

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**

**Cultural Tourism Planning:  
A Case Study, Dawson City, Yukon**

**by**

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**A MASTER'S DEGREE PROJECT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Increasingly, tourism is becoming a factor in the economic development of smaller communities throughout Canada. With the view that cultural tourism is a promising and potential area of development for smaller communities this MDP focuses on examining whether or not cultural tourism is an effective, yet sustainable, type of tourism for smaller communities. Dawson City, Yukon, was used as the case study situation to examine this question as it relates to the integration and relationships between cultural preservation, the tourism industry and involvement of community members. Using a sustainable cultural tourism approach, these component parts were examined through the activities of various tourism agencies, associations and representatives in Dawson City and their associated events, policies and programs from 1950 to 1996. The case study community of Dawson City was chosen due to its unique situation as a federally-designated heritage district, a living, vibrant community as well as the historic and cultural resources available for tourism. The community was also chosen due to the ability of tourism representatives to create a basis for sustainable cultural tourism.

**Key Words:** Community Tourism Planning; Cultural Tourism; Dawson City, Yukon; Historic Preservation; Sustainable Tourism Development

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## **DEDICATION**

**"Sugarfoot" Anderson, My Love  
Anne Chapman, My Friend  
My Family**

**For Always Being There!**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>DMO</b>	Destination Marketing Organization
<b>DM</b>	Destination Market
<b>DNANR</b>	Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources
<b>EA</b>	Environmental Assessment
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EARP</b>	Environmental Assessment and Review Process
<b>CEA</b>	Cumulative Effects Assessment
<b>CTC</b>	Canadian Tourism Commission
<b>HRA</b>	Historic Resources Act (Yukon)
<b>HRIA</b>	Heritage Resource Impact Assessment
<b>HSMBC</b>	Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada
<b>ICOMOS</b>	International Council of Monuments and Sites
<b>KCS</b>	Klondyke Centennial Society
<b>KNHS</b>	Klondike National Historic Sites
<b>KVA</b>	Klondike Visitors Association
<b>MDP</b>	Master's Degree Project
<b>n.d.</b>	No Date
<b>NHPS</b>	National Historic Parks and Sites
<b>OCF</b>	Official Community Plan
<b>PC</b>	Personal Communication
<b>PMM</b>	Product-Market-Matching
<b>SEIA</b>	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
<b>TIA-Yukon</b>	Tourism Industry Services - Yukon
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Science & Cultural Organization
<b>Y.C.G.C.</b>	Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation
<b>YTG</b>	Yukon Territorial Government
<b>YVA</b>	Yukon Visitors Association

# EPIGRAPH

## THE SPELL OF THE YUKON

by  
ROBERT SERVICE

*I wanted the gold, and I sought it;  
I scrabbled and mucked like a slave.  
Was it famine or scurvy—I fought it,  
I hurled my youth into a grave.  
I wanted the gold, and I got it—  
Came out with a fortune last fall,—  
Yet somehow life's not what I thought it,  
And somehow the gold isn't all.*

*No! There's the land. (Have you seen it?)  
It's the cussedest land that I know,  
From the big, dizzy mountains that screen it  
To the deep, deathlike valleys below.  
Some say God was tired when He made it;  
Some say it's a fine land to shun;  
Maybe; but there's some as would trade it  
For no land on earth—and I'm one.*

*You come to get rich (damned good reason);  
You feel like an exile at first;  
You hate it like hell for a season,  
And then you are worse than the worst.  
It grips you like some kinds of sinning;  
It twists you from foe to a friend;  
It seems it's been since the beginning  
It seems it will be to the end.*

*I've stood in some mighty-mouthed hollow  
That's plumb-full of hush to the brim;  
I've watched the big, husky sun wallow  
In crimson and gold, and grow dim,  
Till the moon set the pearly peaks gleaming,  
And the stars tumbled out, neck and crop;  
And I've thought that I surely was dreaming,  
With the peace o' the world piled on top.*

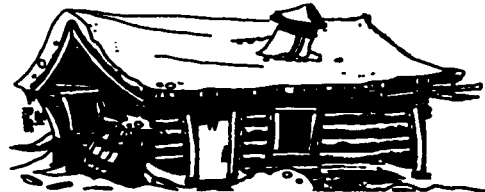
*The summer—no sweeter was ever;  
The sunshiny woods all a thrill;  
The grayling a leap in the river,  
The bighorn asleep on the hill.  
The strong life that never knows harness;  
The wilds where the caribou call;  
The freshness, the freedom, the farness—  
O God! how I'm stuck on it all.*

*The winter! the brightness that blinds you,  
The white land locked tight as a drum,  
The cold fear that follows and finds you,  
The silence that bludgeons you dumb.  
The snows that are older than history,  
The woods where the weird shadows slant;  
The stillness, the moonlight, the mystery,  
I've bade 'em good-by—but I can't.*

*There's a land where the mountains are nameless,  
And the rivers all run God knows where;  
There are lives that are erring and aimless,  
And deaths that just hang by a hair;  
There are hardships that nobody reckons;  
There are valleys unpeopled and still;  
There's a land—oh, it beckons and beckons,  
And I want to go back and I will.*

*They're making my money diminish;  
I'm sick of the taste of champagne.  
Thank God! when I'm skinned to a finish  
I'll pike to the Yukon again.  
I'll fight—and you bet it's no sham-fight;  
It's hell!—but I've been there before;  
And it's better than this by a damsite—  
So me for the Yukon once more.*

*There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting;  
It's luring me on as of old;  
Yet it isn't the gold that I'm wanting  
So much as just finding the gold.  
It's the great, big broad land 'way up yonder,  
It's the forests where silence has lease;  
It's the beauty that thrills me with wonder,  
It's the stillness that fills me with peace.*



# INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, tourism is becoming a factor in the economic development of smaller communities throughout Canada. With billions of tourism dollars spent annually by Canadian residents and foreign visitors<sup>1</sup>, it is easy to see why governments are looking to tourism as a tool to strengthen or stabilize local economies and the private sector invests in tourism initiatives. Due to the economic significance of tourism, particularly revenue generation, governments have become involved in aiding private sector development through grants and subsidies; enacting laws, policies and guidelines to regulate matters such as land use planning and community design; as well as promoting and marketing the tourism industry through agencies such as Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) (Murphy 1985:33). The fragmentary nature of the tourism industry and the complex concerns associated with tourism development have also prompted the need for the both private sector and governments to use techniques of planning to help focus community or regional tourism goals.

Tourism planning in a community context has grown out of the recognition of potentially negative socio-cultural and environmental impacts caused by increasing numbers of tourists. Tourism planning is designated to help mitigate the costs and benefits associated with the tourism industry's five major components: people (both residents and visitors), attractions (sites, events and activities), transportation links, services and facilities, as well as marketing and promotional information (Centre For Livable Communities n.d.:1). More specifically, tourism planning helps to focus tourism activities and attractions toward a particular type of

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<sup>1</sup> In 1995, tourism spending both Canadian and foreign was approximately \$42 billion dollars (Statistics Canada 1997:6)

---

tourism compatible with either the natural, social or cultural environment of a community.

A particular type of tourism increasingly being implemented in a community context is "cultural tourism". Cultural tourism makes use of all tangible and intangible expressions of a community's culture by commodifying those expressions of culture into a product for tourism. A community with an authentic cultural product, including historic assets (buildings, creative arts) or a clear cultural identity (language, festivals), or both, may extend a genuine tourism experience to visitors. Although some anthropologists feel tourism negatively affects a community by crowding out "genuine culture", there are others who see tourism having a positive effect by rejuvenating cultural consciousness and promoting revival of the arts (Howell 1994:152). For purposes of tourism, those cultural expressions passed on "either literally or metaphorically" from one generation to the next are those things that can be promoted as a tourism product (Prentice 1993:5). The essence of that cultural product is in the distinctiveness of the community's culture. Hence, these products play a key role in developing a tourism industry in a community context (Fowler 1996:317).

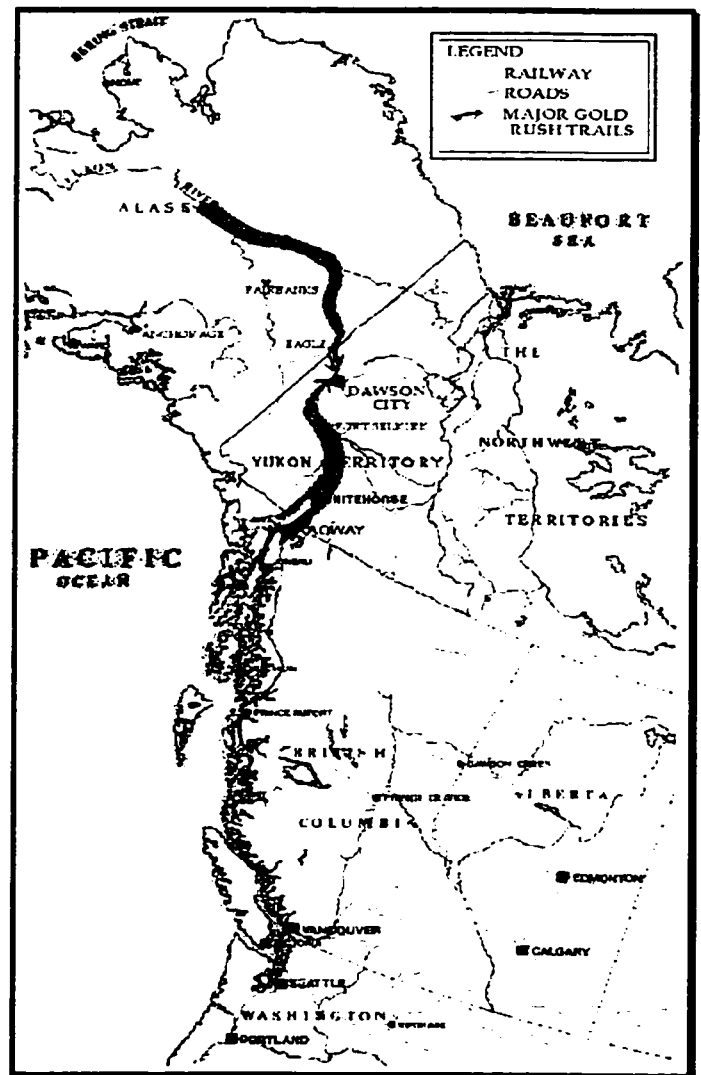
Cultural tourism also encompasses relationships between the components of the tourism industry, economic development and most importantly, protection, enhancement and interpretation of the cultural resources (Centre for Livable Communities n.d.:1). As such, the view that "cultural tourism has emerged as a promising area of development potential for small communities" (Centre For Livable Communities n.d.:1) raises a number of questions regarding these relationships and the effectiveness and sustainability of cultural tourism. Is cultural tourism an effective and sustainable type of tourism for smaller communities? Can it enhance community involvement and act as a tool to stabilize and strengthen the economy? What private organizations or government agencies may be involved in planning,

developing and managing the cultural resources and tourism industry products? And, what kinds of mechanisms (development aid, policies, guidelines or marketing assistance) can these organizations and agencies use to sustain the cultural resources and tourism products for present and future use? These questions help to form a framework for this Master's Degree Project (MDP) to understand cultural tourism planning and development in the case study community of Dawson City, Yukon.

## PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this MDP is to examine whether or not cultural tourism is an effective, yet sustainable, type of tourism for a community such as Dawson City, Yukon. The multi-cultural community of Dawson City, located in the sub-arctic region of the Yukon Territory (Map 1), was chosen as the case study community, due to its unique situation as a federally designated heritage district, a living, vibrant community as well as the ability of the community to use the historic and cultural resources as a product for tourism.

Information relevant to the case study community of Dawson City is used to examine the effectiveness of cultural tourism to meet the community's socio-economic needs, the tourism industry's product and



*Map 1: Routes to the Klondike Yukon Territory & Dawson City (Parks Canada 1978:8)*

marketing needs, and the protection or enhancement of natural and cultural resources. (Tourism services and facilities are not specifically examined within this project, however, reference to the "tourism industry" recognizes these components). Since the 1950s, cultural tourism planning, development, and management in Dawson City has been an ongoing, complex process involving a number of different private sector organizations and government agencies.

This MDP, therefore, seeks to identify and examine the inter-relationships, means and effectiveness of these organizations to implement and sustain cultural tourism. Using a number of key events, policies or programs associated with each organization, significant issues are highlighted and recommendations are suggested for future sustainable cultural tourism planning in Dawson City. The characteristics of a sustainable cultural tourism approach establish the basis on which the planning, development and management of cultural tourism is examined, significant issues are identified and recommendations are suggested. Some of the issues and recommendations are broad, but have relevance to current concerns both in Dawson City and beyond. The information contained in this MDP is directed toward those representatives of Dawson City involved in cultural tourism planning and could be useful as a vehicle for communication, which is critical in the sustainability of cultural tourism. The MDP could also be used to enhance understanding among those representatives as to their roles within the tourism industry in Dawson. Finally, this MDP is directed, as well, at individuals interested in sustainable cultural tourism planning and development in a community context.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

To focus the research, information gathering and inquiry for this MDP, the following objectives were established:

- Establish the community context of sustainable cultural tourism .



- Establish selected characteristics of a sustainable cultural tourism planning approach.
- Use these characteristics to: (1) examine (for the 1950-1996 period) the process of planning for effective long-term cultural tourism in Dawson City, Yukon; and, (2) identify issues relevant to cultural tourism planning and development in the case study community.
- Suggest recommendations for future sustainable cultural tourism planning in Dawson City, based on those issues identified.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To fulfil the stated objectives; the methodology involved:

- a literature review;
- a case study involving
  - information and data gathering;
  - key informant interviews; and
  - field research.

### **A Literature Review**

A literature review was focused on the ideas of sustainable tourism development, tourism planning in a community context and cultural tourism planning. Academic literature and journals as well as federal and territorial government documentation were consulted, which established the characteristics of a sustainable cultural tourism approach to community-based tourism planning.

### **A Case Study**

To examine the view that cultural tourism is an effective and sustainable type of tourism for smaller communities, a specific case study community (Dawson City, Yukon) was chosen. The methodology used to gather evidence for this case study community included: information and data gathering, key informant interviews and field research. Each of these components are outlined briefly below:

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### *Information and Data Gathering*

The data and information gathered were derived from primary and secondary source material. The University of Calgary Library, inter-library loans as well as government documentation were consulted for literature pertaining to the historic context of Dawson City and to understand cultural tourism planning and development in the contemporary period – 1950 to 1996. Document research from Parks Canada in Calgary, AB, Whitehorse and Dawson City, YT, Yukon Territorial Government, and Dawson City Municipal Government included tourism policies, city planning regulations, by-laws and guidelines, community plans and tourism surveys. Further information sources included local newspapers and archival material from the Yukon Territorial Archives, Whitehorse. Key informants were also interviewed.

### *Key Informant Interviews*

Key informants were contacted and interviewed to assist in gaining individual and organizational perspectives on the process of cultural tourism planning and development in Dawson City. Through these interviews this researcher was also directed toward specific information and relevant data used in this MDP. Informants were identified through local and government telephone listings and advice from other informants in a snowball technique. Between May, 1996 and August, 1997 informants were contacted by telephone and either interviewed by telephone or in person. Interviews lasted between ten minutes and an hour.

Within Parks Canada, seven senior officers were interviewed. In Parks Canada's Calgary office, two informants from the Canadian Heritage Branch were interviewed by phone and two in person. During the field trip to the Yukon in August, 1997, one informant from Parks Canada, Heritage Branch in Whitehorse and two in Dawson City were interviewed in person. Within the Yukon Territorial

Government ten senior officers were interviewed. These included meetings with the Yukon Tourism - Industry Services, Development Officer in Dawson City and the director and a senior officer in Whitehorse. Within Yukon Tourism, Heritage Branch, two senior officers were interviewed in person and two by telephone. Within the Territorial Economic Development Department, two informants were interview by telephone and one informant at the Yukon Anniversaries Commission in person. Within the municipal government in Dawson City, a meeting was held with the head of the City Planning Board and phone interviews were conducted with the Town Manager and a planning consultant working with the City of Dawson. Personal interviews were also conducted with the Director of the Dawson City Museum and Klondike Visitors Association.

### ***Field Research***

Field research, conducted in Dawson City and Whitehorse, Yukon, took place from August 13 to August 27, 1996. A grant from the Indian and Northern Affairs Northern Scientific Training Program covered travel expenses. The purpose of the field research was to conduct interviews with a number of key informants and to become familiar with the various aspects of cultural tourism in the community of Dawson City. Tourism events and activities were observed through general participation. Information relating to various historic sites was collected or documented by photography. In the capital city of Whitehorse, key informants in both Parks Canada and the Territorial Government were interviewed and research was conducted at the Yukon Archives and local library.

### **ASSUMPTIONS**

Based on the past history of tourism planning and development in Dawson City, the desire in the community to continue using the cultural and historic resources for tourism is assumed to be the focal point of tourism planning. Also

assumed is the community's commitment to encouraging the creation of new and sustainable tourism activities based on natural, cultural and historical themes.

## **RESULTS**

The results from this MDP include identifying various stages in the process of planning, which involved the evolution of the integration of cultural preservation, tourism industry as a business, and community respect and involvement. A number of issues were identified as being significant in this process. These issues relate to these components parts of cultural tourism and the importance of their consideration in effectively planning sustainable cultural tourism, development and management in the community of Dawson City. The results also suggest recommendations for future sustainable cultural tourism planning in Dawson City.

## **DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION**

The document is organized into six parts:

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: Sustainable Cultural Tourism in a Community Context
- Chapter 2: Historical and Cultural Background to the  
Case Study Community of Dawson City, Yukon
- Chapter 3: An Examination of Cultural Tourism Planning and  
Development in Dawson City 1950 - 1996
- Chapter 4: Sustainable Cultural Tourism Issues and Recommendations
- Conclusion

# CHAPTER ONE

## SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM IN A COMMUNITY CONTEXT

### INTRODUCTION

The rise of a cultural tourism industry in communities such as Dawson City has prompted a number of questions. The most significant is whether or not cultural tourism can be sustainable in smaller communities. Before responding to this question, a basic understanding is needed of sustainable cultural tourism planning and development in a community context .

A sustainable cultural tourism approach begins with the concept of sustainability. The concept seems to have first appeared in 1973 in the publication *Ecological Principles for Economic Development* (Dasmann, Milton & Freeman 1973). The concept was then noted by the *World Conservation Strategy* in 1980 (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources 1980) and becomes more popular with the 1987 *Brundtland Report* (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

These sources identify and promote a number of interrelated principles and goals considered essential for development in the context of sustainability. They include the assurance that all societies and all members of society should have equal opportunity to access available resources (Sowman 1996:1). This refers to equality of opportunity and recognition of needs among individuals and households, social groups and communities (Wall 1993:55). It refers, also, to intergenerational and gender equality and the equitable distribution of wealth and resources (CEDRO n.d.:2). Sustainability also ensures that all development is sustainable over time in environmental, economic, social and cultural terms (Sowman 1996:1).

When the concept of sustainability is used in the context of cultural tourism there is the intent that tourism can maintain its viability and quality in an area indefinitely, while providing a flow of net economic benefits (Bramwell & Lane 1993:2; Butler 1993:29; Driml & Common 1995:3). The notion of long-term viability and quality depends on a positive, yet complex, interaction and commitment to meeting the needs of present visitors, the host community, and the tourism industry while protecting, managing and respecting the scale and diversity of the natural and cultural environment for the common good of the community and future generations (Bramwell & Lane 1993:2; Butler 1993:29; Sowman 1996:1).

Of particular concern is the commitment by tourism planners and developers to the host community in terms of respecting societal goals and values, economic profitability and equity, long-term viable growth, the encouragement of community participation, as well as the collaboration and partnership between sectors (attractions, businesses and services). There is also a commitment to respecting cultural principles and traditions associated with those cultural resources commodified and marketed as tourism products (Bramwell & Lane 1993:2; Butler 1993:29; Sowman 1996:1; Centre for Livable Communities n.d.:1).

These concerns can be thought of as an ecological system, where the understanding of their inter-relatedness is critical for environmentally viable and socially responsible tourism (Draper & Kariel 1990:141). At the same time, these relationships may also interact negatively and can be susceptible to positive and negative external forces (Sowman 1996:2). Thus the need for responsible, ecologically and sustainably-based cultural tourism planning and development that takes into account these environmental, socio-economic, and cultural concerns. The following discussion briefly addresses these concerns.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

A sustainable cultural tourism approach to community-based tourism planning is concerned with both social and environmental issues. Taking a closer look at the physical environment, both natural and cultural, reveals the need to understand how these environments are appropriately protected and managed in relationship to tourism (Inskeep 1991:339). Environments attractive to tourists are often sites that are particularly fragile and vulnerable. Natural ecological environments such as small island, marine, coastal, and alpine areas as well as built environments including archaeological sites, historic buildings and smaller character communities such as Dawson City are all considered important resources and attractions to the tourism industry.

### **Protection Through Legislation**

As environmental impacts tend to be negative when tourist numbers increase and destinations become more accessible, there is the need to consider integrating all aspects of environmental protection with tourism planning (Mathieson & Wall 1982:95). Environmental protection includes aspects of preservation, conservation and restoration used in conjunction with sound environmental management processes. In Canada today, processes of environmental impact assessment (EIA) are legislated by federal, or provincial and territorial governments. Before any new project begins, the minister responsible makes the decision whether or not a full or partial EIA is required. An EIA encompasses processes of environmental assessment (EA), socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA), cumulative effects assessment (CEA) and a heritage resource impact assessment (HRIA). The use of these types of measures and planning, which consider the use of sound environmental management practices and principles, are intended to translate, in general, to the sustainability of the resources and a quality tourism experience. With the involvement of Parks Canada in protecting Dawson City's natural and cultural environments, the use of appropriate measures of protection and management are

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well established. Following this lead, the new Yukon Historic Resources Act Part 4 Section 24.1(2) states an HRIA may be required for the development of an historic site, if deemed necessary by the Minister.

### **Protection Through Respect for Scale and Carrying Capacity**

Planning and developing tourism activities in sensitive environments must also be concerned with respecting the scale, nature and intrinsic values of an area and its resources, as well as taking into account a site's overall carrying capacity (Sowman 1992:10). The idea of carrying capacity in the context of tourism planning can be used as a framework in assessing the impacts of tourism. This framework includes the belief that any destination has a finite supply of natural and cultural resources, and tourist activity that exceeds carrying capacity may lead to the deterioration of those intrinsic values and resources important to sustain the industry. As well, if carrying capacity is exceeded, the quality of interaction between guest and host may diminish and levels of irritation<sup>2</sup> may arise (Cooke 1982:22). Within Dawson City, carrying capacity in terms of the supply of natural and cultural resources, is not an issue of concern. The capacity, however, for residents in the community to continue participating at the level they do is a concern. The concern involves issues such as volunteer burnout, less responsibility taken or increased levels of irritation towards tourism development and visitors. When possible, planning should include the establishment of indicators of growth and thresholds of use to guide further development and mitigate problems associated with carrying capacity.

### **Protection by Monitoring and Measuring Tourism Use and Growth**

Developing indicators of growth and thresholds of use involves establishing ways to monitor and measure the many environmental, economic, and socio-

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<sup>2</sup> Refers to Doxey's irridex model showing a direct link between increased community irritation and continual tourism development (Murphy 1985:124)



cultural factors associated with the tourism condition. Decision-makers can use the evaluation of this information as a basis to make recommendations concerning ways to deal with the changes that occur through tourism development (CEDRO n.d.:4; Gunn 1994:86). Of particular importance to tourism planning in a community context is the awareness of the socio-cultural factors, which can be used to measure the impact of tourism. Although it is difficult to generalize measurable factors and possible indicators from site to site, Craik (1995:94) has developed a potential list, which shows that using a range of indicators could improve the chances of achieving sustainable tourism. These measures and cultural indicators of tourism impacts could be useful as a framework to develop more in-depth studies in Dawson City of such issues as level of community participation or the effect of cultural tourism development on community attitudes.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONCERNS**

As the tourism industry relies heavily on the co-operation and good will of local people, planning and development of this industry ideally should conform to a host community's capacities, aspirations and decision-making. Planning and development should consider all economic and social costs and benefits that may have an impact on a community, and thereby attempt to mitigate general growth problems (such as infrastructure needs) before proceeding to introduce tourism or increase tourist activity (Cooke 1982:26). Without this consideration, resident irritation and local resistance toward tourism can have a detrimental effect on the industry's potential (Murphy 1985:153).

