



Some of the buildings in the recreated pioneer village. The new accessible path can be seen to the right of the image.

Photo credit: Pemberton Museum and Archives Society

Developing Infrastructure

Pemberton Museum and Archives Society

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Like many smaller organizations, Pemberton District Museum and Archives Society has struggled with balancing accessibility and safety needs while working with limited resources. For the Society, these issues stem mainly from the accessibility, safety, and collections management concerns of the one-acre site that houses their heritage assets. The site contains a recreation of a small pioneer village comprised

of seven buildings, four of which are of historical significance. The site was not developed under one cohesive plan, instead it was constructed in phases with the support of the Village of Pemberton and volunteers. This form of development was born out of necessity. Due to limited resources and increasing needs, infrastructure could only be developed over time. However, without a comprehensive plan, problems emerged that created difficulties for the accessibility and safety of the site, particularly in regard to visitors.

Thanks to the B.C. | Canada 150 grant, the Society were able to implement several key infrastructural changes that increased the accessibility, safety, and artifact management capacity of the site. This resulted in enhanced visitor experiences and increased functionality of the museum. The project fostered community collaboration and economic stimulus through the involvement of local contractors and volunteers. This has further engaged the community with the museum, resulting in increased positive experiences reported by visitors. These projects have allowed the Society to better serve the mandate of the museum and its ongoing commitment to supporting Pemberton's legacy.

Accessibility issues were addressed by putting in a wheelchair accessible paved path that connects all of the buildings onsite. Previously, the site's paths had an uneven gravel surface that rendered many areas of the site inaccessible to those with

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wheelchairs, strollers, or other mobility needs. The path is a huge asset that opens up our site to more visitors. It is thrilling that many people are now able to enjoy our site more than before.

The safety of the site was also a major concern, as the size of the site and the added management needs of preserving and protecting multiple pieces of built heritage provided security challenges for the Society. The original property fence did not cover the full perimeter of the site, and did not actually rest on the museum's legal property line. The Society was able to use grant funding to repair and relocate the fence and add a second access gate, improving public safety during events. While organizing the moving of the fence, the Society also obtained an updated legal survey for the site. The survey empowers the Society to plan for the addition of new buildings and other potential future changes to the site, thereby enabling future development. This was a major achievement for the museum, as there are currently plans to add two historic buildings to complete the village.

The grant funding directly enabled the construction of an all new building specifically designed to house, protect, and showcase the Society's collections. Prior to this funding,



the building that housed a sizeable portion of the collection had been closed to staff and public for years due to safety concerns. Many small museums and community organizations struggle with securing dedicated and accessible space to protect, showcase, and contextualise artifacts. This directly impacts the ability of these communities to have their voices heard, to build community, and to educate visitors from near and far alike. The grant has not only lifted a burden off of the shoulders of the Society by helping them better serve their mandate to the community, it has also empowered Pemberton itself by acknowledging the importance of their history and their legacy.

WEBSITE: www.pembertonmuseum.org/
FACEBOOK: @PembertonDistrict-Museum

The wheelchair accessible paved path which connects all the site's buildings.
Photo credit: Pemberton Museum and Archives Society

24 museums and heritage places received funding to increase accessibility for people with disabilities*

*British Columbia | Canada 150: Celebrating B.C. Communities and their Contributions to Canada grant program Impact Report