



**A CONCEPT PLAN AND VISION
FOR THE RESTORATION OF
SANDON, BRITISH COLUMBIA
AS AN AUTHENTIC,
LIVING-HERITAGE COMMUNITY**

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**Prepared for:
The Sandon Historical Society**

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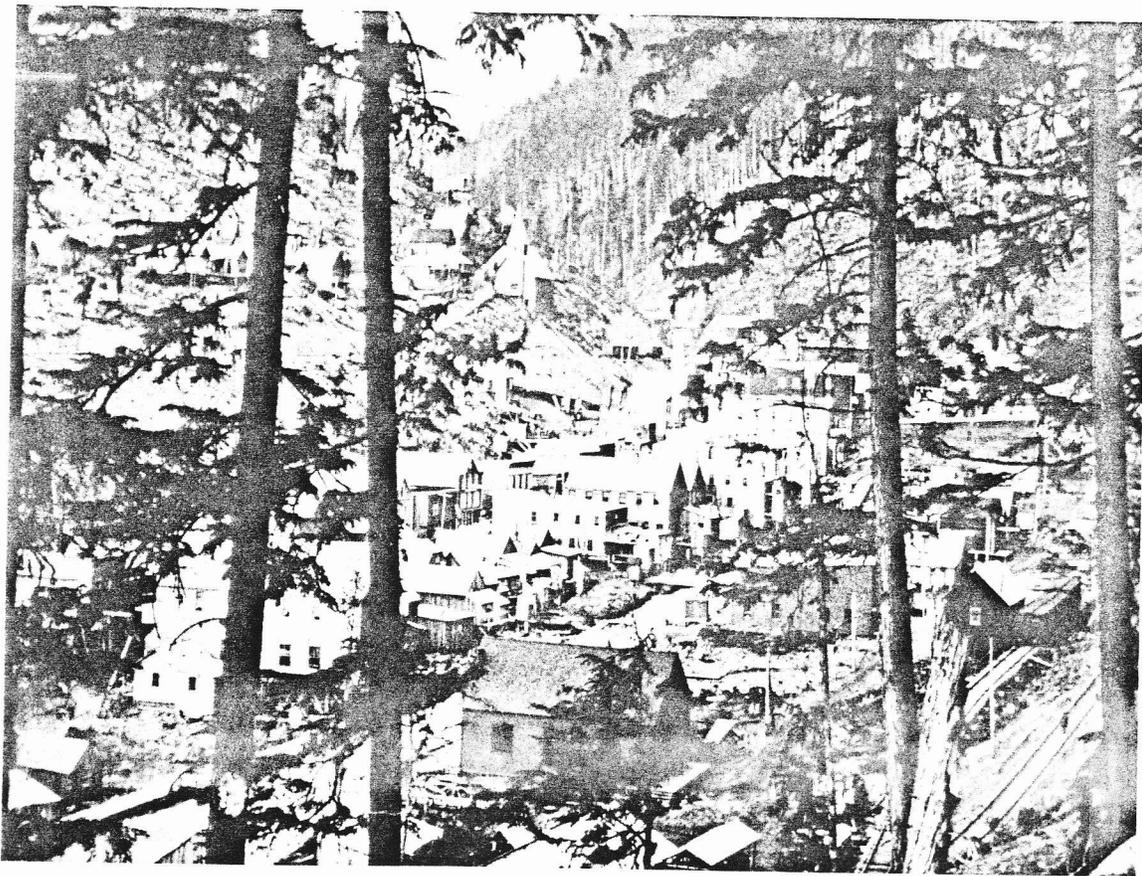
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is one of the most improbable places that one could ever imagine for an incorporated City. In a narrow valley in the interior of British Columbia, surrounded by some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in the province, lies Sandon. Nearly 100 years have passed since this silver-mining 'boom-city' reached the height of its development. Sandon was the heart of the 'Silvery Slocan.' Today its intrigue and history create an all-pervasive force that still lingers along the valley and the hillsides. It's as if Sandon's very soul has permeated the rocks of the mountainsides and resides there, refusing to accept the reality that the silver-rush is long over. Most who visit Sandon come away with some sense of that presence: that it is a place with a remarkable past -- a past very much still evident today. There were other mining towns, other boom-towns, yet none cast the lingering spell of Sandon. Some have become modern communities with only vestiges of their pasts scattered amongst their streets. Others were so ephemeral in nature that they have vanished without a trace. Sandon never became modern, yet it never completely vanished. Even in the midst of the fading ruins and overgrown foundations, the buildings that do remain retain a dignity about them, as if they are waiting for the day when Sandon comes alive again. This time, though, it won't be the miners but the tourists and history lovers who will bring Sandon back to life.



A classic overview of Sandon, taken in its prime, 1898.

Courtesy Sandon Historical Society

Any great undertaking starts as a dream, a spark of an idea that begins with someone daring to venture beyond the ordinary. That 'someone' must have the ability to depart from convention when appropriate, be able to re-form and re-think traditional methods, and possess the desire to rise above mediocrity. The end result in Sandon's case is an exceptional and unique approach to heritage and historic restoration. This is a significant part of the 'Visioning' process presented below.

Sandon is no ordinary town; it wasn't in the past, nor will it be in the future. The Vision for a restored and living Sandon is based on sound economics and practical reality. The concepts put forward here are those that can provide the best return, the greatest appeal, the highest degree of marketability and the greatest practical value while maintaining the highest standards of historical authenticity.

Sandon's history is exceptional. Its future should be similar.

1.1 Background

The purpose of carrying out a 'Visioning' process was to consolidate ideas for Sandon that would serve as a basis for all future planning and development. Additionally it would serve to clarify the Sandon Historical Society's position with respect to Sandon's potential Official Community Plan. Whilst the honing and fine-tuning of many concepts was part of this process, the roots of the exercise lie in work that was begun many years ago as ideas seeded in the minds of a few dedicated individuals. Their dream to re-create one of Canada's most famous mining-boom-towns has matured into the realistic Vision presented here. The plans and ideas put forward incorporate observations relating to various heritage development models on other sites and input from many knowledgeable people. Extensive discussion of the concepts has resulted in some bold and innovative action by the Sandon Historical Society and individuals who know the site, its history, limitations and -- certainly -- its potential. Much of the material contained in this Vision reflects the unwavering dedication of the Sandon Historical Society. The work that has been accomplished to date has been done with this Vision in mind, in the belief that Sandon's best potential as a heritage site lies in such an approach to its development.

1.2 Consulting Process and Vision Development

During the early stages of developing an Official Community Plan for Sandon, some confusion between government officials, consultants and the Sandon Historical Society was experienced. Because of this, the formal process of developing a Vision was begun in November, 1992. This involved a series of workshops with the Directors of the Sandon Historical Society. It was a time of clarifying the objectives of the Society. Large amounts of information were presented during these sessions, with discussion involving the participation of all Directors. Ideas were also drawn from a variety of other sources, such as the Heritage Development Plan produced by George Atamanenko, Society members, government agencies, the public at large and prospective investors.

In preparing the Vision, five main criteria were considered essential:

1. Visual authenticity will be mandatory for all restoration and reconstruction.
2. Reconstruction of historic structures will be allowed and encouraged in all areas of Sandon.
3. Sandon will be encouraged to become a viable, living community within a protected, heritage environment.
4. Development will not be allowed to extend beyond historic city boundaries or exceed the peak historic density.
5. Private investment and private property ownership is vital and will be encouraged and facilitated.

It was determined that the above guidelines strike the most realistic balance between heritage preservation and the economic realities necessary to such a proposal, whilst maintaining the unique character of Sandon. This Vision is intended to serve as a model for future planning and marketing and to encourage the necessary partnerships to form with the various government departments and other private and public partnerships. Producing strong heritage leadership is a fundamental part of this process.

2.0 SANDON'S UNIQUE PAST

Sandon was unique among western-Canadian mining towns. Along with Rossland and Dawson City, Sandon was one of only three mining-boom-towns in western Canada that achieved the fabled prominence of the much-renowned boom-towns in the United States. Sandon shares a legendary past that rivals Virginia City (Nevada), Tombstone (Arizona) and Cripple Creek (Colorado). Sandon, in many aspects, was 'American' and its role in Canadian history was extraordinary. The effect Sandon had on the development of British Columbia, and to a great extent western Canada, was quite dramatic.

Rossland, with its illustrious history as a gold-mining city, has become a suburb community of Trail. Whilst there are many well-preserved structures from the boom years, its character is modern. By comparison, Sandon, once the silver-mining capital of B.C., has become one of the province's most famous ghost towns. Its remains only hint at the scale of development that once existed. Sandon presents an extraordinary opportunity for authentic historic restoration. There are no modern developments or intrusions within its boundaries. Everything existing in Sandon is historically authentic. The potential to develop a world-class historic site cannot be overstated. Both visitors and prospective investors have made it abundantly clear that the attraction of Sandon is its historical authenticity and the total absence of modern, inappropriate development. This authenticity must be maintained and enhanced if Sandon's past is to be presented and marketed in a successful fashion.

remarkable for having the Main Street built on top of a wooden flume containing Carpenter Creek. Throughout its life, Sandon has succeeded in conducting its affairs and history with a degree of aplomb that was the making of many legends.