The potential to provide a quality tourism experience depends on the local community and each the organizational readiness to deal with tourism. Planners and developers should be concerned with whether or not tourism is economically viable and has potential for sound growth: is there sufficient community participation and buy-in to the planning and development of tourism activities? are

there established partnerships and collaboration between local business and the regional tourism industry? and is the community organized to develop, market and promote the tourism experiences and products? (Heritage Tourism n.d.:19).

### **Economic Viability and Sound Growth**

The concern for economic viability associated with tourism development is based on the understanding that the business of tourism can create economic benefits not only for individual entrepreneurs, but the host community in general. Assessing the potential viability of sustainable cultural tourism in a community requires the collection of basic cultural tourism data as well as a general community situation analysis (e.g., infrastructure and services). A systematic gathering of information and data analysis of tourism-related components such as community resources, tourism infrastructure, community infrastructure, community and regional policy planning, community receptivity, and environmental factors will address a community's ability to embrace new or further tourism development. Since the 1960s in Dawson, numerous studies have been done by Parks Canada and the Yukon government to assess their situation relative to tourism. Data and analysis such as that collected in Dawson gives planners and developers the tools to evaluate the current state and future potential of the cultural resources in a community (Branch 1990:35; Draper 1996:PC). This information also helps in identifying the stakeholders and key representatives in the planning and development process (Gunn 1988:225).

On the other hand, the concern for sound economic growth is based on the need to use a long-term planning approach, which has the flexibility and capacity to assimilate new information, change community attitudes, tourism trends and integrate change rather than deal with problems on an ad hoc basis (Branch 1990:42; Draper 1996:PC). Taking into account the costs, benefits and the fragmentary nature of the tourism industry, careful planning by tourism representatives is required,

even with the most favourable of circumstances. Long-term planning, which is not compromised by short-term planning goals and considerations is needed to maintain economic viability, sound growth and quality visitor experiences, (Murphy 1985:87).

In terms of economic viability and sound growth, planning should recognize the need for economic diversity within a community, as well as within the tourism industry and its market segments (Gunn 1994:80). Planning should also make efficient use of resources such as personnel, time and money as well as evaluating alternative methods of planning (Wall 1993:55). Gunn (1994:80) believes that "...greater accountability and better understanding of tourism are required at the earliest stages of planning and developing", if those leaders pushing for the economic rewards of tourism wish to have support and involvement from all segments of the community. In essence, the emphasis of tourism planning, in terms of economics, should focus on quality of growth and the equitable distribution of economic benefits produced rather than quantity of products, assets and their associated costs (Gunn 1988: 246).

### **Community Participation**

A sustainable cultural tourism approach is committed to understanding a community's social concerns and encouraging the participation of informed citizens in making decisions regarding those concerns as they relate to future tourism planning and development (Murphy 1985:171). Planners must recognize that the private sector including businesses, related activist groups such as historic societies or environmentalist groups and, most importantly, committed volunteers, are fundamental decision-making, management and support elements of any community tourism related initiative.

Community participation encourages a collective commitment to finding the right approach to dealing with tourism issues as they relate to social concerns. Creating mechanisms and opportunities, such as involving residents through consultation, surveys, public meetings, and direct decision-making as well as through workshops and committees, enables community members to have greater input and control of the direction tourism planning and development is taking in their community (CEDRO n.d.:5). These mechanisms also help to facilitate and foster effective community leadership and management, which influences the setting of sustainable priorities, goals, and objectives.

Other public participation mechanisms may involve training local people in organizational, leadership, or heritage related skills (e.g., curators, interpreters or restoration specialists), or developing processes for conflict management and conflict resolution (Heritage Canada 1995:19; CEDRO n.d.:4). These mechanisms also help to orient or direct community attitudes and values toward a common goal (Heritage Canada 1995:13; Gunn 1994:86). The result is the fostering of community self-reliance, self-determination, a sense of autonomy and pride as well as the building of broad ownership in an overall commitment to tourism development (Heritage Canada 1995:14; CEDRO n.d.:4). Throughout the early part of the process of planning and developing Dawson City's cultural tourism, a particular issue of concern was the contrary attitude and limited ownership by community members of the vision developed by external cultural resource managers and tourism industry representatives. Through greater communication and understanding, attitudes and commitment to a common goal have changed considerably.

In terms of the tourism industry and its products, public participation efforts may result in controlling the pace of development, integrating tourism with other activities and producing more diversified tourist products (Murphy 1985:151). Public participation may also act to ensure equal opportunity and recognition of

needs among individuals and households, social groups, the disadvantaged, communities and tourists as well as present and future generations (Wall 1993:55). Encouraging participation may also lead to inter-generational and gender equity, the equitable distribution of wealth and resources as well as the costs and benefits of tourism (CEDRO n.d:2).

### **Partnerships and Collaboration**

A key concern in the planning and development of tourism in a community setting is the struggle for integration, co-ordination and agreement between the fragmented tourism sector stakeholders and their jurisdictions. To produce a community tourism product that is greater than the sum of its individual parts, the need to form partnerships and collaborate on tourism initiatives is essential (Murphy 1985:16). Jamal and Getz (1995) offer a detailed discussion of the merits of collaboration theory. A major tenet of their discussion is that collaboration can be used as an effective mechanism for community participation in terms of conflict resolution and the advancement of a shared vision, where stakeholders recognize the potential advantages of working together (Jamal & Getz 1995:187,200).

Five characteristics of effective collaboration are offered: "the stakeholders are independent; solutions emerge by dealing constructively with differences; joint ownership of decisions is involved; the stakeholders assume collective responsibility for the ongoing direction of the initiative; and, collaboration is an emergent process [meaning] ... organizations collectively cope with the growing complexity of their environments" (Jamal & Getz 1995:189). These characteristics point out the importance of individual initiatives for the character of tourism, but a collective, collaborative mentality must also be considered for ongoing, long-term sustainable tourism in a community. In Dawson City, collaborative efforts and partnerships have developed between the different levels of government as well as with private sector individuals and organizations. More collaboration, however, is needed with

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private sector sources external to the community in terms of investment in tourism development or contribution, financial or other, to events and programs.

The need to finance heritage initiatives is a particular example of how important partnerships and collaboration can be. The resources needed to finance a tourism initiative may come from a variety of sources within a community. Local businesses, business associations and service clubs as well as municipal assistance programs may help to establish the financial base needed to carry out cultural tourism initiatives (Heritage Canada 1995:13). The Klondike Visitors Association (KVA) in Dawson City benefits from partnerships and collaboration by its arrangements with many local businesses, which contribute financially to sponsor events each year. The KVA also has a loan agreement with the City of Dawson, which allows the KVA to borrow money at any time. One of the goals of financing is to have long-term, stable funding to finance capital projects as well as pay for ongoing management costs. The Centennial Anniversaries Program has been of particular benefit to Dawson, providing capital funding in developing the waterfront. The Dawson City Museum relies on partnerships with the Yukon government for on-going assistance with both building maintenance and general funding. Collaboration and partnerships are also noted by the many private sector restoration projects, such as St. Mary's Catholic Church, or St. Paul's Anglican Church.

### **Product Development, Product-Market-Matching and Promotion**

A particular concern of sustainable cultural tourism as it relates to the socio-economic environment is developing the right type of product and themes, matching those products and themes to appropriate markets through Product-Market-Matching (PMM) (a method of market analysis), and delivering appropriate and accurate promotional information.

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### *Product Development*

The cultural tourism product in a community context is a combination of cultural events, activities, facilities and services offered to visitors and tourists. An assessment of the quality of resources including landscape, environment as well as the access and seasonal availability, is critical in that adjustments can be made to meet the standards and match resources to the market targeted (Campbell 1994). Packaging a community as a tourism product successfully depends on having a variety of attractions, consistent and reliable service delivery throughout the community, and the flexibility and ability of those services to respond to special requests (Campbell, 1994). Those cultural resources that can be assessed, packaged, marketed and promoted as products of tourism may include:

- historic buildings or streetscapes (associated with a significant person, place, activity or architecture) (e.g., Dawson City's tourism is based on the restoration of historic buildings and streetscapes related to the Gold Rush period 1896-1910);
- cultural or historic landscapes (gardens, battlefields);
- cultural or historic routes (rivers or trails);
- archaeological sites (prehistoric to industrial sites);
- traditional lifestyle (language, dress, folklore, foods, arts and crafts);
- events, festivals (religious or commemorative);
- theatre, dance, music, the arts;
- museums and interpretive centres;
- Culinary arts (famous restaurants, chefs).

These resources must be assessed in terms of their potential and level of quality and service as a cultural tourism product (National Trust 1993). Do the resources have cultural or historic value or significance either locally, regionally, or nationally? Do the individual resources have a thematic linkage? Are there a variety of experiences? Is there ease of access both physically and temporally (seasonal availability) (Heritage Tourism n.d.:16)? Most importantly, will product

development, packaging, marketing and promotion of these cultural resources result in an acceptable economic return for the community at large?

### *Product-Market-Matching (PMM)*

With the development of a tourism product comes the responsibility of cultural resource managers and tourism industry representatives to match the product to the right market in terms of visitor perceptions and expectations. Product-market-matching, although simple in concept, is difficult to apply. There is a need for rigorous product assessment as well as market analysis and definition. PMM requires an understanding of the interaction between product and services and must be open to negative consumer perspectives. In general, PMM requires constant research, analysis, assessment and adjustment to match the product to a given market or market segment (Campbell 1994).

Research and market analyses are vital tools for evaluating tourism feasibility. Information such as demographics, psychographics, activity profiles, trip profiles, social shifts, information sources, psychological triggers and location of markets are used to determine the current and potential number of visitors, potential profits and economic impacts for a community and its attractions (Campbell 1994). In 1992, Yukon Tourism, aware of the need to analyze and assess potential markets, sponsored "The Psychographic Segmentation Study" of North American tourism markets (cited in Graham & Associates 1994:3). Such analyses can support the setting of realistic goals and decision-making by planners and community tourism representatives (Heritage Tourism n.d.:16). This assessment and consequent product adjustment requires aligning characteristics of the product with the requirements of different markets and market segments (Campbell 1994).



### ***Promotion***

Tourism promotion must be considered as a collaborative effort in a community context. More will be accomplished at a tourist destination when there are concerted, collaborative efforts rather than individual ventures. As part of this collaborative effort, a community must provide accurate information prior to visitors arriving so they are not misled on either the attractions or services available to them. Accurate, reliable and up-to-date promotional material must also be available within a community to promote various sites and activities not detailed in the external promotional material. Appropriate marketing and distribution of this promotional material ensures that all tourism enterprises, sites and activities within the community have an equal opportunity to benefit from visiting tourists. The Klondike Visitors Association in Dawson has taken on the role of marketing and distributing promotional materials for the community at large through such efforts as attending travel trade shows and being a major contact for tourism industry related information.

### **CULTURAL CONCERNS**

The use of cultural tourism as the focal point of tourism in a community context has the potential to enhance and enrich a community's sense of pride and stewardship, while providing opportunities for greater understanding, learning and communication between residents and visitors, if handled responsibly. This means that when planning for cultural tourism, there is an effort to preserve and renew the life-enhancing, celebratory traditions of culture as expressed in religion, arts and socio-cultural institutions (Wall 1993:55). At the same time, these resources become a commodity to sell to tourists and when packaged and marketed appropriately, can induce direct economic benefits for the community and lessen the economic problems of flow through or leakage. A sustainable cultural tourism approach is, therefore, concerned with the appropriate preservation of all cultural resources as well as the effects of commodification on cultural integrity and authenticity.

## **Preservation of the Cultural Resources**

Considering cultural resources as tourism products involves the underlying concern with preserving and protecting those resources – in particular, tangible sites. In the past, the laissez-faire attitude toward visitation to sites of particular value and significance has caused the degradation of some sites to the point where public access is no longer possible. The Lascaux Caves in France, for example, are now closed to all but specific research personnel. Recognition of this problem has promoted the creation of international, national, regional and local legislation and policies to protect sites of heritage significance. One small community in Canada, Lunenburg, N.S., has taken full advantage of these legislative measures to designate individual heritage property at the municipal, provincial, and national levels, as well as being designated a national historic district and an international world heritage site. Similarly, Dawson City has been federally-designated as a national historic district with a number of federally-designated properties. The City is considering applying for world heritage status. At the territorial and municipal levels there are, however, still problems associated with local and regional designation and preservation which may have an effect on the application to world heritage status.

Presently, at the national level, the Ministry of Canadian Heritage and Parks Canada acts to designate and protect Canada's national heritage resources. Various legislative acts, such as the "National Parks Act" (1930) and "Historic Sites and Monuments Act" (1953) and policies such as the "National Historic Sites Policy" or "Federal Heritage Building Policy" are in place to give legal jurisdiction to their activities. At the provincial and territorial level, legislation, policies and programs have also been created to deal with the protection of their individual provincial or territorial cultural heritage resources. The Yukon "Historic Resources Act" passed in 1996, states, "The purpose of this Act is to promote appreciation of the Yukon's historic resources and to provide for the protection and preservation, the orderly

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development, and the study and interpretation of those resources" (Yukon Historic Resources Act. s.1.1 c-8). The Act gives legal jurisdiction to the territory and individual municipalities to protect their heritage resources. Policies such as the "Yukon Museum Policy" and programs such as the "Historic Properties Assistance Contribution Program" give direction to organizations and assistance to individuals involved in preserving cultural integrity as well as those interpreting cultural resources for tourism.

At the municipal level of government, by-laws and community design guidelines are sometimes established to encourage protection of the built heritage. In the Yukon, an example of how territorial legislation affects municipalities is found in the Historic Resources Act, Part 5 Section 36.(1). This clause allows individual municipalities to create their own by-laws regarding heritage resources. The mechanism to administer these by-laws and design guidelines may involve the use of a planning strategy that encompasses the community at large.

The need for legislation to protect the cultural resources also puts into context the primary reason for the conservation of cultural resources. That reason involves stewardship and anticipation of the rights and needs of future generations. The special committee for cultural tourism of the "International Council of Monuments and Sites" (ICOMOS) makes the fundamental assumption that "conservation precedes tourism" (Madran & Ozgonul 1996:351). ICOMOS states:

...conservation is a separate and prior activity that prepares the way for tourism development. If conservation planning is successful, the acceptable, dignified and profitable tourism will follow. By setting the right tone, conservation can contribute to the financial and social programs of a country in partnership with tourism (cited in Madran & Ozgonul 1996:351).

Thus, preservation and stewardship involves maintaining the integrity, authenticity and intrinsic quality of cultural resources in the face of tourism development, while understanding that tourism development in turn can be the

mechanism whereby a community's identity, traditions and lifestyles are maintained. The use of effective and accepted methods of cultural resource preservation, conservation and management is critical to sustaining cultural tourism in a community context and to the understanding that the cultural resources are being protected for present as well as future generations.

### **Commodification and the Concern for Cultural Integrity and Authenticity**

To satisfy the tourism industry, those cultural resources available for tourism inevitably must be commodified. Commodification is a complex issue which involves a process that once set in motion, can appear to be irreversible: "...its very subtlety prevents the affected people from taking any clear-cut action to stop it" (Jarvenpa 1994:27). Although commodification does not necessarily destroy the meaning or authenticity of the cultural products for locals or tourists, it might do so in some circumstances (Cohen 1988:383). Attention must, therefore, be paid to the trend or direction the interpretation of the product is taking; not only for the sake of the local culture, but because the cultural tourist places a high value on a genuine experience and an authentic expression of the culture visited. If the process of commodification is not planned for or appropriately managed, the results are unpredictable and may, in the end, be undesirable and lead to friction within the community or toward visitors, or both.

The process of commodification affects both tangible and intangible cultural resources in terms of their meaning, image, integrity and authenticity. The tangible cultural resources such as local arts and crafts are commodified through a complex interaction between tourism producers, vendors and consumers (Brody 1976:69). Other tangible resources such as historic buildings and sites and intangible cultural resources such as the concepts of history or cultural tradition are converted into an historic or cultural heritage product through interpretation (Ashworth 1994:17). Interpretation, in this instance, means what is done to help the visitor experience and

understand, on both an intellectual and emotional level, the site's place in history or within a culture (National Trust 1993). In essence, the interpretation, rather than the resource, becomes the cultural heritage product for tourism (Ashworth 1994:17).

The concept of cultural heritage has evolved from a concern for the preservation of surviving relics from the past (Ashworth 1994:15). The concept suggests an evolutionary process, which involved, in the early stage (1850s to 1950s), cultural resources being preserved based on specific criteria such as age or architectural style in the case of buildings and legally protected through designation (Ashworth 1994:15). The process then shifts in the 1960s to conservation or "preserving purposefully" with an emphasis on areas or communities and their function (Ashworth 1994:15). Combining the interpretation of community function with form involves landuse planners and managers working together with architects and historians in the decision-making process (Ashworth 1994:16).

The process has now shifted to a market-oriented approach where heritage is seen as a product commodified and promoted for tourism (Ashworth 1994:16). The commodification of culture and history is based on interpretation, which is subject to a conscious series of choices about which historically-derived or culturally-derived product is to be commodified (i.e., interpreted) based on demand rather than supply (Ashworth 1994:17). The interpretation, rather than the resource, becomes the cultural product for tourism (Ashworth 1994:17). This process of commodifying heritage can be noted by the stages of tourism planning and development which occurred in Dawson City during the period 1950 to 1996.

As the cultural tourist is central in creating and shaping the demand for a cultural tourism product, importance lies in developing and interpreting appropriate, authentic themes and experiences for visitors. The product must also reflect an indigenous or local interpretation, not one that is touristic or imposed

externally onto the community. Communities, in general, have their own unique qualities and characteristics which can be sustained through appropriate interpretation and can, at the same time, create an authentic and genuine experience for the cultural tourist (National Trust 1995). There is a need to follow ethical principles, respect the traditions and lifestyles of the host community, maintain cultural integrity, and authenticity, while creating an appropriate interpretation of cultural resources for tourists to experience.

In essence, a sustainable cultural tourism approach to commodification recognizes that trade-offs must be made between an authentic experience, economic realities of tourism development and residents' endorsement of the commodification and promotion of local cultural resources. Accessible, appropriately designed facilities and interpretation activities that provide an authentic, educational, creative and exciting experience within the overall tourism experience are necessary for cultural tourism to be sustainable (Ministry of Citizenship and Culture 1987:21; National Trust 1995).

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM APPROACH TO TOURISM PLANNING IN A COMMUNITY CONTEXT**

Based on environmental, socio-economic and cultural concerns discussed, eleven characteristics of sustainable cultural tourism were synthesized from the literature by the author, as being important for tourism representatives, planners and developers to consider. The characteristics suggest that a sustainable cultural tourism approach:

- 1) uses accepted methods of protection for cultural resources;
- 2) respects scale, carrying capacity and diversity;
- 3) encourages economic profitability;
- 4) uses long-term planning to encourage sustainability;
- 5) ensures an equitable distribution of costs and benefits;

- 6) respects societal goals and values;
- 7) encourages community participation;
- 8) advocates partnerships, collaboration and shared responsibility;
- 9) respects cultural principles and traditions;
- 10) appropriately commodifies cultural resources as products for tourism; and,
- 11) encourages reliable marketing and promotion of cultural products.

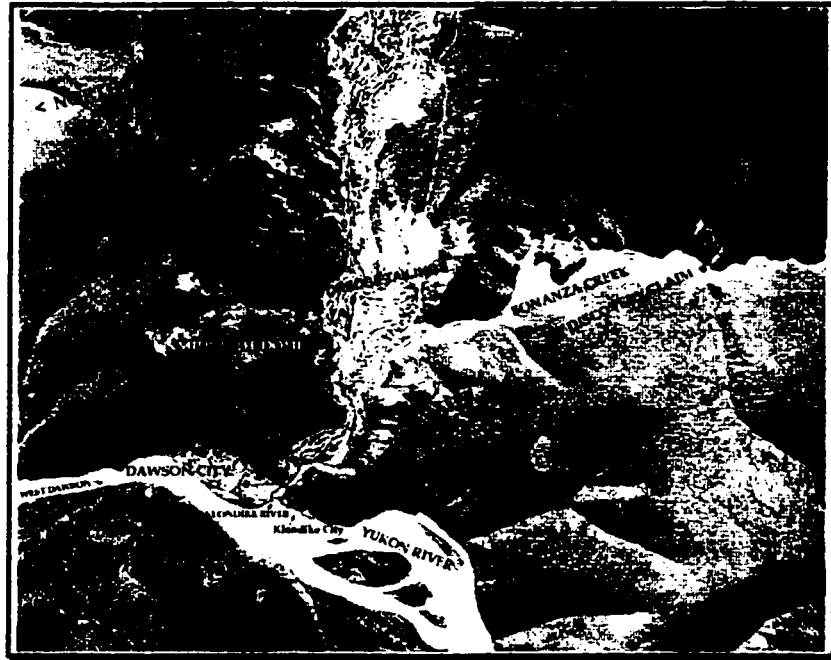
These characteristics are inter-connected and linked such that planning and development will not be sustainable without this integration. These characteristics infer that a sustainable cultural tourism approach can satisfy "...economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity and ecological processes" (Globe '90 Conf.). These characteristics also infer that hard political choices have to be made to strike compromises that benefit all human and natural concerns (Globe '90 Conf.). In general, a sustainable cultural tourism approach is intended to reduce tension associated with the complex interaction between natural and cultural environments, the tourism industry, visitors and host communities (Bramwell & Lane 1993:2; Sowman 1992:10).

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE CASE STUDY COMMUNITY OF DAWSON CITY, YUKON

#### INTRODUCTION

The case study community of Dawson City, Yukon lies on the east bank of the Yukon River at the mouth of the Klondike River (Map 2). Close to the Arctic Circle, the arid, mountainous region of Dawson experiences short summers and long, cold winters.



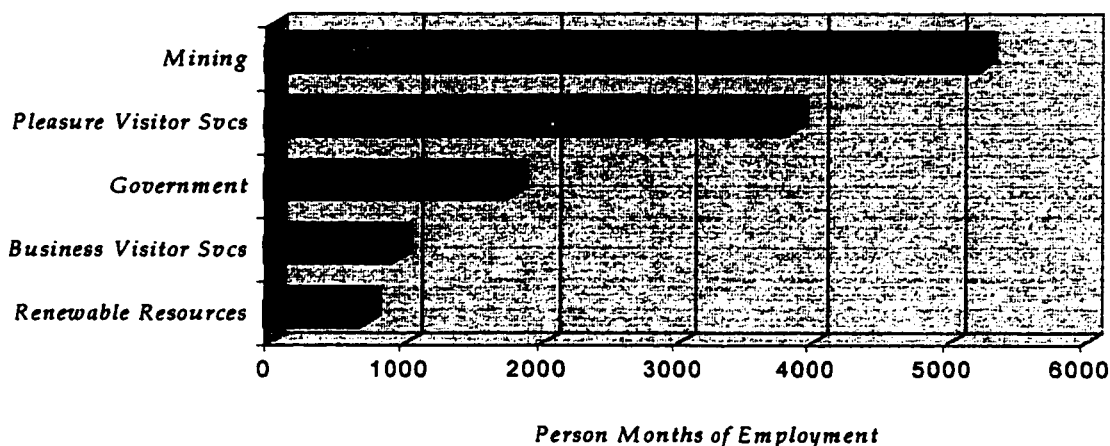
*Map 2: Airphoto of Dawson City and the Gold Fields  
(University of Calgary 116B70 - 1951)*

The economy of Dawson City has experienced highs, lows and periods of relative stability over the years, but the community survived as its residents continued to rely on exploration and mining , particularly gold mining, as the mainstay of their economy. In addition to mining, employment in various government agencies has been a stabilizing factor for Dawson's economy since the



1950s. With the rise of tourism, the economy has become more diversified, particularly in recent years. Information from the Yukon territorial government (YTG) shows, on Graph 1, a general employment sector breakdown noting pleasure visitor services in 1994 as being the second highest employment sector.

**Graph 1: General Employment Sector Breakdown  
Dawson City 1994**



Source: YTG 1994:30

By 1994, tourism accounted for \$8,287,916 in payroll, \$1,615,626 in visitor spending, accommodated as many as 67,570 visitors, protected and restored numerous historic resources and created numerous cultural activities and events for both residents and visitors (YTG 1994:30; YTG 1996a:4). Although Dawson remains a service centre for the mining industry, it now focuses on visitors much the same way it did at the turn of the century – with plenty of entertainment and hospitality.

