

NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION  
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

# Capital Culture Lives Here

An initiative to seek creative and innovative partners to bring heritage sites to life

Canada

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## Introduction

The National Capital Commission (NCC) has a mandate to create an inspiring Capital Region for all Canadians. Supporting heritage conservation and cultural development is a key part of this vision.

The NCC is at once the planner and the steward of the lands and assets under its management, including many heritage sites. Some of these require investment and reimagining to give them a new life that contributes to the Capital experience.

This discussion guide is intended to generate ideas about inspiring new uses, projects and partnerships for three sites in the NCC's portfolio:

- the iconic Strutt House, 1220 Chemin de la Montagne, Gatineau (Gatineau Park)
- the charming former farmhouse at 108 Pine Road, Chelsea (Gatineau Park)
- the McConnell House, a heritage farmhouse on a scenic property at 1055 Chemin d'Aylmer (Gatineau)



*From left to right: the Strutt House, the house at 108 Pine Road and the McConnell House.*

These sites are all well positioned to contribute to the Capital experience — and show that Capital Culture Lives Here — based on location; exciting potential for residency, animation and diverse uses; and the properties' heritage characteristics.

Each of these heritage properties presents a unique opportunity to create a new program, destination or attraction. Just as each home has its unique setting and character, each also has distinct needs.

We are excited at the prospect of engaging creative and innovative partners in the Capital Region and beyond to help shape the future of these heritage places.

## How to use this guide

Our goal is to engage with creative and innovative partners to generate ideas and expressions of interest in these sites.

This guide outlines the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative, the NCC's proposed vision for these three sites, and invites you to share your ideas about inspiring new uses, projects and partnerships.

We hope that you will share this guide within your organization, as well as with your colleagues and contacts, and perhaps organize a discussion about potential projects that could be implemented in these locations.

Please join us and take part in one of our bilingual workshops on Thursday, March 31, 2022. This will be an opportunity for creative ideation and community connections.

**Workshop #1: March 31, 2022, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am**

[Register for workshop 1](#)

**Workshop #2: March 31, 2022, from 6 pm to 8 pm**

[Register for workshop 2](#)

If you have any comments or questions, please contact [heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca).

## What is this initiative all about?

In 2021, we launched a pilot project to transform the Rochon Residence, at 138 St. Patrick Street, in Ottawa, into a residence for artists. Our request for expressions of interest was successful, and we are pleased to have launched a partnership with the SAW Centre Nordic Lab artist-in-residence program this year.

Building on the momentum from the pilot project, and the interest we received from various organizations, we plan to launch requests for expressions of interest for the Strutt House, 108 Pine Road and the McConnell House in June 2022.

Our goal is to seek proposals for these sites that will achieve the following:

- conserve their heritage value
- build awareness of their significance
- enhance the Capital experience

Each site has its own unique character, set of priorities and considerations for the types of partnerships we hope to build. These are described on the following pages.



*The Rochon Residence, at 138 St. Patrick Street, in Ottawa.*

## The NCC's vision and mandate

Giving new life to these sites — the Strutt House, 108 Pine Road and the McConnell House — is further supported by the NCC's vision for a **meaningful and inclusive, picturesque and natural**, and **thriving and connected** Capital Region.



The Plan for Canada's Capital, 2017–2067, outlines several key policy directions for ensuring a “living culture and heritage” which are key drivers behind the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative. They include the following:

- protecting heritage buildings and sites, and bringing them to life with new uses that respect their character, and are compatible with the heritage features to be preserved;
- prioritizing the use of Capital lands for national cultural activities and to support artistic creation;
- working with federal partners to add to and enhance art of the highest quality in the public realm of the Capital, both as stand-alone installations and as art that is integrated into other development projects;

- supporting the diversity of arts in the Capital by allowing use of its lands, where appropriate, by non-profit organizations and educational institutions for temporary events; and
- promoting a collaborative regional approach to cultural planning, in partnership with municipal governments and community-based organizations.

