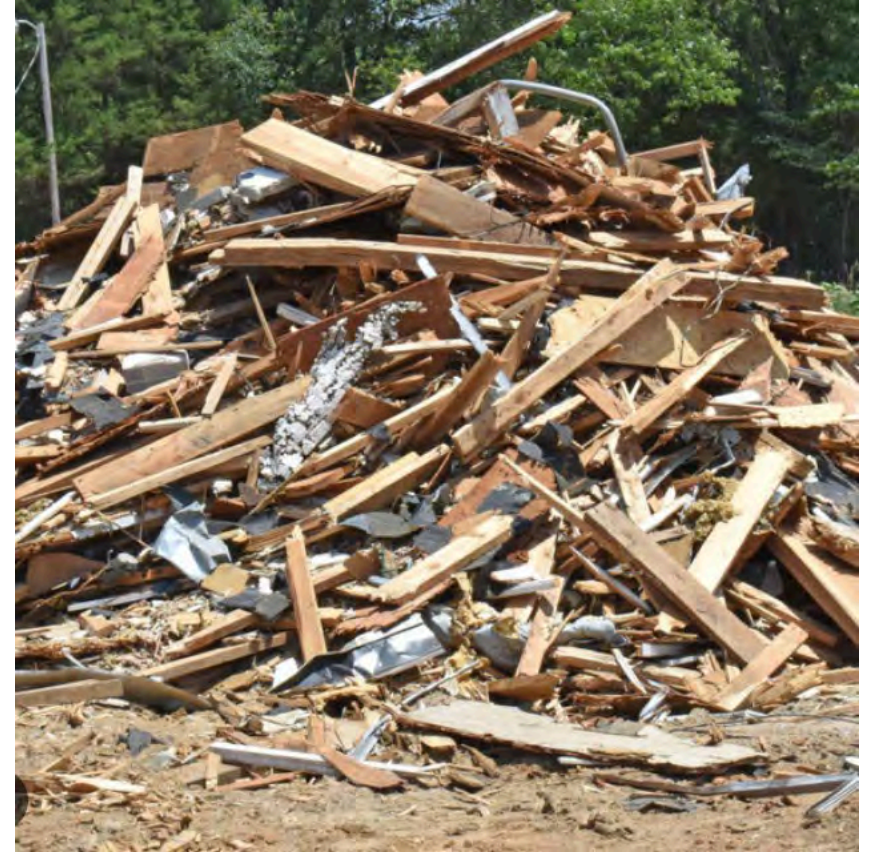


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- ✓ **Retrofitting** existing historic buildings, rather than demolishing them and constructing new buildings, **saves hundreds of thousands of tons of demolition material** from ending up in Nova Scotia's landfills.
- ✓ **Retrofitting** existing historic buildings produces **far lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions** compared to new construction.

“The greenest building is the one that already exists.”

— Carl Elefante, former president of the American Institute of Architects



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What is the state of built heritage in Halifax today?



Demolition of multi-unit homes
Robie Street, Halifax



Careless treatment on Carlton Street, Halifax



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What is the state of built heritage in Halifax today?



Queen Street, Halifax



A favourite subject of tourism promotional material — gone.



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What is the state of built heritage in Halifax today?



Robie Street, Halifax



Attractive streetscapes — gone.



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What is the state of built heritage in Halifax today?



Hundreds of units of affordable housing — all gone.



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**STOP THE
DESTRUCTION OF
HALIFAX'S BUILT
HERITAGE, ENOUGH
IS ENOUGH!**

Started

February 4, 2025

4,833

5,000

**Residents are saying HRM
must do a better job
protecting our built heritage.**



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How can HRM better protect our built heritage?

A. Increase financial and regulatory incentives that encourage heritage registrations and the restoration/adaptive re-use of heritage properties.

B. Create policies that discourage the demolition of historic building stock.



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How can HRM better protect our built heritage?

- 1. Reduce municipal fees** for designated heritage properties.
- 2. Expedite** creation of proposed **Heritage Conservation Districts**.
- 3. Increase municipal heritage incentives.**
Every \$1 invested by HRM generates \$4 in private investment.
- 4. Maintain and enforce existing protections, including view planes.**



How can HRM better protect our built heritage? (continued)

5. Request that the Province allow HRM to:

- a. offer **preferential property tax rates** for heritage buildings;
- b. require property owners to have a **building permit in place** before demolishing existing residential properties; and
- c. enable HRM to **increase tax rates for empty properties** where owners have demolished existing residential units.



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How can HRM better protect our built heritage? (continued)

6. Request that the Province update the Heritage Property Act to:

- a. **remove Section 18 of the Act:** Consideration by the Municipality of the application to alter or demolish **(no other province has this);**
- b. **create a pause provision** of up to one year for specific types of development while conservation plans and bylaws are prepared for Heritage Conservation Districts or Cultural Landscapes;
- c. **create a 30-day holding bylaw for potential heritage assets** to protect them from demolition while applications for designation are being considered; and
- d. **increase fines for illegal demolition** of registered heritage properties.



How can the Heritage Trust help?

The Trust has a network of knowledgeable volunteers across HRM who are committed to the preservation of the Municipality's built heritage.

We are ready, willing, and able to work **with** Council and staff to ensure that HRM capitalizes on the economic, social and environmental value of our built heritage.



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Thank you for your time and attention.



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