## RISE OF TOURISM IN DAWSON CITY

The rise of tourism in the remote areas of the Yukon has been limited in the past by low population density and continuing problems related to frontier living (Mintor 1969:3). Dawson City and the Yukon have, however, made significant efforts to advance their tourism industry since the 1960s toward a viable, sustainable industry. Previous to the 1960s, communities in the Yukon such as Dawson

benefited from tourism as early as the 1900s with the completion of the railway. In fact, tourism in Dawson began with the Gold Rush, which was in itself a unique adventure tour. Many people, having read news reports and heard stories from the Klondike, travelled there out of curiosity and a sense of adventure. Some visitors, particularly those in the arts and communication fields, actually helped create the imagery and mythology of the Gold Rush (Jarvenpa 1994:29). By 1910, tourism declined somewhat, but the 1920s and 1930s saw tourism return as large numbers of summer visitors relived the famous stampede (HSMBC-Yukon 1995:7). The railroad was once the Yukon and Dawson's greatest promoter – carrying as many as 50,000 passengers north in 1929 (Minter 1969:4). Dawson continued to survive throughout The Depression years – remaining relatively stable. The Depression had little effect in the area and Dawson was noted as a "good place to work" and visit (Lotz 1964:17). By the 1940s though, travel and tourism became an insignificant factor in Dawson's economy due to such problems as the declining population associated with World War II, and the building of the Alaska Highway.

Tourists, however, still came to see the place, of which, Jack London wrote and Robert Service portrayed in his poems. They came to talk to people who had taken part in the Gold Rush. They came to see the deteriorating architectural features that were once part of the Gold Rush imagery. Pierre Berton gives us a sense of this deterioration in the film "City of Gold", while his mother, Laura Berton (1974:143), noted the decay as far back as 1921. Returning after World War I she describes the scene as such:

At first glance Dawson looked exactly as it had on the day I first saw it from the decks of the riverboat -- the same grey-roofed buildings, the same helter-skelter of cabins. But, on second glance there was no doubt at all that we were living in a decaying town. The population had now sunk to eight hundred, though there were buildings enough for ten times that number. Dozens more houses were standing empty, dozens more lots were vacant, dozens more buildings were slowly falling to pieces. Ninth Avenue, on the upper edge of town, had vanished into the encroaching bush and weeds. Eighth Avenue, where we now lived, was almost empty of people. The north end of

town had become a desert of boarded-up cabins. For Dawson had shrunk in towards its core. Of West Dawson, ... scarcely a vestige remained. Klondike City was empty and dead.

By the late 1940s and early 1950s, tourism in Dawson was described by Lotz (1964:137) as being "passive." There was no "active" tourism in terms of specific attractions, programming or restoration projects, and few services or facilities for tourists (Lotz 1964:137). To the indignity of the local community, Dawson was labelled a ghost town (HSMBC-Yukon 1995:7). Interpretation of Dawson as a ghost town, was based on images created and perceived from the outside. It was not, however, a ghost town. The community, was more like a "backwater" where life was placid, and there was no real struggle to find work (Lotz 1962:32). With a population nearing 800<sup>3</sup>, the community was still functional and felt it needed to take control of its image, cultural resources and the increasing numbers of tourists. By the mid 1950s, tourists were arriving again in significant numbers and tourism itself was recognized by community representatives as having economic potential. The tourism product Dawson had to offer was the cultural and historic legacy encompassing the myths and imagery of the Gold Rush.

## CULTURAL AND HISTORIC LEGACY

The community of Dawson City and its legacy of cultural and historic resources owe their existence to the 1896 discovery of gold on Rabbit Creek (now Bonanza Creek) and the subsequent rush of miners and entrepreneurs to the area. At the peak of the Gold Rush, the community extended across the Klondike River creating Klondike City and west across the Yukon River creating West Dawson. A police census, mid-summer 1889, put the population of Dawson City between 17,000 and 18,000 and close to 30,000 within the immediate area (Adney 1994:386).

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<sup>3</sup> The population of Dawson steadily declined, reaching a low of 783 persons in 1951 (Lotz 1964:14).

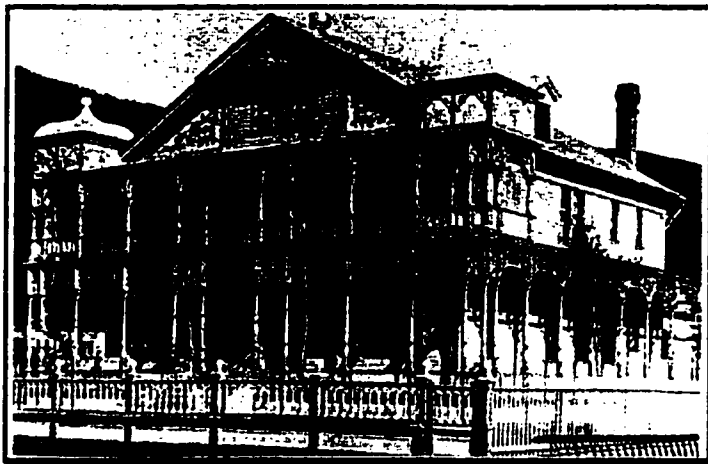
The boom ended abruptly though, in the summer of 1899, with the discovery of gold at Nome, Alaska. As many as 8,000 people left Dawson City that year, yet gold mining continued in the Klondike region and Dawson City settled in as a community with the arrival of wives and children (Berton 1990:557).

As Dawson was the largest community then in the Yukon, (Figure 1) it was recognized as the capital of the Yukon Territory, with the territorial government and commissioner of the Yukon residing there (Figure 2). In 1902, Dawson was incorporated as a city, but later, in 1904, a petition to cancel this status was accepted. Since there



*Figure 1: View North Along Third Avenue to the Moose Hide Slide – ca. 1900.  
(Photo Yukon Archives).*

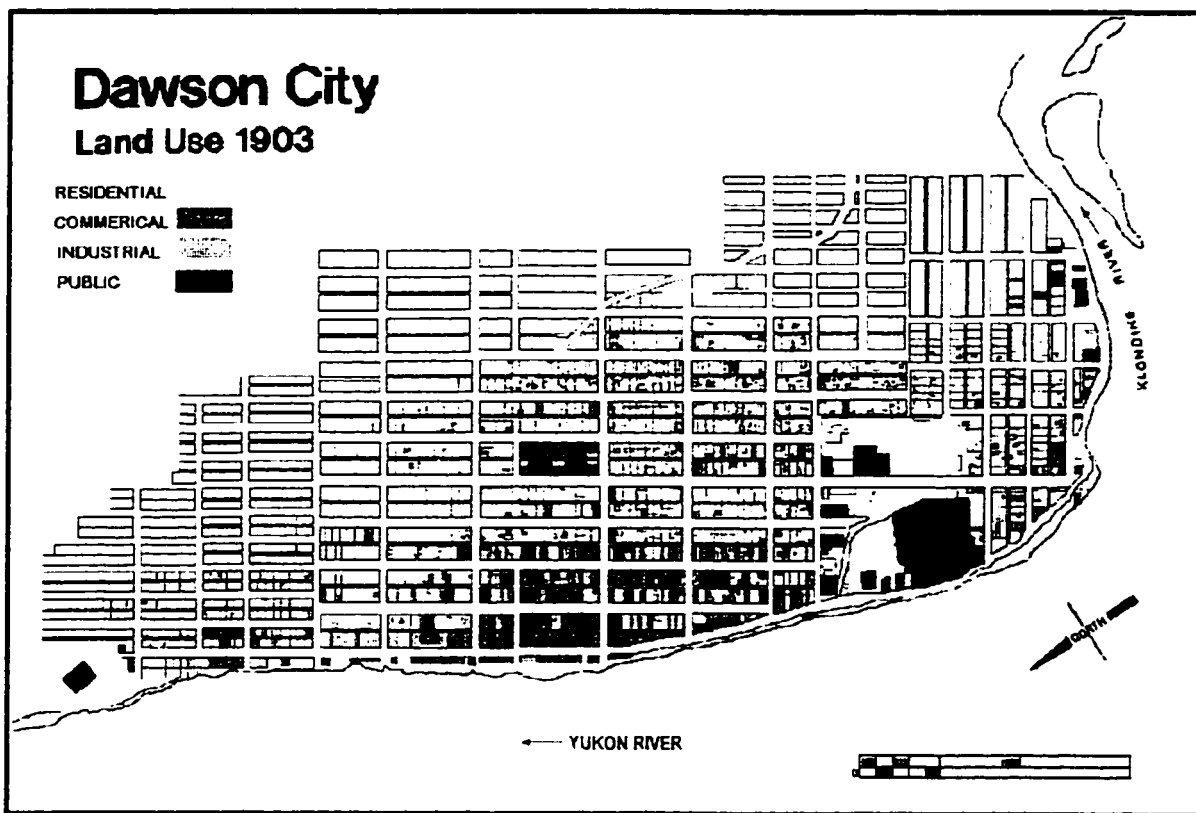
was no mayor or council, the affairs of the community were managed by the Commissioner of the Territory until 1950 when city status and its own civic government were regained (Lotz 1964:46; Coutts 1980:78).



*Figure 2: The Commissioner's Residence Built in 1904.  
(Photo Public Archive of Canada)*

The actual townsite, surveyed in 1887, was laid out in a conventional grid plan with the commercial district clustered along the waterfront area. Fort

Herchmer at the south-west corner, near the Klondike river, housed the R.C.M.P., federal and territorial governments. The residential areas extended back from the commercial district and up the slopes. Map 3 shows the surveyed townsite and land use patterns of 1903.



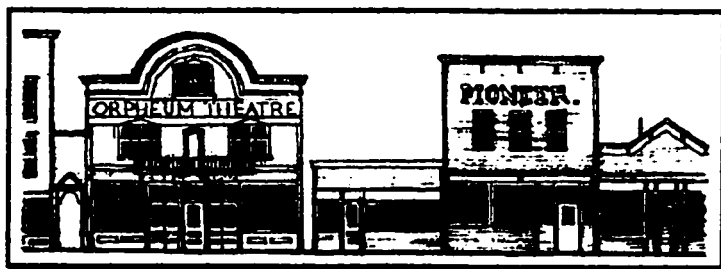
*Map 3: Dawson City Land Use Patterns 1903 (Synergy West 1975:64).*

Numerous fires occurred during the first few years of Dawson. The last major one in 1900 wiped out much of the business district. Improvements in fire equipment and protection methods as well as more buildings made of galvanized iron and tin helped to diminish the threat of fires (Spotswood 1996:11-3). Many of the historic structures left in the city today were built during this period of the early 1900s.

The architectural legacy of streetscapes and ornate façades left by this turn of the century boom town and subsequent community is describes by Berton (1990:475) as being "deceptive:"

The carved scrollwork, the ornate bay windows and balconies with their intricately wrought balustrades, the elaborate cornices and pillars presented a rococo elegance which was as false as the square fronts which hid the dingy, gabled log building behind.

The business district was the main area to use the false fronts (Figure 3). As access to Dawson became easier with the steamships and railway connection completed in 1900, building supplies of superior quality were shipped in from the West Coast and later eastern Canada. These

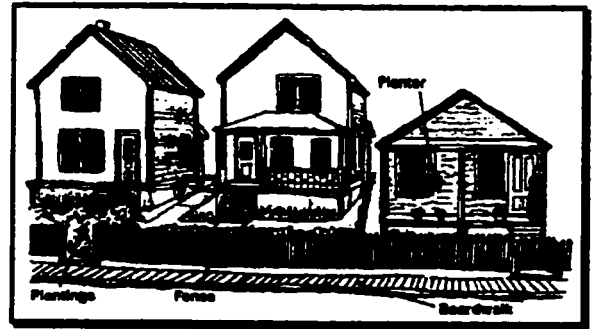


*Figure 3: A Typical Main Street Profile in Dawson.  
(Parks Canada n.d.:28)*

supplies included, various sheet-metal building products, mass-produced wooden and metal ornaments and good quality milled lumber. They enabled the merchants to create elaborate façades over their common log buildings (Parks Canada n.d.:12). Analysis of these buildings by Parks Canada in the 1970s showed these façades were actually fairly simple and inexpensive. Elements such as window casings, door surrounds or weather boarding are common to both historic and contemporary periods (Parks Canada n.d.:8). As cost is a particular issue of concern to members of the community, this suggests that attempting to reconstruct or copy historical designs would not be difficult nor overly expensive.

Very few brick, and no stone buildings, were built in Dawson, even with the wealth of the community at the time. Transportation costs and climatic conditions restricted this type of construction (Parks Canada n.d.:12).

The residential areas initially formed a semi-circle along the hillsides. They were separated from the business district by a swamp, which was later drained and infilled. As the community settled in, homes varied from log cabin to Victorian style (Figure 4).



*Figure 4: A Typical Dawson City Residential Streetscape. (Parks Canada n.d.:19)*

After 1900, Parks Canada (n.d.:12) described Dawson as an "Edwardian city, not dissimilar in structure from other Canadian cities of its day." As building codes and city by-laws improved the various fire, sanitation and construction standards, the types of buildings constructed could have fit into any cityscape in southern Canada. The layout, however, remained constant through the city's expansion and decay (Parks Canada n.d.:14). Today there are a variety of building types from various periods in Dawson's history.

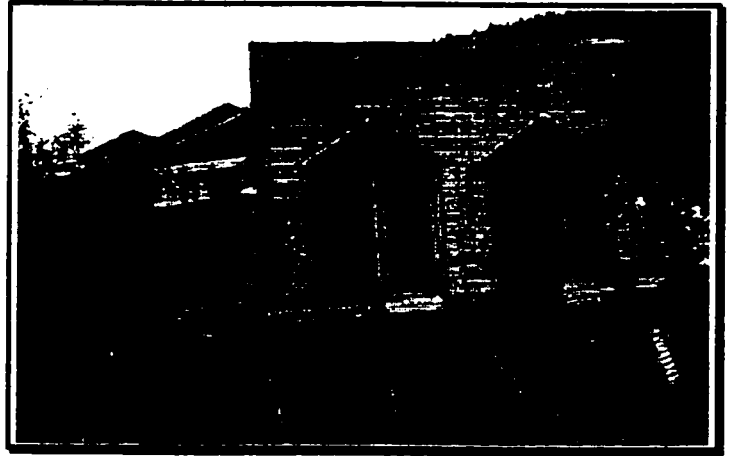


*Figure 5: Three Structures Built in 1901. Now Owned and Preserved by Parks Canada. (Photo E.A. English)*

Between the Gold Rush and the 1950s few of these buildings survived. Those structures that did survive allow a small glimpse into the past and give a sense of what the community was like. Although a number of those buildings have been restored and interpret the Gold Rush period, equally of interest are those not restored. They allow a visitor to experience the

ravages of time and interpret a less prosperous period in Dawson's history (Figures 5 & 6).

The architectural legacy is not the only surviving remnant of the past. There is a very deep feeling of community pride and sense of culture that has been passed down through the generations and embraced by many new residents. Those who stayed on after the initial Gold



*Figure 6: The Effects of Age and Permafrost on One Local Business. (Photo E.A. English)*

Rush were not all miners and entrepreneurs; some scholarly and learned people came and made Dawson their home. Dawson's social and cultural life soon developed with dramatic societies, church organizations, glee clubs, and vaudeville companies (Berton 1990:469). Residents such as Robert Service and Jack London became famous for their stories of the North. Others such as Martha Black (Yukon's first woman MP), or Laura Berton, a school teacher (later an author) added to the fabric of community life. All these people and the various social groups helped create the imagery and mythology of the Gold Rush (Jarvenpa 1994:29). The spirit of these first residents is kept alive through the many volunteer organizations, clubs and activities in the community today. In the 1960s, Lotz (1962:32) observed that the community...

"...has been notable for great collective efforts to provide facilities...the time, effort and money put into such projects by the small population is truly staggering, and the more impressive because these projects have been carried out by all members of the community and not by small groups or clubs.

From a social and cultural point of view, the community's willingness to be involved continues as a legacy started when Dawson first became a settled community.



Marginalized, if not absent from the imagery and mythology surrounding Dawson and the Gold Rush, is the involvement of the First Nations. Before the discovery of gold, a small island at the mouth of the Klondike was the site of a First Nations seasonal salmon fishing camp. The Tr'ondek Hwech'in (Gwich'in)<sup>4</sup>, members of the Han Nation, had used this site for countless generations. Although an important aspect of the cultural make-up in the community, very little is written, preserved or interpreted regarding the Han culture and history, or their involvement in the gold mining history of the area. Until recently, the main cultural event, "Discovery Days" did not include events, activities, exhibitions, or ceremonial occasions that gave tribute to indigenous lifestyles or history (Jarvenpa 1994:36). In 1996, however, the addition of a "Han Cultural Day," to the week long festival is one of a number of initiatives to begin filling this void. Other initiatives include ongoing research by the Dawson City Museum and plans to build a Han interpretative centre.

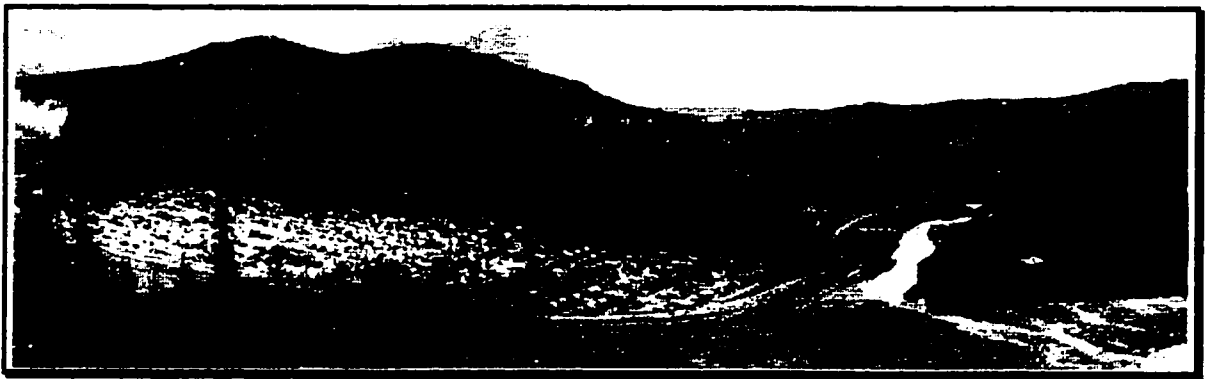


Figure 7: A View of Dawson City, August 1996 (Photo E.A. English)

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<sup>4</sup> The northern Athapaskan linguistic group "Han Hwech'in" (also Gwich'in) - (people of the river) are the original inhabitants along the Yukon Valley. The Tr'ondek Hwech'in is a local band which lived between the Klondike and Kandik rivers and reside in the Dawson area today (Jarvenpa 1994:38). The name Tr'ondek, became "Klondike" when first interpreted by outsiders. Today the band is referred to as either Han or Tr'ondek Hwech'in.

This cultural legacy including the historic structures, social and cultural elements, both past and present, form the basis on which cultural tourism developed in Dawson from the 1950s to the present. The following chapter examines the process of planning, development and management to understand how effective and sustainable cultural tourism is in a community such as Dawson City (Figure 7).

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **AN EXAMINATION OF CULTURAL TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN DAWSON CITY 1950 - 1996**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The community of Dawson City began a process of cultural tourism planning and development in the 1950s. The process undertaken was complex and randomly affected over time by community attitudes and values, government policies and programs, as well as economics and the business sector's commitment to cultural tourism. Tourism planning was, and still is, affected by various organizations, associations and government agencies, each with their separate role and views on how the cultural and historic legacy should be protected, developed, managed and marketed as a product for tourism.

This chapter identifies and examines the various organizations, their roles, and how each affected the process of planning and development of Dawson City's cultural resources for tourism. The organizations include several private sector associations (Klondike Visitors Association, Yukon Visitors Association, Dawson City Museum and First Nations), the Federal Government (Parks Canada), the Yukon Territorial Government (Yukon Tourism and Anniversaries Commission), and Dawson City Municipal Government (Planning Board and Klondike Centennial Association). A number of selected key events, policies and programs associated with each organization are used to examine how these organizations planned and managed to protect the cultural resources, enhance community involvement and strengthen or stabilize the economy. (Table 1 is a chronological listing of events, policies and programs by organization). These organizations and the chronology of associated elements were examined and consequently revealed three stages of planning and development, which occurred from 1950 to 1996. This examination

**TABLE 1**  
**CHRONOLOGY OF SELECTED EVENTS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH**  
**PLANNING AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM IN DAWSON CITY 1950 TO 1996**

ORGANIZATIONS	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s +
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	1950s - Concerned Citizens Begin to Organize Tourist Activities				
<b>KLONDIKE VISITORS ASSOCIATION (KVA)</b>	1952 - KVA Created 1954 - Klondike Nights Started - Greeting the Boats - Palace Grand Theatre Acquired	1960s - Began Producing Tourism Promotional Brochures 1962 - Thas-di-gras Spring Festival Begins 1963 - Gaslight Follics Begins 1969 - Jack London's Cabin Acquired	1971 - Diamond Tooth Gertie's Opens 1973 - Commissioner's Ball Begins 1977 - The Great Klondike International Outhouse Race 1979 - Music Festival Begins	1980s - Began Repairing Diamond Tooth Gertie's 1986 - Klondike Slow Pitch Tournament Begins 1985 - Dome Race Begins 1985 - Alaska Marketing Prog. 1987 - Klondike International Dart Tour. Begins 1988 - Odd Fellows Hall Stabilized	1990s - Odd Fellows Hall Stabilized 1994 - Slot Machines Installed in Diamond Tooth Gertie's 1996 - Berton Home Restored 2005 - 50th Anniversary
<b>YUKON VISITORS ASSOCIATION (YVA) YUKON TRAVEL BUREAU TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOC YUKON (TIA-YUKON)</b>	1957 - YVA Created 1958 - Grant to KVA 1959 - Yukon Travel Bureau	1966 - 1969 - Klondike Defence Force			1990s - Communication Co-ordinator
<b>DAWSON CITY MUSEUM</b>	1952 - Museum Formed	1960 - Museum Burned 1962 - Museum Moved into Administration Bldg.		1980s - Museum Planning Study 1987 - Administration Building Restored	1995 - Klondike Gold Travelling Exhibit 1995 - Website & Database
<b>FIRST NATIONS</b>				1980s - Began to Promote Use of the Name "Han" 1987 - Chief Pledges Support of Dawson City Museum	1992 - Moosehide Gathering Begins 1995 - Yukon First Nations Tourism Association Created 1997 - Cultural Centre Starts
<b>FEDERAL GOVT</b>	1953 - Formation of DNANR (now DIAND) 1959 - HSMBC Recognizes Dawson's Historic Res.	1960 - Festival Foundation 1967 - HSMBC Met in Dawson			
<b>HISTORICITIES AND MONUMENT BOARD OF CANADA (HSMBC)</b>		1962 - Restoration of Palace Grand Theatre 1962 - Dawson City Festival - Foxy Revue	1971 - Gold field Report 1972 - Dawson City Bldg Report 1974 - Urban Cons. Plan 1975 - Conceptual Dev. Proposal 1978 - Master Dev. Plan	1980s - Archaeological Srvys - Continued Restoration of Historic Sites 1988 - Interpretation Plan	1993 - KNHS Conceptual Plan 1994 - Funding Cuts 1995 - User Fees 1996 - Commissioner's Residence Re-opens
<b>PARKS CANADA</b>					



			Grand Theatre 1962 - Dawson City Festival - Foxy Revue	1972 - Dawson City Bldg Report 1974 - Urban Cons. Plan 1975 - Conceptual Dev. Proposal 1978 - Master Dev. Plan	Continued Restoration of Historic Sites 1988 - Interpretation Plan	1994 - Funding Cuts 1995 - User Fees 1996 - Commissioner's Residence Re-opens
<b>YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT (YTG)</b>			1968 - Historic Sites and Monument Ordinance		1981 - Dept. of Heritage & Cultural Resources Established	
<b>TOURISM YUKON</b>			1962 - First YTG Tourism Office Opens 1962 - First Tourism Related Survey	1970s - Foundation Assistance Program Created - Facade Incentive Program Created 1974 - Tourism in the Yukon Report 1978 - Tourism Yukon - New Identity and Mandate 1978 - Yukon Tourism Develop. Strategy	1980 - Fed-Terr. Tourism Aggr. 1980 - YTG Office Opens in Dawson 1981 - Tourism Development Strategy 1986 - Yukon Historic Sites Inventory 1987 - HPAC Program Begins 1987 - Visitor Exit Survey 1989 - Yukon Museum Policy	1992 - Psychographic Segmentation Study 1992 - Museum Artifact Conservation Policy 1993 - Tourism Industry Mfg 1994 - Visitor Exit Survey 1994 - Planning for Tourism Development Study 1996 - Historic Resources Act Passed
<b>ANNIVERSARY COMMISSION</b>					1987 - Anniversaries Comm. Formed	1993 - Strategic Plan 1992 - Alaska Hwy 50th Anniversary 1995 - Centennial Event Prog. 1995 - Cent. Anniversary Program
<b>MUNICIPAL GOVT CITY PLANNING BOARD</b>			1967 - Planning Board Formed	1972 - Zoning By-Laws 1975 - Development Planning Rpt	1980 - Historic Controls By-law	1996 - Reviewing Official Community Plan 2002 - Centennial of Incorp. of Dawson as a City
<b>KLONDIKE CENTENNIAL SOCIETY (KCS)</b>						1996 - Member of Water- Front & Cultural Centre Project Ping 1996 - Anniversaries Ping
<b>MISCELLANEOUS - Events Affecting Community Social-Economic Conditions</b>	1953 - Capital Moves to Whitehorse 1948 - Road Opens Year Round into Dawson City 1953 - Last of the Steamboats	1966 - Y.C.C.C. Closes		1979 - Devastating Flood		
<b>Other Annual Events &amp; Activities</b>	1899 - Top of the World Curling Bonspiel 1910 - Discovery Day (Aug 17th) Begins to be Celebrated Now a Week-long Festival			1977 - Canada Day Celebration Begins	1984 - Yukon Quest Begins	1992 - Trek Over the Top Begins 1995 - RCMP Centennial



also revealed the commitment by cultural resource managers and tourism industry representatives to preserve the historic and cultural character and resources of the community, encourage a viable tourism industry to enhance the local economy, as well as encourage community respect and involvement. Throughout the discussion, a number of issues are highlighted based on the characteristics of a sustainable cultural tourism approach to tourism planning in a community context.

