



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** September 15, 2023

From: Marie Fenwick, Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services **File:** 11-7141-01/2023-Vol 01

Re: **Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework**

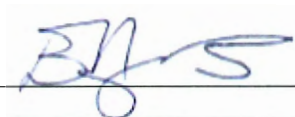

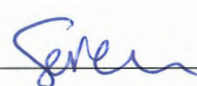
Staff Recommendation

That the Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework as detailed in the staff report titled “Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework,” dated September 15, 2023, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services be endorsed for the purpose of guiding the future development of interpretive programs, exhibits and initiatives in Steveston.

CM Fenwick

Marie Fenwick
 Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
 (604-276-4288)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:	APPROVED BY CAO
		

Staff Report

Origin

This report responds to the following referral from Council on November 8, 2021.

(1) That the Draft Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework as detailed in the staff report titled "Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework," dated September 21, 2021, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services be endorsed for the purpose of seeking stakeholder and public feedback; and

(2) That the final Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework, including the results of the stakeholder and public feedback, be reported back to Council.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Strategy #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

6.5 Enhance and preserve arts and heritage assets in the community.

Analysis

Background

Steveston is home to six City-owned heritage sites, Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site, London Farm, Steveston Tram, Steveston Museum and Post Office, Branscombe House and Scotch Pond which offer a variety of interpretive opportunities. Additionally, Steveston is home to the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site owned by Parks Canada and many other landscapes, places, objects, public art pieces, and activities that support the presentation of its unique heritage. Collectively these things tell the story of Steveston and as such, would benefit from the guidance of a holistic Interpretive Framework.

Interpretive plans are important guiding documents for heritage institutions and other informal learning facilities, providing direction for the design and operation of heritage facilities including conservation, landscaping, exhibits and programs. A key element of an interpretive plan is the interpretive framework. This framework sets out the key themes and stories told which guide decisions on how to communicate key messages and information to audiences through meaningful experiences, site management and business planning.

The Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework (Interpretive Framework – Attachment 1) considers the overarching interpretation of Steveston's heritage at the City-owned heritage sites and other assets in Steveston, including the waterfront and natural areas. Developed through an integrated interpretive planning process, working with community members, the Interpretive Framework is intended to support the creation and delivery of interpretation in a more holistic

manner by informing future site planning, exhibit development, signage, conservation-related projects, and programs.

The Interpretive Framework provides long-term guidance that may evolve in response to societal shifts in our understanding of history and its importance or as the community of Steveston changes. While it is recommended that the Interpretive Framework be reviewed every 10 years it may be revised and updated at any time should new information emerge and / or feedback be received from key contributors

The Interpretive Framework provides guidance to site-specific interpretive plans. Currently, four of the City-owned heritage sites have working interpretive plans. These plans outline in more detail the themes, audiences and methods of interpretation at that site. These plans are living documents that will change as the circumstances surrounding the site's operation and interpretation changes. Additional interpretative plans may be developed for other sites at a later date and will be informed by the Interpretive Framework.

The Interpretive Framework was first presented to Committee at the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee on November 8, 2021. Following Council's endorsement in principle, further community engagement was undertaken and minor changes made in response to the feedback received. This report outlines that engagement and the resulting changes.

Engagement

The initial development of the Interpretive Framework was done in collaboration with the societies that support the operation of City-owned heritage sites' as well as other groups interested in the heritage interpretation of Steveston. Engagement began with a workshop in January 2020 focused on defining intended audiences, interpretive themes, and desired interpretive methods for each site and across Steveston. The following groups participated in this workshop:

- Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society;
- London Heritage Farm Society;
- Steveston Historical Society;
- Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society;
- Scotch Pond Cooperative; and
- Tourism Richmond.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, staff had numerous discussions with these groups individually, further refining the proposed audiences, themes, and methods for each site. The results of these discussions, combined with a thorough review of previous heritage planning work and historical documentation, provided the foundation for the draft Interpretive Framework.

In the previous report to Council, staff committed to engaging "groups who participated in the creation of the draft Interpretive Framework (Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, London Heritage Farm Society, Steveston Historical Society, Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society, Scotch Pond Cooperative and Tourism Richmond) and others who we anticipate will help to

advance both ongoing and future strategic actions related to the plan. These groups include the Musqueam Indian Band, Steveston Harbour Authority, Steveston Community Society and the Richmond Heritage Commission.” These groups, along with members the Steveston Japanese Canadian community, were all invited to comment.

