

Collingwood Heritage Emergency Policy

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

March 2026



Online Survey

DATE	17 February – 11 March, 2026
FORMAT	Online Survey
ENGAGEMENT	15 Respondents

NPG Planning Solutions Inc. (NPG) facilitated an online survey through Survey Monkey on the Town’s project webpage. This survey was designed to understand past experiences, current challenges, proactive strategies, and information sharing as they relate to cultural heritage emergency management in the Town of Collingwood. Key survey findings are summarized and presented in this report. Where used, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1. Survey Respondents

A total of 15 survey responses were received. Most (53%) were residents of Collingwood, and approximately a quarter (27%) were both residents and business owners in Collingwood. Non-resident business owners in Collingwood represented approximately 13% of responses, and only one (1) respondent was neither a resident nor a business owner. Nearly three quarters (73%) of respondents own a heritage property in Collingwood.

2. Perceived and Experienced Risks and Challenges

Respondents indicated that the most common risks to designated heritage properties were fire, flood, and extreme weather. Other risks mentioned included vibration caused by heavy trucks, vandalism, tornadoes, and all types of disasters and emergencies.

Just over half (53%) of respondents reported having observed damage to Collingwood’s cultural heritage resources due to disasters and emergencies. Of those 53%, more than half reported witnessing fires, particularly downtown and on the main street. Specific examples include fires that damaged the Arlington Hotel and the Masonic Temple. Other responses included vandalism/graffiti, fallen trees during a storm and damage due to snow removal.

Two (2) respondents reported having personally experienced a disaster or an emergency that affected a cultural heritage resource. Experiences included basement flooding; backed-up sewers; ice damage to eavestroughs, fascia, and soffits; and the shutdown of the Downtown area. One (1) respondent expanded on their experience, referencing lost revenue due to the shutdown of the Downtown area.

When asked what factors could prevent cultural heritage resources from being repaired or restored after a disaster or emergency, the most common response was in reference to the cost of restoring or replicating the “historic” or “heritage” style. The time and cost of finding suitable tradespeople and the unwillingness of insurance companies to rebuild

or restore buildings also frequently appeared. Other challenges included: political red tape and bureaucracy; a lack of desire by the owner to restore or rebuild; and the owner's preference for demolition over restoration.

3. Information Sharing

Respondents were asked how informed they feel regarding the protection of cultural heritage resources before, during, and after a disaster or emergency. Of the 15 responses, most (53%) report having some knowledge of relevant resources, followed by 33% of respondents who report no familiarity with any resources. Only two (2) respondents reported feeling very informed in regard to preparing for and responding to a disaster or emergency.

Nearly half (46%) of respondents get information about emergencies in the community from social media, and some (13%) access this through the Town's website. 40% of respondents receive their information from other sources, such as the online news source "Collingwood Today", the Townhall / BIA, local networks, television, and radio.

When asked what types of information or training would be helpful for emergency management preparation or in response to a cultural heritage disaster, online resources were the most requested. Other specific responses included emergency checklists; workshops; access to an inventory with pictures; contact information of suppliers and skilled contractors; clear guiding policy; and greater clarity on how the Town will assist in costs.

4. Special Considerations and Recommendations

Four (4) responses were received in response to a question that asked if there were other cultural heritage resources deserving of special consideration during disasters or emergencies. This included historic neighbourhoods located outside of the Collingwood Downtown Heritage Conservation District, 20th century homes, older properties not yet designated, the lighthouse, and the Collingwood Grain Terminals.

The final open-ended question provided an opportunity for respondents to share any other comments they had on the topic of to cultural heritage, disasters, and emergencies. These responses included the following comments and recommendations:

- It is important to adhere to the standards established in the Downtown Collingwood Heritage Conservation District Plan;
- The 2016 article "Goderich: A Case Study of Conserving Cultural Heritage Resources in a Disaster" by Kayla Allison Jonas contains useful advice;
- A heritage committee-managed fund should be established as a reserve for emergencies;
- A brochure/pamphlet should be given to heritage property owners to advise them on how to react to disasters;

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- Heritage property owners should be encouraged to install fire, temperature, and sump pump alarms; and,
 - Educate Town Staff on any new policies.

Stakeholder Workshop

DATE	24 March 2026
FORMAT	In-person Workshop
ENGAGEMENT	6 Attendees

NPG Planning Solutions Inc. (NPG) facilitated an in-person workshop at the Collingwood Public Library. The consultants provided a presentation and held a question-and-answer session. Poster boards were posted around the room, inviting input from attendees. The workshop invited input on local experiences with hazards and emergencies in Collingwood. Key findings from the workshop are summarized below.

1. Emergency Preparedness

- Attendees noted that the Town has a resource list for contractors, and it was suggested that the list should be updated regularly;
- It was suggested that the Town consider having contractors and consultants on retainer to ensure faster response times and to support owners before, during and after an emergency;
- It was recommended that the heritage inventory and addresses for properties should be updated to ensure accurate information and fast response times during and after an emergency;
- Regular updates to the photos of properties on the heritage inventory were recommended to document building conditions before hazards and disasters;
- It was suggested that the Town could prepare information to send out with tax bills or via the local BIA educating property owner about local hazards such as fire and floods, and ways to mitigate and minimize these risks, such as responsible building practices;
- Attendees asked to what degree the Cultural Heritage Emergency Plan would mandate requirements to prevent or mitigate risks for heritage properties.

2. Emergency Response

- Attendees asked whether and how cultural heritage resources are, or can be, prioritized for conservation during and after an emergency or disaster;
- Attendees asked who was responsible for costs after an emergency or disaster, the property owner, or the municipality;
- Attendees showed interest in a program that could enable the Town to share costs for conservation work on heritage properties after an emergency or disaster.