## **PRIVATE SECTOR**

Private sector involvement has played a major role in the process of planning, developing and managing Dawson City's cultural tourism industry since the 1950s. Private citizen involvement, and groups such as the Klondike Visitors Association, the Yukon Visitors Association, Dawson City's Museum and Historical Society, and First Nations (Han) have made significant contributions to protecting and preserving local culture and history as well as participating in planning and developing the cultural resources as a community tourism product.

The process began with a commitment by this private sector to improve economic stability and preserve historic and cultural integrity. Concerned citizens began a "grassroots" movement to take a more active role in catering to the increasing numbers of visitors and to lobby government for support in preserving the historic aspects of their community. From this movement came the formation of the Klondike Tourist Bureau and government agencies taking notice of the cultural assets in Dawson City.

### **The Klondike Visitors Association (KVA)**

In 1952, a group of volunteers formed a non-profit, community-based organization known as the Klondike Tourist Bureau or Klondike Visitors Association as it was later named. By 1954, the volunteers of the KVA were



involved in such things as greeting<sup>5</sup> the SS Klondike on its run from Whitehorse to Dawson and putting on the original "Klondike Nights" to entertain visitors (KVA 1992:1). They went on to acquire the old Palace Grand Theatre, assisted with developing a museum, and began producing and distributing thousands of tourism brochures. With few financial resources, their activities during the 1950s and into the 1960s remained modest, but with a dedicated core of volunteers, the organization continued to grow and attract visitors (KVA 1992:1).

In 1971, the Yukon Territorial Council gave KVA permission for a limited gaming operation and Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall, Canada's first legalized gambling casino, began opening during the summer months (Figure 8).



*Figure 8: Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall  
in the Restored Arctic Brotherhood Hall  
Originally Built in 1901.  
(Photo E.A. English)*

The proceeds from this casino allowed the KVA to begin supporting numerous cultural events and activities within the community, as well

as to promote and market the Klondike experience to the outside. The use of gambling raises an issue concerning the ability of gambling to be a reliable, growth-oriented source of revenue, which can support cultural tourism and the restoration of the historic environment.

<sup>5</sup> In the 1950s residents in turn of the century dress greeted the steamships as they arrived in Dawson – reminiscent of the community's traditional gesture during the town's early years.

In Dawson City, there is only one casino, open four months of the year and 1990s statistics reveal that while attendance is up, gambling is down (Swackhammer 1996:PC). Although the KVA's revenue base substantially increased with the introduction of gambling and, in particular, the slot machines in 1994, the community's isolated location, the types of tourists that visit and the decline in gambling revenues, suggests that there may be little future growth in gambling revenues. The KVA must find other sources of revenue to sustain the financial growth needed to support the cultural tourism events or historic preservation, as it has done in the past.

Until the 1990s, the KVA's financial resources, based on gambling revenues and other sources, were limited mainly due to the cost incurred by the restoration of the Arctic Brotherhood Hall, the home of Diamond Tooth Gertie's. In the 1980s this costly repair severely restricted the KVA from initiating new projects or helping other organizations with their marketing or restoration projects (KVA 1992:4). Even with this financial restriction, however, the KVA was able to create and develop numerous annual social and cultural events for both tourists and locals to enjoy. As the KVA is a non-profit organization, the revenue is redistributed back into the community ensuring a sustainable, equitable distribution of benefits. These benefits are not only in the form of events, business and employment opportunities (e.g., Diamond Tooth Gertie's), but the preservation or restoration of the built environment as well.

In the past, the KVA has acted as a lobby group on behalf of the commemoration and preservation of the cultural and historic resources of the town site. The KVA has always been consulted, even throughout the period when Parks Canada was identifying and restoring significant historic buildings. One of the original founders of the KVA worked for Parks Canada and was a strong proponent of working together with the government to restore the integrity of the built

environment (Kobayashi 1996:PC). In turn, the KVA has used the expertise of Parks Canada's historians and conservationists and other specialists to help them restore their own buildings and ensure the sustainability of the resources by using accepted methods to protect and enhance those resources.

This relationship, however, was not always a smooth one. In the 1960s the federal government imposed restrictions on some KVA activities and the newly appointed superintendent of Yukon historic sites was urged to maintain close contact with the Association in order to exert the desired influence on KVA's planning as it affected Parks Canada property (Stuart 1990:27). Despite this influence, the KVA successfully prevented the demolition of the old Yukon Territory Administration Building (now the Dawson City Museum) and took responsibility for expenditures to restore a number of historic properties (Stuart 1990:27). Although there were differing opinions on what properties the KVA and the National Historic Parks and Sites (NHPS) deemed significant, the goals for preserving the historical and cultural resources for the community and promising tourism industry were the same.

The KVA's first building to be acquired for reasons of preservation and restoration was the Palace Grand Theatre in the 1950s. Due to lack of funds, the theatre was given to the federal government (Parks Canada) on the condition they would restore it. The building, however, was in such disrepair that Parks Canada completely rebuilt it. The theatre re-opened in 1962 with the Broadway show "Foxy" created for the Dawson City Festival of that same year (Figure 9). The KVA then leased the theatre from Parks Canada and proceeded to oversee the *Gaslight Follies* entertainment during the summer months. The theatre and shows continue to be a major attraction and source of entertainment and revenue.



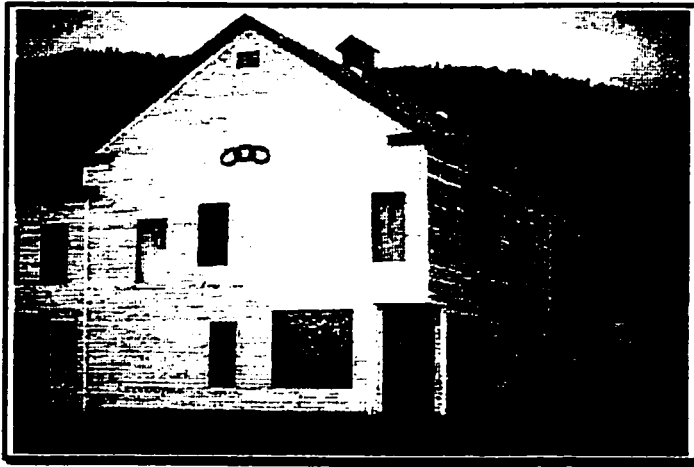
*Figure 9: Palace Grand Theatre, Built for Arizona Charlie, Charlie Meadows in 1899 - Restored in 1962. (Photo E.A.English)*



*Figure 10: Jack London's Cabin, One of Two Replicas built in 1969, Part of an Interpretive Centre Sponsored by the KVA. (Photo E.A.English)*

Properties such as Jack London's cabin contribute to cultural tourism by educating visitors to the people and community of Dawson and the North (Figure 10). The KVA also own and have restored several buildings through funding arrangements and the use of government expertise. These include the Odd Fellow's Hall restored with the help of \$97,000 in grants from the territorial government and \$20,000 from the City of Dawson (Figure 11). The total cost to renovate is estimated to be between \$300,000 and \$400,000 (Davidson 1988:31). The hall will be restored for functional use when the financial resources become available. The latest building the KVA assisted in restoring was the Berton home in 1996 (Figure 12). The

home, originally purchased by Francis G. Berton in 1920 for \$500, was re-purchased by Pierre Berton at a cost of \$50,000 and donated to the Yukon Arts Council. The house was then restored by the KVA for approximately \$100,000 and furnished by the Yukon Arts Council, who finance an ongoing "writer in residence" program (plaque outside Berton home).



*Figure 11: Odd Fellows Hall, Presently Stabilized, Eventually to be Restored and Used as KVA Offices. (Photo E.A.English)*



*Figure 12: Berton Home (1920-32) - Restored Through Partnership Arrangements. (Photo E.A.English)*

The high cost of restoration has often hindered the organization's ability to take on or complete such projects, but the KVA has taken advantage of expertise and funds made available through partnerships, other programs and granting agencies as well as a lending agreement with the City of Dawson (Kobayashi 1996:PC). The

issue this raises is the need for and ability of organizations such as the KVA to work collaboratively with other organizations to achieve their goals, whether it is by direct cost sharing, accessing funding programs or use of expertise. With the many projects undertaken over the years, the KVA has created an atmosphere of partnership and trust, which results in other organizations being willing to work with them or support them in some manner.

An issue that concerns the KVA and the community is the use of historic buildings as museum pieces with little to no functional use (e.g., commissioner's residence). The feeling is that buildings should be re-adapted in such a way as to promote the historic value, yet be functional in terms of the needs of a living community. On the restoration of the Berton home, Pierre Berton was noted as saying he didn't want the home "museumized" and it was consequently re-adapted for a unique use as a writer's retreat (Friis-Baastad 1996:3). A better example is the Arctic Brotherhood Hall re-adapted as a gambling hall, which creates the revenue base for the KVA, creates employment opportunities, pays community taxes and is a major attraction for tourists.

Although the KVA works closely with Parks Canada's experts in the preservation and restoration of their historic resources, the KVA is not as concerned as Parks Canada with the authenticity associated with all cultural resources (Gates 1996:PC). The KVA's focus is on commodifying the resources as viable commercial tourism products, which results in exaggerating and re-interpreting the myths and imagery as portrayed throughout the years in literature and film. This raises the issue concerning the importance of meeting the interests of the visitors, while maintaining a certain degree of authenticity and cultural integrity. Jarvenpa (1994:42) notes:

...there is abundant evidence in Dawson City of the packaging of shared meaning, moral tone, and ethos for external consumption. Predominant themes in local lore and world view, infatuation with material wealth and the ethic of individualism, are codified in the

image of the sourdough, an amplified symbol of EuroCanadian and EuroAmerican achievements and Gold Rush history that in turn, provides a compelling focus of attention for tourists.

Jarvenpa (1994:42) argues that in the case of Dawson City the process of cultural commodification is not necessarily negative and invokes creative responses to local culture, positively affecting and enriching the development of that culture. He feels that where promoters and tourists, or host and guests hold many ideas in common, the potential for compromising local cultural integrity is lessened (Jarvenpa 1994:43). The KVA, in particular, plays a major role in commodifying Dawson's culture through the development and marketing of the community cultural tourism product. The KVA must, however, be aware of the potential to compromise authenticity and cultural integrity .

Through the ownership of such business as "Gertie's" and the overseeing of many events and activities, the KVA is considered a tourism product developer and operator. The organization also, however, sees itself as a destination marketing organization (DMO) and therefore functions as promoter as well as a lobby group for the tourism industry in Dawson City and the Yukon in general (KVA 1992:3). One of the most ambitious and successful marketing programs, started in the Fall of 1985, recognized the need to attract residents of Alaska to Dawson and the Yukon. The success of this program and others is reflected in the amount of funds allocated to the KVA's promotion and marketing budget. The budget has gone from \$20,000 in the mid 1980s to nearly \$250,000 in the mid 1990s (Kobayashi 1996:PC). This financial commitment to ongoing promotion and marketing is a significant factor in sustaining the viability of Dawson City's tourism industry.

The ability of the KVA to successfully promote and market the community's tourism industry also depends on collaborating with other communities in the region. As Dawson City is too small a market to promote entirely on its own in

terms of attracting visitors from the rest of Canada, the United States and internationally, the KVA is aware it must collaborate and support organizations such as "Tourism Yukon", the territorial government department, the private sector Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon (TIA-Yukon) and particularly the new Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) to promote the whole Yukon experience (Kobayashi 1996:PC).

Promotion also involves understanding the community's "position" as it relates to other tourism markets in the north – specifically Alaska. The sustainability of the tourism industry as a whole in Dawson and the Yukon finds itself directly tied to the aggressiveness and budgets of Alaska's tourism industry (Kobayashi 1996:PC). Thus, a strong sense of partnership and collaborative marketing and promotion with Alaska is essential for the smaller market of Dawson to have greater visibility and market position within the Alaska - Yukon tourism industry. The KVA has developed a significant role in sustaining this link with Alaskan tourism, which, in turn, fosters the sustainability and growth of Dawson City's tourism industry.

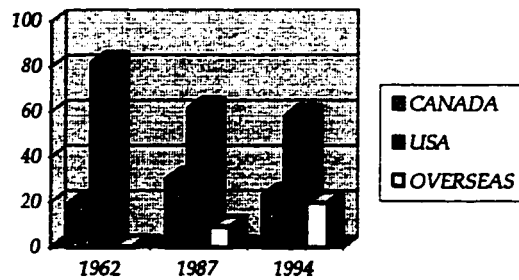
The KVA and other tourism sector stakeholders are also aware of the need to match their product to identified markets. Product-market-matching is essential for maximizing visitor potential. In central Europe there is a market segment interested not only in the historical activity of gold mining, but present day gold mining endeavours. There are as many as 60 families and their employees recovering millions of dollars in gold in the area each year. Although these families cannot allow visitors to their sites, the KVA has adapted to this interest by creating an active claim at Bonanza Creek No. 6 above the original claim where they allow people to try their hand at placer gold mining (Kobayashi 1996:PC). The second largest market segment identified are those people from the U.S. and Canada who come to trace their relatives who ventured north during the Gold Rush. The Yukon



Archives in Whitehorse and the Dawson City Museum are significant stops for such people and have developed programs to fit this demand.

***Graphs 2A & 2B: Market Segmentation - 1962-1994***

***2A - Dawson City***



Sources: Lotz 1964:126; YTG 1994:2

***2B - Yukon Territory***



Sources: YTG 1974:Plate 9; YTG 1987:9

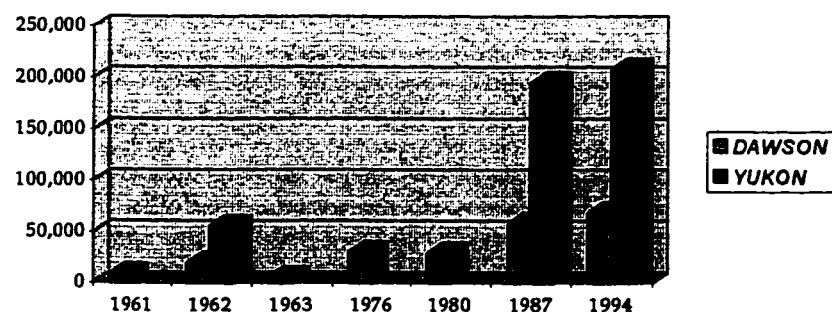
Graphs 2A and 2B identify these main market segments as a percentage of total visitor numbers for each year. Graph 2A is specific to Dawson City, while Graph 2B reflects the Yukon. The graphs reveal a shift over time from an American dominated market to a growing Canadian and overseas market (particularly Europe). With this shift comes a difference in visitor attitudes and interests in the product being offered; therefore a particular issue centres on the ability of tourism representatives such as the KVA to adjust to changing market segments, tourism trends and visitor interests. The ability of the KVA and other sectors of the tourism industry in Dawson City to adjust to these changes will serve to strengthen and sustain overall community cultural tourism product growth.

To help these representatives understand the complex nature of tourism markets, the Department of Tourism sponsored "The Psychographic Segmentation Study" of North American tourism markets in 1992 (Graham & Associates 1994:3). The study divided travellers into five distinct categories based on their travel patterns, preferences and lifestyles as well as age, sex and education (Graham &

Associates 1994:3). Two of the five categories revealed visitors interested in cultural and historic events and attractions make up 37% of the tourism market, with a third category of 15% interested in adventure type experiences. Tourism representatives including the KVA have a challenge in creatively planning, developing, packaging and promoting Dawson City's history, culture and natural resources to target these differing market segments.

Another tool for community cultural tourism product development and PMM is the ongoing survey and feedback of visitors. Many individual business and organizations such as the KVA have gathered visitor information, which helps to fine tune their marketing and product development. The most important to the KVA and other private sector organizations are the visitor exit surveys produced by the Tourism Department of the Yukon government and the federal government. One of the first tourism-related surveys completed in 1962 by the Yukon Department of Travel and Publicity, estimated 54,045 visitors to the Yukon that year, a significant difference from 206,800 in 1994 (Lotz 1964:126; YTG 1996a:4). In 1961, an estimated 8,000 visitors went to Dawson City, also a significant difference to the 67,570 that passed through the region in 1994 (Graph 3) (Lotz 1964:126; YTG 1996a:4).

**Graph 3: Numbers of Visitors to Dawson City 1961-1994  
With a Comparison to the Yukon**



Sources: Lotz 1964:126; YTG n.d.:55; YTG 1987:15,9; YTG 1994a:4; 1994b:9

These surveys reveal a number of details including the stable flow of visitors through Dawson City since the 1970s. This stability provides a basis from which organizations such as the KVA can begin to use long-term planning as a strategy for future development. These statistics also reveal little growth in visitor numbers during the early 1990s: 33% of total visitors to the Yukon in 1994 came to Dawson emphasizing the fact 67% did not (YTG 1995:8). This raises the question of why no significant increase occurred. Is this an issue relating to the cultural tourism product, promotional and PMM capability or some other related reason such as access?

From a product point of view, tourism representatives and the KVA, in the mid 1990s, responded by investing significantly in event planning to celebrate numerous centennials and project planning to enhance the aesthetics of the community (e.g., the waterfront project). From a promotional and PMM perspective, the response by KVA has been to increase promotional and marketing budgets as well as collaborate more effectively with other tourism markets in the area.

With this response to perceived needs and adjustments to the community tourism product, there is greater potential for sustaining a pattern of growth in terms of attracting more visitors and keeping them longer. By identifying the 67% of Yukon visitors not going to Dawson, and more specifically, promoting the City to that market segment, Dawson should be able to claim a greater share of Yukon visitors.

An outlet that is not being targeted fully by cultural resource managers in Alaska is the information office on board cruiseships that sail along the Alaska-BC coast. Very little information is being promoted through these offices, suggesting a potential target for promotion by both Alaskan and Yukon cultural sites (Cook

1997:26). With creative packaging of tours or linking with some tours already offered out of Alaskan ports, the cruiselines may prove to be a possible target.

The 1994 visitor survey also revealed that the average length of stay of visitors to the Dawson region is one to two nights (YTG 1996a:4). Understanding why visitors stay such a short time may reveal ways to encourage longer stays. One factor, which must be taken into consideration is Dawson's remote location. Most visitors (75.3%) travel by car, van or RV from other parts of Canada and the U.S. using up much of their vacation time just getting there (Graham & Associates 1994:14). The 1994 survey noted 57% of visitors said they would have stayed longer if they had more time to spend.

Many travellers to the Yukon and Alaska see Dawson City as a brief stopping place on their circuit through the region, but not as a destination in itself. The issue this raises is whether or not the cultural tourism product has the calibre and distinctiveness to attract tourists for longer stays or is there not enough in terms of packaging and promoting the product to convince visitors to stay longer. The response by visitors saying they would stay longer if they had time suggests the product is attractive and interesting enough to make people want to stay, however, they need to know this before arriving to make plans to stay longer. There is a need to convince visitors, through innovative packaging and promotion, that Dawson City is a worthwhile destination.

The packaging of a variety of historic and cultural products to offer tourists has the potential to attract tourists, keep them longer in the community, and create a "critical mass" necessary for visitor-oriented events (Graham & Associates 1994:Poster). Parks Canada has begun to package their sites and tours with noted results. Also, combining smaller socio-cultural events may attract the numbers of visitors necessary to make these events financially viable. On a larger scale,

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packaging means Dawson City is part of a regional package, and that should be planned by local tourism operators rather than relying on external operators. As the KVA sees itself as a destination marketing organization it has a role in packaging and promoting Dawson City as a primary destination for future tourists.

A particular issue of concern for Dawson's tourism industry is not only the packaging and promotion of tourism products, but the need for a diversity of products within the realm of cultural tourism as well as other types of tourism. Other types of tourism include activity-based (sports) or adventure-based (recreation) tourism products. For Dawson City, these products are considered a new area of potential for attracting tourists and tourism growth and, as such, event planning or businesses are needed to cater to and promote these activities.

As seasonality also has a major effect on tourism product development and packaging in the North, the KVA has made a deliberate attempt to extend the traditional May to late August season further into September creating a shoulder season. The Gaslight Follies now closes the second weekend of September and Diamond Tooth Gertie's two weeks later. Several annual events were specifically organized to create a shoulder season, while others were created to attract visitors during the winter season. Although some of these events are not historical, and do not relate directly to the theme of the Gold Rush, they are cultural events reflecting contemporary lifestyles and add diversity to the list of cultural products to be enjoyed year round. The creation of winter cultural events attracts community members and those in the regions of the north such as Alaska, N.W.T., B.C. and the Yukon. Creating a larger number of off-season events and adding a more active visitor component to current off-season events could attract a wider market segment. (Graham & Associates 1994:19).

Creating off-season tourism better utilizes the tourism industry service capacities, increases business opportunities, produces viable growth, and distributes the costs and benefits over a greater part of the year (Graham & Associates 1994:19). Consideration of off-season tourism planning must also consider the potential infrastructure and service problems associated with the extreme temperatures, climate and isolation of this region during the winter months. The 1994 planning study (Graham & Associates 1994:19,20) suggests moving some successful summer events such as the Music Festival to the shoulder season to reduce an already busy summer. Another study, done by the Music Festival, noted 88% of residents and 92% of businesses felt it should not be moved, suggesting maximum benefit and value are gained by its present scheduling (Dawson City Music Festival Society 1996:28).

Cultural tourism product development is also based on the participation of community members in planning and development. As the KVA developed from a strong core of volunteers, it continues to encourage participation through membership on their board of directors. With twelve directors and numerous advisors from the Yukon government, the City of Dawson, the local tourism organization, and their own marketing and promotions committee (with representatives from the business sector), there is significant community input into everything the KVA does (Kobayashi 1996:PC). As board members and advisors have varied professional backgrounds, from business to expertise in preserving, restoring and managing cultural resources, the KVA benefits not only from their professional consultation, but their part in the decision-making process affecting both business and cultural resources. Because of this, resolution, which is needed before proceeding with any initiative, can be made in a timely, efficient and appropriate manner.

The numerous cultural events put on each year by the KVA require dedicated volunteers to organize and run them. The involvement and participation of community members not only as board members and volunteers to help run these events, but as full participants in the events is of significance in terms of their commitment and buy-in to community tourism goals and objectives. The support of this association by the community at large is an important factor in sustaining its viability; however, the association must also continue to listen and be aware of community needs in terms of their ability to deal with potential problems such as irritation or burnout that could be associated with on-going or new event planning.