The discovery of the Payne mine in 1891 touched off a frenzied rush into the Slocan region. By the following year a building boom was in progress. By 1895, both the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Kaslo and Slocan (narrow gauge) Railway were completed into Sandon, vying for the transportation of the rich ores and concentrates to the distant smelters. The momentum continued at an even greater pace and by 1897 Sandon was the largest of all the Slocan communities and the first fully-electrified community in B.C.



Sandon in about June 1897. The Public School is the small building (with a platform on its left) located high up on Sunnyside directly above the K&S railway carriage. The centre of the photograph shows that Carpenter Creek was in the process of being channelled. Black's Hotel is the unpainted four-storey building centre foreground. A bridge gives a direct link between the hotel and the CPR station. The hockey rink is the large flat-roofed structure to the right of the big livery stable under construction (centre left). Note also the CPR turntable (left). Glenbow Archives NA-2937-5

Incorporated as a City in 1898, Sandon had become B.C.'s leading mining community, reaching the zenith of its development in 1899. However, unstable metal prices, strikes, lock-outs and the Klondike gold-rush were harbingers of Sandon's decline and its population began to dwindle. A fire in 1900 devastated downtown Sandon and although rebuilding began immediately, it was on a much smaller scale. By this time

Sandon's halcyon days were over. Even though there was an increase in metal prices during the First World War, the time of renewed prosperity was relatively short-lived. Unable to recover from the lean years before World War I, the city became insolvent and finally was disincorporated in 1920. The depression years killed the silver-mining industry and Sandon was virtually abandoned. There was another brief reprieve during World War II, when Sandon became a Japanese-Canadian relocation centre. Improved metal prices then brought a flurry of mining activity that peaked in 1952 when Sandon's population came close to the 1000 mark for the last time.

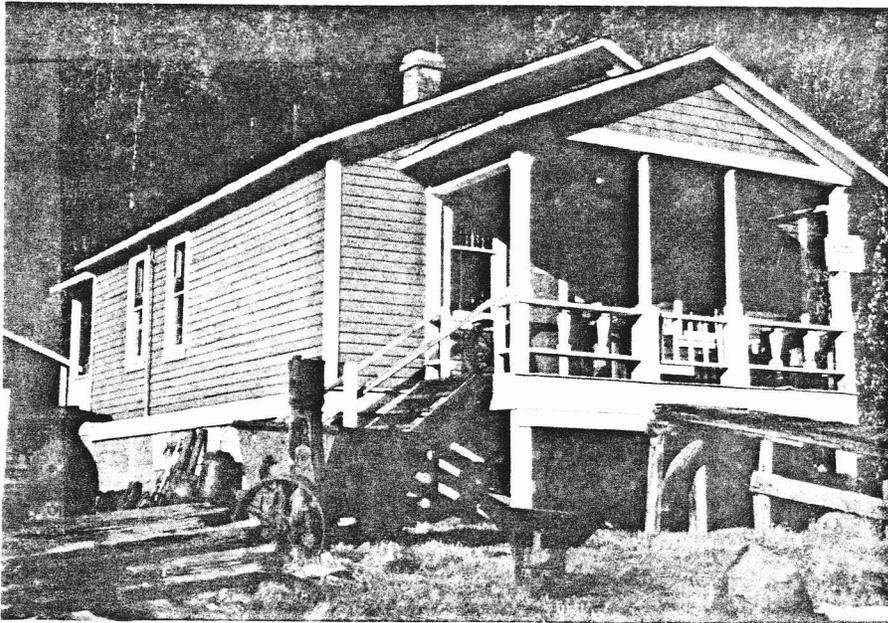


Remnants of Main Street flume now high and dry. 1957. Several buildings have already been demolished by salvagers following the 1955 washout. The old Reco Hotel (centre) is in the process of being demolished.
Glenbow Archives NA-193-3

In 1955 the aging Main Street flume plugged, causing Carpenter Creek to overflow, wash out Sandon's streets and seriously damage many buildings. Soon after, the salvagers and souvenir-hunters descended and began systematically dismantling the

townsite. It was not until 1972 that a museum was opened and a concerted effort was made to halt the destruction. The Sandon Historical Society was formed in 1978 and is presently the organization directing the restoration of Sandon.

During the summer months Sandon's streets are again alive with people, though this time it is not miners! Over 40,000 visitors a year make Sandon the most-visited heritage site in the West Kootenays. They come to gain a sense of history and to experience a part of the mystique associated with Sandon.



Sandon Museum. Built to house Sandon's policeman in 1925 and later home of the McLanders family for many years, this building has served as the Sandon Museum since 1973. It has become the most visited museum in the entire West Kootenay region.

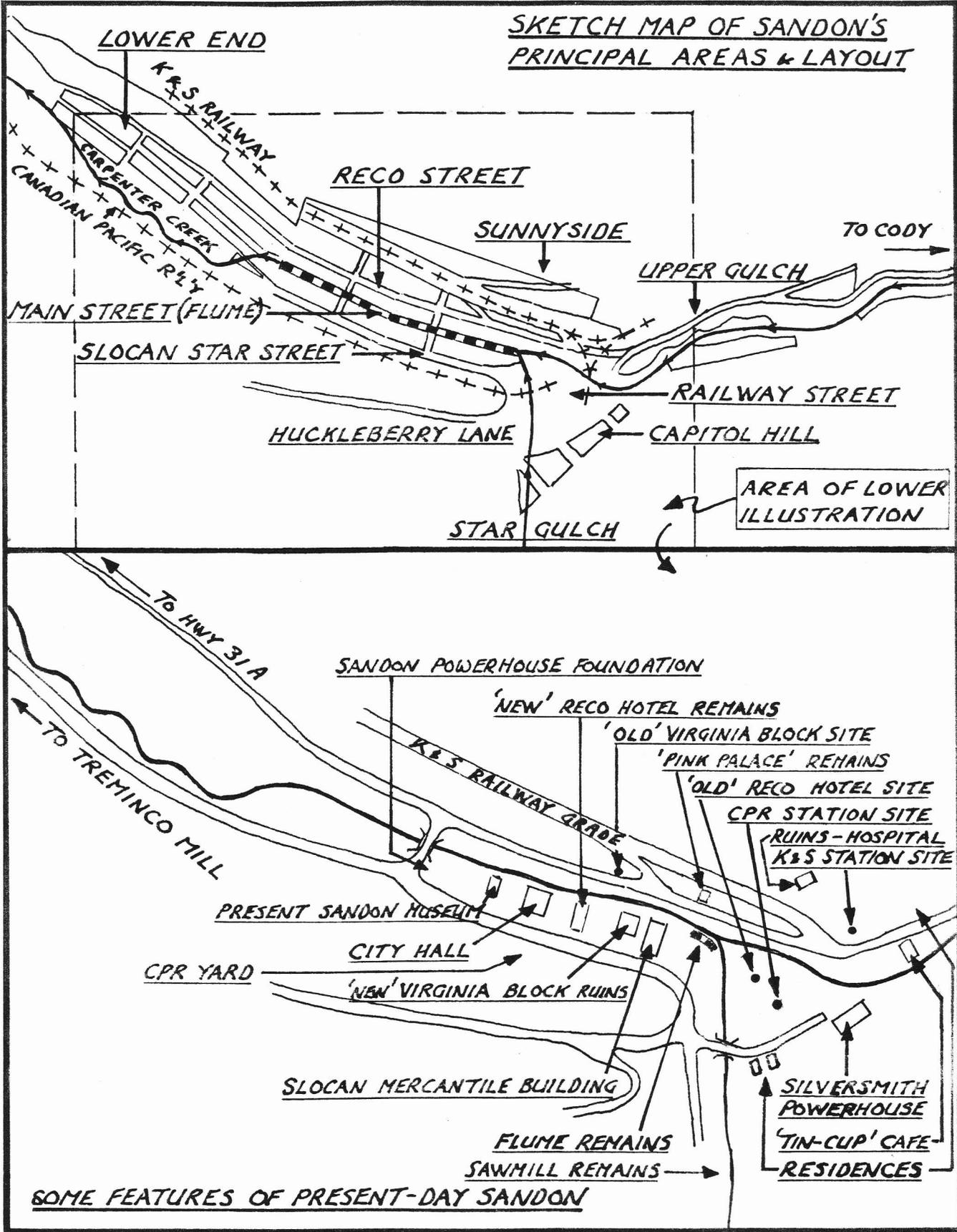
2.2 Site Description

Despite the ravages of time, weather and the salvagers, much remains on the site. There are approximately fifty structures standing within the original city limits. These range from small homes to large structures such as the three-storey City Hall.

