

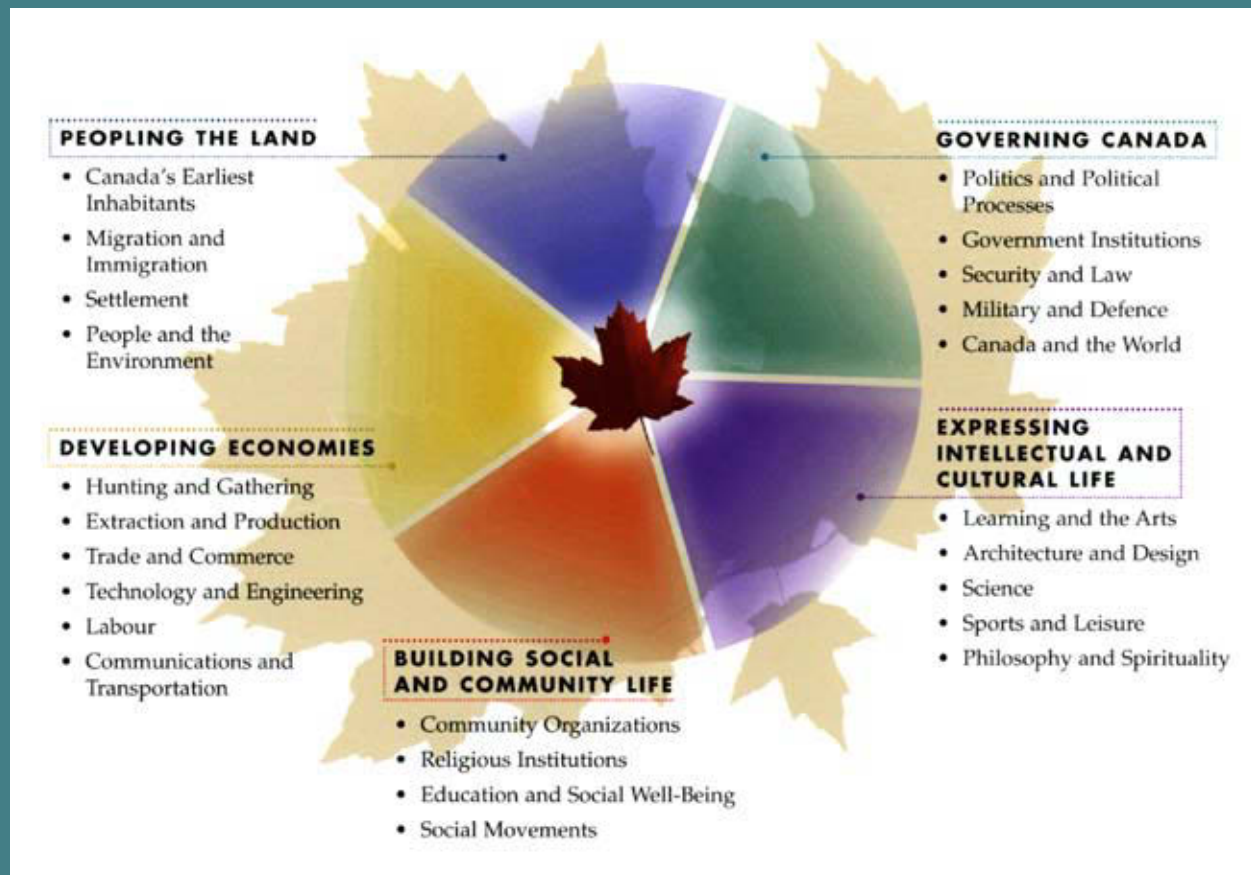
# Mount Pleasant Historical Themes

## 3.1 NATIONAL THEMES

In the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, Heritage Value is defined as:

*The aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations.*

Parks Canada, as part of its National Historic Sites System Plan, has developed a thematic framework. This framework is a way to organize or define history to identify and place sites, persons and events in context. The thematic framework for National Historic Sites provides a comprehensive way of looking at Canadian history. This framework responds to evolving concerns and interests, and reflects recent scholarship on the evolution of Canadian historiography. The categories of this broad thematic framework have been used as an overarching organizing element for the development of the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood themes.



### 3.2 MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD THEMES

It must be recognized that as of yet, there are no identified criteria for the selection of specific heritage resources at the national level, and the City criteria were developed before the introduction of values-based assessment. The thematic framework will assist, but not complete, the development of criteria for inclusion on the Heritage Register. In the absence of criteria, a broad range of values was developed under which neighbourhood themes could be articulated. This will need to be further refined, but this framework acted as a working tool in the calibration neighbourhood themes.

