



The Forks
National Historic Site

DRAFT Management Statement

2017



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The Forks National Historic Site of Canada

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Introduction

The Parks Canada Agency manages one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and historic areas in the world. The Agency's mandate is to protect and present these places for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. This management statement outlines Parks Canada's management approach for the portion of The Forks National Historic Site (NHS), referred to in this document as Parks Canada Place, owned and administered by Parks Canada.

The Forks NHS is located at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This site has witnessed many of the key events in western Canadian history, including thriving pre-contact Indigenous cultures, the fur trade, the exploration and settlement of Western Canada, the creation of the Province of Manitoba, and the establishment of the City of Winnipeg. The Forks NHS continues to be a public gathering place for recreational, commercial and educational use. It is a focal point for tourism in Winnipeg, receiving over four million visits a year.

The Forks NHS in its entirety is co-owned and operated by Parks Canada, The Forks North Portage Partnership and The Canadian Museum for Human Rights (Figure 1). Parks Canada's portion of the site, Parks Canada Place is largely green space, 3.6 ha of the 25.3 ha of the designated site.

Visitor facilities and infrastructure at Parks Canada Place are minimal, including: an orientation node with public restrooms; interpretive signage; the Variety Heritage Adventure Park (playground and splash pad); a small open-air amphitheatre; a dock on the Red River; and a 382 m portion of the Winnipeg Riverwalk along the Red River (Figure 2). Frequent river floods render the Riverwalk, dock, and amphitheatre inoperable for portions of the year.

The cultural resources within Parks Canada Place consist of buried archaeological resources and views. Minimal site infrastructure and approximately one to two meters of fill, deposited during the railway era, ensures the continued legibility and well-being of the historic evidence that remains in situ. Parks Canada continues to review all projects and proposals for the site to minimize or mitigate potential impacts to cultural and natural resources.

Partnerships continue to play an important role in how Parks Canada manages Parks Canada Place. Collaboration with others, particularly with The Forks North Portage Partnership, enhances opportunities to present heritage programs and services in and around the site. Parks Canada has developed a good working relationship with businesses and not-for-profit organizations at The Forks, including the Inn at The Forks, The Manitoba Theatre for Young People and the Manitoba Children's Museum.

Management Objectives

There are two opportunities that the MFU will pursue, expressed below as results-based objectives.

1. The presentation of Indigenous cultures is increased.

The Forks area holds a special meaning for Indigenous groups. Parks Canada ensures that Indigenous groups have access to its spaces to engage in traditional and cultural activities and to share their perspectives.

- The MFU collaborates with Indigenous people on product development, interpretive content and visitor experiences to add a greater Indigenous presence and to create new Indigenous-related programming at the site.
- The majority of Indigenous programs are delivered by Indigenous people in collaboration with Parks Canada interpreters at Parks Canada Place.

2. The visibility of Parks Canada Place at The Forks NHS is increased through an enhanced visitor offer, services, and a locational-identified presence on site.

Parks Canada endeavours to incrementally increase the visibility and profile of Parks Canada Place within the greater Forks NHS.

- Parks Canada has increased the visibility of Parks Canada Place through identifier signage and branding on site.
- A strategic review of site infrastructure identifies possible new investment or rationalisation of under-performing assets to allow Parks Canada effectively and sustainably meet its mandate.
- Contemporary, interactive paid programming which complements and competes favourably in the local and regional tourism market is provided by Parks Canada and third party partners.

Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

Parks Canada is responsible for assessing and mitigating the impacts of management actions on ecosystems and on cultural resources. The *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*, prepared by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment of all plans and policies submitted to the federal Cabinet or to a Minister for approval deemed to have important positive or negative environmental effects.

A strategic environmental assessment will be undertaken on this management statement, and the management direction found within will be adjusted to respond to findings in the final management statement.

LINKS: pc.gc.ca/forks

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Figure 1 The Forks NHS Property Owners/Administrators. Parks Canada 2017.



Figure 2 Parks Canada Place Facilities at The Forks NHS. Parks Canada 2017.