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CDNS 4403-5003

Sustainable Heritage Case Study
Class Presentation
Nov. 28, 2017

The Ontario Heritage Trust

Rehabilitation of the Birkbeck
Building in Toronto



Birkbeck Building Façade. Source: Taylor, D. (2014, October 26). Toronto's Birkbeck Building at 8-10 Adelaide St. East. *Historic Toronto*. Retrieved from <https://tayloronhistory.com/2013/12/24/torontos-architectural-gemsthe-birkbeck-building-at-8-10-adelaide-st-east/>

Lessons

- How an organization with core values based on protecting and maintaining heritage properties and landscapes, can make use of a historic building to satisfy its everyday needs



Photo taken in 1927 shows the Birkbeck Building and the surrounding structures. Source: Parks Canada Agency / Agence Parcs Canada

Description

- **Ontario Heritage Trust:** The Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) – the province’s lead heritage agency – “is dedicated to identifying, preserving, protecting and promoting Ontario's rich and varied heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.” (OHT, n.d.) This includes protecting both built structures and natural heritage.
- **The Birkbeck Building:** The Birkbeck Building is an Edwardian style office building, constructed in 1908-10, and located at 10 Adelaide Street East in downtown Toronto. It was designed by George W. Gouinlock. From 1985-88, the OHT acquired the building for use as its headquarters, and the building underwent a major restoration and rehabilitation.

Stakeholders

The Ontario Heritage Trust

- Relationships: Governments, municipalities, Indigenous communities, conservation authorities, land trusts, heritage organizations and private landowners

The Birkbeck Building

- Organizations: The Ontario Heritage Trust, Parks Canada (National Historic Site of Canada in 1986), and the City of Toronto (designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1976)
- Users/ Owners: The Ontario Heritage Trust

Timeline

- **1908-10:** Built for the Canadian Birkbeck Investment and Savings Company
- **1910-1927:** Occupied by the Canadian Birkbeck Investment and Savings Company and its successor, the Canadian Mortgage and Investment Company
- **1927:** Sold to the Standard Bank
- **1927-1985:** Ownership of the structure passed to several corporations and individuals
- **1985:** Purchased by the Ontario Heritage Trust
- **1987:** The Ontario Heritage Trust restores and adapts the building as office space
- **2002:** Restoration of the former banking hall (The Gallery)
- ▼ **2005-2007:** Façade restoration in three phases