ENVIRONMENTAL	NATIVE	SOCIAL	CULTURAL	POLITICAL	ECONOMIC	SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL	PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL	SPIRITUAL
Brewery Creek	Native Presence in MP	Social Organization	Cultural Legacy		Mount Pleasant Industries		Old Mount Pleasant Village	Church Hill
The Natural Environment		Immigration & Settlement			Immigration & Settlement		Historic Pattern	

Broad historical themes were extracted from the Historic Context Statement, defining those forces that shaped the physical and community development of Mount Pleasant. These are then articulated into sub-themes related specifically to neighbourhood and sub-area development. In the absence of Register evaluation criteria, this provided the context for the selection of heritage resources that best illustrate the heritage values of Mount Pleasant.

It is important to consider that values are multivalent, and that a theme or a historic place can illustrate more than one value.

#### MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD THEMES

1. Native Presence
2. Immigration & Settlement
3. Historic Pattern
4. Old Mount Pleasant Village
5. Brewery Creek
6. The Natural Environment
7. Mount Pleasant Industries
8. Social Organization
9. Church Hill
10. Cultural Legacy

## THEME 1. NATIVE PRESENCE

This theme articulates the ancient and continuing First Nations presence in Mount Pleasant.

- For untold thousands of years, the site of Mount Pleasant was a rich resource hinterland for First Nations peoples and a home for wildlife such as deer, bear, beaver, cougar and small herds of elk
- The aboriginal presence continues in the Native Education Centre and its indigenous Botanical Garden on 285 East 5th Avenue

### Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register

- Native Education Centre, 285 East 5th Avenue

## THEME 2. IMMIGRATION & SETTLEMENT

The neighbourhood has been defined by the diversity of its settlers. This theme articulates the socio-economic diversity of Mount Pleasant, both during its origins, and over time.

- In the 1891 Census for Mount Pleasant, 87% of people who were surveyed were British, 2% were born in Italy, 1% were born in China and 1% were born in Germany. Chinese settlers were farmers living on China Creek and the four people whose occupations were listed as “brewer” were all born in Germany and all worked in Brewery Creek breweries.
- Before World War Two, the second largest Japanese community in Vancouver, outside Japantown, was in Mount Pleasant.
- Since the 1970s, the Chinese community has made up approximately 10% of the population, while the 1980s saw the number of Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants to also increase to ten percent of the area.
- Today, community services such as Broadway Youth Resource Centre target a broad range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Original Street Names based on British precedents

### Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register

- Houses occupied by Japanese families and expropriated in 1942, such as the Masuda House at 498 East 5th Avenue and the Edamura House at 473 East 6th Avenue.
- Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, 1927, 205 West 10th Avenue—now Vancouver Korean Presbyterian Church.
- Christ Lutheran Church, 375 West 10th Avenue.
- St. Michael's Anglican Church, 1905 and 1932, 409 East Broadway.

## THEME 3. HISTORIC PATTERN

This theme represents the historic physical development of the neighbourhood, the development of the street pattern, and physical layout and infrastructure, as shaped by historical forces.

- Ancient First Nations and animal trail that became Kingsway.
- In 1867, H.V. Edmonds purchased the land north of today's Broadway for one dollar per acre, spurred by the vision of a future railway. He named Vancouver's first subdivision “Mount Pleasant” after his wife's birthplace in Ireland.
- In 1876, the crossing of today's Kingsway and Fraser Street was the first intersection in the future city outside of Gastown. It is known as “Pioneer Junction” after Junction Inn, a stagecoach roadhouse on the intersection in the 1880s and the first commercial building in Mount Pleasant.
- Most of Mount Pleasant was surveyed and developed using traditional surveying methods, based on survey by 66-foot “chains” that resulted in 33-foot lots

and 66-foot roads. The narrow lane of Watson Street and residential streets that run at an angle to the grid are boundaries of the earliest property lines that illustrate the evolving tenures in the area.

- In 1888, landowner Dr. Israel Powell named all the streets in Mount Pleasant after Canada's provinces at that time to represent the early map of Canada.
- Many other original street names, such as St. George Street, Scotia Street, Scott Street and Dublin Street are representative of the first English, Scottish and Irish settlers.

#### Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register

- Kingsway: the ancient trail and earliest road through the future Mount Pleasant.
- Grid pattern system and oddities, e.g. Watson Street.
- "Pioneer Junction": intersection at Fraser Street and Kingsway.
- Historic street names.
- "Westminster Road" concrete street name impression
- Granitoid paving at Columbia Street and 10th Avenue
- Red brick paving at 10th Avenue and Alberta Street

### THEME 4. OLD MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Mount Pleasant was a pre-automobile, streetcar-era village that naturally developed along Brewery Creek. Near the crest of the hill overlooking the heart of Vancouver, it is uniquely characterized by the nexus of three through roads: Broadway, Main Street and Kingsway. This theme represents the development of this self-contained village during the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. This was a village where people lived close to where they worked and shopped.

- A Streetcar Village, centered on the unique intersection of three major Vancouver streets— Main Street, Broadway and Kingsway, where most everything is within walking distance. The only Vancouver neighbourhood half on the West Side, half on the East Side
- Up to the 1950s, Mount Pleasant had a mix of heavy industry near False Creek and its commercial district on Main Street surrounded by houses and churches.
- Nicknamed "Honeymoon Hill" in the 1890s for the large number of young couples and families who settled in Mount Pleasant. The community retains the highest number of late 1890s Victoria homes in Vancouver, including the Davies Houses, which inspired the restoration of heritage homes across the city.
- Another unique feature of Mount Pleasant is the lane to the east of Main Street between Broadway and 16th Avenue. Now called Watson Street, it was known as Howard Street from 1899 to 1950, and was one of the few alleys in the city with houses facing the lane, creating a pedestrian-oriented backstreet.
- Many of the landmarks that made up the Old Mount Pleasant Village skyline are distinguished by the use of yellow-brownish coloured brick from the Clayburn Brick Plant near Abbotsford. They contrast the red brick buildings in Gastown and Yaletown.

#### Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register

- 1880s and 1890s Victorian Homes—Mount Pleasant has the greatest concentration of 1890s Victorian homes outside of Strathcona, with even some from the 1880s. No attempt has been made to catalog all of these homes, and there are less every year, with many of the oldest ones being the most unnoticed and neglected. Some examples include the Lindsay Residence, 1888; the Depencier Residence, 1889; and the Horne House, 1895.
- Mason Block. 1905-07 (possibly the earliest concrete building in Vancouver)

- St. Patrick's Convent, 1926, 12th Avenue near Main Street (Clayburn brick)
- St. Patrick's High School, 1931, 11th Avenue at Quebec Street (Clayburn brick)
- H.H. Stevens Building, 1963, 10th Avenue at Quebec Street (Clayburn brick)

#### Examples of Heritage Resources on the Heritage Register

- Davis Houses—a historic cluster of adjoining Victorian and Edwardian houses renovated in the 1970s and 1980s that inspired the restoration of heritage homes all over Vancouver

*(note: all of the following buildings use tan Clayburn brick)*

- Lee Building, 1912, Broadway (9th Avenue) at Main Street.
- Quebec Manor, 1912, 7th Avenue at Quebec Street.
- Ashnola Apartments, 1912, 6th Avenue at Main Street.
- Heritage Hall, 1916, Main Street at 15th Avenue.
- Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, 1910, 10th Avenue and Quebec Street—later Evangelical Tabernacle, now the Cornerstone apartments.
- Belvedere Court, 1911, Main Street at 10th Avenue
- Frontenac Apartment, Quebec Street at 11th Avenue
- Wenonah Apartments, 1913, 11th Avenue at Main Street
- Vernon Building, 1930, Broadway (9th Avenue) at Kingsway
- Mutch House, 1911, Yukon Street at 11th Avenue
- Ivanhoe Apartments, 611 East 7th Avenue

### THEME 5. BREWERY CREEK

This theme represents the importance of Brewery Creek since ancient times. Mount Pleasant is the only community in Vancouver that developed around a creek. This unique situation allowed the development of many early breweries in the area, and affected the development of the entire neighbourhood.

- Most of Mount Pleasant was covered in dense rainforest of huge fir, cedar and hemlock that was diagonally bisected by an ancient animal trail, the future Kingsway.
- Down the centre of Mount Pleasant's land mass ran one of the largest salmon and trout waterways in Vancouver, named Brewery Creek by British settlers. It formed a ravine 40 feet deep as it cascaded down the hillside to the ocean. Additionally Brewery Creek was important because it provided meeting places for early British settlers
- The first home, owned by A.T. Julius Voight, was a small cabin and vegetable farm on the edge of False Creek in the 1860s.
- Brewery Creek earned its name from a concentration of breweries and soda works in the 1880s that located along its banks to draw on the water source.
- Near 14th Avenue and between Main and Fraser Streets, a beaver dam caused Brewery Creek to back up and form a swampy lake that became known in the 1860-70s as Tea Swamp after a plant that British pioneers used to brew tea.
- Concentration of early breweries in the area due to the availability of water:
  - San Francisco Brewery, 1888, 11th and Main Street—Reifel brother's first brewery and the forerunner of the Union Brewery empire
  - Red Star Brewery, 1890—11th and Main Street, Jacob Wm. DeWitt
  - Vancouver Brewery, 1888, 7th Avenue and Scotia Street—Charles Doering's "the largest on the Pacific Coast," which eventually became part Reifel's Union Breweries, then Carlings and finally, Molson's
  - Lion Brewing Co., 1897, 286 Front Street (1st Avenue) at Scotia
  - Stadler Brewery, 1899, 286 Front Street (1st Avenue) at Scotia
  - Lansdowne Brewery, 288 Front Street (1st Avenue) at Scotia —A. Hasenfratz