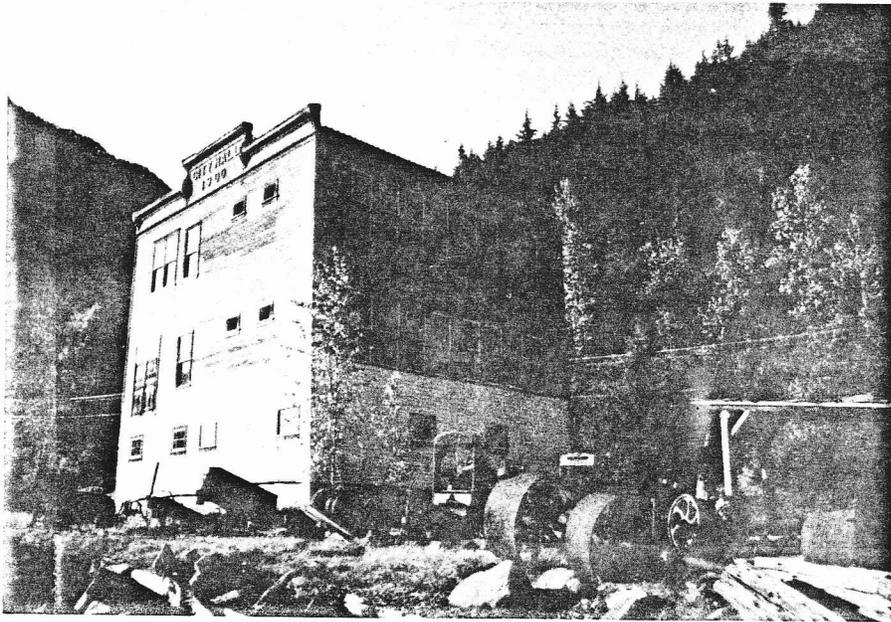
Sandon's 'ghost city' status allowed the basic layout of the town and streets to survive relatively untouched over the years. Evidence of the original streets and railway grades can be seen throughout the site. Reco Street, Main Street, Railway Street, The Upper Gulch, Sunnyside, Huckleberry lane, Capitol Hill, Star Gulch, the Lower End (the red-light district) and Slokan Star Street were distinct areas. The map on the following page shows the layout of the townsite.

Of particular significance is the Silversmith Powerhouse in the 'Capitol Hill' area, containing western Canada's oldest continuously-operating hydroelectric plant. Almost completely unaltered from its original installation, this facility is a heritage monument of national significance.

SANDON TOWNSITE & MAIN FEATURES



Standing on Main Street, the Slocan Mercantile Building is a brick structure dating from 1900. It is presently being restored to serve as the new Visitor Centre and Museum. Further down the street is the City Hall, an imposing three-storey structure that is being privately restored. Private homes and cabins are scattered throughout the site, as are a number of other commercial buildings. Interspersed among these are the fast-fading ruins and evidence of dozens of other structures.



City Hall, 1900. Sandon's main municipal building from 1900 to 1920. Vacant 1920-1925 and then served as a schoolhouse 1925-1954. It was gradually dismantled from 1954-1988. It was on the verge of collapse when a private restoration program was begun in 1989. The Prospector's Pick, a specialty store, now occupies the lower floor of the City Hall.

Carpenter Creek now runs in a safely dredged channel through the townsite. The remains of the flume that once contained the creek are still clearly visible on the south bank. In order to make the area to the north of Main Street usable once again, the creek needs to be re-routed back into a properly-engineered control-structure that serves the same purpose as its predecessor.

The Treminco Resources Ltd. mill (built by Carnegie Mines), the last operating concentrator in the region, sits on the outskirts of Sandon, serving a mining property that has produced for over 100 years. This facility has great potential for heritage and interpretive programs.

Projects that will begin in 1993 are the reconstruction of the Canadian Pacific Railway yards and the initial work that will eventually see the reconstruction of Sandon's famous flume.

The Sandon Historical Society acts as custodian of the site, keeping roofs clear of heavy snows in the winter, repairing buildings and performing general site maintenance. The days of random salvaging and of structures being allowed to deteriorate are no more.

As mentioned previously, the lack of modern intrusion and the fact that all buildings and infrastructure are original are Sandon's greatest assets. The site in its unimpaired condition allows for an uncomplicated redevelopment of Sandon and creates the potential for an unequalled opportunity in authentic heritage development. The concept of visual authenticity does not involve having to undo or mask recent development in Sandon. All prerequisites for the authenticity concept are presently in place.



Carnegie Mill was only six years old when photographed here in 1958. This mill is still operating but the railway tracks are gone. VPL 33916

2.3 The Basis of the Concept

Sandon's potential lies in its ability to present a heritage theme that faithfully re-creates its past and is not some approximation or dilution of what it may have been like. Should anything less than visual authenticity be allowed, Sandon would quickly become just another place with nothing to separate it from dozens of other communities that contain heritage structures.

The people involved in the planning and the decision-making process must clearly understand the importance of this approach to heritage development in Sandon. The

Vision and all its supporting and attendant concepts begin with this premise: Sandon is an unimpaired heritage resource and **all** future development must be visually authentic -- without exception.

3.0 THE AUTHENTICITY ISSUE, THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT

3.1 The Rationale

The need for visual authenticity extends far beyond just the preservation of Sandon's history. It is the single-most-significant element in attracting the necessary capital to restore the site. Initially it may appear as if the issues of authenticity and restoration are unrelated but in this instance one is contingent upon the other.

In the past, the bulk of historic preservation in British Columbia has been accomplished with the assistance of public money through various government agencies and grant programs. With taxpayers demanding change, and governments at all levels attempting fiscal restraint and balanced budgets, the days of the public coffers funding large-scale heritage projects are at an end. To prepare a plan for Sandon relying on government funding would be foolishly short-sighted and doomed to almost immediate failure.

So, what does historical authenticity have to do with raising capital? The answer is "Almost everything." The only practical method of raising the funds necessary for Sandon's heritage development is through the private sector. The concept has generated a high level of interest from prospective investors. The appeal and opportunity to own property in a protected heritage environment is the attraction and the principal selling-feature of the private-investment concept. Individuals currently owning property in Sandon, prospective investors and other interested parties have stated that their commitment and willingness to invest depends on the maintenance of historical authenticity.

Inadequate mechanisms controlling the type of development in Sandon will deter serious investors. Someone investing \$50,000 or \$500,000 in restoring or replacing a structure requires the assurance that his next-door-neighbour is not going to construct an 'A'-frame cottage or haul in a modern house trailer. The appeal lies in the accurate reconstruction of Sandon. This would be accomplished by registering protective covenants requiring visual authenticity against property titles before selling property to dedicated individuals for development. The covenants will ensure that all development will conform to the overall plan.

Approaching the development by requiring visual authenticity opens the door to a vast source of capital that would be unavailable to a publicly-funded site. The historical-accuracy criterion is thus a necessity if Sandon is to be successfully reconstructed. Reconstruction is Sandon's only future. Left as a ruin, it will quickly fade into oblivion and so will the remarkable opportunities.

3.2 Restoration and Replication

Maintaining visual authenticity is crucial for appropriate development. The need to control and enforce the relevant parameters becomes paramount. Initially this mandates that development in and around Sandon be subject to the following conditions:

1. Reconstruction needs to occur in all areas of Sandon. (This will ensure complete historical accuracy and provide investors with the largest range of choices and opportunities in selecting a project.)
2. Development should not be allowed to extend beyond the historic city boundaries.
3. A buffer zone should be established around Sandon to protect the adjacent heritage sites and Sandon itself from being marred by modern buildings or development.

A number of the buildings on the site are presently undergoing some form of stabilization or restoration. The vast majority of future development will be replication of structures that are no longer in existence. Whilst not considered heritage buildings, replicated structures are necessary to re-create the original appearance of Sandon and to maintain the authentic heritage theme. Replicas also serve to enhance the visual environment of the genuine original buildings and add to their interpretation potential.

Only replicas of structures that once stood in Sandon will be permitted. It is here that the standards set out in the Vision need to be clearly enforced. Buildings representative of the period or of compatible architectural styles are not part of the plan. In some cases there may not be sufficient information available from historic photographs to produce an exact replica. In these cases the closest possible approximation will serve as an acceptable substitute.

Structures will be built to meet modern building codes and standards. Snowloading, fireproofing, insulation and modern mechanical systems are some of the areas that will be addressed before any construction begins. Exteriors will need to be entirely authentic. Vinyl siding and modern approximations of Victorian architectural detailing will not be allowed in any form. The use of real wooden drop-siding, wooden shingles, double-hung windows and wood-panelled doors will all be a necessary part of the replication and restoration process.

The degree of authenticity proposed will be accomplished by establishing a building scheme for each and every project and then registering restrictive covenants on the property titles for each building. This would ensure that all construction incorporates a high level of workmanship and meets standards established to maintain the historical accuracy required.

When Sandon reached its peak development prior to the 1900 fire, there were approximately 400 principal buildings. This figure includes both commercial and residential structures. There were also an estimated 400 to 600 accessory buildings,

sheds, outbuildings, etc. A careful study of the pre-fire photographs allows the listing of approximate numbers of principal buildings in the various areas of the townsite:

Reco Street	- 100 buildings
Main Street	- 25 buildings
Railway Street	- 25 buildings
Upper Gulch	- 110 buildings
Sunnyside	- 25 buildings
Huckleberry Lane	- 10 buildings
Capitol Hill and Star Gulch	- 20 buildings
Lower End	- 75 buildings
Slocan Star Street	- 10 buildings

The principal buildings plus the accessory buildings gave Sandon an approximate total of 1000 structures. It is anticipated that all of Sandon will eventually be reconstructed. This is a process that could realistically continue over 50 years or longer. Initially much of the development will consist of residences and the smaller commercial structures. Structures such as the railway stations that appeal to special interest groups could conceivably be reconstructed early in the program. Some of the larger structures would only become feasible after development had reached a point that generated a sufficient tax base and enough tourism revenue to provide the necessary construction capital and operating money.