#### Links

[SAW Centre Nordic Lab artist-in-residence program news release](#)

[Plan for Canada's Capital, 2017–2067](#)

### INCLUSIVE AND MEANINGFUL

- ✿ Maintain and create the inspiring symbols and meaningful legacies that are intrinsic to Canadian identity
- ✿ Celebrate Canadian values and achievements
- ✿ Welcome Canadians, in all their diversity, to the Capital Region, respecting its location on traditional lands of the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation

### PICTURESQUE AND NATURAL

- ✿ Protect and enhance the Capital Region's ecological integrity and its natural beauty
- ✿ Maintain and create the distinctiveness of northern natural and cultural landscapes in the Capital Region
- ✿ Foster new ways to access and animate the Capital's shorelines, waterways and green space networks

### THRIVING AND CONNECTED

- ✿ Support a liveable, attractive, resilient, accessible and economically competitive Capital Region
- ✿ Promote sustainable mobility, and support transit-oriented development in the Capital Region
- ✿ Conserve and enrich cultural heritage through design excellence and exemplary stewardship

*Goals that support that NCC's vision in the Plan for Canada's Capital, 2017 to 2067.*

# The properties

## Strutt House: A mid-century icon set among the trees

### The site

The Strutt House was the residence of well-known Canadian architect James Strutt. Built in 1955–1956 as an experimental prototype for other residences he designed, it is a “recognized” federal heritage building. It is perched at the top of a two-level site on the environmentally sensitive Eardley Escarpment.

Part of the innovative modern movement in architecture of its day, it was designed to sit in harmony with nature.

Nestled among the trees, it also benefits from the warm sun streaming in the windows and a beautiful view of the valley below. The Strutt House was once a popular destination for politicians, academics, artists and the design community. The site is not universally accessible due to the steep stair access, as well as the split-level building design.



*From left to right: View of the living room, exterior view of the Strutt House, view of the sun streaming in.*

## The planning context

The Gatineau Park Master Plan (2021), prepared with extensive public and stakeholder consultation, provides the vision and policy direction for the Park. The Strutt House site is located on the Eardley Escarpment an “intensive nature conservation area” of the Park.

The Gatineau Park Master Plan includes specific policies for the Strutt House property, as follows:

- Give the Strutt House, a recognized federal heritage building on the Eardley Escarpment, a purpose that would help protect the building.
  - Examples of possible uses: accommodations for an artist- or scientist-in-residence, venue for architectural or design workshops, etc.
  - Limit the number of visitors to the site.
  - Allow occasional public access (e.g. during Culture Days and so on).

## Links

[Gatineau Park Master Plan \(2021\)](#)

# Vision

## — Vision Statement

*Gatineau Park is an exceptional natural environment in the Capital Region that must be protected for current and future generations so that they can enjoy its precious contribution to nature conservation, outdoor recreation, and the discovery of history and culture.*

*The vision statement of the Gatineau Park Master Plan.*

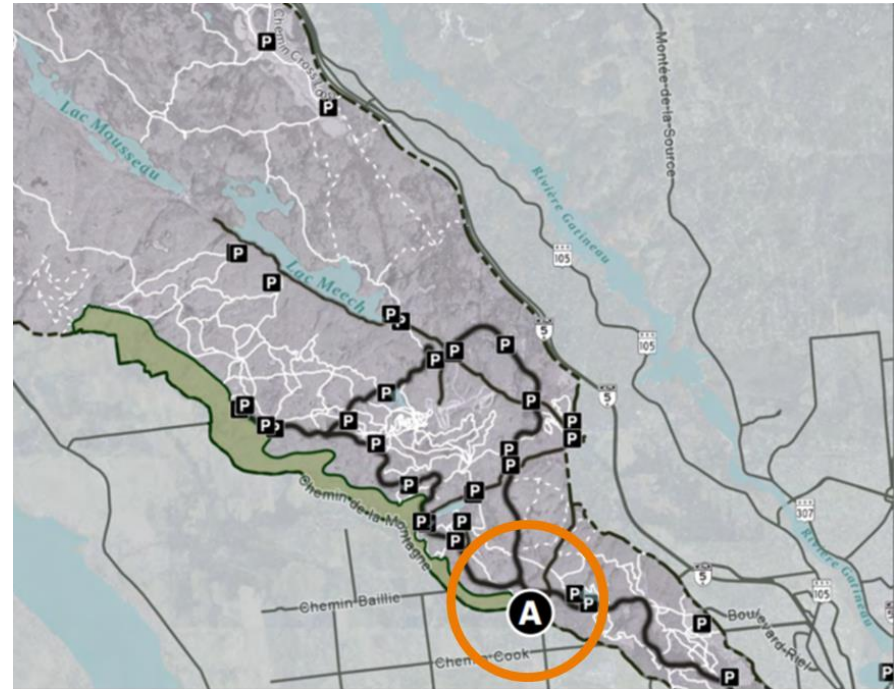


## The opportunity

Given its unique design and location (zoned as an “intensive nature conservation area” in the Gatineau Park Master Plan, 2021), residential use of the site is preferred over a more public use. It would be an ideal site for an “in-residence” program, such as artist-in-residence or scientist-in-residence program. The NCC hopes to find a partner to enter into a multi-year lease to operate this type of program at the site. Periodic public access could be granted, but the intent is that the site not become a destination for large groups of visitors.