Feedback received through this engagement has been accommodated with minor changes made to the draft Framework as discussed below. All groups and community members engaged endorse the Framework as presented in this report.

Staff reached out to the Musqueam Indian Band for input in the development of the Interpretive Framework as well as for input on the draft Interpretive Framework. While there was initial interest in providing input, no formal response has been received at this time. The Interpretive Framework is intended to be a living document. Staff will continue to invite Musqueam participation in projects related to the interpretation of Steveston heritage as well as future planning work relating to the Interpretive Framework and Council will be advised accordingly.

Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework

Much of the Interpretive Framework draws on the Historical Context Statement developed for the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area Program in 2009 to help identify and preserve the buildings and features in Steveston Village. The Interpretive Framework considers the themes presented in the 2009 document in the current context of interpretation and as they relate to the interpretive opportunities at the heritage places in Steveston.

An overview of the Interpretive Framework is provided here. Since Council’s endorsement in principle in 2021, the following minor changes were made to accommodate additional input from the community.

- The addition of other places of interpretation;
- The addition of information related to the experience of Japanese Canadians;
- The addition of a new sub-story to the Farming story to highlight the natural bounty of Steveston’s lands; and
- An update to the Interpretive Goals for the Steveston Museum and Post Office.

Additional detail, including descriptions of themes and stories, is included in the attached full version. The full Interpretive Framework also includes specific interpretive goals for each City-owned heritage site which will direct the methods of presentation of the themes and stories outlined below.

The themes identified in the Interpretive Framework include:

- **Cultural Diversity** – Steveston was and is a culturally diverse area, attracting people from around the globe for economic opportunities and natural beauty.
- **Connection to the Fraser River** – Steveston exists in its current form in large part because of the physical and natural environment found in its location at the mouth of the Fraser River.

- **The Past in our Present** – While today’s Steveston looks very different than that of one hundred years ago, the legacies of what was built then, still lives on in its people, places and activities.

The four stories outlined in the Interpretive Framework include:

1. **Fishing** - Fishing has been a central driver of settlement in the Steveston area, which served as a place for fishers to collect and process their harvest for many generations. This was seen in the rich traditions of Indigenous Peoples fishing the Fraser River and remains true for the hundreds of commercial vessels in today’s Steveston Harbour.
2. **Farming** - While today’s farmland is found largely on the outskirts of Steveston, farming has been an important activity shaping the area’s development. From Chinese market gardens, to family dairy farms, to large-scale grain farms, to the berry and vegetable farms in today’s Agricultural Land Reserve, each of these illustrates unique features of the land and the people who work it.
3. **Community Life** - Located in the southwest corner of Richmond surrounded by river and open fields, Steveston has always been set apart from other populated areas. Because of this, community members took it upon themselves to build what it needed, developing a strong sense of independence. Community Life reflects this enterprising spirit and illustrates how people from diverse backgrounds come together to form a community.
4. **Transportation Hub** - In today’s world, it is difficult to imagine the large steamships of the early twentieth century that visited Steveston’s port and the ferries and interurban tram that took people from the busy Steveston town to the neighbouring areas of New Westminster or Vancouver. With each change in transportation came changes to the development of Steveston and the lifestyle of people travelling and moving goods.

The full Interpretive Framework also includes specific interpretive goals for City-owned heritage sites which will direct the presentation of the themes and stories outlined in the table below.

THEMES		
Cultural Diversity	Connection to the Fraser River	The Past in our Present
Stories	Sub-Stories	
Fishing	a) The Catch b) Fishing Techniques and Traditions c) Processing the Catch d) The Fishing Fleet	
Farming	a) The Natural Bounty of the Land b) Land Management and Stewardship c) A Farming Community d) The Business of Farming	
Community Life	a) Building Community b) Home Life c) Staying Connected	

THEMES		
Cultural Diversity	Connection to the Fraser River	The Past in our Present
Stories	Sub-Stories	
	d) Nikkei Contributions	
Transportation Hub	a) Evolution of Transportation b) The “Sockeye Special” c) The Backbone of Commerce	

Next Steps

To successfully implement the Interpretive Framework, it is recommended that future heritage interpretation initiatives:

1. Align with the themes and goals identified in this Interpretive Framework;
2. Put the visitor’s experience first; and
3. Link the stories and sites in Steveston.