This approach is a radical departure from the 'traditional' method of developing a heritage site using public money. Usually proposals call for a number of key structures to be constructed at the start of a project using taxpayers' money. The result is often several well-restored or replicated structures that require large infusions of capital. In most cases a significant portion of the costs are drawn from grant programs which leave a legacy of high operating and maintenance costs. The whole cycle is then perpetuated by requiring more grant money. Ultimately the process can create heritage developments that become perpetual 'welfare' cases. The style of development envisioned for Sandon seeks to avoid the line-up at the public-funding 'trough'.

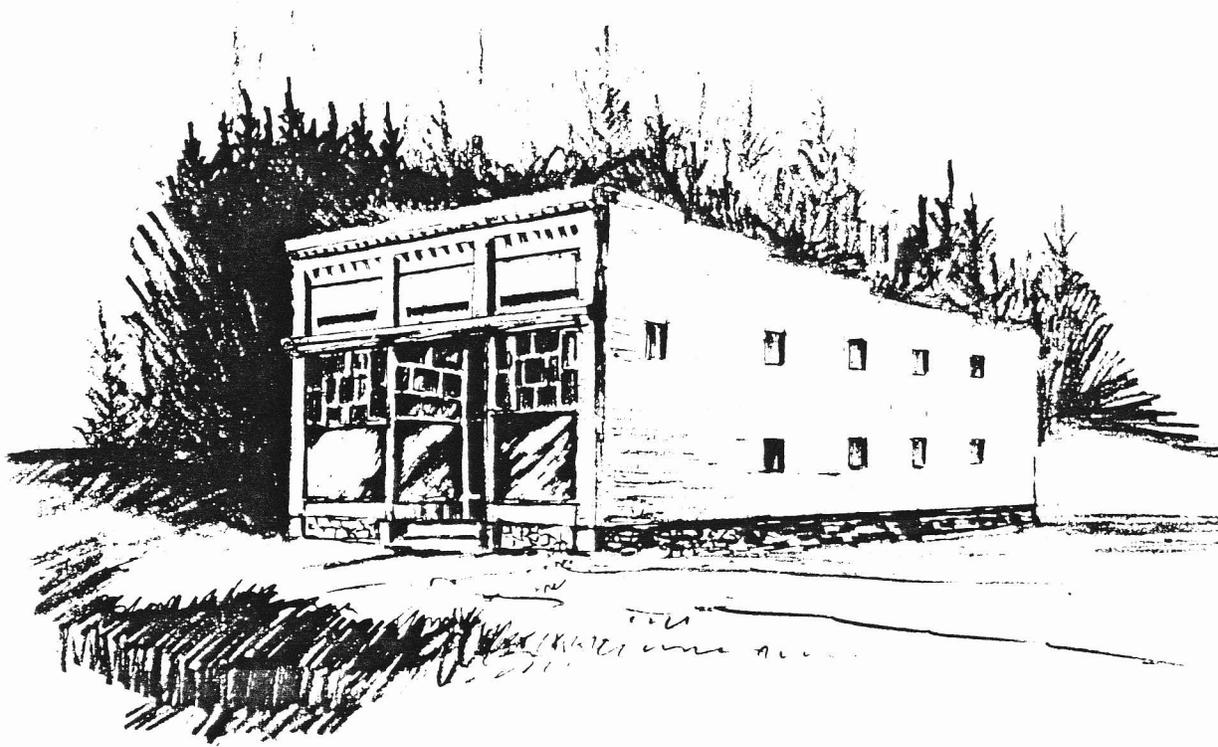
To facilitate orderly and visually accurate reconstruction, the formation of a Development Board and a non-profit Corporation is proposed. These bodies would be responsible for the historical accuracy, planning and supervision of all construction. This is dealt with in greater detail in section 5.2 below.

With land available for sale, there will be the desire by less serious investors to purchase land which was formerly occupied by buildings and leave it undeveloped in order to give them open space beside their property. This would undermine the potential of the heritage site and threaten its success. The design guidelines will reflect the historic density of construction. Buildings should eventually be built side-by-side as they were originally. However, population density would be considerably lower than it was at the turn of the century. More space per person will be desired by modern individuals settling in Sandon. Those people requiring more space will have to acquire land adjacent to their holdings and will be required to construct replicas of the buildings which formerly occupied those lands.

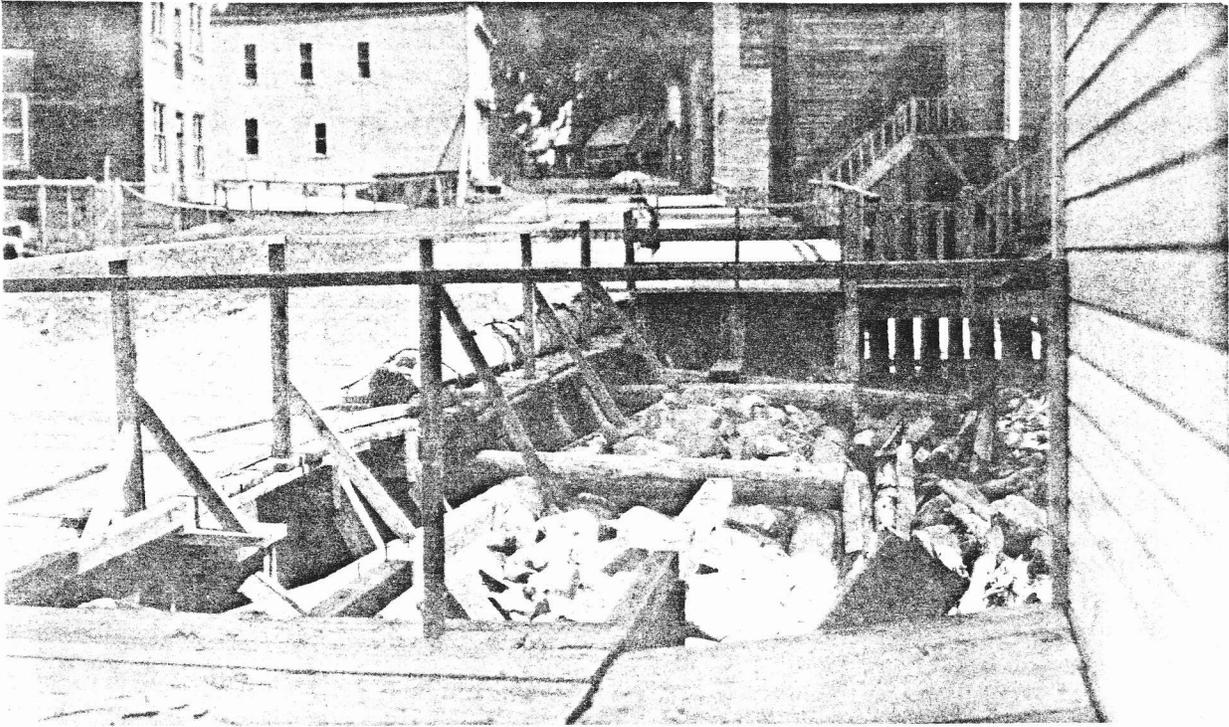
These buildings, original in appearance, can be used as accessory buildings to the ones occupied as homes or businesses (e.g. they can be used as garages, storage sheds, workshops etc.).

3.3 Essential Historic Infrastructure

There are several structures and sites within Sandon that are essential to the complete interpretation and the marketing of the project. Their preservation and restoration will serve a twofold purpose: preserving vital components of Sandon's past and providing a platform from which the necessary public awareness can be built to pursue both tourism and investment. There are two main structures which initially play this role. They are the Slocan Mercantile Building and the Silversmith Powerhouse.



The Slocan Mercantile Building is a 2,400 sq.ft. commercial brick structure built in 1900. It received extensive stabilization in 1992 and work is continuing to complete its restoration. This building will become the new Museum and Visitors' Interpretive Centre. The present museum lacks adequate display area, public washrooms, archive storage and offices. This will be resolved upon completion of the new facility. From here a vastly-expanded public-awareness campaign of Sandon's history and future potential can target both the tourism and investor markets. While playing a major role for historical interpretation, it will also serve to promote and instil a level of confidence in those prospective investors viewing the site. The Slocan Mercantile Building in its prominent position on Main Street will serve as a focal point for visitors and tourist traffic. The Museum will form a node of activity which makes it a good location from which to begin the construction of adjoining structures.