Opportunities to exhibit work developed through the residency program could be showcased at the Gatineau Park Visitor Centre.

The NCC will be undertaking the rehabilitation of the Strutt House in 2022–2024. At the end of the project, the house would be ready for occupancy.



*Location of the Strutt House within the “intensive nature conservation area.”*

## The partnership

The goal of the request for expressions of interest is to find a partner to operate an “in-residence” program, once the rehabilitation is completed.

The partner organization and NCC will enter into a lease agreement reflecting the market rate for the property. However, the NCC may provide rental credits for a portion of the annual rent for “value in kind.”

### *What is value in kind?*

The NCC maintains a rental portfolio to safeguard important buildings and help fund its stewardship of the National Capital Region. A value-in-kind contribution is a good or service provided by a partner organization that helps the NCC fulfill its mandate, which the NCC would normally fulfill using its own resources. In doing so, value in kind provides a measurable improvement to NCC lands, buildings or stewardship. Possible examples of value in kind in Gatineau Park could include scientific research to support Park management, tree planting, invasive species management, trail maintenance, environmental monitoring, restoration of other heritage buildings or interpretive installations.

For additional context and inspiration, the Gatineau Park Master Plan includes more detailed description of the NCC’s activities and objectives in the Park.

The NCC welcomes suggestions for alternative agreements in addition to those listed above.

## Discussion questions

With the NCC’s proposed vision for this space in mind...

1. If you are aware of one, please describe an existing program that would be ideal for Strutt House.
2. What would you or other organizations need to establish these existing programs at the site? For some, this could include things like more time to refine or market the program. For others, it could be things like visiting the site to get a feel for the property, or getting a better understanding of partnership/leasing options.
3. What other ideas do you have for Strutt House? Think about the needs of your community, or possibilities that could reflect the proposed vision for this site.
4. What would you or other organizations need to get these new ideas off the ground? For some, this could include things like funding, or more time to develop a program. For others, it could be things like finding community partners or further evaluating the fit for their organization.
5. How do you see your organization partnering with the NCC on the Strutt House? Think about the role you or your organization could play in relation to a potential partnership. What kind of partnerships interest you? What do you need to get this partnership up and running?

## 108 Pine Road: A nature-inspired experience in Meech Creek Valley

### The site

This attractive brick farmhouse with a wrap-around veranda, surrounded by mature pine trees, was built in 1915 by the Cross family. The building is listed on the Régistre du patrimoine culturel du Québec. The house features heritage architectural details throughout the interior and exterior. Located close to trailheads for many types of activities, the property offers prime access to all that the Park has to offer. However, the house is in need of significant rehabilitation.



*Exterior view of the house at 108 Pine Road, in Chelsea.*

## The planning context

As with the Strutt House, the Gatineau Park Master Plan (2021), prepared with extensive public and stakeholder consultation, provides the vision and policy direction for the Park and this site. The 108 Pine Road site is located in the “conservation and outdoor experience area” of the Park.

The master plan includes several key policies for this zone, as well as for Meech Creek Valley, including the following:

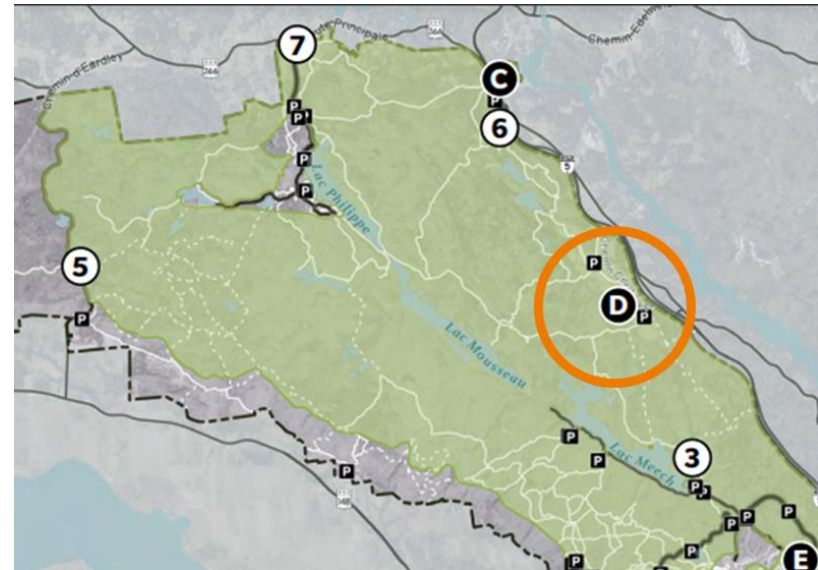
- allowing visitors to discover the Park’s cultural heritage
- providing recreational experiences for individual visitors or groups
- enhancing and interpreting cultural landscapes identified in the Cultural Heritage Plan, including the agricultural landscape of Meech Creek Valley
- allowing tourist accommodations only in existing heritage buildings
- providing options for an Indigenous gathering place