There are a number of current initiatives in progress that build on the stories identified in the Interpretive Framework. (Attachment 2) Additionally, the following areas of interpretation will be further developed at various locations across the Steveston area:

- Stories of Indigenous Peoples and their changing relationship to the area;
- The significance of the Fraser River in Steveston’s development and the impact of that development on the River;
- The evolution of West Coast fishing methods and boats;
- The history of Cannery Row and how the canneries shaped the Steveston community;
- Stories of commercial farming and agriculture in Steveston past and present;
- The diversity and evolution of communication for Steveston residents; and
- The story of Steveston as an international port.

Addressing these gaps should be considered priorities for future interpretative initiatives, such as exhibits, programs, events, signage at existing sites and elsewhere in Steveston as opportunities arise. Based on input from community and an assessment of current opportunities, staff recommend these priority actions to address the identified interpretive gaps.

- Britannia Shipyards Plan – A new plan for Britannia Shipyards would provide a vision for park signage, landscaping and displays that address gaps in interpretation of the River, local ecology, and fishing boats.
- London Farmhouse Displays – Display upgrades in the London Farmhouse would provide opportunities to expand on the story of the London family and interpret new stories related to the Steveston communities that supported farming.
- Field trip programs at heritage sites – Expand the development and delivery of curriculum-related school programs at the four City-owned heritage sites.

- Steveston interpretive signage – A comprehensive interpretive signage program would support linkages between heritage sites and stories and could build on existing signage found at Imperial Landing, the Dyke Trails, Garry Point Park and elsewhere.
- Interpretation of Fraser River at Scotch Pond – Scotch Pond is uniquely situated in Garry Point Park adjacent to Sturgeon Bank. As such, this location could offer excellent opportunities to introduce new interpretation of the Fraser River.

The Council-endorsed Interpretive Framework will provide direction for future responses to existing referrals and on-going projects related to the heritage sites in Steveston. Staff, working with community stakeholders, will develop and support new initiatives to take advantage of interpretive opportunities in parks and other heritage places over the coming years. These initiatives will be the subject of future reports to Council and funding requests.

Steveston heritage sites initiatives and others relating to the implementation of the Interpretive Framework will be brought to Council as part of the Annual Year-in Review reporting. Should Council endorse the proposed Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework, staff will circulate the document to interested community members and groups.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact at this time. Any recommendations of the Interpretive Framework that require additional funding will be the subject of future reports to Council and the annual budget processes.

Conclusion

Staff recommend Council endorse the Interpretive Framework for the purposes of guiding how the stories of Steveston are shared at different heritage sites and locations throughout the area. The Interpretive Framework will provide direction for undertaking interpretation in a more holistic manner and inform future site planning, exhibit development, signage, conservation-related projects, and programs, at City-owned heritage sites.



Rebecca Clarke
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- Att. 1: Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Framework
Att. 2: Current Interpretive Initiatives at Steveston Heritage Sites



CITY OF RICHMOND STEVESTON HERITAGE INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK

September 15, 2023



Thematic Framework

Overview

Interpretive themes		
Cultural Diversity		
Connection to the Fraser River		
The Past in our Present		
Stories	Sub-Stories	Interpretive Locations
Fishing	a) The Catch b) Fishing Techniques and Traditions c) Processing the Catch d) The Fishing Fleet	Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steveston Harbour Scotch Pond Imperial Landing Fisherman's Park Garry Point Park Steveston Fishermen's Memorial Nikkei Fishermen's Memorial
Farming	a) The Natural Bounty of the Land b) Land Management and Stewardship c) A Farming Community d) The Business of Farming	Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> London Farm Dyke Trail Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Branscombe House London Wharf Park
Community Life	a) Building Community b) Home Life c) Staying Connected d) Nikkei Contributions	Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steveston Museum and Post Office Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site London Farm Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steveston Tram Steveston Village Branscombe House Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre Steveston Nikkei Memorial Steveston Community Centre Steveston Martial Arts Centre Kuno Garden & Cherry Trees at Garry Point Suikinkutsu Japanese Garden in Town Square
Transportation Hub	a) Evolution of Transportation b) The "Sockeye Special" c) The Backbone of Commerce	Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steveston Tram Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Steveston Museum and Post Office London Farm Railway Greenway Steveston Harbour Imperial Landing Steveston Community Park London Wharf Park

Interpretive Themes

The following interpretive themes, or central concepts, can be seen in all of Steveston's heritage places and activities. These concepts are important lenses through which Steveston's history and heritage can be viewed and its stories told.