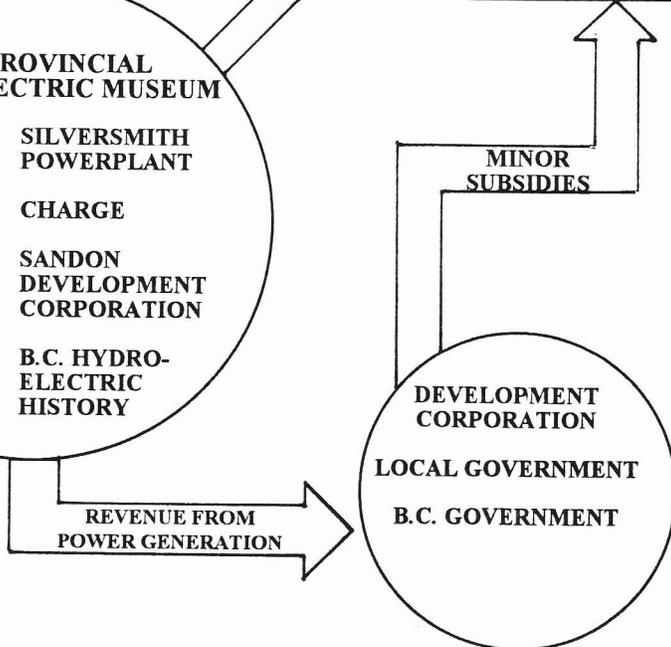
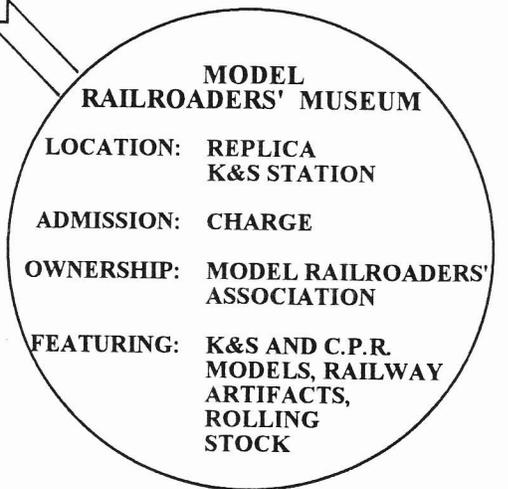
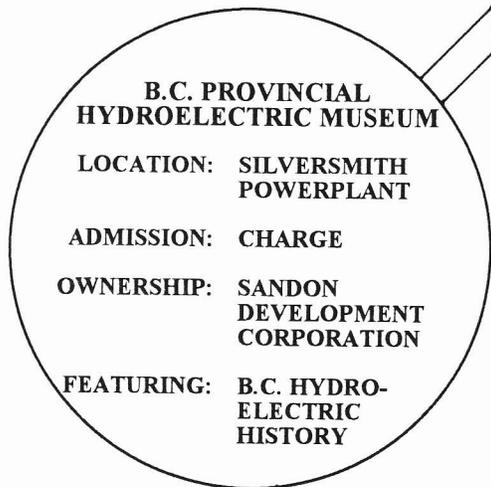
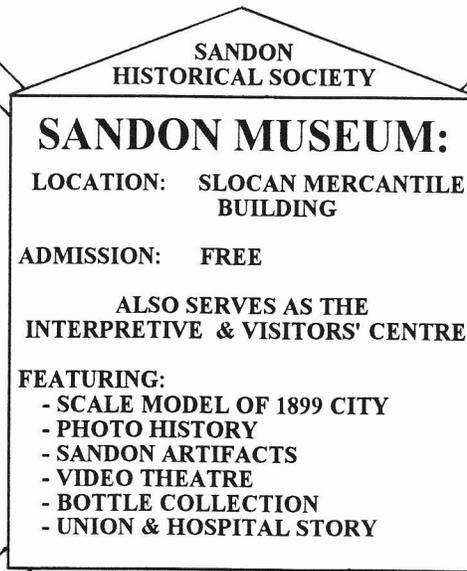
Cribbing and sidewalk repairs being done on Main Street flume. Early 1930's. This photograph was taken in front of the Catholic Church. Courtesy Mrs. Eileen Millican / Hope George

methods of dealing with erosion and flood control, but such proposals are insensitive to the heritage value of the site. They also do not address the problem of making the property which was damaged during the 1955 washout available for development -- as it is situated in the present creek channel. Any accurate Main Street development will require the reconstruction of the flume. This would have to be a properly-engineered, modern structure capable of handling any potential high-water situations. Sandon would once again have its historic Main Street over the creek. Much of the intrigue of the commercial section of Sandon would be regained with the re-creation of the flume. In addition to providing control of the creeks and maintaining historical authenticity, the flume would provide the opportunity and means to install a water and sewer service corridor alongside it. A penstock for the future generation of hydroelectricity could also be incorporated into the design of the flume without compromising its appearance. The Sandon Historical Society is committed to the hiring of an engineer to design a practical, environmentally sound and cost-effective means of fluming the creeks. Private sponsorship and a levy placed on Main Street properties are some of the ideas being considered to raise the money for its construction.

An important part of the heritage development of the site is the establishment of an overall 'museums' concept. Again, the element of private ownership plays an important role. The Sandon Museum / Interpretive Centre -- located in the Slocan Mercantile Building -- would serve as a hub for four additional private satellite museums. The result would be the preservation and replication of some of Sandon's important landmarks and a detailed level of interpretation of major themes in Sandon's history. The diagram on the following page illustrates how the museums model would function:

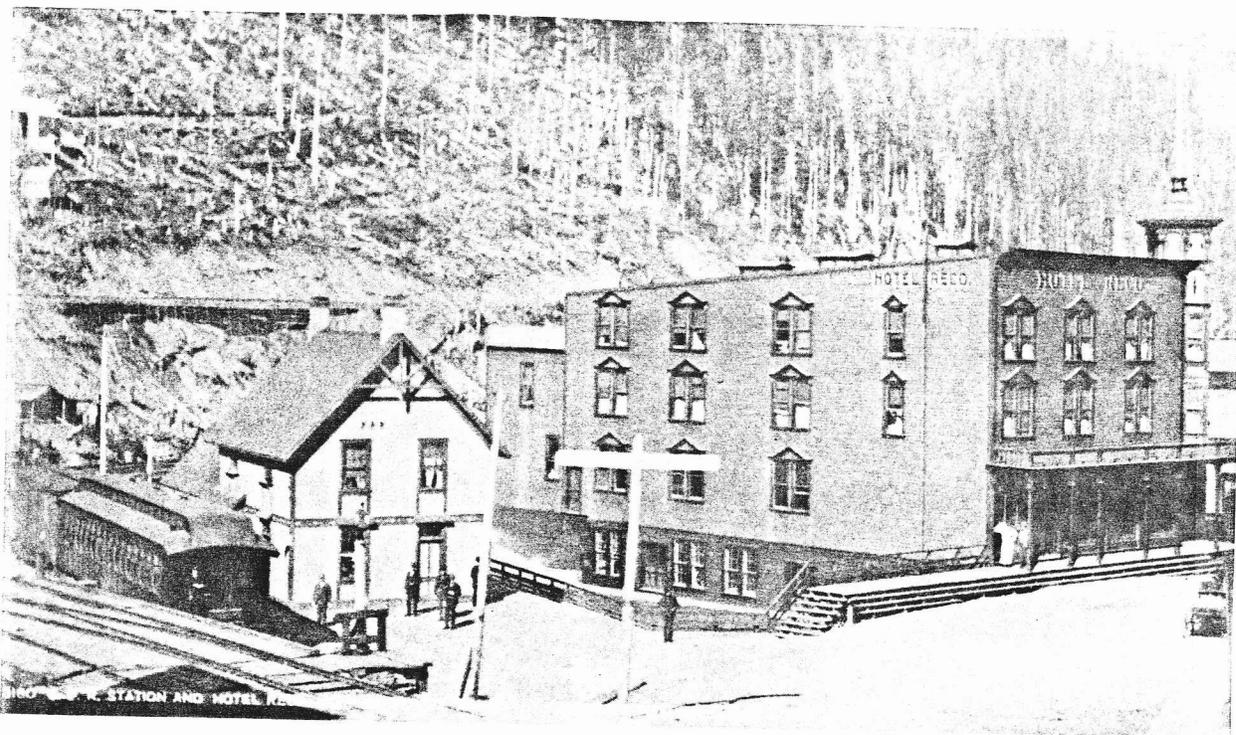
MUSEUM CONCEPT FOR SANDON

**MUSEUMS OPEN TO THE
PUBLIC WITHIN THE
HERITAGE TOWNSITE**



Restoration of the Slocan Mercantile Building, the Silversmith Powerhouse and the flume are essential historical elements of the Vision. A number of other projects and structures are considered key to the development. The timing and feasibility of their reconstruction would be dependent on the level of investor interest and confidence. Peripheral development (residences and smaller commercial structures) is a first step to attracting the investors, residents and the tourism businesses required to support the reconstruction of the larger key historic buildings. Other than the ones already identified, some of these would be:

- the Virginia Block
- the Canadian Pacific Railway Station
- the 'Burns Meat' Building
- the Reco Hotel
- the 'Paystreak' Newspaper Office
- the Miners' Union Hall
- the Miners' Union Hospital
- the Churches



A Trueman photograph showing the Hotel Reco and the CPR station on the morning of May 3, 1900, just hours before the devastating fire. BCARS 51722

Of equal importance is the City Hall, privately owned and now undergoing complete restoration. There are, of course, many other important structures.