Natural/Cultural Heritage

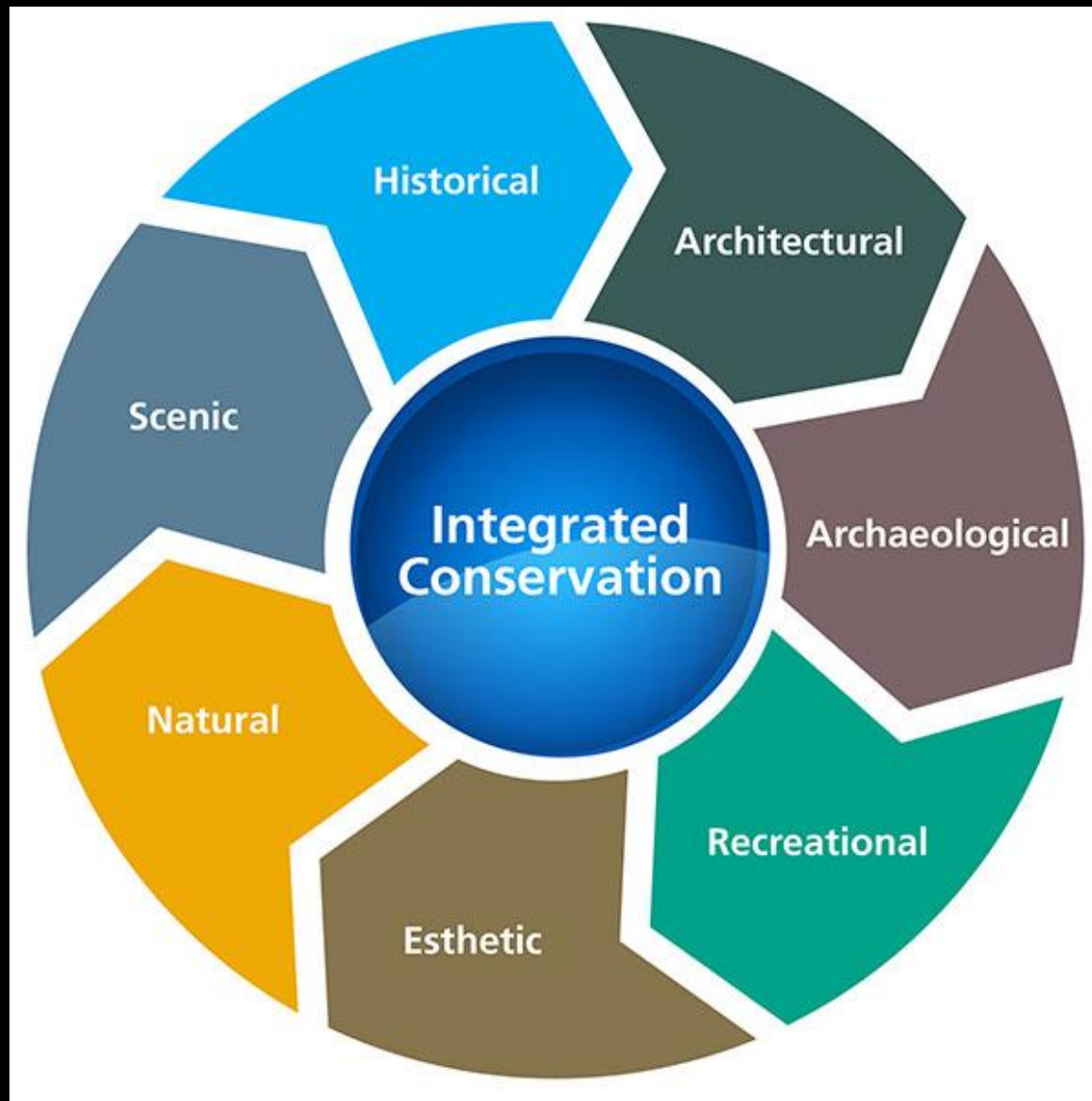
- **Natural Heritage:** The OHT is concerned with protecting wetlands, woodlands, grasslands and geological land formations.
- **Cultural Heritage:** The OHT's buildings, properties and sites serve as as living museums, reception venues, leased spaces, offices and film locations, used and enjoyed by the people of Ontario and visitors to the province
- **Heritage Value:** "The Birkbeck Building was designated a national historic site of Canada because it is a good representative example of a transitional building which combined historical style with modern technology." (Parks Canada, n.d.)



The first floor hall known as The Gallery. Credit: Bofei Cao. Source: Trust, O. H. (n.d.). Meetings and Corporate Events. *The Ontario Heritage Trust*. Retrieved October 30, 2017, from <http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/index.php/pages/about-us/heritage-venues/meetings-and-corporate-events>

Sustainability

- **Environmental sustainability:** While the OHT is directly involved with environmental sustainability, the Birkbeck Building is located in the downtown core of Toronto, close to transit and walkable amenities
- **Social sustainability:** The Birkbeck Building meets the needs of its current users and also supports the ability of future generations to maintain a healthy community
- **Cultural sustainability:** Both the Birkbeck Building and the OHT contribute to the cultural sustainability of Toronto, and Ontario in general
- **Economic sustainability:** The Birkbeck Building provides economic sustainability to the OHT and allows the building to efficiently continue functioning profitably over time



Integrated Conservation Strategy of the Ontario Heritage Trust. Source: Trust, O. H. (n.d.). Conservation. *The Ontario Heritage Trust*. Retrieved October 30, 2017, from <http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/index.php/pages/sites/conservation>

References

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