These themes, and the stories that follow, highlight Steveston's unique heritage and offer opportunities to illustrate how these histories are part of the larger story of British Columbia and Canada.

A. Cultural Diversity – Steveston was and is a culturally diverse area, attracting people from around the globe for economic opportunities and natural bounty.

Since before contact, Indigenous peoples have been drawn to the areas' rich resources. Later Chinese, Japanese, South Asian and European populations came and developed commercial fishing and farming industries. Changes in community populations through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries were representative of larger socio-economic trends and government policies such as:

- Establishment of the reserve and residential school systems for First Nations people outlined in the Indian Act;
- Criminalization of Indigenous peoples' cultural heritage practices such as fishing, potlatches, and speaking Indigenous languages;
- Race-based immigration policies that discriminated against people of non-European descent such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Continuous Journey Regulation;
- Race-based awarding of fishing licenses that discriminated against people of non-European descent;
- Racial segregation of public schools that discriminated against people of non-European descent;
- Land ownership and enfranchisement laws that privileged men and people of European descent; and
- Forced internment of Japanese Canadians and dispossession of their property and businesses during the Second World War and four years after.

These policies shaped both the fishing and farming industries that were the backbone of Steveston's community.

In response, members of the Steveston community were at the forefront of social change, showing leadership by:

- Starting the movement to unionize the fishing industry;
- Establishing Richmond's first hospital and the first socialized health care system in Canada;
- Establishing Richmond's first racially integrated school, home to BC's first certified Japanese Canadian teacher; and
- Winning the right to vote for Japanese Canadians in BC elections.

Despite numerous challenges, people continued to come from around the world, creating a unique mix of cultures and working together to build a community that supported each other's well-being. While racism has been a persistent factor in Steveston's history, so has the cultural harmony that was fostered through shared working and living experiences.

B. Connection to the Fraser River – The Fraser River is a designated Canadian Heritage River with a rich natural and cultural heritage. Steveston exists in its current form in large part because of the physical and natural environment found in its location at the mouth of the Fraser River. The estuary surrounding Steveston is considered an environmentally sensitive area due to its unique ecology of tidal marshes, tidal sloughs, mud flats, traces of surviving indigenous vegetation, riverine and terrestrial habitat.

This River and its rich estuary have supported the people who settled in the area since time immemorial by providing food, fertile soil, a means of transportation and a place of beauty and recreation. The importance of the River as a connector and provider is at the heart of every story from its beginnings to today.

C. The Past in our Present – The village of Steveston and the surrounding area have maintained a strong identity despite, or perhaps because of numerous ups and downs throughout history. Communities of peoples have come and gone and come back again. The industries of fishing and farming have changed significantly over the years, but are still well-represented in the area with many residents connected to those earlier ways of life.

Preservation of heritage places and practices that long distinguished Steveston have played an important role in this continuity. So has a turn toward a new economic basis in tourism. While today's community looks very different than that of the past, the legacies of what was created then, still lives on in its people, places and activities.



Image: Steveston Waterfront circa 1943, COR 1985 4 14

Stories / Sub-stories

Although Steveston has many stories to tell, this plan focuses on four central stories which provide a rich basis for interpretation and offer opportunities to bring each story to life through existing places, objects and activities.

A. Fishing

Fishing has been a central driver of settlement in the area for millennia. Settlements initially served as a base from which fishers could collect and process their harvest. This was seen in the rich traditions of Indigenous Peoples fishing the Fraser River and Salish Sea and remains true for the more than 500 commercial vessels in the modern day Steveston Harbour.

Contained within the Fishing storyline are a number of sub-stories that speak to not only the technical aspects of the work but also the people doing the work and their experiences of hardship and success.

- **The Catch** describes the many species of fish and other sea life that have provided sustenance for people over the years. In addition to fish traditionally found in the Fraser River, the Catch tells about the species commercially fished up and down BC's coast by the vessels and fishers of Steveston.
- **Fishing Techniques and Traditions** focuses on the methods of fishing and their technological and cultural evolution. From the highly productive, and carefully regulated, traditional Indigenous fishing techniques, to gillnets, Seine nets and Easthope engines, each fishing method is unique to a people and time and sets the stage for the day-to-day experiences of Steveston's fishers and their families.
- **Processing the Catch** highlights the prolific fish processing industry that shaped Steveston's development during the twentieth century. This story is dominated by the salmon canneries that lined Steveston's Cannery Row, but also includes Indigenous practices of salmon preserving and modern practices of reduction and freezing.
- **The Fishing Fleet** tells the story of the vessels that supported fishers and the unique craftsmanship that went into their design and maintenance. In particular, this includes the history of the many boat works that were owned by Japanese Canadians who brought their unique boatbuilding skills with them from Japan.