The object here is to gain a sense of the scheme of reconstruction. The scheme will allow Sandon to develop to a point where the construction of these buildings becomes



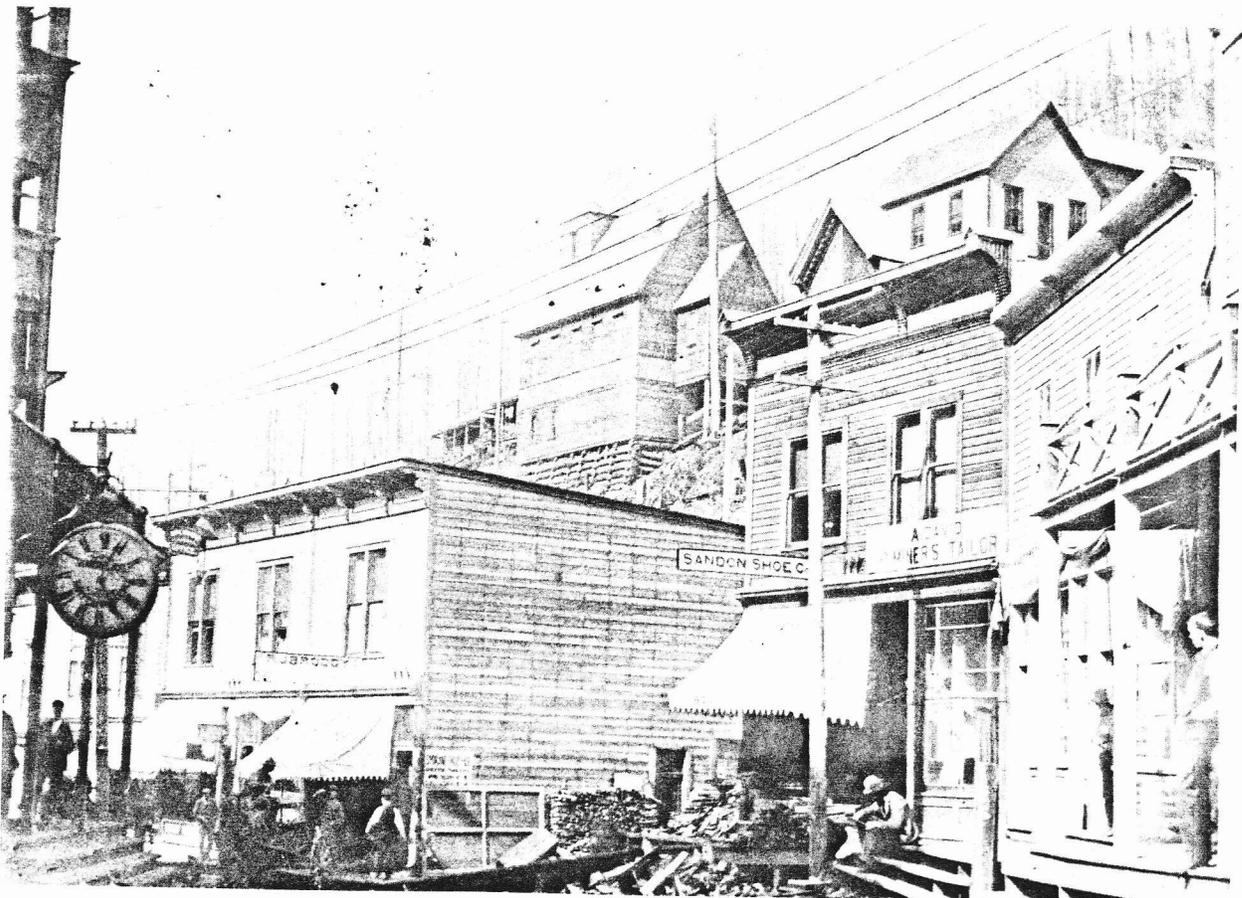
VIRGINIA BLOCK 1897

economically viable. Whether it be private investors, corporate sponsors or the Sandon Historical Society, the prospect of constructing a \$350,000 replica structure on Main Street becomes far more attractive when there is a community and a growing tourism industry to support such endeavours. Sandon will not make the mistake of using government money to erect the buildings and then having to search for ways to support them.



Miners' Union Block c. 1905. Built in 1900, it was considered the finest building of its type in the B.C. Interior BCARS 40671

Another condition designed to ensure historical accuracy -- and one which should be regarded as an essential component -- is the establishment of a 'buffer zone' surrounding Sandon. Also, the corridor leading into town from the Three Forks Junction on Highway 31A needs some additional protection. From a tourism perspective, the corridor provides the initial experience for the visitor to Sandon. It offers a more broadly-based interpretation of Sandon's surroundings and further protects the



1897 view taken from Reco Avenue. The Methodist Church, still unpainted, sits high up on Sunnyside overlooking the downtown core. A set of steps linked the Church to Reco Avenue. The schoolhouse is visible on Sunnyside to the right of the Church. BCARS

actual townsite from being marred by inappropriate development. Some of the initial development that will take place in the corridor will be the erection of interpretive signage. As Sandon develops, there are several corridor features that can be replicated. The Muirhardt and Payne Ranches can provide excellent opportunities for the operation of an outfitting business or a small agricultural enterprise.

3.4 Interpretive Framework

In researching Sandon's history, it quickly becomes apparent that the last years of the 1890's and the first few years of the present century contain the most exciting material for interpretation. Virtually all the significant development that characterized Sandon at its historic peak occurred between 1897 and 1901. There is an opportunity to reconstruct and interpret sections of Sandon that are both pre- and post-fire. By 1910 Sandon was showing definite signs of decline. Taking this into consideration, a ten-year period has been chosen -- the years 1899 to 1909 -- from which restoration and replication projects would be selected. A few exceptions will be allowed in order to provide proper interpretation of the Silversmith Powerhouse, the Miners' Union Hospital, Japanese-Canadian relocation and the present Treminco mill. The main street in pre-fire Sandon was Reco Street. The post-fire Main Street was located on top of the flume. It is possible to reconstruct and interpret both the pre-fire and post-fire main streets independently. This will add an exceptional dimension to the interpretive potential and the appeal of Sandon.

Interpretation of the Gulch, Huckleberry Lane, the Lower End (red-light district) and Capitol Hill can span the whole 1899-1909 period as they were not affected by the 1900 fire. Placing the lower limit at 1899 would eliminate the first generation of shacks and crudely-constructed buildings that characterized Sandon during its initial development. Choosing this interpretive period allows for the broadest possible interpretation during what was Sandon's most illustrious time. This interpretive period forms the basis from which restrictive covenants can be developed to ensure the visual accuracy of all reconstruction.

3.5 Authenticity and Attracting Investment Capital

The single most important consideration in planning the heritage development of Sandon is authenticity. Any compromise will devalue the potential for attracting serious investors and the ability to market the site from a tourism standpoint. At the risk of being repetitive, it must be emphasized that serious investors are demanding the maintenance of visual authenticity. The most appealing aspect of the Vision is of creating the experience of participating in a living-heritage community. To allow any lesser type of reconstruction will weaken the concept to a point where the project may not be viable. Sandon cannot survive if it becomes just another community with a few scattered, restored buildings amongst structures that have absolutely no relevance to its history. The vision encourages the creation of a living-heritage community that will be self-supporting, and will not rely on taxpayers' dollars or government subsidies. Planners and decision-makers must re-think their traditional methods of approaching heritage development when it comes to

Sandon. Sandon is unique and this project can be unique. In order to allow a living community to maintain and pay for a large historic site such as Sandon, rigid adherence to visual authenticity must be guaranteed.

4.0 THE CONCEPT OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT

4.1 The Self-Supporting Nature of the Project

Before considering any heritage development in Sandon, alternatives should be developed to the traditional, public-funded projects. The concept of private investment for historical sites is one that has been pursued successfully around the world. It is still a relatively untried approach in Canada. When faced with the other choices, it quickly becomes apparent there are few real alternatives. Simply put, there is very little government money available for such projects, and there will probably be even less in the future. Involving the private sector opens doors to new capital and resources. Private sponsorship not only places the responsibility of raising capital on the owner or investor, it creates a tax base which becomes a source of revenue for the project and the province. Services such as water and sewer would be funded by taxes and a levy built into the price of the property. This would allow Sandon's populace to be much less dependent on government for basic services than most British Columbians.

4.2 A Heritage Community

Part of the enticement for investors and participants is the living-heritage community concept. This will allow people to own property and live within a setting that is visually historically accurate. It enables investors to know exactly what the development will look like in future years after completion. It also provides the opportunity to pursue businesses, trade and skills that are compatible with a heritage theme. This will further enhance the attraction for tourists. With the entire original townsite available for development, there will be ample opportunity and room for commercial heritage ventures and interpretive experiences. Again, the authenticity issue becomes important. By regulating the type of activity allowed within the site, appropriate commercial ventures cannot outgrow acceptable grounds and become excessive or detract from the site. Creating the framework in which artisans and tradespeople can pursue heritage trades will be a powerful attraction for businesses, investors and tourists.

A natural outgrowth of this is a proposal to establish a School of Heritage Trades in Sandon. Preserving our history is meaningless if the people-skills are not also preserved. As a result, it is becoming critical to teach heritage skills, trades and technologies in order to preserve them. Sandon could be the location where historical trades are taught and practised in an authentic historical setting. Products that are made using heritage tools and techniques can be marketed in Sandon to the large numbers of visitors or can be exported to other markets. The resurgence of interest in heritage trades and skills provides Sandon with another opportunity. With proper marketing there are several industries that were once located in Sandon that could again export their products.