With the peak tourism season compressed into four very busy months, the problems of volunteer burnout and lack of funding are factors in planning and managing cultural events (Kobayashi 1996:PC). As these volunteers operate their own businesses or work in some capacity, they have limited time available and are a finite resource on which to draw. Similarly, local businesses give all they can in terms of financial support to events. As events become larger, the administration of those events becomes more difficult, committees become smaller and people no longer take ownership and responsibility. Such large events cannot be expected to be run solely by volunteers (Kobayashi 1996:PC).

With this in mind, the KVA finds itself under pressure to provide expertise to organize not only their own events, but other organizations' events as well. They do this by providing planning assistance through a paid co-ordinator and financial assistance by covering event expenses and advertising costs (Kobayashi 1996:PC). The KVA has developed the ability to effectively evaluate, plan and manage the development of many events and activities associated with cultural tourism in Dawson City. With a relatively stable revenue base, the KVA also has the ability to begin long-term planning as well as actively assist other community tourism initiatives through partnership arrangements (Kobayashi 1996:PC).

With this ability, the KVA has been able to address particular issues pertaining to product development and giving events both quality and consistency from year to year. They do this by being in a position to offer, over the long-term, strong leadership, administrative assistance and professional management, which raises the calibre of events in terms of how they are carried-out, marketed and visibly promoted (Kobayashi 1996:PC). In the past, problems of event consistency had varied from year to year, however, as expertise is gained, shared events have a greater potential for quality and consistency.

Two events created by the KVA benefited by this direction to the point where they became independent and important sources of revenue for the community. The Music Festival created in 1979 attracts some of Canada's best names in music. Many of the tickets are purchased by Yukoners, but as it is held in late July, the height of the tourism season, visitors from all over the world attend. The direct economic impact on the community from the 1995 Festival was estimated at \$347,600. (Dawson City Music Festival Society 1996:12). The second event is the Canadian Airlines International Dome Race, which is a foot race to the top of the Midnight Dome mountain. The KVA organized and ran this event from 1985 until 1990 when it was renamed "Run Dawson." It is now organized by an independent group, while the KVA remains involved to give support and direction.

Today, the KVA is committed to developing and supporting the tourism industry within the community as well as creating employment and economic opportunities<sup>6</sup>. The KVA's role in the process of planning, developing and managing cultural tourism has been significant, not only in terms of its longevity and consistent support of the tourism industry, but also in terms of its involvement in preserving cultural resources and actually creating the numerous events, which

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<sup>6</sup> The KVA is the second largest employer in the community; Parks Canada is the largest (KVA 1992:1).



are a key factor in attracting visitors. The KVA's vision has changed little over the years, but its role has changed substantially. As a small, volunteer-based organization in the 1950s the KVA's role involved organizing entertainment for visitors. Today its roles include: ensuring that accepted methods of protection are used in the preservation and restoration of historic properties; enriching local culture through creative development and commodification of the community's cultural resources; creating quality and consistent cultural tourism products; promoting and marketing those products and Dawson City as a primary destination market; maintaining links with the Yukon-Alaskan tourism industry to ensure sustainability of Dawson City's tourism industry; and, finally, providing professional and administrative assistance in planning and organizing cultural events for other private sector organizations in the community. The KVA's future role involves providing more of this professional direction and support ensuring the continuity and sustainability of cultural tourism in Dawson City (Kobayashi 1996:PC).

**Yukon Visitors Association (YVA), Yukon Travel Bureau (YTB), Tourist Industry Association Of The Yukon (TIA-Yukon)**

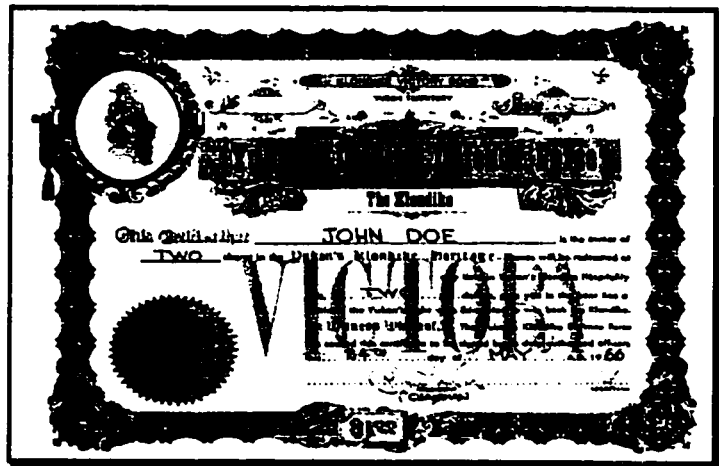
The KVA was not the only private sector organization to begin formally influencing the tourism industry in the Yukon and Dawson City in the 1950s. The Yukon Visitors Association (YVA), formed in 1957, saw the need to organize the tourism industry in the Yukon in order for it to emerge as a competitive segment of the Canadian travel scene (Minter 1969:5). Although the YVA was represented by people from Whitehorse, it had regional interests with membership open to all individuals or businesses related to tourism. The YVA became the Yukon Travel Bureau (YTB) in 1959, and for the first time, the Yukon possessed a proper tourist development office with a paid manager and staff financed by the Yukon government and Yukon business community. This association envisioned the Yukon as a world class travel destination and, therefore, encouraged the Yukon government to establish the Department of Travel and Information in 1962, which

took over much of the planning and development responsibilities the YTB envisioned (YTG 1978:1).

The main purpose and vision of the original YVA, however, was to encourage, increase and improve visitor services and attractions, while enhancing and stimulating the business climate within the growing visitor industry (Synergy West 1974:17). This commitment to the tourism sector is noted by a \$2000 grant in 1958 to the KVA in Dawson City to assist with fixing up several attractions within the townsite. This is believed to be the first time an outside agency, professionally committed to economic development, invested in developing the historic resources for tourism in Dawson City (Stuart 1990:116). This also suggests a tentative beginning of partnerships and shared responsibility within Yukon's tourism industry.

This shared responsibility came into play between 1966 and 1969, when the association went into battle to protect those historic and cultural resources through the "Klondike Defences Force."

In the early years, the YVA recognized the value in using the history of the region as a promotional tool and felt there was particular magic in the name "Klondike" (Minter 1969:5). Therefore, when Edmonton, Alberta, decided in 1963 to promote "Edmonton Klondike Days" as the theme of



*Figure 13: Yukon Klondike Defence Force - Victory Bond (Minter 1966:7)*

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its annual Exhibition, the YTB, the Yukon government and Yukoners protested vehemently. The defence force was started and funds were raised to support the protest through the sale of "Victory Bonds" at a dollar a share (Figure 13).

As the tourism industry in the Yukon was just beginning to develop, there was a feeling that unless Edmonton was forced to stop this expropriation and exploitation of Yukon's history, the development of tourism in the Yukon would be irreparably damaged (Mintor 1966:8). Although, in fact, the tourism industry has not been damaged significantly and continues to grow, the misunderstanding and confusion for visitors concerning the history of the Gold Rush remains. "A whole generation of travellers is growing up believing that Edmonton and the Klondike are synonymous...The myth is becoming the reality" (Mintor 1969:12). Also, the decision by Edmonton to continue with the Klondike theme is a point of bitter contention between the two regions even today.

This situation raises the issue of one community's respect, not only for another community's cultural heritage, but the goals and ambitions of that community. The bitterness of this situation precludes any collaborative efforts between the two communities to promote the "real" Klondike region. This event also raises the issue of commodification and authenticity of local and regional cultural heritage. The theme "Klondike Days" in Edmonton continues to promote mythical and exaggerated images of the Klondike. Within the Dawson region, however, comprehensive research and studies by Parks Canada and others into this historic period allows the promotion of authentic cultural themes and interpretations. The myths and the imagery are, of course, still used for promotional purposes and some events, but are offset by the work the community has done to preserve the authenticity and integrity of the cultural and historic legacy through restoration and interpretation.

To gain this appreciation and respect, the distribution of accurate, educational and entertaining information as well accurate promotional materials is essential. Within the community of Dawson and the Yukon in general there is a need to communicate and co-ordinate this information and materials produced for visitors. TIA-Yukon, the current private sector tourism representative, sees itself as having a role as communications co-ordinator among the various tourism stakeholder groups within the Yukon (Blackburn 1993:4). Although TIA-Yukon has been criticized in the past, it now hopes to encourage those stakeholders to attend its board meetings as well as give support to this organization and its role as communications co-ordinator (Blackburn 1993:4).

### **Dawson City Museum And Historical Society**

In the past, the private sector's role and involvement in preserving the Yukon's historic and cultural heritage was often limited to museums and historical societies. These museum societies have in their possession the majority of objects and artifacts of the Yukon's cultural heritage (Johnson 1980:30). The museums, therefore, have an integral role in preserving not only the cultural artifacts and heritage, but also authenticity and integrity as it interprets this heritage for the tourism industry.

The Dawson City Museum and Historical Society has the largest collection of cultural artifacts in the Yukon. With this substantial collection, the museum finds itself acting as a regional museum aimed at attracting tourists rather than a community museum preserving and interpreting local heritage (as they would prefer) (Swackhammer 1996:PC). Being a regional museum means a certain loss of autonomy and a close working relationship between the museum, territorial and federal governments (Kyte 1980:3). The museum relies heavily on these governments for programs such as job development and museum assistance programs as well as the museum policies generated to guide and legitimize their work.

The most significant effort involving government programs was the restoration of the Administration Building in which the Dawson City Museum is housed (Figure 14). In 1987, with funding from the Yukon's Heritage Branch capital program and a federal-territorial job development program, the renovations to this structure were completed (Davidson 1987:33).



*Figure 14: The Dawson City Museum in the Old Territorial Administration Building, Built in 1901 and Restored in 1987. (Photo E.A. English)*

The building continues to be owned by YTG who support the museum by maintaining the building.

The issue raised here is that without the support and partnership efforts on the part of the Museum Society, the community, the Yukon and federal governments, an important and significant contribution to the fabric of the community's cultural tourism product could not exist. Nor could there have been such a committed effort toward creating a mechanism for preserving and interpreting particular cultural and historic artifacts (both material and ethnographic).

The museum created by the Dawson City Museum and Historical Society in 1952 was first housed in an old fire hall, which subsequently burned down in 1960, destroying much of the collection. The museum re-opened in 1962 in its present location – the old Territorial Government Administration Building. Attempts at conserving this structure and rebuilding the collections were hindered by a chronic shortage of funds (Stuart 1999:120). By the 1980s the Museum, lead by an active,

progressive-minded Museum Society had begun organizing programs and policies for museum management, had hired a year-round museum manager and completed a planning study for future development (Johnson 1980:19). This future development involved the renovation of the old Yukon Administrative Building.

At the re-opening of the museum in 1987, an important event took place. The acting chief of the Han First Nations formally added their pledge of support to the museum's endeavours to reflect their culture (Davidson 1987:6). Although the museum already had interpretive displays of First Nations' culture, the formal pledge and support of the museum creates the openness for collaborative opportunities in terms of exhibiting and interpreting Han culture. The museum sees an opportunity to collaborate with the Han on displays and collection management at the new interpretive centre (Swackhammer 1996:PC). With this collaboration, both community members and tourists benefit, as an important cultural component of the community is interpreted and appropriately commodified through the expertise and knowledge of museum curators, indigenous knowledge of Han elders and community members.

As the Dawson City Museum is a tourist-oriented museum, its close ties to the tourism industry determines the type of programming and promotion needed to remain viable (Kyte 1980:4). With an estimated 22,000 visitors in 1996, (and tourists who visit only once outnumbering residents ten to one), the museum has decided not to spend money on upgrading permanent exhibits, other than normal maintenance (Swackhammer 1996:PC). The focus of spending has gone into a travelling exhibit, which not only promotes the museum, but the community at large.

With this focus, the museum created "Klondike Gold," a major travelling exhibit with artifacts and interactive videos depicting the 1898 Gold Rush. The

exhibit, funded by the Yukon government and the Federal Museums Assistance Program will travel across Canada and into the USA into 1999 (Olynyk 1995:1). Essentially the exhibit is a promotional vehicle for the community and is seen by the museum as their contribution to the economy and cultural tourism industry in Dawson (Swackhammer 1996:PC).

Another promotional vehicle comes in the form of a computer website<sup>7</sup>. The museum has created a database of names of people who came to the Klondike at the turn of the century. The Museum has as many as five to six requests per day and as many hits on their website from people looking for names of relatives (Swackhammer 1996:PC). Within individual organizations and agencies, the use of new technologies such as the Internet and databases for public access and promotion is becoming a necessity. The response to this is a linking of websites in the Yukon creating a particularly good site<sup>8</sup> for up-to-date tourism information on the Yukon and Dawson City.

The museum also feels it has a role in making visitors stay in the community a little longer, by making it worth their while. (Swackhammer 1996:PC). The museum is an important component of the overall tourism industry and thus aware of the need to have a quality, entertaining product to offer and attract visitors. Even though little money goes into the exhibits at the museum, other forms of programming, from plays acted out on street corners and interactive interpretive demonstrations at the museum, to coupons for 50% off the price of a meal at the museum coffee shop, are key programming elements aimed at attracting and

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<sup>7</sup> Dawson City Museum website - <http://gold-rush.org/ghost-07.htm>  
or <http://users.yknet.yk.ca/dcpages/museum.html>

<sup>8</sup> The main website for the Yukon is: <http://www.yukonweb.wis.net/>

keeping visitors in the community a little longer. Enticing visitors to stay for even one-half day longer has an economic impact on the community.

The issue, which arises out of this commitment to cultural tourism concerns whether or not the responsibilities of collection management, exhibit care and development and appropriate research are being hindered by the emphasis on creating and promoting a product for the tourism industry. The museum is very aware that some responsibilities are being compromised for tourism (e.g., exhibit development), however, efforts particularly in the area of research and field work are an important focus of their activities. Although difficulties arise with funding and finding experienced researchers to do field work and research, significant field work and photo documentation has been done in the gold fields, Dawson City and its surrounding area. The museum is the only source of scholarly research into the developmental history and culture of Dawson City beyond the narrow margin of the Gold Rush years (Swackhammer 1996:PC). As such, it has a significant role in preserving this history and culture and interpreting a variety of themes beyond the Gold Rush not only for tourists but, more importantly, for the community.

Throughout the years, the Dawson City Museum and Historical Society has made a significant contribution to the cultural tourism industry in Dawson City. The museum has played a role in collecting, housing and protecting the material and ethnographic artifacts of the community and region, as well as packaging and promoting this collection as a cultural tourism product. The museum has also played a role in contributing, through its membership, to the planning and development of events and projects associated with cultural tourism activities in the community at large. With this contribution, the cultural and historic legacy is protected and preserved for future generations.



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## First Nations

Yukon First Nations is one of the more important and latest sectors to become involved in the process of planning and developing cultural tourism. With the development of the Yukon First Nations Tourism Association in 1995, there is a willingness to participate more fully in the process. The association was developed to support First Nations tourism initiatives in terms of professional advice and securing funding. There is a major challenge for First Nations people to create solid communication within their communities and to determine what they feel they can and cannot share about their culture (Tobin 1995:4). In some instances, bands such as the Han in the Dawson area must rediscover and learn about their own culture before commodifying it for tourism.

While struggling with their identity and land claims issues, the Han have become involved with tourism. During the 1980s, usage of a more encompassing "Han" name began to create a more cohesive identity for the local Dawson band and facilitate the process of revitalizing their culture (Jarvenpa 1994:38). Today, the "Han Cultural Day", and the "Moosehide Gathering" (1992) adds to Dawson City's list of cultural events. Some members of the Han have established a theatre group to perform plays based on contemporary cultural experiences and others are planning to develop a fishing and trapping interpretive attraction upstream from Dawson. The new Han Cultural Centre," under construction at the north end of the waterfront near the present visitor reception centre, will help further efforts in defining and interpreting both past and present Han culture for tourists, while providing a centre for cultural events and activities for the community of Dawson and its visitors.

Within Dawson City there is significant respect for the band and its initiatives, despite previous business failures and negative attitudes from both First Nations and non-First Nations. Similarly the Han have respect for the community, noted particularly by their voluntary compliance with the historic by-laws (Kincaid

1997:PC). Land claim negotiations have gone relatively smoothly and are believed to be very close to signing (McDougal 1997:PC). For the past five years, a band member has been on the City Planning Board and members are a large part of the steering committee for the cultural centre (Williams 1996:PC). New business opportunities are being investigated and joint venture tourism opportunities will be encouraged by the band (Graham & Associates 1994:Poster).

The encouragement of joint venture, collaborative efforts is a significant issue not only for all stakeholders and key players in planning and developing cultural tourism, but especially First Nations. Within a community context, such as Dawson, the tourism products developed by the Han must be integrated, not isolated from the overall community cultural tourism product. Collaboration is key not only in terms of planning and financing projects, but the overall socio-cultural benefits derived from shared opportunities and understanding. Dawson City is particularly fortunate in that mutual respect and understanding between all cultures has been established leaving the path open for future joint ventures and partnerships. With the settlement of land claims and renewed cultural understanding, new possibilities for protecting and sharing Han culture may emerge along with having a greater role in planning and developing Dawson's cultural tourism.

## **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

In the 1950s, the community of Dawson became aware of the necessity to take control of the growing tourism industry and the need to protect, yet enhance, their cultural resources. The community felt the federal government needed to share in this responsibility. The attitude in Dawson City during the 1950s revealed their feeling that "...Dawson and the Klondike had done so much for Canada in gold production and patriotism during the wars that they deserved national recognition and assistance" (Stuart 1990:116). It was not until a federal bill was introduced in

1953 to set up the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (DNANR) that northern Canada and, consequently, Dawson City were given serious attention. The Department's aim was to administer to northern peoples, develop resources and create a further presence in the North (Lotz 1972:14). The result, especially for Dawson City, was large amounts of government money spent to improve and secure the lifestyle of the residents, including the infrastructure (particularly roads) and, most notably, the restoration of the historic resources (Lotz 1972:18).

Although the DNANR was created in 1953 and assistance to the North soon began, it was not until 1959 that the historic and cultural resources of Dawson were finally recognized and the federal government began its part in the process of planning and developing, preserving and restoring the historic resources. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), having previously rejected the area, determined "...Dawson City was an urban complex of national historic significance and that the discovery of gold should be commemorated by the national government in some way" (HSMBC-Yukon 1995:8). This allowed the government to begin a process of gradual involvement and commemoration of Dawson as part of federal support of the tourism industry (HSMBC-Yukon 1995:8).

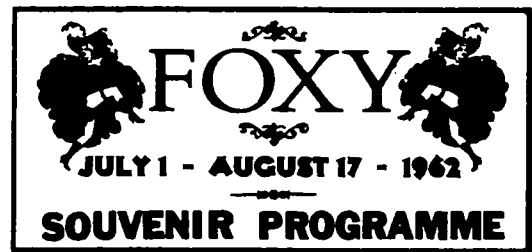
This also was the beginning of the loss of autonomy for Dawson City (Stuart 1990:128). As the attitude of community members in Dawson generally was that government assistance was their right, they also strongly resented regulation from the outside. They were to find that the price of survival meant dependence on external decision-making and financial support from the Canadian taxpayer (Stuart 1990:128; Swackhammer 1996:PC). The issue of autonomy was, and still is, a concern for certain members of the community. The concern stems from an attitude of frontierism where rules and regulation are unwelcome. The community, however, has had to rely on various federal programs to support it economically

and thus felt it has been dictated to by external forces rather than given support to carry out its own local goals.

One of the first major initiatives imposed on the community and planned by external decision-makers was "The Dawson City Festival," which took place July 1st to August 17th, 1962. The idea for the festival came out of discussions between the DNANR and Tom Patterson, Director of Canadian Theatre Exchange Ltd. Consequently, a Dawson City Festival Foundation was established in 1960 based on recommendations from a feasibility study completed the previous year by Patterson (Lotz 1962:3). The festival resulted in the initial involvement, in Dawson City, of the federal government's National Historic Parks and Sites Branch (NHPS), which rebuilt the Palace Grand Theatre and brought to Dawson the steamship "S.S. Keno" for use as a hotel/cabaret.

The festival foundation helped fund the stabilization of a number of buildings and encouraged the local community and the City to clean up the streets and vacant lots for appearance sake. Accommodation in the form of a tent city was established for the length of the festival, tourist attractions were erected and extensive publicity was undertaken (Yukon Archives 1994:4,10). The main entertainment involved the show "Foxy", presented at the Palace Grand Theatre (Figure 15). Even with all this planning and organizing the festival was not considered a success.

The festival, having been imposed upon the community from the outside, left some members of the community feeling it was not being done to benefit them (Lotz 1962:33). Although representatives from Dawson and the Yukon were present on the board of directors, there was little to no input



*Figure 15: Cover of the Dawson City Festival Brochure, 1962 (Yukon Archives)*

from the local community. Lotz felt, "...it was a classic example of outsiders' attempts to save a community with minimal local participation." He also noted the president of the festival said at a public meeting in Dawson seven months before it opened "...whether the people of Dawson want it or not they had a festival on their hands..." (Stuart 1990:117). The issue of respecting a community's societal goals and values was less than evident in this circumstance and rather than enhance community well-being, it encouraged the feeling of isolation and lack of support for their perceived needs. This resulted in little buy-in, participation and support of this festival.

The issue of lack of support and participation of this festival also stemmed from the attitude of some in the community that Dawson City during the 1950s and early 1960s had been neglected by the federal and territorial governments (Lotz 1962:33). The community was still feeling the loss associated with the transfer of the capital to Whitehorse in 1953, a number of curtailed government activities, the ceasing of steamship travel and freight hauling in 1953 due to the decline in use following the opening of a permanent road in 1948 and the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation (Y.C.G.C.) pending closure in 1966. As a result of this attitude and the fact the festival was being imposed from the outside, the festival did not have the support and participation it needed. Lotz (1962:48) reported,

The lack of involvement by the people of Dawson themselves in the Foundation was the most distressing augury of the future of the City...Unless local support can be gained...it will be extremely difficult to preserve the historic buildings of Dawson, the tourist attractions of the city, and, in the long-run, the city itself.

Although there was no festival the following year and the Foundation's remaining assets were liquefied in 1965, the determination of the local community to pursue the development of tourism is evident by the product offered today (Yukon Archives 1994:1). A factor in the community pursuing tourism was the interest generated by this festival in Dawson as a tourist destination. An estimated 18,545

visitors came to the festival generating approximately \$1,948,000 in revenue. The cost to the federal government and those private investors, however, emphasized the economic problems of investing in tourism in the North (Lotz 1964:126). There was little to no tourism infrastructure such as accommodation and services and very little ongoing programming or activities to attract and accommodate tourists. This issue of lack of tourism infrastructure could only be resolved through significant investment by the community and the outside both financially and idealistically before a cultural tourism event such as the 1962 festival could be successful.

As one entity, what the Festival Foundation tried to do appears to have been divided between the federal government and the community. One of the main goals of the Festival Foundation was to attract tourists to a festival with cultural events and activities that entertained, educated and raised money. Members of the community, KVA and the Museum Society, having participated in planning and developing festival events and activities, came away with invaluable knowledge (Stuart 1990:121). The community and especially the KVA began applying their new found knowledge and skill of event organizing and managing to create a number of events in the 1960s and 1970s, some of which, are now permanent annual events (Table 1).

A second goal of the foundation was to promote a sense of pride and awareness of the historic importance and value of the community by providing facilities to exhibit cultural traditions and the conservation and restoration of the historic resources (Lotz 1962:3). This was to be done by raising funds through the festival and other activities. As this required substantial financial support and expertise, the task fell upon the federal government. The NHPS, having acquired assets (the Palace Grand Theatre and SS Keno) and having done some significant research into the historic resources, now had a stake in the success of the community and the tourism industry. With this commitment, Lotz (1962:45) suggested in his

1962 report that the only way to solve the problems in Dawson and create the success the community and federal government envisioned was to take a long-term approach, restoring Dawson over a period of years.

This long-term approach began in 1967 with the meeting of the HSMBC in Dawson. With information from previous NHPS research, the Board felt there was a need to plan and execute a long-term program involving as much community input as was compatible with a nationally-funded program (Stuart 1990:125). The newly named Dawson City Historic Complex was evaluated and planned based on the board's recommendations:

- arrangements be made to collect, catalogue and, where necessary, acquire artifacts related to the history of the Gold Rush;
- the Minister acquire and preserve designated buildings;
- the full extent of the Gold Rush and its impact on Canadian history be commemorated; and, that;
- the evolution of placer-mining technology from the gold pan to the dredges be described and displayed (Parks Canada 1978:5).