The site is identified as a “Class C” heritage property of regional significance in the Gatineau Park Cultural Heritage Plan (2016). The plan states that, while the NCC considers all cultural resources to be of value, it will focus its heritage conservation and interpretation on those that are of national and Capital importance, while working with partners to conserve cultural resources of regional importance.

## Links

[Gatineau Park Master Plan \(2021\)](#)

[Gatineau Park Cultural Heritage Plan \(2016\)](#)



*The location of the house at 108 pine Road within the “conservation and outdoor experience area.”*



### **The opportunity**

Given its location near the NCC's parking lot P16 and seasonal parking lot P15 at Meech Creek Valley, the site is ideally situated to easily access the Gatineau Park trail network and popular destinations for recreational activities.

Brimming with potential, and located in an area with many possible uses, 108 Pine Road could be used for the following:

- residential purposes
- education and interpretive uses
- restaurants
- visitor amenities, such as rest stops and picnic areas, accommodations
- conservation and enhancement of built and landscape heritage
- events and gathering uses

### **The partnership**

The house at 108 Pine Road is located in beautiful Meech Creek Valley. Unlike the case with the Strutt House, no funds have been committed by the NCC to its rehabilitation, and it requires additional investment from partners to complete a restoration. It is currently vacant, and has had interior finishes removed to expose the framing and structure.

The NCC will work with interested partners to develop an agreement to reflect private investment in the restoration, including rental offsets for the duration of a subsequent lease.

The request for expressions of interest would seek conceptual proposals from potential partners for both the rehabilitation and the animation of the site. The goal is to secure a creative partnership for the site that can contribute to the visitor experience in Gatineau Park.

The NCC welcomes suggestions for alternative agreements in addition to those listed above.



## Discussion questions

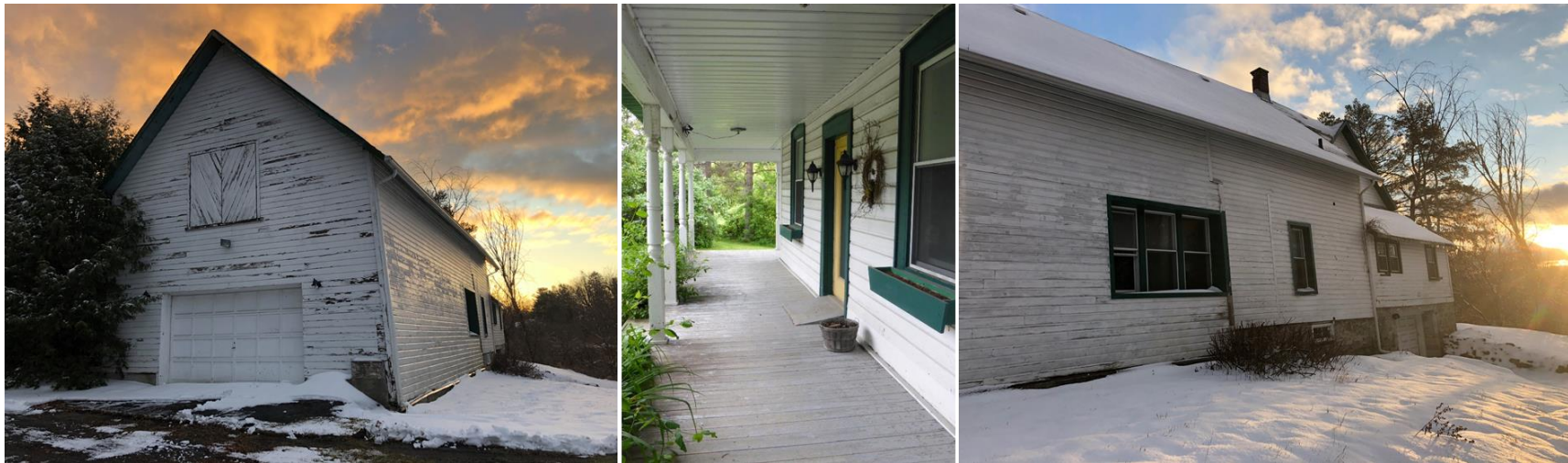
With the NCC's proposed vision for this space in mind...