- Thorpe & Company Soda Water Works, 1889, 6th Avenue and Scotia Street —producers of Ginger Beer, Kola Champagne, Iron Brew and Sarsaparilla who expanded from Mount Pleasant to branch plants in Victoria and Nelson
- In 1887 there was also a brewery at 10th Avenue and Columbia Street, on the next creek to the west of Brewery Creek, Columbia Creek. This was Robert Reisterer's Mainland Brewery. Reisterer then moved his operation to Nelson in 1893, establishing the Nelson Brewing Company, today still the area's most successful brewery
- Cross & Co. Soda Water Works, at 38 East 4th Avenue, 1913-1964.
- Pacific Dry (W.H. Nelson Bottling Works), at 225 East 5th Avenue, 1931-1950. This company held the first Pepsi Cola franchise in Vancouver.
- R & B Brewery, 1997, 54 East 4th Avenue—successful microbrewery set up near Brewery Creek

In 1996 the City of Vancouver Planning Department adopted the Brewery Creek Guidelines, which allowed the City to request that developers recognize and commemorate Brewery Creek in return for granting relaxations in zoning for sites near the former banks and pathway of the Creek, now underground. This is in addition to other heritage awareness initiatives that have been undertaken in the area:

- 12th Avenue and Main Street—at Saint Patrick's new church the route of Brewery Creek from 13th Avenue to 12th Avenue is marked with a mosaic creek in the pavement, and with a garden at the 13th Avenue
- 5th Avenue and Brunswick Street (1997)—at the east side of the Artiste live/work studio building is Brewery Creek Park, donated by the developer to recreate the part of Brewery Creek that was buried at the site. This triangular-shaped park has a dry creek bed and is planted with many of the native plants that were known to grow in the ravine of Brewery Creek.
- 2nd Avenue and Brunswick Street—in the Main Space live/work studio building there is a mosaic in the lobby commemorating Brewery Creek
- 1st and Brunswick—at the east side of the Artech live/work studio building, a greenspace at the mouth of Brewery Creek
- The Brewery Creek cairns (1993)—these cast bronze cairns have three full-colour plaques celebrating different aspects of Brewery Creek at four locations:
  - Broadway and Main Street: Brewery Creek July 1897 (a map); What You Would Have Seen If You Were Standing Here in 1908; The Centre of Mount Pleasant at the Turn of the Century.
  - Kingsway and 8th Avenue: Bridges of Brewery Creek; Castle Hall Knights of Pythias (now the Western Front); Blacksmiths and Brewery Creek.
  - Scotia and 7th Avenue: Thorpe and Company Soda Water Works; Red Hand Brand (the brand of Thorpe's Soda Water Works); Ginger Beer Bottles Marble Bottles.
  - Scotia and 6th Avenue: The Doering & Marstrand Brewery; The Reifel Brothers and the Vancouver Breweries Limited; When You Feel Blue 'cause Biz is bad'.
- Mount Pleasant Walkway Plaques: Scotia and 5th Avenue

#### Examples of Heritage Resources on the Heritage Register

- Doering's Vancouver Brewery, 1903 (now Brewery Creek Building).

## **THEME 6. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

This theme recognizes the importance of the natural environment and its relationship with human activity. There are physical remnants of natural features (such as the original escarpment). This theme recognizes social gathering places and even heritage resources important for recreation. Mount Pleasant's community has a strong relationship with its "Natural Ecology"; this includes survival and comfort. Later outdoor recreation includes the bicycle track and the skate park. The Community is rooted in activities such as the Green Spaces movement in the 1970s, now a city-wide movement but born in Mount Pleasant.

### **Examples of Natural Heritage**

- Tea Swamp
- Community Gardens
- The Escarpment
- The shoreline of old False Creek
- Brewery Creek Ravine Park (5th Avenue at Brunswick Street).

