

HOW DOES HERITAGE CREATE A STRONGER SASKATCHEWAN?

With the conclusion of the provincial election looming, we believe it is important to reach out and explain how heritage creates a better province for all Saskatchewanians.

HOW DOES HERITAGE CREATE A STRONG ECONOMY?

There is often a belief that public investment in heritage is important, but that it does not result in a sizable economic return. In reality, the economic case for government investment in the sector is an easy one to make.

In 2022 a total of \$8,490,000 GDP was directly generated by the operations of archives, libraries, culture heritage sites and natural heritage sites. A further \$34,836,000 was generated through architecture projects related to heritage sites.¹ The heritage sector is also fundamentally intertwined with the tourism sector. Many of the strongest drivers for tourist interest and visitor expenditures are heritage sites and narratives interpreted by heritage workers. Visitation to provincial parks, museums and cultural sites generated 2.8 billion in total visitor expenditures in 2022.² A significant percentage of that total spend was driven by the heritage sector. However, investment in heritage organizations by the province has been comparatively small, totaling \$5,859,000 in 2024.³

HOW DOES HERITAGE CREATE MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT?

In 2022, 460 jobs in archives, libraries, cultural heritage sites, and natural sites were directly attributable to the heritage sector. Although not specifically classified as heritage sector workers, a significant proportion of the 53,1944 tourism/hospitality labour force in Saskatchewan works directly and indirectly with natural and cultural heritage sites.⁴ Those jobs would not exist without the heritage sector.

Further, heritage workers, indigenous and non-indigenous alike, are often on the frontlines of reconciliation work, questioning colonial narratives about history, and working to decolonize cultural institutions.

HOW DOES THE SECTOR PREPARE US FOR THE FUTURE?

The heritage sector is embracing new technologies and innovations to advance design, construction, and conservation of heritage places, buildings, and natural sites. These advancements are increasing the demand for related education and generating high-quality jobs. Similarly, recent investments in Saskatchewan's film sector have driven the need for a workforce skilled in using this technology. The cross-sector demand for these skills in Saskatchewan industries presents an opportunity to develop career pathways tailored for the province and the potential for further economic benefit.

HOW DOES HERITAGE CREATE STRONG COMMUNITIES?

Heritage shapes our identity and our relationships with others. Heritage is a living component of everyday life, the value of which is constantly being negotiated and renegotiated by each successive generation.

Imagine Saskatchewan without cultural sites like Wanuskewin, that demonstrate the rich heritage present here and help us to understand that our heritage is diverse and living. Imagine our province without the Remai Modern Gallery, the Saskatchewan Science Centre, the Legislative Building, Wascana Park, Grasslands National Park, or local historic sites throughout our communities.

These places, and what they contain, are important to community and hold stories about the past. They strengthen our current collective identity, and are invaluable in their history, beauty, and meaning. We believe there is intrinsic cultural value in these things, and that they deserve to be protected for the social, educational, and economic benefit of Saskatchewanians.

WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, COUNTS AS “HERITAGE”?

We define heritage broadly. Heritage is those tangible and intangible resources, both human and natural, created by activities of the past, that inform present and future Saskatchewanians of that past. Heritage includes:

- Works of architecture, works of engineering and infrastructure, places of faith
- Landscapes, archaeological sites, sacred sites, sites of natural beauty
- Everyday places such as homes, agricultural structures, town squares
- Tools and equipment, paintings, music, language, clothing and textiles, oral histories, festivals, events, sport teams, and all those things that make of our communities strong, vibrant, unique and worth celebrating

WHO ARE WE?

Heritage Saskatchewan and the Museums Association of Saskatchewan are two non-profit provincial organizations with a focus on safe-guarding heritage, which includes tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Heritage Saskatchewan gives voice to living heritage: the values, beliefs and ways of living inherited from past generations that are used to understand the present and inform our choices for the future: www.heritagesask.ca

The Museums Association of Saskatchewan is a collective organization of over 250 member museums, and supports its members through a variety of education, advisory, resource and networking programs: www.saskmuseums.org

WHAT ISSUES EXIST AND HOW CAN YOUR LEADERSHIP HELP?

Because of its huge benefit to the province, the heritage sector requires government to commit to providing the appropriate resources to strengthen the industry and continue growth. The resource issue is multifaceted, and includes lack of funds available for the conservation of local heritage sites, and limited opportunities for relevant education and training in-province. If we hope for Canadians and newcomers to continue to make their home here, we must be willing to invest to protect our cultural heritage, create the appropriate educational programs, and build our leadership in the sector.

Thank you for reading; we look forward to following up post-election.

WHAT HERITAGE LOOKS LIKE



Wanuskewin, 1983-present



Capitol Theatre, Saskatoon,
1929-1979 (Demolished)



Original Humboldt Site, 2012-
present



Our Lady of Assumption Co-Cathedral,
Gravelbourg, 1930-Present (at risk)



Darke Hall, 1928-present

¹ Culture and sport indicators by domain and sub-domain, by province and territory, product perspective, Table: 36-10-0452-01 (formerly CANSIM 387-0012), GDP Indicator filter applied, Release date: 2024-06-03, Statistics Canada

² Tourism Saskatchewan, Annual Report 2023-24

³ Funding for Saskatchewan Arts, Culture and Heritage Organizations Benefits Us All: Government of Saskatchewan media release, July 24, 2024

⁴ Snapshot of the Tourism Sector Labour Market Provincial Report Series: Saskatchewan, Tourism HR Canada, Quatylyst Research Group, 2023