1. If you are aware of one, please describe an existing program that would be ideal for 108 Pine Road.
2. What would you or other organizations need to establish these existing programs at the site? For some, this could include things like more time to refine or market the program. For others, it could be things like visiting the site to get a feel for the property, or getting a better understanding of partnership/leasing options.
3. What other ideas do you have for 108 Pine Road? Think about the needs of your community or possibilities that could reflect the proposed vision for this site.
4. What would you or other organizations need to get these new ideas off the ground? For some, this could include things like funding or more time to develop a program. For others, it could be things like finding community partners or further evaluating the fit for their organization.
5. How do you see your organization partnering with the NCC at 108 Pine Road? Think about the role you or your organization could play in relation to a potential partnership. What kind of partnerships interest you? What do you need to get this partnership up and running?

## McConnell House: A heritage gem located in a dynamic corridor

### The site

This 19th century farmhouse — now a “recognized” federal heritage building — sits prominently on open, pastoral land between the Champlain Bridge and downtown Aylmer, in the Aylmer district of Gatineau. It has modest wood siding, a gabled roof and a large front veranda that runs the full length of the front facade. The connected barn, considered a rare feature among Quebec’s agricultural heritage properties, provides ample space that can accommodate a variety of indoor activities. The surrounding property is quite large, and offers an opportunity for outdoor programming. However, the house and attached barn are in need of significant rehabilitation.



*Exterior view of the McConnell House and barn.*

## The planning context

The Capital Urban Lands Plan (2015) applies to the urban lands that extend to the Greenbelt boundary (Ontario), and those located within the urban boundaries of Gatineau, excluding Gatineau Park. The plan outlines key roles for the urban lands in the Capital, with a set of goals linked to each role: creating and fostering high-quality and meaningful places; supporting the Capital's urban green and blue space network; and contributing to building a livable Capital Region. Within these roles, two key goals are of particular interest to McConnell House:

- improving, safeguarding and enriching the Capital's cultural heritage
- protecting and enhancing the Capital's picturesque landscapes

## Links

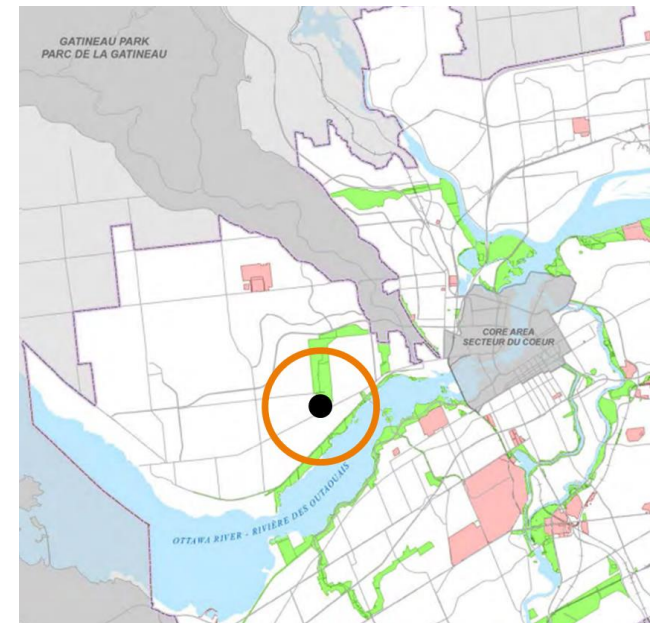
### [Capital Urban Lands Plan \(2015\)](#)

Located in the Capital green space network, which prioritizes environmental stewardship, and on lands designated Capital urban green space, McConnell House could offer opportunities for passive enjoyment and recreation with less intensive formal infrastructure.