This involvement resulted in some community members' strong resistance to certain historic related initiatives. This was not because they did not want their resources preserved and managed, but the independent mindset of those in Dawson City was resentment toward being told what to do with their own property. There was perhaps a misunderstanding of the ideas and vision behind the imposed planning, rules and regulations (Lotz 1962:46; Swackhammer 1996:PC). Combined with the federal government's limited encouragement of community participation in the process, there was little buy-in to the vision during the 1960s and 1970s. The issue this raises is one of how participation can be encouraged and who has the ability to change or focus community attitudes and visions toward a common goal. The role must be taken on by a body that is representative of the members of the community, and that has their support and respect. In Dawson City this was not the federal government's responsibility. Through their substantial contribution to the process, however, they gave the City of Dawson and YTG the tools to begin focusing

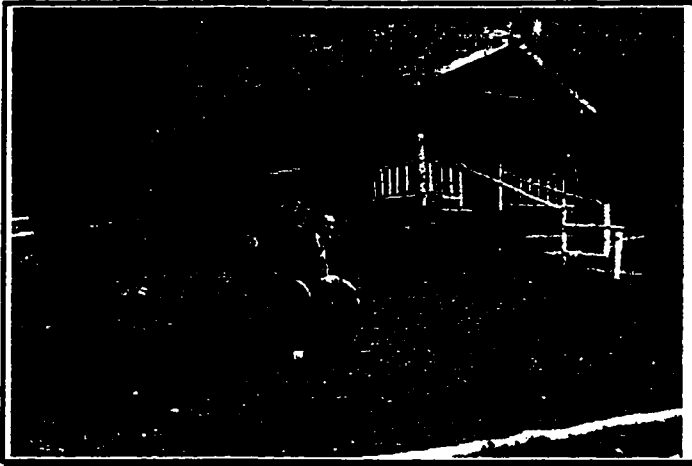
and working toward specific goals and establish their roles in influencing community participation, attitudes and vision.

Parks Canada began their contribution to the process in earnest by the summer of 1968. An Historic Sites Planning Committee began implementing the recommendations of the HSMBC by identifying and acquiring certain properties deemed significant. The decisions made by this committee of what was and was not significant again demonstrated the authority over Dawson City residents and their opinion concerning what the community would like to see preserved (Stuart 1990:126). Over the next several years, Parks Canada continued to have an exclusive vision of Dawson and began to produce several reports based on this vision.

- 1971 - *The Gold Fields;*
- 1972 - *Dawson City Buildings;*
- 1974 - *Urban Conservation Plan;*
- 1975 - *Conceptual Development Proposals for the Dawson City;  
Historic Sites and the Klondike Gold Fields; and*
- 1978 - *Master Development Plan.*

The first two reports outlined the conceptual framework to guide acquisitions and development within a thematic context. The themes were to clearly describe and interpret the relationships between three identified areas, "Historic Dawson City," the "Gold Fields," and the "Klondike Gold Rush International Trail" (Parks Canada 1978:5). The theme in Dawson itself is based on the romanticized period of the Gold Rush 1897 - 1903 and the period of consolidation of Dawson as an urban complex – approximately 1910 (Neufeld 1996:2). The buildings acquired, preserved and interpreted, therefore, reflect the administrative, social, economic and gold field support function of the town during this period (Figure 16)(HSMBC-Yukon 1995:8).





*Figure 16: Robert Service's Cabin Built ca. 1897-8 – Declared a National Historic Site in 1967 by HSMBC and Donated to Parks Canada by the City of Dawson in 1970. (Photo E.A. English)*

Themes associated with sites in the gold fields commemorate the Klondike Gold Rush and corporate industrial mining activity in Canada (Figure 17). These themes reflect the mandate of Parks Canada to protect the authentic components of history, while having the flexibility to interpret all aspects of that history. These various themes based on one point in history are an issue of concern to the City of Dawson and organizations such as the museum. This limited view of Dawson City's



*Figure 17: Dredge #4 - Built in 1913, Donated to Parks Canada in 1969. (Photo E.A. English)*

history negates the importance of the community's socio-cultural contributions to the history of Dawson beyond the period of the Gold Rush. This difference in vision between Parks Canada and the community has yet to be resolved without compromising the commemorative integrity of the history of the Gold Rush, nor

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suppressing the needs of the community to recognize and celebrate all of their history and culture.

The third major report by Parks Canada was the 1974 "Urban Conservation Plan". Based on these original themes, a detailed set of architectural and landscape design guidelines was created to aid not only Parks Canada in their projects of restoration, renovation or rehabilitation, but also to act as a guide for City Council, residents and developers to use with their own projects (Parks Canada n.d.:7). Parks Canada strongly encouraged the community to comply with these themes and guidelines, which were included as amendments to the City's historic control zoning by-laws. Initially, compliance with these guidelines and by-laws was limited, however, the long-term commitment by Parks Canada and the City's commitment to creating these by-laws began to convince community members of their importance in developing and maintaining the character of the townsite.

In addition to the 1974 plan, a 1975 *Conceptual Developments Proposal* and 1978 *Master Development Plan* were proposed. Planning team members representing Parks Canada, various other government agencies, the Yukon Territorial Government and Dawson City set out to "...identify and integrate those legal, historical, physical, socio-economic and organizational factors that influence the preservation, commemoration and administration of the historical and natural resources of the 'Dawson City - Klondike Gold Fields Areas' " (Parks Canada 1978:6).

One of the first objectives recommended by the Master Plan was the integration of themes, plans, policies and programs associated with these two areas into the *Klondike National Historic Sites* (KNHS) (Parks Canada 1978:6). Numerous sites in the gold fields and Dawson City were identified for preservation and interpretation under the new KNHS designation; however, this very ambitious master plan was never fully implemented. Budget restraints forced Parks Canada to

return to a stabilization and slower development approach, which limited the process of preserving and restoring the numerous recognized historic resources (Johnson 1980:43).

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, Parks Canada did, however, continue to research, plan and develop the historic resources entrusted to them. During the 1980s, for example, a program of archaeological investigations added to the growing body of resource information. In 1993, the *Klondike National Historic Sites Concept Plan* recognized the need to continue nurturing relationships and partnerships with the Yukon Territorial Government, the Department of Tourism and the City of Dawson. The report emphasizes the importance of their relationship with the community, KVA and Museum Association as being vital, in terms of architectural conservation, joint marketing, special events planning and shared resource expertise (Parks Canada 1993:4). This report in particular is one of the first of Parks Canada's to specifically address the issue of partnerships and shared responsibility and is an important issue in terms of Parks Canada's involvement in tourism communication activities and encouraging collaborative ventures which use their historic structures (e.g., the Post Office operation , located in an historic building owned by Parks Canada, is contracted out, and run by a private source).

The Concept Plan also re-affirms the use of Parks Canada's management policies such as those contained in the *Cultural Resource Management Policy*. Adherence to these policies relating to appropriate preservation and conservation can help to ensure the integrity of the cultural resources in Dawson as well as creating public awareness of the importance of special places. The Plan also encourages the use of the Environmental Assessment and Review Process (EARP) in conjunction with new developments. The establishment and use of these government policies and processes are important for the sustainability of the cultural resources and as products for tourism.

By 1996, Parks Canada has acquired, preserved and restored as many as 28 sites within the KNHS – 25 in Dawson City and three in the gold fields. The sites within Dawson City have been restored to a specific period of history and become focal points to the interpretation of the Gold Rush period (Figure 18).

As Parks Canada's planning has focused more on preserving the commemorative integrity of the historic resources and a period in history, rather than commodifying them as commercially viable properties, the ongoing cost of maintenance and programming continues to be the sole responsibility of Parks Canada and taxpayer dollars.



*Figure 18: Commissioner's Residence Built 1904, the latest property to be restored by Parks Canada, re-opened August, 1996. (Photo E.A.English)*

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In the early 1990s, however, reduction in Parks Canada funding left the KNHS with approximately 55% of its previous budget. This resulted in staff cuts and less money for maintenance and programming (Blackburn 1994:4). An issue of concern relating to staff cuts, is the loss of personnel with expertise and knowledge associated with both the historical aspects of Dawson and the technical ability to protect, preserve and conserve the physical historic environment. The loss of

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knowledgeable personnel cannot be equated only in economic terms, but in terms of ensuring standards and quality of property maintenance, historic and cultural interpretation and the historic integrity of the sites.

Solutions to this problem of funding cuts involved the implementation in 1995, of user fees at Parks Canada sites (e.g., Robert Service cabin and the poetry reading by Tom Byrne cost \$6.00 adult in 1996) and packaging these products more effectively. The purchase of a package of tickets (\$10.00 - \$15.00 in 1996) including a number of guided tours and site admissions has been noted as having a profound effect on the length of stay of visitors to the community. Visitors will stay longer, even overnight, just to use all the tickets in the package, resulting in direct economic value to the community (Swackhammer 1996:PC). An extreme option, addressed by Parks Canada, would be the divestment of certain property (Davidson 1994:4). As with private sector organizations, extreme solutions are not necessarily the best solutions, therefore, the need to find creative ways to increase revenue is becoming more of a factor in the process of planning.

The role of the federal government and, particularly, Parks Canada in the process of planning and developing the cultural and historic resources as a product for tourism has been a significant one. The presence of permanent Parks Canada staff, who are experts in cultural heritage preservation, and are knowledgeable and sympathetic to the Yukon's cultural resources, has been of great benefit to Dawson City and the Yukon in general (Johnson 1980:45). Their main role has been and continues to be preserving the commemorative integrity of the historic resources in Dawson and promoting a sense of awareness and pride within the community concerning the historic nature and value of those resources. Their role has also included providing the facilities to exhibit and interpret this history, while preserving and conserving the built environment. Their role has changed somewhat in recent years from planning and developing the historic resources to managing, maintaining and programming the products they have developed since the early

1960s. Their involvement, however, is still significant in terms of sustaining and maintaining standards and providing quality assets to the overall community cultural tourism product.

The federal government also plays a role in the growth and international competitiveness of Canada's tourism industry and, as such, is committed to a policy of co-operation, co-ordination and integration with all provincial, territorial and tourism industry partners (Tourism Canada 1991:17). The many tourism and heritage related policies and programs initiated by the federal government play an important role in encouraging the preservation, protection and sharing of Canada's cultural and historic resources.

## **YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT (YTG)**

The Yukon Territorial Government's interest in tourism involves all ministries to a certain degree, but more specifically the Department of Tourism (Yukon Tourism) and the Anniversary Commission. These two agencies in particular, have played a large part in the process of cultural tourism planning and development in the Yukon. They have affected the process by the development of policies and programs, which protect the cultural resources, yet encourage culturally related tourism initiatives.

### **Yukon Tourism**

Yukon Tourism plays a large role in developing strategic tourism planning, tourism and cultural policies as well as promoting the region's tourism. The department capitalizes on the Yukon's vast wilderness experience, Gold Rush and mining history and First Nations' cultural heritage through promotional leads such as the "magic and the mystery" and "it's on the road less travelled." This ministry's

strong identity, presence and support of the tourism industry has, however, taken a number of years to develop.

The first government tourism office was not established until 1962. With numbers of tourists increasing each year (54,045 in 1962 - Graph 3), the Yukon government recognized the potential for the tourism industry to stabilize and diversify the economic base in the Yukon and thus the need to establish an office to co-ordinate and plan tourism initiatives. By the 1970s, studies such as *Tourism in the Yukon: An Overview* (Synergy West Ltd. 1974) and various plans and programs were being considered; however, little was done to develop an overall tourism strategy. The office and its programs did not have a strong identity, and that hindered program implementation. This changed somewhat in 1978 when this office was designated "Yukon Tourism" (YTG 1978:1).

Yukon Tourism was given a higher profile and a greater mandate to support the tourism industry. This began a process that involved greater collaboration with the federal government and encouraged private sector investment. *The Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* commissioned by YTG in 1978 and a 1980 *Federal - Territorial Tourism Agreement* injected \$6.0 million into the Yukon's tourism industry. This helped to create enthusiasm and momentum within the Yukon and Dawson City's private sector (YTG 1982:1). A \$330,000 contribution to Dawson City from this agreement resulted in \$2 million dollars in private sector investment (YTG 1982:2).

The 1978 development strategy established a framework for the growth and development of the Yukon's tourism industry and, in particular, promoted a study of Dawson City's tourism development. A 1981 study, *Dawson City Tourism Development Strategy*, revealed that although considerable effort and expense by a number of agencies, particularly Parks Canada, had gone into preserving the cultural resources and development of interpretive programming for tourism, the

results were less than expected. Overall development appeared spotty and inconsistent and revealed that a number of significant structures had been left to decay or were merely stabilized, while less important buildings were restored at great expense (YTG n.da:12).

The flood of 1979 had also left many buildings severely damaged with some having to be demolished. This added further to the community's loss of heritage properties as well as general housing and business property structural problems, not to mention the socio-economic problems associated with this flooding. As the financial constraints to Parks Canada's 1978 "Master Plan" precluded further implementation, YTG felt it should become involved in preservation and development programming in Dawson City (YTG n.da.:12). This resulted in Yukon Tourism opening a Dawson City regional office in 1980 to provide design guidance, grant application assistance, and deliver the incentive program established by a sub-agreement to the Federal - Territorial Tourism Agreement. This assistance helped in re-establishing and enhancing both the historical and developmental aspects of the community (Saito 1996:PC). With the opening of this regional office in Dawson, the YTG began to develop a more encompassing vision for Dawson and take a more active role in the process of planning and developing Dawson's tourism industry.

Yukon Tourism and its Industry Services, Marketing, Arts and Heritage branches are now responsible for planning and developing tourism and heritage related policies and programs. Of particular importance is the fact that Yukon Tourism is responsible for the cultural resources of the Yukon through the Heritage Branch. Unlike many provincial and territorial governments in Canada, Yukon Tourism and the Heritage Branch very seriously support and invest in cultural heritage preservation by developing policies, and funding programs (Swackhammer 1996:PC). They also provide conservators, archaeologists, palaeontologists and museum advisors to give assistance or advice. With this management structure,



cultural resource concerns co-ordinate with the tourism services and marketing directly and any tourism industry related policy or program takes into consideration the impact on the cultural resources.

Until the 1980s, however, there was little to no interaction between the business of tourism (e.g., commodification of cultural resources, marketing or promotion) with cultural preservation concerns. A comprehensive discussion by Johnson (1980) highlights concerns, issues and problems relating to preserving the Yukon's cultural heritage resources prior to 1980. Noted in this discussion is the lack of territorial government means to plan or implement long-range, culturally related strategies. An example of this was the passing of the 1968 *Historic Sites and Monuments Ordinance*, which allowed the commissioner to acquire, preserve, commemorate and administer any historic places, lands or things (Johnson 1980:1). From this ordinance an advisory board was established; however, frustrations as to its main role and function left the Board with no clear overview or long-range perspective. In a November, 1976 press release, an executive committee member stated:

"the Yukon Government does not anticipate becoming involved in an extensive historic resources stabilization, restoration or interpretive program...YTG funding for this type of program simply does not exist now and probably won't be available in the foreseeable future" (Johnson 1980:7).

Despite these problems, a number of programs were developed in the 1970s, such as the production of tourism brochures, matching grant programs to assist community attractions (including museums), a Foundation Assistance program, a Façade Incentive program, and heritage related, educational curriculum development programs. These programs and projects, however, represented improvements to or creation of new visitor attractions, but were not generally considered part of a long-range plan to preserve the Yukon's historic resources (Johnson 1980:8).

This lack of a clearly defined role and long-range vision previous to 1980 hindered the YTG from interacting effectively with other organizations or groups associated with cultural preservation (Johnson 1980:12). In particular, the preservation and restoration of Dawson's heritage was being directed solely by the federal government and its policies. Federal policies and spending encouraged the view that local initiatives may be insignificant or not required, however, these federal policies reflect national heritage objectives and themes and do not interpret or address the broader ongoing local cultural heritage (Johnson 1980:35). There was little to no regional government support or collaboration with local community initiatives nor comprehensive territorial heritage legislation to protect cultural sites, artifacts or historic buildings. Thus, an issue of great concern previous to 1980 was the need for more regional government support of local cultural heritage by developing appropriate policies, programs and legislation.

The result of this concern was the establishment of the Department of Heritage and Cultural Resources in 1981 (later to become the Heritage Branch of Yukon Tourism). This concern also resulted in further programming and the beginnings of heritage related policy directives. One of the first programs developed was to create the *Yukon Historic Sites Inventory* (1986), which is constantly updated and has become a critical source of information for historic resource management (YTG n.d.b.:Pamphlet). Another, *The Heritage Properties Assistance Contribution* (HPAC) program developed in 1987, encourages groups or individuals to become involved in preserving significant, privately-owned, cultural or historic sites (YTG-HPA n.d.:Pamphlet). For example, in 1995 a total of \$40,000 from this program contributed to the preservation of four historic buildings in Dawson City (Whitehorse Star 1995a:3). This program, however, is feeling the pressure of a limited budget and over-subscription resulting in less money for individual projects and more restrictive criteria in evaluating which projects receive funding (Olynyk 1997:PC).

The extensive utilization of these two programs reflects the impact of YTG programming to stimulate interest and investment in preserving cultural heritage. There is importance in continuing to back these programs in terms of protecting the cultural resources and sustaining growth and development of cultural tourism related products.

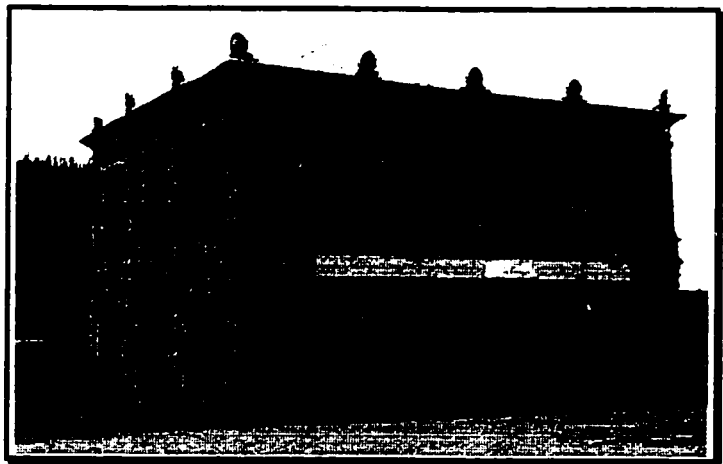
One of the first major policies developed during the 1980s concerned the role of museums in preserving cultural heritage. The need to support this role through museum development assistance programs, co-ordination of activities, training of personnel and availability of professional advice was incorporated into the *Yukon Museums Policy* (1989). This policy gives the Heritage Branch "...a clear mandate to act as a facilitator and catalyst for the Yukon museums community...It allows for the provision of various government programs and services to museums and encourages government agencies and museums to work together to achieve shared objectives" (YTG 1989:ii). Subsequent to this policy was the *Museums Artifact Conservation Policy*, (1992) which "...sets priorities and establishes a process for rationalizing the external artifact conservation services being provided by the Yukon government to museums and Yukon First Nations" (YTG 1992:2).

The issue of lack of government support, which was a concern prior to 1980, is addressed by the many programs and policies established throughout the 1980s and 1990s. This initial lack of government support highlights the need for governments at all levels to establish and set policies as guidelines to help focus goals, while funding and assistance programs give incentives for private sector investment through financial and professional assistance.

The most significant directive of this Heritage Branch is the drafting of the *Historic Resources Act* (HRA) to protect Yukon's cultural heritage resources. Prior to this legislation, cultural resources were under limited protection by the 1971 *Area*

*Development Ordinance* and the *Municipal Act*, which allowed municipalities to deal with heritage matters, but there was no obligation for them to include such matters in their planning process (Ward 1986:136,138). Cultural resources, therefore, were virtually unprotected from demolition and unrestricted renovation in the case of historic structures, or vandalism at archaeological or palaeontological sites. This new HRA, with much debate over issues such as the fundamental difference in beliefs between the rights of the individual and the right to protect public heritage, was finally passed into law July 1, 1996 (Whitehorse Star 1995b:2).

As it relates to historic structures, the Act gives support and legal backing for individual municipalities to develop their own cultural heritage by-laws. The City of Dawson, with the help of Parks Canada, had previously implemented some historic by-laws, however, they did not have the legal backing to enforce these by-laws nor create specific ones such as that relating to heritage designation. The inability to designate and protect historic structures in Dawson City has been an issue of great concern. Although there are some 38 properties designated in the Dawson City area, these are federally defined and Parks Canada has no plans to designate any further properties or sites. Those sites considered significant by the territory and the community of Dawson could not be designated as heritage properties and could not be protected until the passing of this Act. A particular example is the Bank of Commerce building, which stands on the banks of the Yukon River (Figure 19).



*Figure 19: Bank of Commerce - A Significant Historic Building which Needs Protection Through Designation as a Heritage Property.  
(Photo E.A. English)*

This structure has historical significance not only for its architectural style, but the fact that Robert Service worked at the bank in the early 1900s. The structure is privately owned and its existence and condition lies solely in the hands of the owner. The City of Dawson can now designate this building as an historic structure under Part 5 Section 36.(1) of the Act allowing municipalities to create specific by-laws to designate specific structures.

The issue raised involves the debate over property owner's rights versus the right to protect public heritage. A subsequent section 36.(2) of the Act states that municipal councils cannot designate a site considered to be a residence in which the owner resides without written consent of that owner. As the Bank of Commerce building has apartments on the upper floors it could, in fact, fall under this section of the Act if the owner were to actually reside there. The choice to designate the building would again lie solely in the hands of the owner. The problem then involves cultural resource managers being responsible for education and the creation of public awareness regarding the protection of public heritage.

Another issue which arises from the passing of this Act involves the limited amount of municipal resources in terms of financial, staffing and political means to implement either the intention or requirements of the Act. The ability of the City of Dawson to fulfil such requirements as developing a "municipal inventory" or to use the intention of the act, particularly heritage designation, to protect the historic resources is restricted by limited means. There is importance in finding the means to implement these processes as they relate not only to protection of sites and the intrinsic historic or cultural value, but as an integral part in preserving the aesthetics of the townsite and its character as a tourism product.

Apart from Yukon Tourism's role in preserving cultural heritage it also has a role in marketing and promotion. The Yukon is marketed and promoted

appropriately to the outside and to support organizations such as the KVA in Dawson City and TIA-Yukon (Saito 1996:PC). In November, 1993, a meeting sponsored by the Department of Tourism brought together over 220 delegates associated with various community Chambers of Commerce, the TIA-Yukon, other industry groups, government and private operators. The topic, *Tourism Promotion in the Yukon*, centred on such issues as infrastructure, marketing, and awareness in terms of communication, trust and partnerships (Blackburn 1993:4). The ability of Yukon Tourism to encourage and support meetings such as this demonstrates its commitment to improving communications, partnerships and trust between tourism industry sectors in the Yukon, ensuring that an integrated, consistent and quality product is marketed and promoted.

#### **Anniversaries Commission**

Tourism Yukon is not the only territorial government department involved in encouraging the planning and development of cultural tourism. In 1987, the YTG recognized the potential of commemorating numerous upcoming historic anniversaries, not only as a celebration for the Yukon's residents and cultures, but to serve as an economic development tool for tourism and related community development (Yukon Anniversaries Commission 1993:i). The Yukon Anniversaries Commission was, therefore, created to plan, organize and co-ordinate events and programs to celebrate various Gold Rush related centennials, and other significant anniversaries, particularly the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway. After five years of planning, the 1992 Alaska Highway Anniversary celebration was judged a success in terms of community involvement and the impact on tourism. This success provided opportunity and incentive to the Commission to create the mechanisms necessary to tap into the potential benefits from the Gold Rush related centennials and anniversaries (1995-2000) (Yukon Anniversaries Commission 1993:i).

The Yukon Anniversaries Commission's 1993 *Strategic Plan* (Yukon Anniversaries Commission 1993) identifies the potential, the goals and a number of specific strategies to take advantage of this unique situation. The plan is meant to be a guiding strategy to focus and integrate cultural tourism initiatives. The potential impact, although speculative and difficult to predict, is expected to be positive in terms of increased visitation and tourism dollars spent. Economic benefits will result in the growth of existing businesses and formation of new businesses, stronger production and distribution of Yukon products (arts and crafts), and interest in the Yukon as a place to live and invest (Yukon Anniversaries Commission 1993:vii).

The socio-cultural impacts expected involve raising awareness and interest in the Yukon's social and cultural history, creating a valued legacy in terms of cultural interpretive facilities and collections that are sensitively and accurately treated, and creating educational benefits for the public school system (Yukon Anniversaries Commission 1993:vii).