## **THEME 7. MOUNT PLEASANT INDUSTRIES**

From the earliest hunters and gatherers to today's post-industrial workers, Canadians have worked in a wide variety of ways to sustain themselves. This theme addresses the development of industries and secondary manufacturing processes as well as changing forms of energy used to supplement human labour. During the industrial period, Mount Pleasant employed thousands of workers in its sawmills, shingle mills, metal fabricating plants (e.g. now demolished Canon), logging, coal, gravel and cement; this was in addition to the very specific development of the breweries. Shipping was important to the development of Mount Pleasant. There was also a garment "district" that developed in the area. The only large buildings from this era to survive are the distinctive 1918 Opsal Steel Building on 2nd Avenue where metal hooks, pulleys and other rigging equipment for the logging industry were made, and the 1931 Vancouver Salt Building, where industrial salt was unloaded for use mainly in the fishing industry.

### **Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register**

- Remnants of the old industry along the shoreline
- The Jantzen Building (remnant of the Garment District)

## **THEME 8. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

There is a long tradition of effecting social change through social movements spearheaded by voluntary associations. The impact and experiences of these movements are recognized through larger expressions of social action, leading to the establishment of mutual benefit organizations, cooperatives and other voluntary organizations. Mount Pleasant has a community services offered by various institutions and neighbourhood organizations as well as the history of social clubs. It also captures the history of services such as the fire department, police department and other service providers who should be recognized and remembered.

### **Examples of Heritage Resources on the Heritage Register**

- The old Knights of Pythias Hall, 1922 (now the Western Front) at 8th Avenue and Scotia.

### **Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register**

- Light & Love Home, 123 East 6th Avenue (originally Simon Fraser School Annex, 1929).
- Remembrance Hall (Royal Canadian Branch #177), 2655 Main Street



- Triangle Building at the tip of Main Street and Kingsway. Offices upstairs are important to the community; over the years the owner has leased the space to a series of non-profit organizations
- In front of the tip of the Triangle Building, the site of the Mount Pleasant Bandstand (now directly in front of the new community centre)

### THEME 9. CHURCH HILL

The imprint of religion on neighbourhood life and society is evident in Old Mount Pleasant, which had the greatest concentration of churches in the city. By 1910, there was a cluster of three large new churches on 10th Avenue just west of Main Street, creating a distinctive skyline. Here there were eventually five churches on three city blocks that lead to their nickname as “Church Hill”. Others nearby were centered on 10th Avenue west of Main. This theme also recognizes the importance of a particular site, person or event to an ethnic community’s culture.

#### Examples of Heritage Resources on the Heritage Register

- Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 1948, 10th Avenue near Quebec Street (originally the site of the Free Methodist Church)

#### Examples of Heritage Resources not on the Heritage Register

- Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, 1927, 205 West 10th Avenue—now Vancouver Korean Presbyterian Church.
- Canadian Temple of the More Abundant Life, 185 E. 11th Avenue near Main Street (in the early 1950s; later the Glass Slipper and now Remembrance Hall)
- Christ Lutheran Church, 375 West 10th Avenue.
- St. Michael’s Anglican Church, 1905 and 1932, 409 East Broadway.
- Associated Gospel Church, 1932, 11th Avenue at Columbia—now Church of the Good Shepherd.

### THEME 10. CULTURAL LEGACY

Over the last 30 years, culture and creativity have emerged as defining features of Mount Pleasant. This theme recognizes historical cultural developments as well as neighbourhood-based emergent creative movements.

- In 1973, a group of eight avant-garde artists purchased the old Knights of Pythias Hall at 8th Avenue and Scotia and renamed it The Western Front after its architectural style. The Western Front matured into an internationally recognized hub for multi-media arts and home to the renowned E.D.A.M. dance company.
- Also begun in 1973 was the artist-run Video In Media Arts Centre (VIVO) on Main Street at 4th Avenue. VIVO is a popular state-of-the-art facility for media production, exhibition and distribution.
- In 1993, the first live/work zoning in Vancouver was approved for Brewery Creek Building, three blocks from the Western Front. Since then, over 1,000 live/work units have been developed in Mount Pleasant’s old industrial zone.
- Mount Pleasant has a history of arts and entertainment venues, such as jazz clubs.
- Since 1998, Mount Pleasant has a renewed vibrancy with the establishment and clustering of arts-led cafes, restaurant-bars, designers, boutiques and galleries.

#### Examples of Heritage Resources on the Heritage Register

- The Western Front, established 1973 (in old Knights of Pythias Hall, 1922) at 8th Avenue and Scotia.
- Live/work developments, e.g. Brewery Creek Building.