Key policies of interest for Capital urban green space lands, including McConnell House, include the following:

- supporting the Capital experience, for example, to host various public activities and events of smaller scale
- preserving the overall multi-purpose nature of sites

- promoting the Capital Experience through the discovery of built heritage and cultural landscapes
- providing spaces for leisure and various activities and events
- focusing new animation, amenities and services where the infrastructure support exists
- locating animation nodes where they can be integrated with existing pathway networks



*Location of the McConnell House within the Capital urban lands.*

### **The opportunity**

The McConnell House is uniquely situated on open, pastoral land — a beautiful contrast to the urban backdrop. Given its location, the site benefits from high visibility, accessibility and nearby access to public transit, which is also set to improve in the coming years. The size of the lot and existing parking facilities also provide ample opportunity to accommodate multiple programs.

The Urban Lands Plan permits a variety of uses, including, for example:

- education and interpretive uses
- restaurants
- visitor amenities, such as rest stops and picnic areas
- conservation and enhancement of built and landscape heritage
- events and gathering uses

Ideally, such uses will contribute to the animation and public enjoyment of the Capital, generally maintain free public access to the site, and respect its heritage and scenic character.

### **The partnership**

As with the property at 108 Pine Road, no funds have as yet been committed by the NCC for the rehabilitation of the McConnell House. The building is currently vacant, and has had interior finishes removed to expose the framing and structure. Its location on a main transportation route between the eastern and western areas of Gatineau means that it is in a prime spot for commercial activity.

The request for expressions of interest would seek proposals for both rehabilitation and animation of the site. The NCC will work with interested partners to develop an agreement to reflect private investment for restoration, including rental offsets for the duration of a subsequent lease.

The NCC welcomes suggestions for alternate agreements in addition to those listed above.

## Discussion questions

With the NCC's proposed vision for this space in mind...

1. If you are aware of one, please describe an existing program that would be ideal for the McConnell House.
2. What would you or other organizations need to establish these existing programs at the site? For some, this could include things like more time to refine or market the program. For others, it could be things like visiting the site to get a feel for the property, or getting a better understanding of partnership/leasing options.
3. What other ideas do you have for the McConnell House? Think about the needs of your community or possibilities that could reflect the proposed vision for this site.
4. What would you or other organizations need to get these new ideas off the ground? For some, this could include things like funding or more time to develop a program. For others, it could be things like finding community partners, or further evaluating the fit for their organization.
5. How do you see your organization partnering with the NCC at the McConnell House? Think about the role you or your organization could play in relation to a potential partnership. What kind of partnerships interest you? What do you need to get this partnership up and running?



## Thank you!

We hope this guide has served you in learning more about the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative, and helped you to reflect on potential uses, projects and partnerships for the three sites: the Strutt House, 108 Pine Road and the McConnell House.

Do you have ideas or considerations to share that weren't covered in this guide? We invite you to share those with us.

Please send your comments or questions to [heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca).

## Next steps

A consultation report will be published on the NCC website following this engagement process. The feedback gathered in the workshop will help refine the vocation, priorities and considerations for the three sites and future partnership opportunities.

We thank you for your contribution to this exciting initiative.

# Frequently asked questions

## About the consultation

### How can I get involved in this process?

- You can take part in one of the workshops on March 31, 2022, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am or from 6 pm to 8 pm.
- Comments and questions can be submitted in writing to [heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca).

## About the properties

### Will there be opportunities to visit the sites?

Visits can be organized by appointment, pending site conditions. The visits will be subject to public health directives and measures established by local authorities. Please contact the NCC if you are interested in visiting a site.

## About the requests for expressions of interest

### Could I receive notification when the requests for expressions of interest are published?

If you are interested in receiving notification, please submit your contact information to [heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca).

### When will the requests for expressions of interest be published?

The requests for expressions of interest process for all three sites will launch in June 2022.

## About the discussion guide

### What is purpose of this discussion guide?

The purpose of the guide is to provide you with background information about the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative and the NCC's proposed vision for these three sites. Discussion questions are included to help you reflect on inspiring new uses, projects and partnerships for the sites.

This guide also serves to frame potential discussions you may choose to organize with your colleagues and contacts, or within your organization.

### Do I have to submit my comments prior to taking part in the workshop?

Feedback will be gathered primarily during the workshop. However, we welcome feedback on the NCC's proposed vision for these sites until April 11, 2022. Comments or questions can be submitted in writing to [heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:heritage-patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca).

## Technical issues

### The registration link does not work. How can I register for the workshop?

If you're having issues accessing the online registration form or submitting the form, please contact the NCC's client services at [info@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:info@ncc-ccn.ca) or 613-239-5000.