Although these impacts are not yet fully realized, the vision this Commission created can be judged by programs and initiatives already implemented. A joint initiative of the departments of Economic Development and Tourism developed two, separate, five-year programs to provide financial assistance to communities to improve tourism potential and take advantage of the economic benefits offered by these anniversaries (YTG-CAP n.d:Pamphlet). The *Centennial Events Program* (1995) provides financial assistance to communities and Yukon-wide groups planning events commemorating Yukon centennials or other anniversaries. No private sector, or government agencies are eligible to apply. With the exceptions of Yukon-wide events, the YTG may contribute up to 50% financing of eligible costs for an approved event to a maximum of \$10,000 for community focused events (YTG-CEP n.d.:Pamphlet). Several events in the community of Dawson have been approved and funded by this program to date:

- 1) The Opening of Ridge Road
- 2) Discovery Claim Activity
- 3) World Gold Panning Championships
- 4) Han First Nations - Cultural Theatre Events
- 5) Re-enactment of Dawson Nugget Hockey Team (1910-1914)
- 6) Re-enactment of Percy De Wolf Dog Sled Race

The second program, "Centennial Anniversaries Program," provides incentive for communities to develop and support capital related projects. The YTG may contribute up to 100% of eligible cost for an approved project and only one project is approved per community (YTG-CAP n.d.:Pamphlet). In Dawson City, a "Waterfront Improvement Project" has been approved and \$1.6 million allocated toward the proposed \$3.5 million needed (Kenny 1996:PC, Sawa 1996a:5). The project is aimed at reclaiming the river heritage lost by the construction of the dike and generally improve the appearance, access and use of the waterfront by creating venues and public facilities (Florian Maurer Architect Ltd. 1996:8).

One of the main facilities included in the waterfront project is the construction of a \$1.5 million Tr'ondek Hwech'in Cultural Centre. This project had been considered a separate project by the band, but to qualify for funding under the anniversaries program they collaborated with the "Waterfront Improvement Project." For these projects to be approved for funding as one entity the community and all participants had to be in full agreement. This joint venture is believed to be the first time the City and First Nations have worked together on a project of this scale (Sawa 1996a:5).

These two programs are significant in terms of YTG's role in encouraging and assisting socio-cultural community relations by requiring participation and full agreement within the community of events or projects to be undertaken. These programs also give the financial impetus to encourage local community cultural tourism initiatives and tourism related infrastructure projects that will have lasting, sustainable value to the community.



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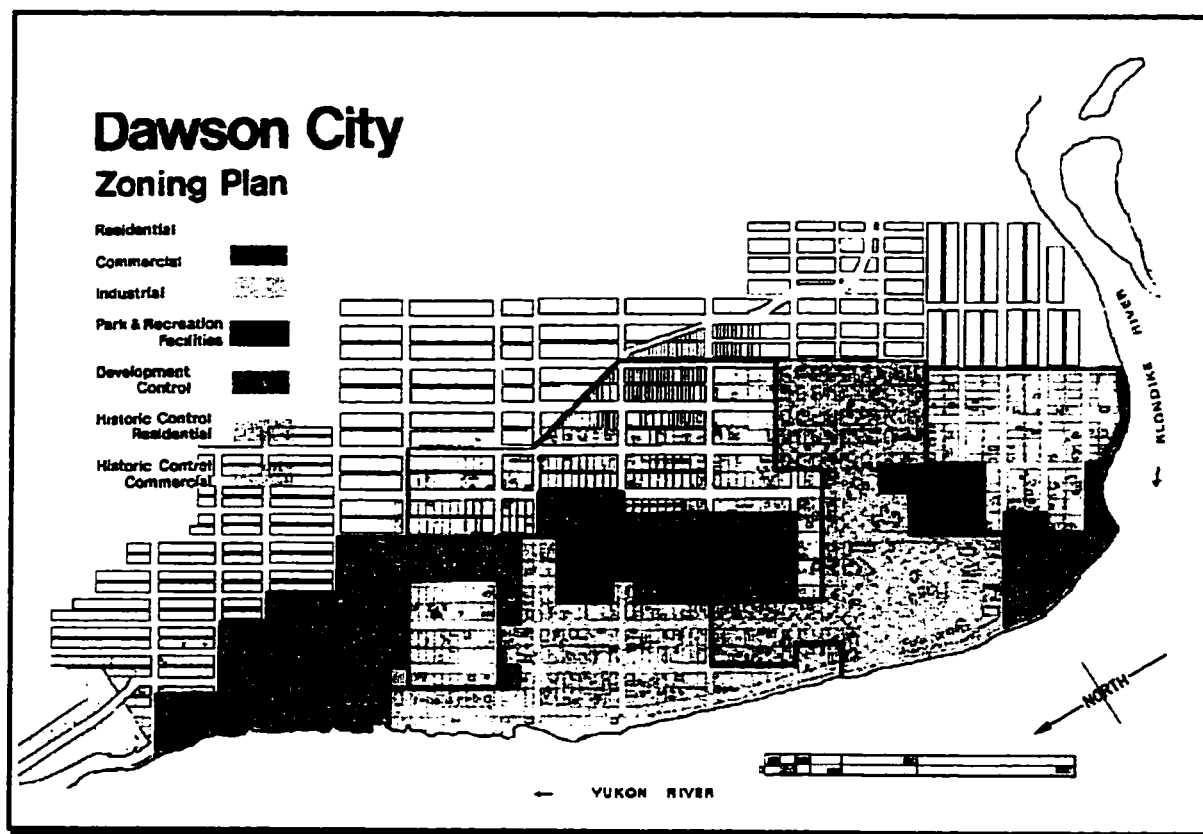
## MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

The final organization involved in the long and complex process of planning, developing and managing cultural tourism in Dawson City is the municipal government or the "City" as referred to within this document. The City's active involvement in the process did not begin until the late 1960s. Until that time the City had been coping with the loss of status as capital of the Yukon, the closing of the Y.C.G.C. in 1966 and the attitude that the community may not have a future. The result of this was very little infrastructure replacement or improvement and no formal community planning occurring. The placement of the power plant at the gateway to the community and the YTG maintenance yard in a prime location attests to this lack of community planning in terms of the townsite's overall visual and aesthetic character (Swackhammer 1996:PC).

By 1967, however, Parks Canada had made significant contributions in terms of research and initial planning and helped the community form a volunteer planning board within the City. This volunteer board, made up of community members and assistance provided by Parks Canada, began advising City Council with regard to an overall vision for the community in terms of appearance and character as it related to the historic Gold Rush period. To implement this vision and regulate the historic character, a zoning by-law was passed in 1972 creating two historic control zones, one commercial and one residential. This zoning by-law was later amended (#80-08) and an *Historic Control By-Law* (#80-09) was added, which incorporated further research and design guidelines from Parks Canada's 1974 *Urban Conservation Plan*.

The boundaries of these historic zones were based on Parks Canada's research, however, later YTG and City-supported studies suggested the boundaries be changed somewhat. A 1975 study *Dawson City Community Plan* by Synergy West (1995) suggested the following zoning plan (Map 4), which is slightly larger than the

area originally approved and similar to an area proposed by Parks Canada's 1974 *Urban Conservation Plan*.



*Map 4: Proposed Zoning Plan (Synergy West 1975:85)*

The zoning plan of 1972 has yet to be officially up-dated. When it is updated, it must take into account the annexing of a large portion of land surrounding Dawson City. The original townsite plus surrounding area is now 45 square miles in area. The City in 1997 is in the process of updating the *Official Community Plan* (OCP), land use and zoning by-law including the 1972 historic zones and historic control provisions. There is a proposal to have three zones of historic control (Kincaid 1997:PC). The first zone involves the downtown commercial core, which will have provisions restricting the types of materials used to restore or build structures and the structure's appearance. The commercial core is the main focus of attraction for tourists and as such, the provisions are focused on

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maintaining the architectural style common during and immediately following the Gold Rush.

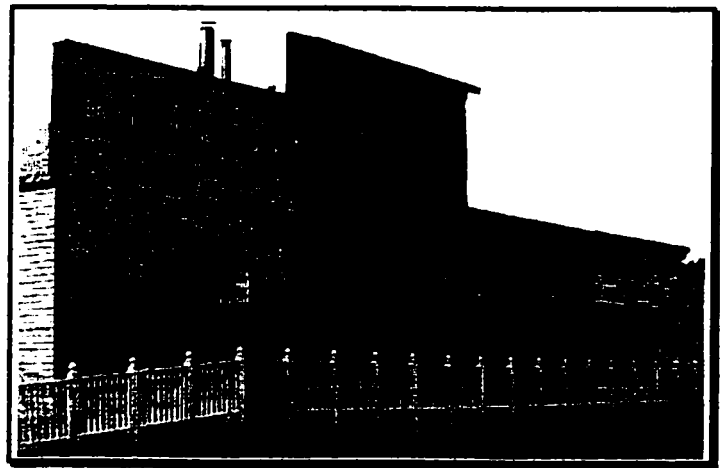
The second zone involves the historic residential area, which would involve structures maintaining an historic appearance with no restrictions to materials used. This would help to alleviate the pressure of having to use more expensive materials for the sake of authenticity. The third zone of historic control would involve the remainder of the community including the approach corridors and West Dawson. Design guidelines suggest this area would also have an historic appearance, but have even fewer restrictions in terms of building materials or designs used. The development of this three level approach would allow a transition in terms of the community's visual appearance from the less historic outer areas to the historic core.

As the City has a responsibility to regulate the character, aesthetics and infrastructure associated with community, tourism industry and cultural resource related needs, the City is taking responsibility by discussing ways to integrate the needs of these various components through the current review of the OCP. New historic zoning and related design by-laws are taking into account both the cost of preservation to residents, as well as the interpretation of an inclusive cultural heritage.

These new options proposed for the OCP attempt to address the issue of whether Dawson City is treated as a museum piece such as Barkerville, B.C. or a living, vibrant community taking into account the economic realities of community members to develop and maintain the historic character of the townsite. These options attempt to alleviate the tension between socio-economic issues, property rights and historic preservation.

Another issue raised by the process of redefining the land use zones and historic control by-law concerns the use of the term "historic" as opposed to the term "heritage" (Kincaid 1997:PC). As the by-law stands there is a very restrictive historic time period in which the Gold Rush style of architecture is defined. Using the term heritage broadens the perspective to include the whole history and culture (including First Nations) of Dawson City, allowing the by-law to interpret, where appropriate, the Gold Rush style of architecture, yet allowing other areas to reflect equally important phases in Dawson's cultural history.

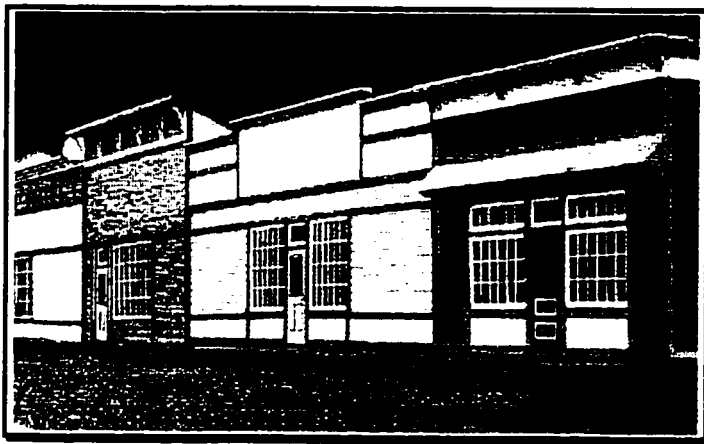
When the Zoning By-Law and Historic Control By-Law were first set in place they concerned those historic areas most attractive to tourists. Property owners were encouraged to comply with these by-laws to help create a sense of history and character. These by-laws, however, have been difficult to enforce due to lack of local financial means, process and political will and have, therefore, relied on the buy-in and voluntary compliance of community members. Initially the planning and historic by-laws and guidelines proposed by Parks Canada and the City, met with a certain amount of resistance, but by the late 1970s, and into the 1980s, the attitude was changing. The significant commitment and contribution by Parks Canada was being recognized and Parks Canada, YTG and the City's proposed vision began to gain acceptance (Swackhammer 1996:PC). With this change in attitude and understanding of the potential to attract tourists through adhering to the by-laws and suggested design guidelines, the community has complied increasingly (Figure 20).



*Figure 20: Historic Commercial Zone - By-Law Compliance (Photo E.A. English)*

Today, between 75-80% of the community complies with the by-laws and guide-lines, when restoring or constructing new projects (Williams 1996: PC; Kincaid 1997:PC).

The remainder of community members and some external private sector operators either disregard the by-laws altogether (e.g., Indian and Northern Affairs building), or take advantage of loop-holes in the by-laws and unclear guidelines to make a statement of their feelings toward by-law requirements. For example, the Westmark Hotel owned by Holland America takes advantage of the lack of a colour restrictive by-law by painting the false façades on the back of their hotel with brilliant colours (Figure 21). The back of the hotel actually fronts a main thoroughfare.



*Figure 21: The Westmark Hotel - painted with non-historic colours. (Photo E.A. English)*

Other issues relating to community appearance and aesthetics include the debate over whether or not the roads should remain gravel or be paved, the height or elevations of buildings and the street grade which is being altered to alleviate problems of flooding.. The lack of clear design guidelines is also an issue of concern and adds to problems of compliance. The design guidelines used by the City are based on those developed by Parks Canada in the 1970s. The City itself has not

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published a clear set of guidelines that can be accessed and used by the general public. With a clearer set of published guidelines compliance may be improved.

With the passing of the Yukon Historic Resource Act in 1996, greater legal support is given to municipal by-laws and their enforcement. The issue, though, involves the problem many smaller communities such as Dawson City face, and that is not having the resources and means to implement even the most important of its directives. A year after the Act's passing, the much needed by-law concerning heritage designation and the mechanisms to enforce it have yet to be put in place. Sites and properties such as the Bank of Commerce still go unprotected.

One of the solutions suggested to deal with the problems associated with planning and regulating the historic and cultural heritage resources in the community would be to form a Heritage Foundation (Kincaid 1997:PC). This foundation would have support of City and business representatives, but would be an arm's-length private sector organization that would have the autonomy to act on its own behalf. The foundation's role would involve dealing with all aspects of Dawson's heritage and could be the organization to formally apply for World Heritage Status<sup>9</sup>.

The City's involvement with cultural tourism involves more than a concern with protecting the historic and cultural resources. The City and the planning board also find themselves trying to meet the needs of the community, while facing the problems of increasing numbers of tourists (Williams 1996:PC). The need to develop more residential land and tourism infrastructure in Dawson City and areas immediately adjacent is hindered by unsettled First Nation land claims. The settlement of these land claims is a precondition for almost all major constitutional and economic initiatives in the Yukon and North West Territories (Whittington

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<sup>9</sup> Former Mayor Art Webster and Pierre Berton have discussed the possibility of applying for Dawson City to become a World Heritage site (Kincaid 1996:PC).

1985:80). The transfer of crown lands to the territory has been frozen and territorial lands are not being transferred to municipalities, resulting in millions of acres of land that cannot be purchased for development (Kobayashi 1996:PC). The issue as it concerns the tourism industry is in the need to use the areas peripheral to Dawson City to allow for expansion of visitor services, facilities and infrastructure. The City is pursuing the idea of moving the RV park to the Dome Road area, a more appropriate site for recreation facilities (Graham & Associates 1994:Poster). But this can only be done when the land claims are settled and land becomes available for purchase.

In the early stages, the issue of basic infrastructure was a major concern as noted by the 1962 festival which had to construct a tent city and supply other basic needs. In the 1990s a comparison to the three-day music festival noted that 60% of residents felt infrastructure was adequate, while 40% saw it lacking. The most notable deficiencies involved campgrounds, accommodation and restaurants (Dawson City Music Festival Society 1996:19). As well, there was very little accommodation available for the approximate 1000 summer-time workers, of both mining and tourism industry services. Some find accommodation in Dawson, up to 200 of them take up permanent summer residence in the campground in West Dawson (Pyper 1997:A13).

The City's role in the process of planning and developing cultural tourism and historic preservation, although somewhat unclear, does involve helping private sector initiatives with funding and support (Kincaid 1997:PC). The City has a role in maintaining a positive municipal climate which supports and encourages appropriate tourism development, and affects tourism through the development of local regulations, by-laws and the Official Community Plan (Graham & Associates 1994:Poster). It also has a role as participant in tourism marketing, as well as

development of events through the recreation department and their support of arm's-length organizations such as the Klondyke Centennial Society.

A committee associated with the Recreational Department of the City of Dawson is responsible for the "Discovery Days" celebration held each year on August 17th. This celebration began in 1910, but grew in later years into the week-long event offered today. In 1996, the 100th anniversary of the discovery of gold was of particular importance in terms of planning and organizing events and celebrations (e.g., World Gold Panning Championship).

### **Klondyke Centennial Society (KCS)**

One of the latest organizations created to deal with planning cultural tourism events and projects in Dawson City is the Klondyke Centennial Society (KCS). Although the KCS is a non-profit, volunteer based organization, it was formed in 1993 by the City of Dawson and given a mandate to organize, promote, advertise, host and celebrate special events associated with the many centennials and anniversaries on behalf of the City. This Society is also one of the member groups of the community steering committee to oversee the Waterfront Improvement Project. With half the organization's funding coming from the City of Dawson (\$217,000 by 1996), the KCS relies heavily on City support to cover operating costs (Sawa 1996b:40). The success of this organization, in terms of numbers of visitors, revenue generated and improvements to the community through the centennial events, is directly related to the commitment by City Council to be involved in and have a role in cultural tourism planning and development in Dawson City.



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## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE PROCESS OF CULTURAL TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN DAWSON CITY 1950-1996**

The unfolding of events, policies and programs associated with key representatives engaged in planning, developing and managing Dawson City's cultural tourism can be described as a process. This process, which has evolved and changed, was affected by community attitudes and values, government policies and programs, as well as economics and the business sector's commitment to cultural tourism. An overview of this process reveals the commitment by cultural resource managers and tourism industry representatives to preserve the historic and cultural character and resources of the community, encourage a viable tourism industry to enhance the local economy and encourage community respect and involvement. A viable, sustainable cultural tourism industry in Dawson City depends on the interaction and integration of these three components; however, this was not possible until the third stage of an evolutionary process was reached.

Comparable to Ashworth's model (1994:15) noted in Chapter 1 (page 24), involving three stages in the development of the concept of heritage, the process of planning and developing a cultural tourism industry in Dawson City has emerged through three similar stages. During the first stage from the early 1950s to the late 1960s, preservation of the cultural resources took precedence over tourism industry functions with a focus particularly by Parks Canada on preserving and restoring the built heritage and researching the history of the Gold Rush. Individual buildings in Dawson were being preserved based on criteria developed by the federal government. These criteria included such attributes as age and style. These criteria often excluded numerous sites significance to the community for reasons other than age and style. The difference of opinion between the community and Parks Canada on what should be preserved raised issues relating to the theme and function of the historic resources as well as issues relating to participation and co-operation of community members and their role and integration into the process.

The shift to conservation (preserving purposely - Ashworth's second stage) is noted by Parks Canada's 1975 "Conservation Development Proposal" and 1978 "Master Plan," which emphasized the community and its function during the Gold Rush period. This shift to conservation in the late 1960s began to involve land use planners and managers in the process. The City became more involved with preservation through the development of a planning board and by-laws relating to heritage zones and design criteria to guide restoration and new development. With the implementation of these by-laws, issues relating to community buy-in and compliance to these by-laws became a concern, emphasizing the lack of interaction and integration of community participation in the process.

Also, with the involvement of community planners, concerns for lack of infrastructure relating to both the community and tourism services were raised and began to be dealt with. The City upgraded sewer, water and power, and studies such as Synergy West's 1975 "*Dawson City Community Plan*" commissioned by YTG were undertaken. This study highlighted the issue of having to deal with community needs in the face of ever increasing tourist numbers - an issue the community is still dealing with today.

During this same early period (late 1960's and 1970s) the tourism industry sector was more a function of the private sector. The KVA, in particular, was involved in planning socio-cultural events and promoting the community, but efforts were limited as their financial resources were also committed to the restoration of historic buildings. Tourism industry sector initiatives took second place to preservation and conservation efforts and little integration between government and private sector took place. The KVA, however, established a solid core of volunteers with expertise and knowledge, which created the basis for future planning and promotional efforts.

The third stage in the process involved the recognition of the need for integration and interaction between the components of cultural tourism (cultural preservation, tourism industry services and community respect and involvement). With Yukon Tourism's involvement in Dawson's tourism industry in the 1980s and 1990s, studies such as the 1981 "*Dawson City Tourism Development Strategy*" and 1994 "*Planning for Tourism Development in the Dawson Region*" (Graham and Associates 1994) highlighted the potential as well as the problems of tourism development in the Dawson area. These reports raised issues relating to product development, marketing and promotion as well as communication and tourism services concerns.

This third stage is characterized by the commitment of the Yukon Territorial Government to cultural heritage preservation, tourism industry services and community needs through its Tourism branch. This stage is also characterized by the involvement through partnerships and collaborative efforts of various government agencies including Parks Canada, CTC, Yukon Tourism, City of Dawson and private sector tourism industry organizations such as KVA, and TIA-Yukon. This third stage in the process of planning and developing cultural tourism highlights the significance of integrating these components and the potential this integration has for creating sustainable cultural tourism.

The complex nature of this three-stage process in creating cultural tourism and a heritage product for Dawson was brought about by the varied roles private sector associations and government agencies played in directing and implementing the events, policies and programs associated with planning and developing. As each organization recognized the potential for cultural tourism to stabilize and strengthen the economy and enhance community socio-cultural traditions and resources, each adapted accommodate or direct the process. In doing so, issues arose relating to such concerns over who is responsible for the protection of cultural heritage or the implementation of specific plans and development.

Private sector individuals and organizations were responsible for recognizing the potential of their community and encouraging external involvement in the form of government assistance. With government involvement, the process was more formally directed by legislation, policies and programs implemented to protect and enhance the historic and cultural resources and begin long-term strategic planning to guide the tourism industry.

Throughout the discussion, a number of issues were highlighted as they related to the process of cultural tourism planning and development. These issues are addressed in the following chapter with recommendations suggested for consideration in future sustainable cultural tourism planning.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Dawson City has a promising future in which continued planning, development and management of cultural tourism can occur. The community will continue to benefit from the substantial tourism base established by the process noted in the previous chapter. The process since the 1950s has been complex and although tension between government and private sector objectives have differed at times there has been a continued and determined effort by community tourism representatives to ensure cultural tourism has a future.

#### **ISSUES**

Examination of the activities of various tourism agencies, associations and representatives and their associated events, policies and programs revealed that a process of developing a cultural heritage product and a tourism industry evolved through three stages from the 1950s to 1996. These stages encompassed the increasing integration and interaction of cultural resource managers and tourism representatives in preserving the historic and cultural resources of the community, meeting the needs of the tourism industry as well as encouraging greater community respect and involvement. Having examined this process using the concept and characteristics of a sustainable cultural tourism approach to tourism planning in a community context; a number of issues relating to these components were raised

These components and related issues are categorized on Table 2, into those relating to preserving the cultural resources for tourism, those relating to tourism

**TABLE 2: A LIST OF SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM ISSUES****CULTURAL PRESERVATION****A) Issues Relating to Legislation, Policies and Programs:**

- 1) Ability of the Yukon government to designate and protect historic and cultural resources
- 2) Ability of the City of Dawson to implement legislation
- 3) Ability of the City of Dawson to regulate community cultural and tourism concerns
- 4) Compliance with historic by-laws and design guidelines

**B) Issues Relating to Ensuring Standards, Quality and Consistency:**

- 1) Who is responsible for ensuring standards of quality
- 2) Respect of cultural principles and traditions
- 3) Appropriate commodification of cultural resources as products
- 4) Tourism industry needs versus responsible preservation
- 5) Ensuring a diversity of appropriate themes to interpret the cultural resources and community

**C) Issues Relating to the Cost of Preservation:**

- 1) Museum versus living community
- 2) The ability to cope with the financial costs associated with preservation
- 3) The need to find new sources of revenue and financing

**TOURISM INDUSTRY****A) Issues Relating to Developing and Diversifying Tourism Products:**

- 1) Encourage economic profitability
- 2) Long-term planning for sustainable tourism
- 3) Diversity of tourism products
- 4) Quality and consistent historic and cultural tourism products
- 5) Packaging of historic and cultural tourism events and sites
- 6) Seasonality, capacity and infrastructure

**B) Issues Relating to Marketing and Promotion:**

- 1) Dawson City's position within the Alaska-Yukon tourism market
- 2) Communication and co-ordination
- 3) Adapting to new technology, tourism trends and changing tourist market segmentation

**COMMUNITY****A) Issues Relating to Community Respect and Involvement:**

- 1) Community participation
- 2) Partnerships, collaboration and shared responsibility
- 3) Changing roles of tourism representatives
- 4) Loss of autonomy and community attitudes

industry interests and those associated with community respect and involvement. From this listing an issue of particular concern is that of communication, however, all of these issues are important to future tourism planning and development in Dawson City and are, therefore, noted along with a number of recommendations. These recommendations are based on the concern for improving communication, protecting the cultural and historic resources, the concerns and interests of the tourism industry and needs of the community of Dawson. Some of the recommendations are specifically directed toward those organizations identified as being stakeholders and key representatives. Other recommendations are broader and more general, but are still relevant to sustainable cultural tourism planning and development in Dawson City.