The prominence of fishing in Steveston's development allows for numerous interpretive opportunities, highlighted by two National Historic Sites – the Gulf of Georgia Cannery and the Britannia Shipyards – and brought to life today at the Steveston Harbour.

B. Farming

While today's farmland is found largely on the outskirts of Steveston, historically farming was central to the area's development. Throughout the twentieth century, farming in Steveston has taken many shapes, evolving to suit the people, economic markets and technology of the time. From Chinese market gardens, to family dairy farms, to large-scale grain farms, to the berry and vegetable farms in today's Agricultural Land Reserve, each of these illustrates unique features of the land and the people who work it.

- **The Natural Bounty of the Land** tells the story of the richness of the area. Fueled by the fertile soils of the Fraser River estuary, the land that Steveston was built upon is home to many native species of plants and animals that have provided agricultural economies for the peoples of the area for millennia.
- **Land Management and Stewardship** shares how farming in Steveston shaped and was shaped by the River and its ecology. From the creation of the dyke system to maximize use of the rich delta soil to management of "pests", and the use of chemicals to increase production, farming has had a significant impact of the ecology of the River estuary.

- **A Farming Community** tells the story of Steveston's many farming families and how together, they worked the land. These stories of resilience and resourcefulness share how farmers, their families, labourers and community worked together to make a living off the land. These stories also illustrate the class, gender and racial divides that were part of twentieth century farming culture.
- **The Business of Farming** speaks to the evolution of farming methods and how farmers worked not only to feed their families, but to produce crops that supported a sustainable business. From the types of crops planted, to the farming implements used, to the means of transportation to get to market, each decision set the course for how successful a farm business would be.

The story of farming is primarily told at London Farm with supporting interpretation in parks spaces and along the dyke trail.

C. Community Life

Located in the Southwest corner of Richmond surrounded by river and open fields, Steveston has always been set apart from other populated areas. Because of this, community members took it upon themselves to build what they needed, developing a strong sense of independence. The story of Community Life reflects this enterprising spirit and illustrates how people from diverse backgrounds can come together to form a community.

- **Building Community** focuses on the amenities and activities that developed in Steveston as the community grew. From hospitals and schools to celebrations and commerce, these places and activities characterize the life of the peoples that settled in the area known as Steveston.
- **Home Life** illustrates how the people working in the fishing, canning and farming industries lived. The opportunities offered by this work attracted people and families from around the world who lived in different circumstances, practicing a variety of cultural traditions.
- **Staying Connected** speaks to the evolution of communication methods that the diversity of people in Steveston used to maintain connections with their families in distant lands.
- **Nikkei Contributions** tells the story of the Japanese Canadians who played a significant role in the shaping of the Steveston community. From the first settler from Mio, Japan, to the forced removal of Japanese Canadians, to the modern contributions to Steveston's community, the ups and downs faced by the Nikkei people have put an indelible mark on the community known today.

The story of Community Life is told at many places throughout Steveston. The Steveston Museum and Post Office serves as a focal point, while Britannia Shipyards and London Farm offer immersive experiences.

D. Transportation Hub

The story of Steveston as a Transportation Hub is the only story that is largely situated in the past. In today's world of highways and cars, it is difficult to imagine the large steamships of the early twentieth century that visited Steveston's port regularly to transport salmon across the sea. Also lost are the ferries and interurban tram that took people from the busy Steveston town to the neighbouring areas of New Westminster or Vancouver. With each change in transportation came changes to the development of Steveston and the lifestyle of people travelling and moving goods.

- **Evolution of Transportation** tells the story of the changes to how people and goods moved from Steveston to other places in the region or world. It includes the early international ships, local travel by canoe, ferry or horse, as well as the interurban tram system and modern day transit and roads.
- **The "Sockeye Special"** was the affectionate name locals gave to the interurban rail, reflecting the importance of the Tram to the people of Steveston. This story shares the experiences of the people who travelled on the Tram for work and going to and from social events in Richmond and Vancouver.
- **The Backbone of Commerce** describes how various transportation systems supported the commercial development of Steveston. This includes systems that brought workers into Steveston during the fishing and canning seasons and provided producers with a reliable method of marketing and transporting their products.