An example would be a Victorian millwork (windows and doors) manufacturing business. The sash-and-door factory once located in Sandon could become a custom supplier of such material not only for construction in Sandon but for export to regional and even more distant markets. Part of the great attraction for visitors will be seeing people at work utilizing historic skills and machinery. Sandon will have a living element that is rare in other historic sites. 'Sandon' can become synonymous with many kinds of heritage products.

Some heritage trades that would be appropriate for Sandon are:

- blacksmith / farrier
- brewer
- harness-maker
- wheelwright
- printer
- horse logger
- millwright

In conjunction with the structures being historically correct, the heritage trades concept adds an even greater level of authenticity. For the visitor it would be a rare opportunity for almost total immersion in an 1890's setting. While some of these experiences are already provided at Fort Steele and Barkerville, the heritage setting and interpretation at Sandon features many themes presently not addressed or that are unique to Sandon. A radical departure from other sites is that Sandon can create 'real' jobs and business, driven by the marketplace and private initiative. Heritage tradespeople working in Sandon would provide interpretive activities for the benefit of tourists without being subsidised by government money.

For businesses wishing to establish themselves in a heritage site, Sandon can supply electrical energy needs through environmentally-sensitive hydroelectric installations such as the historic Silversmith Powerhouse.

The development of the Sandon heritage community will have long-term benefits for the Kootenay region. The people of the Kootenays place great value on their rural and small-town lifestyles. There is presently a high level of concern about how the impact of tourism can be minimized so as not to destroy the beauty and rural character of the region. However, with the resource-extraction industries playing a more subordinate role in local employment, tourism must be one of the alternatives.

It is not envisioned that Sandon should become another Banff (Alberta) or Whistler (B.C.). Sandon can be a model in environmentally-responsible development. With controls on the types of development and growth, the heritage community theme would still allow Sandon to become a major tourist destination. The existing area communities could retain their quiet and desired lifestyles, and yet receive the many spin-off benefits from Sandon's tourist trade. With tourist traffic focused on Sandon, Kootenay-based manufacturers can enjoy the benefits of high-volume exposure in a setting that does not have a detrimental impact on their places of residence.

A living-heritage community in Sandon will also provide a substantial boost to the area's tax base. Communities such as New Denver, Silverton and Kaslo can maintain their privacy, character and economy by allowing Sandon to be developed as the area's prime tourism generator. Sandon can help the Kootenays' hospitals, schools and other essential services to stay alive by contributing substantially to the local economy.

4.3 Private investment and Property Ownership

Throughout the Vision, the concept of private investment and property ownership has been recognized as key to the development of Sandon. To summarize, the benefits (some already discussed in this paper) of supporting private investment will be:

- to reduce the need for government funds and public money
- to provide new sources of capital
- to provide a much broader range of historical development in Sandon
- to broaden the area's tax base
- to create new jobs and industry
- to preserve a national historic site which will otherwise be lost

The proposed restrictions -- on all buildings and structures -- requiring them to be original in appearance and location may at first glance appear to be an impediment to development. Discussions with prospective investors indicate quite the opposite. They regard the mandatory historical-authenticity requirements very much as an incentive. Property in Sandon is viewed as being more valuable with that level of protection in place. It is a guarantee on which a prospective investor can count. It provides the opportunity for investors to participate in a fresh approach to heritage development. In a lagging economy, the investment and private property dimension fuels the entrepreneurial spirit. This style of development attracts a particular type of investor, in most cases one having a genuine interest in heritage. These people not only contribute to the economic well-being of the project but also provide immeasurable support in terms of human resources.

The acquisition of the land presently held by the Crown within the Sandon townsite is critical to the private property aspect. Resolution of this issue in a form acceptable to all parties is necessary early in the planning process. This should be reflected in the Official Community Plan being prepared for Sandon.

5.0 MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

5.1 The Role of the Sandon Historical Society

At present the Sandon Historical Society has a many-faceted role in the Sandon project. In many instances the Society has had to assume responsibilities that may be far beyond its mandate. This is not meant to reflect negatively on the Society. Without the perseverance and dedication of the Society, the remains of Sandon would have collapsed under winter snows and rotted into the ground long ago. The site in its stabilized condition, the huge number of tourists visiting each year, the concepts and ideas and level

of public awareness are realities that stem from the Society's commitment to care for the project. As the Vision develops into reality, the role of the Society will need to adapt. The formation of a non-profit Development Corporation (discussed in the next section) would allow the Society to divest itself of direct involvement in the development process. The Society's function could then return to such activities as research, public relations, marketing, assisting in setting policy for historical authenticity and management, and operation and management of Society buildings and the Museum. The Society should be considered the 'watchdog' of the project. Its mandate would best be described as preserving, and protecting the authenticity of historical Sandon.

5.2 A Development Corporation

To manage the actual development of Sandon, a management body in the form of a non-profit Development Corporation should be formed. All initial construction, in particular the exteriors of structures and certain maintenance duties, would be performed under the direction of this body. Working in an advisory capacity with investors, the Development Corporation would ensure that historical authenticity and high-quality standards are planned and maintained. The Development Corporation would assume the responsibility of completing a building to the 'lock-up' stage, with the exterior completed and painted. At this point, it could be turned over to the new owner who would then complete the interior. The Development Corporation would have a staff of professional and trained individuals capable of directing all facets of planning, drafting, restoration and replication. This staff should include a heritage architect, heritage adviser, experienced carpenter(s), construction foreman, accountant, public relations and marketing personnel and a general manager. After a number of years, development may advance to a stage where Sandon can become an incorporated municipality. Its Council would work closely with the Development Corporation to maintain the correct balance between heritage considerations and municipal requirements. As Sandon approaches its full development potential, the role of the Development Corporation would diminish and increased management responsibility would be assumed by the municipality.

5.3 Sandon as a Community

It is estimated that the permanently settled population of Sandon at its peak was around 2500 residents. The balance of the estimated 5000 citizens were more transient in nature. They lived in the hotels, boarding-houses, squatters' shacks and even tents. Many of the homes and buildings were sandwiched together with little-or-no space between them. Today people require a much greater degree of personal space than in the 1890's. Allowing for this greater requirement of space, the maximum population Sandon could accommodate by modern standards is about 800 residents. Of the estimated population of 800, it is conceivable that at least half of that number would be seasonal or part-time residents. Many of the people employed in the various Sandon businesses could be expected to commute from other communities such as New Denver, Silverton and Kaslo.

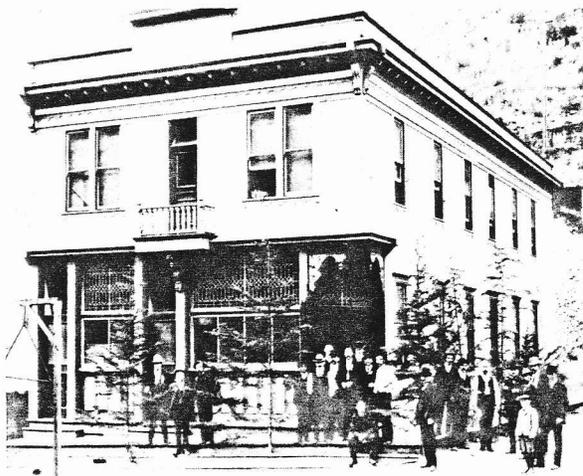
Constraining Sandon's physical growth to historical limits automatically results in a self-regulating ceiling on the population numbers. From a planner's perspective Sandon

presents the unusual situation of knowing the absolute limits of its future development and growth. This should alleviate fears of unbridled development swallowing-up the valley in rows of vacation homes and condominiums.

Not all businesses and services will be developed during the initial stages of the project. The numbers and types of businesses will increase as the demands of the visitors and the community itself grow. To ensure a systematic and orderly development of the business community and protect the investments of new business people in the various sectors of the marketplace, a business-licensing system should be established. As the community and tourist-trade grow, pre-established benchmarks would indicate where and when a duplication or increase in a particular service is required. Just as an investor's property is protected from inappropriate development within the site, the same principle should apply to businesses. Protecting an investor's or business person's financial commitment to the project is vital to Sandon's becoming a living-heritage community.

6.0 CONCLUSION

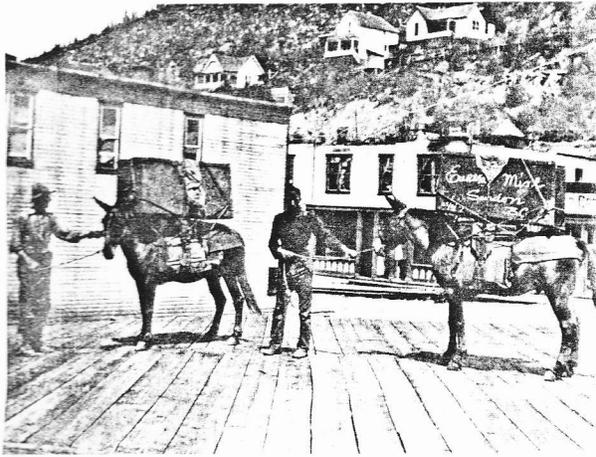
The Sandon Historical Society actively promotes the opportunities for private sector participation in the preservation of Sandon as presented in this Vision. Sandon has already captured the imagination of its visitors and the commitment of individuals willing to preserve and rebuild this historic city. Sandon is already proving its worth as a regional heritage site and should carry on to become one of national importance. This Vision is an extension of the work already taking place. Decisions regarding Sandon's future need to reflect the historical value and potential that distinguish it from **all** other heritage sites.