## COMMUNICATION

From this list of issues, one in particular stands out as a concern that involves all cultural resource managers and tourism industry representatives within Dawson, the Yukon and even nationally. The issue centres on improving communication in terms of more collaboration and co-ordination of activities, projects and education associated with having a reliable, high quality, sustainable cultural tourism product.

At the regional level the concern for improving communication is evidenced by the 1993 meeting sponsored by YTG as well as TIA-Yukon offering to take on the responsibility and role as communications co-ordinator for the Yukon. Greater communication involves such tasks as co-ordinating accurate information and promotional material offered to tourists as well as generally keeping open the lines of communication between the various tourism sectors throughout the Yukon. To carry out this function, the association must have the support of the tourism industry in the Yukon.

At the community level there is no formal mechanism for co-ordinating communication or tourism planning and development (Graham & Associates 1994:22). As such, there may be value in having a formal body to co-ordinating activities and allow open communication between the various tourism representatives and cultural resource managers within Dawson. Graham & Associates (1994:Poster) also suggests that a community-wide event strategy be prepared which considers content, dates, target markets, use of facilities and organizational needs. Developing a formal mechanism to deal with communication raises the issue of which organization (existing or new) would take on this function. Graham & Associates (1994:22) suggest the Klondyke Centennial Society (KCS), but this organization has been set up temporarily to oversee centennial events and by its existence already creates further pressure on community volunteers. With more support, the KVA could offer this service, and therefore reduce the need for more tourism related associations.

With the concern for improving communication between tourism sectors and all tourism representatives in Dawson, the following recommendations are suggested for consideration:

- 1) The City, KVA, Dawson First Nations, Dawson's Chamber of Commerce, Yukon Tourism and Parks Canada need to consider long-term communication needs within Dawson's tourism industry. They could suggest methods to meet communication and co-ordination needs, and make suggestions as to which organization could best facilitate communication - an existing organization such as the KVA or the creation of a new organization.
- 2) Tourism representatives might consider co-ordinating and clarifying the roles of the various organizations and government agencies to improve the lines of communication, which will assist in avoiding overlap of functions and better define areas of responsibility.
- 3) The City to continue communication efforts in the area of education and raising awareness relating to the importance of preserving public heritage and creating a sense of character and place.



- 4) Individuals, First Nations, organizations and agencies to continue their efforts to communicate and work collaboratively creating partnerships and sharing the responsibility of restoring and enhancing the character of the townsite.

## **CULTURAL PRESERVATION**

The first main component of a sustainable cultural tourism industry involves preserving, conserving and interpreting cultural heritage resources. The view of ICOMOS that "preservation precedes tourism" is evident in the process that occurred in the community of Dawson. The process, however, reveals that, to preserve on a community scale, there is a need to involve formal measures such as legislation to protect the resources, policies to guide preservation and programs to educate and assist with preservation. By implementing these measures there is greater assurance that standards of quality preservation are met as well as respect for the intrinsic value of the resources. The process also reveals that in implementing such measures as zoning and historic control by-laws by the City of Dawson, there is recognition and support in terms of the financial cost of preservation to community members, organizations and government agencies.

### **A) Issues and Recommendations Relating to Legislation, Policies and Programs**

The need for formal measures to protect the cultural resources in Dawson City, in the past, raised the issue concerning the ability of the YTG to create legislation, policies and programs to protect historic and cultural resources. As the territory now has a number of these measures in place, a particular concern is with the ability of the City of Dawson to implement the territorial legislation and its programs. There are also issues regarding regulating community cultural and tourism concerns through the creation, implementation and compliance of community historic by-laws and design guidelines. To continue protecting the historic and cultural resources of Dawson, the City needs to:

- 1) Create the means (financial, staff and process) to implement the measures associated with the intent and requirements of the Historic Resources Act, particularly the designation of cultural heritage sites.

- 2) Comply with the Historic Resources Act by developing a "municipal inventory" that contains historic sites, their location and description, historic or cultural significance, date of designation, address of owners and lessees and any other specific information. The inventory will also function as an information source available to the public.
- 3) Continue to address specific issues relating to community aesthetics such as colours of buildings, gravel versus paved roads, historic by-law amendments relating to the exterior building elevations and street grade.
- 4) Publish and make available a clear set of design guidelines for all public and private construction, to assist residents in complying with community historic by-laws.

A more general recommendation suggests:

- 5) The Yukon government (Yukon Tourism) continue to create and implement policies and programs relating to the protection of cultural heritage, particularly the continuity of the centennial anniversary and event programs in some similar form after the year 2000.

#### **B) Issues and Recommendations Relating to Ensuring Standards of Quality and Consistency**

With the implementation of formal measures outlined above, there is greater potential for standards of quality preservation and consistency may be met. There still remains the need for some agency to assume responsibility for ensuring appropriate methods of preservation are used and standards of quality are met. Also, there is the issue of who is responsible for creating a diversity of appropriate themes to interpret the cultural resources and the community. There are also issues relating to the need to respect cultural principles and traditions, to see that cultural resources are appropriately commodified as tourism products, and to ensure the preservation of the cultural resource is not being disregarded in order to focus on developing the resource as a tourism product. Within the community of Dawson these issues involve all cultural resource managers and representatives of the cultural tourism industry. Their roles, however, have changed over time also

contributing to the issue of who is responsible. The following broader recommendations address these issues.

- 1) Considering the changing organizational roles of the City, YTG, KVA and Parks Canada's, a shift in responsibility may be needed to ensure standards of quality preservation are met and maintained. This responsibility could be undertaken by the proposed Heritage Foundation, and, therefore, the author suggests further investigation by the City and others into the potential role and creation of this Foundation.
- 2) With the community's concern for a diversity of appropriate themes, every effort must be made within the community's tourism products (e.g., guided tours, interpretation and built environment – restoration other than the Gold Rush period) to maintain the commemorative integrity of the Gold Rush period, while allowing the entire history and culture of Dawson to be interpreted for visitors.
- 3) The community, in general, and government agencies, in particular must continue to support, at present levels, the Dawson City Museum in its efforts to be both a regional museum and, thus, a tourism product as well as a community museum preserving the history and culture of Dawson.
- 4) The ability of cultural resource managers to maintain levels of responsible preservation may be hindered by the emphasis on creating and promoting a product for the tourism industry,(e.g., museum exhibits, Parks Canada budget cuts and greater focus on implementing user fees and promotion). Thus cultural resource managers and planners must give equal consideration to the cultural resource as an object of history and preservation, as well as a product for tourism. The difficulty in doing this centres on budget constraints and the need to use the cultural resources to generate revenue through tourism.
- 5) To ensure visitors have an authentic cultural experience, cultural resource managers must ensure that integrity and authenticity are maintained as they commodify cultural resources, as well as plan and develop touristic experiences. Thus, there is a need for cultural resource managers and planners to use well-researched information and authentic or accurately replicated objects of history (e.g., Palace Grand Theatre) in developing the product.
- 6) Considering First Nation's involvement in tourism and events such as the Edmonton Klondike Days, continuing efforts to create understanding and respect for cultural principles and traditions are vital not only within the community of Dawson, but between communities as well. Thus, cultural resource managers and planners must continue to respect the variety of cultural

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traditions within Dawson and other communities, to communicate openly with all community members and ensure involvement and participation in planning.

- 7) In terms of the quality and consistency of cultural tourism events, the KVA in particular should continue to listen to and be aware of community needs and their ability to deal with problems such as resident irritation or volunteer burnout that could be associated with ongoing, or new, event planning.
- 8) Parks Canada, KVA, Dawson City Museum and others should continue to plan, monitor and assess cultural tourism sites and activities for quality and consistency.

### **C) Issues and Recommendations Relating to the Cost of Preservation**

With the implementation of formal measures to protect and enhance the historic and cultural resources, there is a need to recognize the financial cost of preservation to community members, organizations and government agencies. An issue of particular concern is understanding that Dawson City is a living community and there are financial costs to individual property owners associated with restoring historic property to the specific requirements of the City by-laws. With the revision of these by-laws and design guidelines to reflect less expensive designs and materials, costs can be reduced. There is also an issue relating to the ability of organizations to find new sources of revenue and financing to help defray those costs.

Primarily the City and community of Dawson must

- 1) Continue to find ways to help reduce the cost of preservation for community members through such measures as the revision of historic zoning by-laws, to relax strict design guidelines in some areas, and design guidelines which do not require the use of expensive, hard-to-obtain materials used in renovations or construction. This must be done, however, without risking the authenticity and integrity of the historic resources or community theme.
- 2) Use leasing, partnerships and cost-sharing agreements especially with Parks Canada and other historic property owners to adapt buildings for active use.

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More general recommendations include:

- 3) As statistics suggest, gambling is down and may not have the potential for future revenue growth at Diamond Tooth Gertie's. There may be a need to enhance or add to the existing shows or create other forms of entertainment to attract and keep visitors longer in the casino. Thus, there is a need for the KVA to study the situation and to find ways to continue developing a product that has growth-oriented revenue generation.
- 4) The museum and other cultural resource managers continue to find ways, such as product packaging, creating gift shops or merchandising related to the resource, that would attract visitors and generate the revenue needed to assist with the cost of preservation.
- 5) The private sector needs to look beyond the community to larger corporations such as airlines, travel companies, freight, fuel and mining companies to fund and sponsor tourism events. They could also make use of funding programs such as the new CTC loan program. The CTC, the Business and Development Bank of Canada and private banks have created a \$500 million fund with loans up to \$5 million per project (Calgary Sun 1997:1).

## **TOURISM INDUSTRY**

Through the restoration, development and interpretation of their cultural resources, the community of Dawson has grown more confident in their tourism industry and in the promotion of their community as a tourist destination. With buy-in from the community in the 1980s and 1990s to the visual and conceptual vision of cultural tourism representatives, the community has increasingly turned to developing and diversifying tourism products. They have also begun to market and promote these products more aggressively.

### **A) Issues and Recommendations Relating to Developing and Diversifying Tourism Products**

An issue of primary concern for the tourism industry in Dawson is the ability of the YTG and the City to encourage economic development through creating a positive environment for investment and encouraging the use of long-term planning. The ability of YTG, the City, businesses and private sector organizations to

use long-term planning has been made possible by a stable tourism industry. Issues relating to the development of individual tourism products within the community include the need to create a diversity of consistently high quality products and to package those products effectively. Graham and Associates (1994:Poster), in their 1994 study, offer a list of criteria relating to product diversity, quality, appeal and financial risk, which aid in assessing new tourism development in the community of Dawson.

In developing a product there is also a need to take into account seasonality as well as the capability and capacity of the community to create products and host events. Graham & Associates (1994:Poster) suggest there is a need to move some successful events such as the Music Festival to the off-season to promote Dawson and to attract a wider market segment. They also suggest packaging and combining more cultural events (e.g., Percy deWolfe Race and Thaw-di-Gras festival) and heritage sites to create the critical mass needed to generate revenue and cover costs. In terms of capacity, the community needs to continue to monitor the impact of developing new tourism products, especially as it affects infrastructure and services.

Primary recommendations for community tourism representatives include:

- 1) The need for both local and regional governments to continue efforts to induce an environment that encourages investment and economic profitability within the tourism sector. This involves such measures as tax incentives, appropriate infrastructure (utilities) or funding programs such as the Centennial Events program.
- 2) The need for both government and the private sector to use long-term planning, that will not be compromised by short-term goals, as a tool for future tourism product development.
- 3) Due to the negative response to the question of rescheduling the Music Festival in the *Music Festival Economic Impact Study* (1996), the author does not recommend the Music Festival Society reschedule the event to the off-season.
- 4) If further planning and developing of off-season events occur, organizations such as the KVA, KCS and the City need to be very conscious of the availability and

capacity of human resources, both paid staff and volunteers, to establish high quality, consistent tourism events from year to year.

- 5) The City planning board as well as the tourism industry must encourage and support the assessment of more summer employee and visitor accommodation.

#### **B) Issues and Recommendations Relating to Marketing and Promotion**

With more aggressive marketing and promotion of Dawson as a tourism destination, an important issue relates to understanding Dawson's position within the Alaska-Yukon tourism market and the ability of this marketing and promotion to capture Dawson's share of visitors. More general issues to be considered involve the need for organizations within Dawson to adapt to new technology, tourism trends and changing tourist market segmentation. Recommendations of primary concern include the need for YTG, the City and organizations such as the KVA to:

- 1) Continue using visitor surveys, or create studies such as the Psychographic Segmentation Study to identify why 67% of visitors to the Yukon do not visit Dawson City.
- 2) Capture more of the Alaska-Yukon visitor market through creative and effective marketing and promotion, and to identify market segments and promotional outlets (e.g., on-board information offices on cruiseships along the Alaska-BC coast).

A general recommendation to cultural resource managers and event planners is to:

- 3) Continue to adapt and introduce new technologies (e.g., Internet) to create more public access to information and promotion regarding both cultural heritage resources and tourism activities in Dawson City.

#### **COMMUNITY RESPECT AND INVOLVEMENT**

Each of the private sector and government agencies examined have made a commitment to preserving the cultural resources and supporting a growing tourism industry. There remains, however, an underlying concern for the respect and well-being of the community at large. Although each sector believed their vision was for the benefit of the community, the processes did not always respect community goals

or encourage community participation. In the third stage of the process there is greater effort and commitment to understand and respect community needs while integrating the components of cultural preservation and the business of tourism.

#### **A) Issues and Recommendations Relating to Community Respect and Involvement**

In Dawson, issues relating to the needs of the community and its attitude toward tourism development became apparent as the process of tourism development evolved. The process revealed that without respect and direct involvement of community members in planning and decision-making, tourism in a community context cannot be sustainable. The issue of most concern in the past dealt with the loss of autonomy and negative attitude toward outside decision-makers. More recently, however, these concerns have been addressed in part by a high degree of community participation. Looking toward the future in terms of planning and development of a sustainable tourism industry, important issues involve the ability of tourism representatives to: understand and adapt to their changing roles within the tourism industry; assure continued community participation in the process; and, encourage partnerships, collaboration and shared responsibility in protecting the cultural resources.

General recommendations relative to these issues include the need for:

- 1) Tourism representatives at all levels to continue to encourage community participation through open meetings, forums and volunteer boards (e.g., City Planning Board and KVA Board of Directors), which create an atmosphere conducive to community involvement in the decision-making process, and which encourages collaboration, partnerships, shared responsibility and participation in a shared vision.
- 2) Tourism related organizations to focus on maintaining levels of community participation by being aware of potential burnout, and providing community volunteer organizers and board members with management, leadership and skill training, or simply recognizing volunteer efforts.



In summary, these issues and recommendations raised by the examination of the process of planning and developing a sustainable cultural tourism industry in Dawson highlight the complexity and diversity of concerns associated with tourism in a community context. They also highlight the fact that there is no one person or organization that can oversee the component parts and it is therefore the responsibility of all these various tourism organizations and agencies to encourage shared responsibility, co-ordination, collaboration and most importantly communication.

## CONCLUSION

This MDP was undertaken to examine whether or not cultural tourism is an effective, yet sustainable type of tourism for small communities such as Dawson City, Yukon. With the view that cultural tourism is a promising and potential area of development for smaller communities, four questions were raised and used as the framework to examine the case study community. These questions were: is cultural tourism an effective and sustainable type of tourism for smaller communities?; can it enhance community involvement and act as a tool to stabilize and strengthen the economy?; what private organizations or government agencies may be involved in planning, developing and managing the cultural resources and tourism industry products?; and, what kinds of mechanisms (development aids, policies, guidelines or marketing assistance) can these organizations and agencies use to sustain the cultural resources and tourism products for present and future use? These questions involve the relationships between cultural preservation, the tourism industry, and the community as well as the integration of these components to create sustainable cultural tourism (Centre for Livable Communities n.d.:1).

Using the case study community of Dawson City and the concept of sustainable cultural tourism, the last two questions were specifically addressed using information and data collected through research. The first question meant identifying which private sector organizations and government agencies are involved in planning, developing and managing the cultural resources and tourism industry products in Dawson City. The second question involved examining the inter-relationships, means and effectiveness of these representatives to implement and sustain cultural tourism.

The first two questions creating the framework of this MDP are based on the examination of the case study and address whether or not cultural tourism is an effective type of tourism, and if it can enhance community involvement as well as act as a tool to stabilize and strengthen the economy.

This study concludes cultural tourism can act as a tool to stabilize and strengthen Dawson City's economy. Dawson, however, is a unique situation in which a large amount of federal money was used to preserve and restore the historic resources. Without this initial and major input by Parks Canada to preserve the existing character and create the means (planning and design guidelines) to continue to enhance the character of the community, the basis for their tourism product would be severely compromised by the continued loss of significant buildings and the lack of detailed research into the period of the Gold Rush. One must also remember that Dawson City is a living, viable community, that has been dealing with the cost of preservation, the increase in tourism industry needs, and the needs of the community; therefore, economic stability depends on the community's ability to mitigate the problems associated with these factors.

Another conclusion this study makes is that cultural tourism can enhance community involvement and serve as a mechanism to create a sense of social and cultural pride. Community participation is encouraged by private sector and government agencies through open meetings, forums and volunteer boards (City Planning Board, KVA board of directors), which create an atmosphere conducive to community involvement in the decision-making process. With this involvement comes greater understanding and awareness of the potential of the tourism industry and encourages collaboration, partnerships and shared responsibility. Participation also creates a sense of pride and ownership not only within the tourism industry, but the community in general.

Finally, from this case study one could conclude that the implementation of a tourism industry grounded in the history and culture of the community has been a very effective type of tourism for smaller communities such as Dawson City. The implementation of cultural tourism has helped to diversify the economic base, creating employment and revenue. Implementation has also created and driven the mechanisms to preserve and conserve the history and culture of the community, as well as enhance the character, aesthetics and basic infrastructure for both residents and tourists. Implementation has meant promoting a rich cultural heritage to the outside, but, more importantly, has allowed research and interpretation of authentic historic themes and images. The planning and development of cultural tourism has also encouraged the participation and involvement of community members. With this greater participation, community respect, ownership and confidence have created a sense of autonomy allowing residents to act more on their own behalf.

With this conclusion that cultural tourism can be an effective type of tourism for a small community, additional measures can be taken to make it sustainable. No strategy, however, can be implemented without the buy-in and support of the community and private sector. Thus, the responsibility for a sustainable cultural tourism industry in Dawson City will rely on individuals, organizations and businesses re-examining their roles, adjusting to new challenges, taking responsibility for planning and implementing new initiatives while maintaining the quality of those existing. This study emphasizes the need to, first, preserve the unique cultural qualities, and, secondly develop basic tourism infrastructure before tourism is promoted. This study also emphasizes that cultural tourism development must integrate and interact with other tourism processes locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Tourism will be sustainable if there is an understanding of the consequences of the development choices made. Finally, the study emphasizes that a sustainable cultural tourism industry is driven by local

control, local needs, local aspirations and, most importantly, open communication between local, regional and national tourism representatives.

As this MDP focused generally on the process of planning and developing cultural tourism in Dawson City, it only highlights issues, concerns and interests. There is a potential for further research by the individual organizations, government agencies, the community or students not only into the history of the process, but to gain a better understanding of issues highlighted by this project. There is the potential to develop more detailed recommendations regarding selected issues, which could further guide tourism representatives in Dawson City toward a more sustainable cultural tourism industry.

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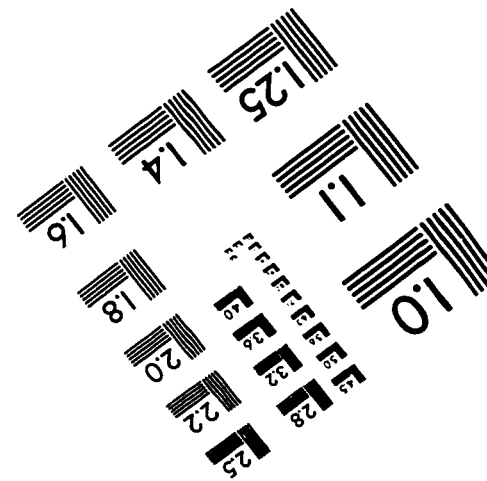
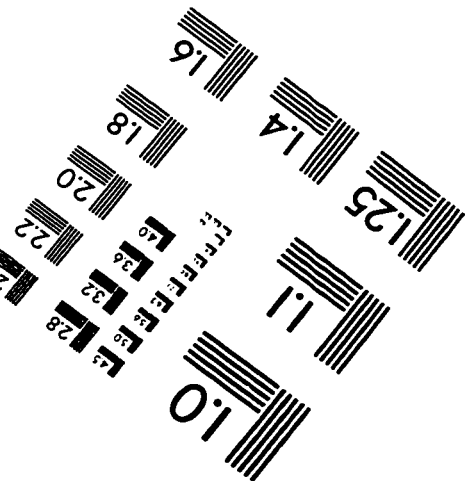
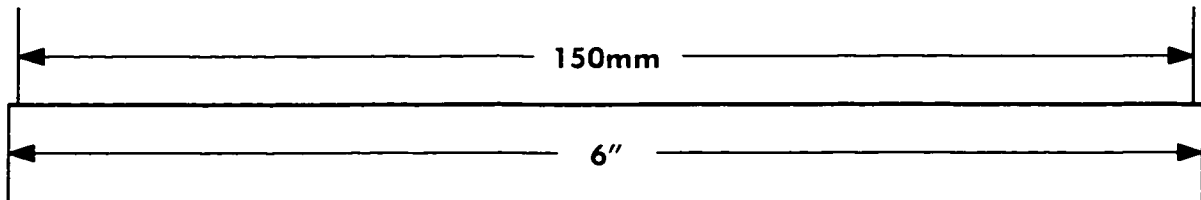
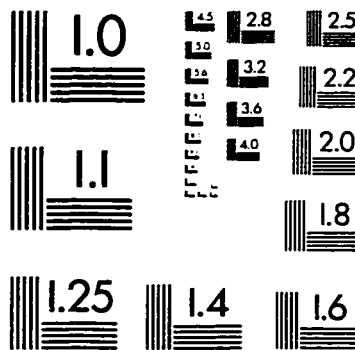
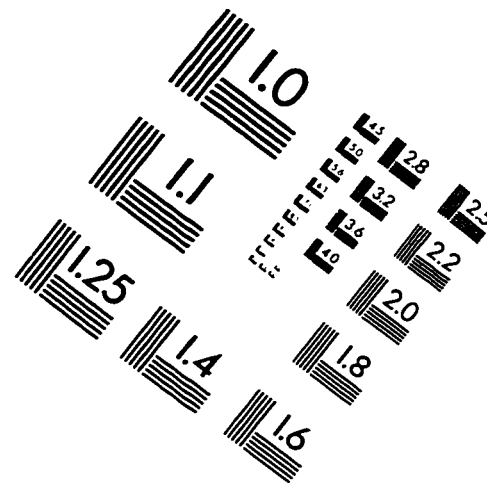
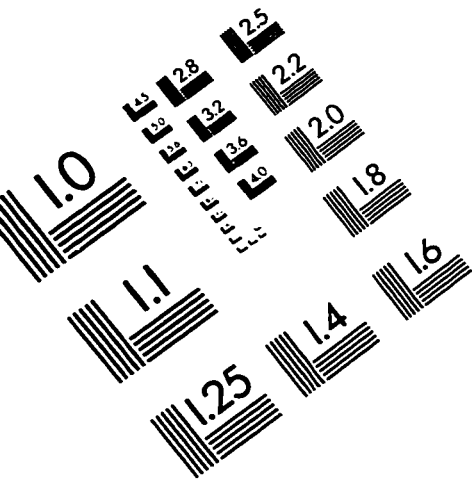
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