This story is primarily told at the Steveston Tram with supporting interpretation at the Steveston Museum and Post Office and London Farm.



Images, top to bottom, left to right: Wood working displays at Britannia Shipyards, Tram passenger display, Doing laundry at London Farm

Interpretive Goals for Heritage Sites

Interpretive goals help direct the presentation of the themes and stories described above. These interpretive goals focus on the primary points of interpretation at City-owned facilities and places. The Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site is guided by its own interpretive plan which is in development with input from community, including the City of Richmond.

Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Goals

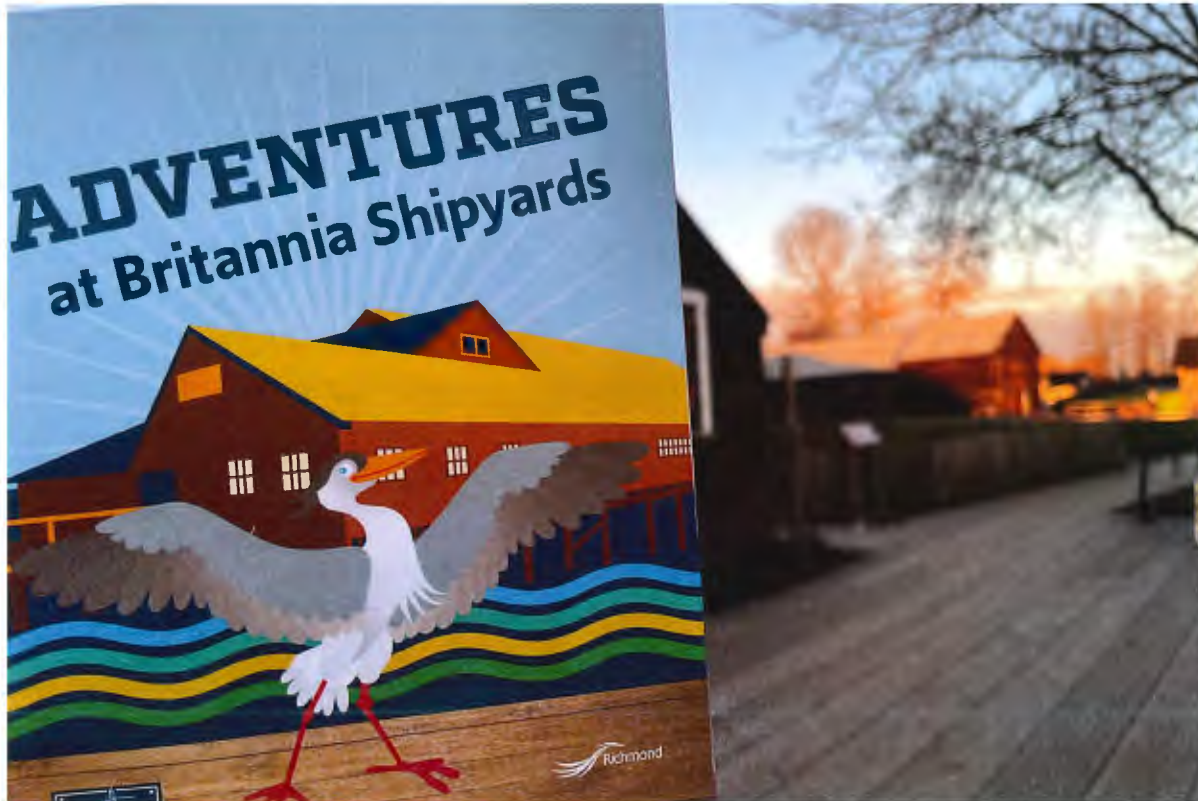
Interpretation at this site is designed to...

- Create authentic and immersive experiences of the daily life of the people who worked in West Coast fishing and boatbuilding;
- Foster greater understanding of the cultural diversity of people that supported West Coast fishing and boatbuilding;
- Encourage discovery of the complex workings of West Coast fishing and boatbuilding industry; and
- Inspire connections to and stewardship of West Coast maritime heritage and the Fraser River.

London Farm Goals

Interpretation at this site is designed to...

- Inspire connections to and stewardship of the land and the site;
- Create an environment of curiosity and remembering of early twentieth century farm life;
- Foster greater understanding of agricultural and farm practices of early twentieth century farming; and
- Encourage discovery of the people and complexity of Richmond's farm society.