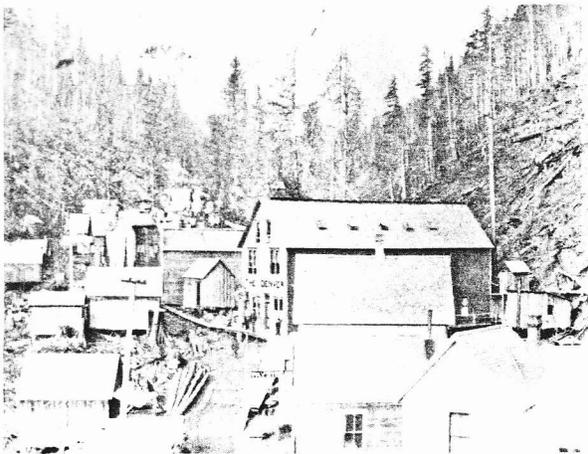
The third and final Sandon Hotel, shortly after completion, summer, 1900. This building replaced a gigantic 3-storey structure that perished in the 1900 fire.
BCARS 68992



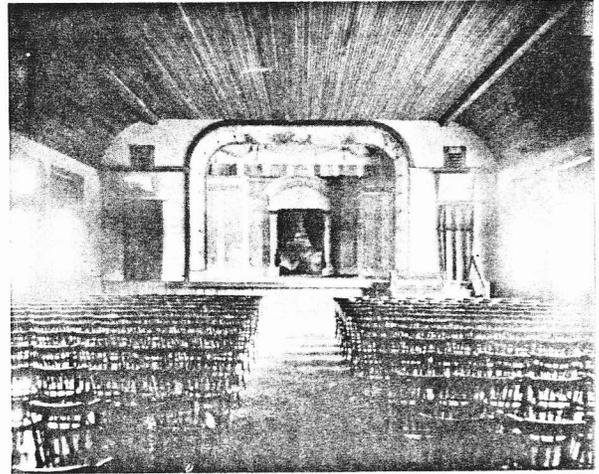
View of Main Street, taken in front of the Hotel Reco. c. 1905. The sign at the far left is that of the Slocan Mercantile Company Ltd. It occupied the brick building (still standing today). L to R: J.M. Harris, Fred T. Kelly (Harris' partner), Mrs. Kelly and Miss Aikin (Harris' bookkeeper). Courtesy John Sanderson



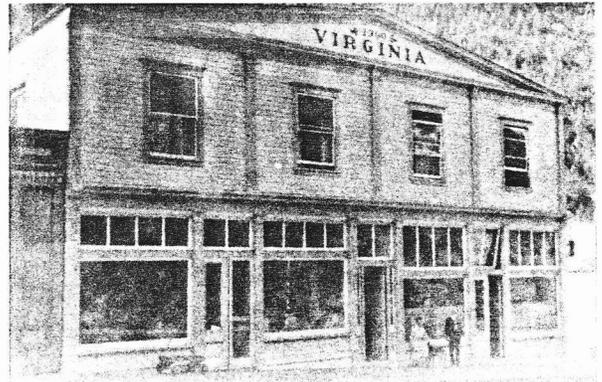
Mine ore cars ready for their journey to the Eureka mine. The date written on the ore car is August 25, 1907. Ernie Towgood (left) and Percy Johnson. Note the gutted shell of the building in the background. This was the Filbert Hotel shortly after a large fire destroyed the upstairs. Although insured, the owners could not collect insurance because the fire fighting equipment had been installed in the rear of the building instead of in a central point. Courtesy John Sanderson



Upper Gulch, c. 1897. The Paystreak office is visible in the foreground. The large house with the bay window was the home of Dr. Gomm (the house still stands today). The Denver Hotel, beyond, spanned Carpenter Creek. A large pedestal clock stood on the sidewalk advertising J.G. Melvin, Jeweller, who had an office in the hotel. Further up the street, a large sign reads "Sandon Laundry." That building still stands today. BCARS 39017



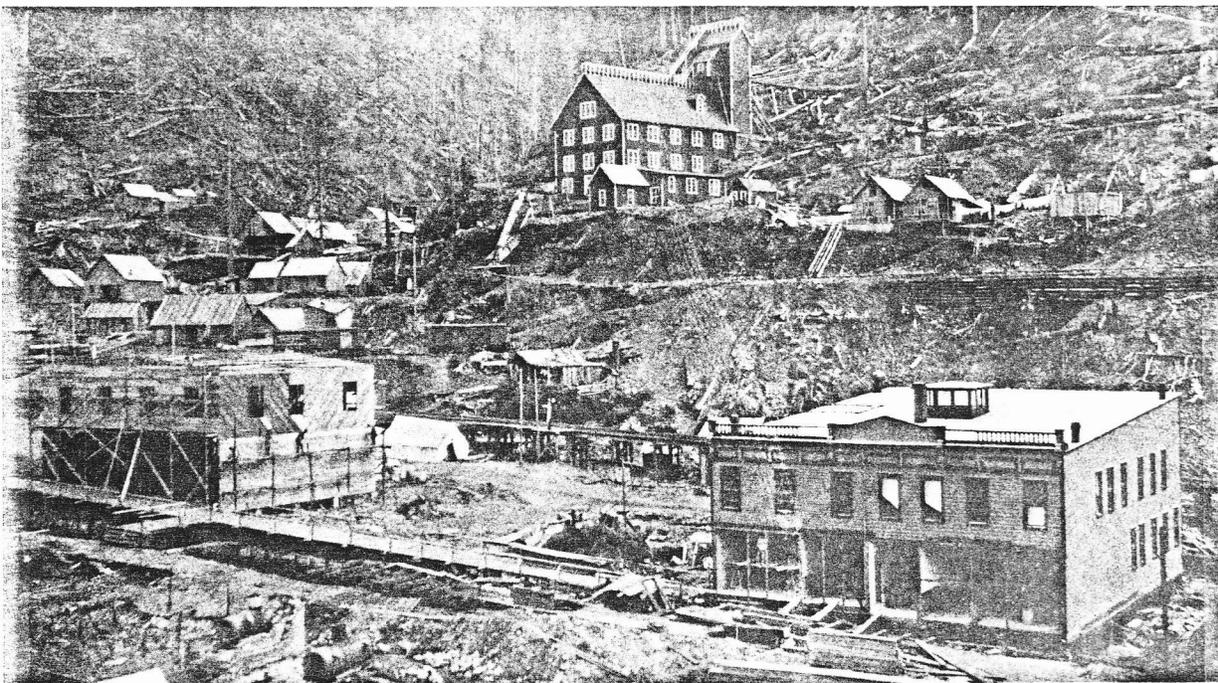
Interior view of Opera House, part of Miners' Union Block, c. 1901. BCARS 53247



The Virginia Block, built 1900, replaced an ornate three-storey predecessor. J.M. Harris had his offices upstairs. A dry goods store and the Bank of B.C. (later the Bank of Commerce) occupied the ground floor. Date unknown. The Virginia Block was torn down for salvage in 1970. Courtesy Ted Kleim



Giegerich & Byers' General Store. c. 1900. Note street numbers on front of building. The wagon belongs to D.W. French & Co., grocers. BCARS 95166



Almost seven weeks after the fire. The building in the lower right corner is the old Livery Barn (which survived the fire) in process of conversion into the new Reco Hotel. In the lower left is the new Virginia Block under construction. The burnt top of the flume is visible in the foreground. The boilers are the only remnants of J.M. Harris' pre-fire steam heating plant. The Ruth Mill (another survivor) is the large building in the background. BCARS 40673



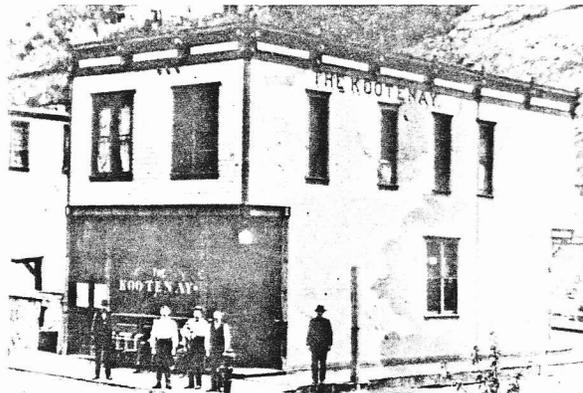
Queen Victoria's Memorial Procession, February 2, 1901. BCARS 95165



1955. In places the streets were piled high with rubble as here on Slocan Star Street, behind the present museum. BCARS 45449



Footraces on Main Street, Labour Day, 1904. BCARS 75314



The post-fire Kootenay Hotel at the corner of Reco Avenue and Ivanhoe Street, c. 1905. Selkirk College Archives