Kids activity book at Britannia Shipyards

Steveston Museum and Post Office Goals

Interpretation at this site is designed to...

- Evoke memories of and curiosity for the Steveston community;
- Foster greater understanding of the experiences and contributions of Steveston's Nikkei community;
- Highlight the past and present communication methods of Steveston people; and
- Encourage exploration of Steveston's unique history and heritage beyond the Museum's walls.



Image: School program at Steveston Museum and Post Office

Steveston Tram Goals

Interpretation at this site is designed to...

- Immerse visitors in the authentic experience of an interurban tram from the first half of the twentieth century;
- Foster a greater understanding of the significance of interurban transportation to Richmond; {
- Encourage discovery of the streetcar technology and operation; and
- Inspire connections to Richmond's transportation history.

List of supporting resources (by area of interest)

Branscombe House

Branscombe House Conservation Plan,
Don Luxton and Associates, 2013

Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site

The Britannia/Phoenix Heritage Study,
Duncan Stacey, 1983

A Heritage Overview of "Area E" at the Britannia Waterfront, Leonard Ham, 1988

City Bylaw 5585 for Heritage Designation,
City of Richmond, 1990

Britannia Information Report,
City of Richmond, June 1990

Britannia Complex Phase II,
Robert Lemon Architecture, Sept. 1990

1991 Agenda Paper HSMB of Canada,
Parks Canada, 1991

Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Statement of Significance, Historic Sites and Monuments Board, 1991

Some Tree Ring Dates for buildings at the Britannia Heritage Shipyard – Dendrochronology Report,
M L Parker Co., Mar. 1992

The Britannia Heritage Shipyard Marketing Research Study, MDM Marketing Consultants, May 1998

Steveston Community Industrial Adjustment Study: Final Report Feasibility Analysis, Cornerstone Planning Group, May 1998

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Business Plan, Britannia Business Plan Steering Committee, Sept. 2000

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone Interpretive Plan, Denise Cook Design, Sept. 2006

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Marketing Project – Steveston Resident Discussion Group Plan,
Mitchell James Marketing, 2006

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Marketing Project – Multi-year Marketing and Communications Roadmap,
Mitchell James Marketing, 2007

Britannia Shipyards NHS Strategic Plan 2014-2018,
City of Richmond, 2014

How We Lived: Stories of Work and Play at Britannia,
City of Richmond, Feb. 2009

Britannia Shipyards NHS Site Entryways and Wayfinding Concept, Denise Cook Design, Mar. 2010

Voices of Britannia: The People, the Stories and the Future" Community Engagement Project – Final Report, City of Richmond, Nov. 2013

Seine Net Loft Design Brief, City of Richmond, Jan. 2015

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Conservation Plan,
Don Luxton and Associates, 2015

Waterlot Management Plan, City of Richmond, 2016

Japanese Duplex and First Nations Bunkhouse Historical Literature Review, Denise Cook Design,
May 2016

Restoring the Japanese Duplex and First Nations Bunkhouse Buildings, City of Richmond, Sept. 2016

Maritime Vessel Management and Operational Plan,
City of Richmond, Nov. 2016

Britannia Shipyards Heritage Site Business Plan – Market Analysis, RC Strategies + PERC, Nov. 2017

Britannia Visitor Survey (in conjunction with Strategic Development Plan), City of Richmond, 2017

Britannia Shipyards NHS Strategic Development Plan,
Nordicity, 2018

Britannia Staff & Board Boat Survey Summary,
City of Richmond, 2018

Britannia Shipyards Building History,
City of Richmond, Sept. 2018

Management of the Existing Fleet of Boats at Britannia,
Bud Sakamoto, Nov. 2018

Marketing Plan for Britannia Shipyards,
City of Richmond, April 2020

Phoenix Cannery Building: Research Report and Conservation Options, Don Luxton and Associates Inc.,
Dec. 2022

Phoenix Cannery Building #32: Research Report and Conservation Options, Don Luxton and Associates Inc.,
May 2023

Garry Point Park

Garry Point Park Master Plan, Pacific Landplan Collaborative Ltd., 1983

Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site

Gulf of Georgia Cannery Management Plan,
Parks Canada, 2011

Visitor Information Program LITE Final Report,
Parks Canada, 2018

Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society Strategic Plan,
Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society, 2020

Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society Building

Japanese Nurses Residence Relocation Drawings,
McGinn Engineering and Preservation Ltd., Dec. 2009

Exhibit text panels, D. Jensen and Associates, 2010

Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society Building Interior Renovation, Birmingham & Wood Architects and Planners, April 2013

Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society Building Conservation Review, Don Luxton and Associates,
Nov. 2013

London Farm

City Bylaw 3528 Designation of Lands, City of Richmond, 1977
City Bylaw 3515 Designation of House, City of Richmond, 1978
Minutes from the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission regarding London Farm application, Provincial Agricultural Land Commission, Dec. 1978
London Farm Site Development Plan, Advance Planning and Research Architecture, 1982
London Farm Plan, Justice and Vincent Landscape Architects, 1986
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Current Interpretive Initiatives at Steveston Heritage Sites

There are a number of initiatives currently underway which support the implementation of the Interpretive Framework at the City's heritage sites. These are outlined by location in the following section.

Britannia Shipyards

Britannia Shipyards is a large site with numerous interpretive opportunities and significant investment in preservation and displays in recent years. However, two buildings, the First Nations Bunkhouse and Japanese Duplex, remain unrestored. At the regular Council meeting on February 8, 2021, Council endorsed a proposed program plan for the First Nations Bunkhouse and at the regular Council meeting on April 11, 2022, Council endorsed a proposed program plan for the Japanese Duplex. More detailed information about the proposed program and levels of service for the First Nations Bunkhouse and Japanese Duplex will be the subject of subsequent reports.

Additionally, Council has approved a number of interpretive experiences at Britannia Shipyards that support the stories and goals outlined in the Interpretive Framework. These include:

- Program planning and fit-out for boat restoration and building in the Richmond Boat Builders;
- Planning for heritage boat preservation and display;
- Recruitment of heritage vessels for rotating display at Britannia Shipyards docks; and
- Improved interpretive signage along the boardwalk and in the park.

Staff are currently working to complete these projects.

London Farm

At the regular Council meeting on February 8, 2021, Council endorsed a new Master Plan to guide the future development and operation of London Heritage Farm site. This Master Plan advances the Interpretive Framework by identifying specific infrastructure improvements in the London Farm Park. In June 2023, the first phase of this Master Plan was implemented and many of the elements identified in the Plan have now been completed. The remaining elements will be the subject of future reports to Council and budget requests.

Steveston Museum and Post Office

After consultation with the community, Steveston Historical Society and Tourism Richmond through 2020 and 2021, a number of new activities were proposed which would support the interpretative themes and goals identified in this Interpretive Framework and improve the visitor experience at the Steveston Museum. Council approved the following improvements to the Steveston Museum and Post Office at the November 8, 2021 meeting:

- Providing additional interpretation connecting the post office to Steveston's history and heritage;
- Working with local artists and artisans to offer rotating displays in the Northern Bank building;

- Raising profile of the Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society (JFBS) exhibits and providing easier access in summer season;
- Working with the local Japanese Canadian community to enhance interpretation in the JFBS building; and
- Refreshing displays of Steveston history in the Northern Bank building to allow for additional stories to be told.

At this time, upgrades to the Steveston Museum post office room are complete and the Steveston Historical Society has been offering a pop-up artists program there since 2022. This program has been popular with locals and visitors and helps to animate the site with local artists.

Staff are working to complete the initiatives approved as part of the 2022 capital project to help to address gaps in the current interpretation of Steveston's stories as well as build on the existing community programming and JFBS exhibits which have proven popular over past years.

Steveston Tram

In January 2023, new displays were opened at the Steveston Tram. These displays complete the Tram restoration project by providing the historical context for the Interurban Tram system and its importance to Richmond and Steveston. These new family-friendly displays support the themes and stories identified in the Interpretive Framework. The new displays have been well received and have significantly increased visitation to the Tram.

Phoenix Net Loft

Staff currently have a referral to explore a variety of program options for the future use of the Phoenix Net Loft. Any program option will offer interpretive opportunities to share the story of the Phoenix Net Loft and its former use.

Other Initiatives

In addition to City-led projects, two significant initiatives are being undertaken by other community groups that will contribute to the interpretation of the Steveston area.

In 2023, the Steveston Harbour Authority, in partnership with Tourism Richmond, began planning for the Fishers' Walk. This project will add interpretation of today's fishing industry along the Harbour property that connects the Gulf of Georgia Cannery to Garry Point Park.

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site is currently renewing its interpretive plan. City heritage sites staff are participating in this project with the goal of sharing unique Steveston stories in a collaborative way across sites.