



LOWER FORT GARRY

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
OF CANADA

Management Plan



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For more information about the Site Management Plan or about Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada:

Lower Fort Garry
National Historic Site

Tel: (204) 785-6050

Fax: (204) 482-5887

email:

lfgnhs.info@pc.gc.ca

www.pc.gc.ca

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Management Plan

October 2007

Foreword



Canada's national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas offer Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast unique opportunities to experience and understand our wonderful country. They are places of learning, recreation and fun where Canadians can connect with our past and appreciate the natural, cultural and social forces that shaped Canada.

From our smallest national park to our most visited national historic site to our largest national marine conservation area, each of these places offers Canadians and visitors unique opportunities to experience Canada. These places of beauty, wonder and learning are valued by Canadians - they are part of our past, our present and our future.

Our Government's goal is to ensure that each of these special places is conserved.

We see a future in which these special places will further Canadians' appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Canada, the economic well-being of communities, and the vitality of our society.

Our Government's vision is to build a culture of heritage conservation in Canada by offering Canadians exceptional opportunities to experience our natural and cultural heritage.

These values form the foundation of the new management plan for Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada. I offer my appreciation to the many thoughtful Canadians who helped to develop this plan, particularly to our dedicated team from Parks Canada, and to all those local organizations and individuals who have demonstrated their good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

In this same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Baird". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Baird
Minister of the Environment

Recommendations

Recommended by:



Alan Latourelle
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada



Dawn Bronson
Superintendent
Manitoba Field Unit

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1.0 Introduction

Sir George Simpson needed a new home for his young English bride. He also needed a substantial Hudson's Bay Company post to serve the company's trading needs in a place free from seasonal floods and somewhat removed from the centre of the Red River settlement where Winnipeg stands today. In 1832, he moved his bride into the new stone fort called Lower Fort Garry and attempted to move the centre of Red River Valley commerce there as well.

While the fort never achieved the economic role Simpson envisioned, it played a pivotal role in the development of western Canada. Rapids on the Red River above the fort made Lower Fort Garry a logical place from which to ship goods to supply a large number of forts downstream along the Saskatchewan River and beyond. Manufactured goods arrived via the Hayes River and Lake Winnipeg to be shipped out to the trading posts.

Men like William Bear and John Badger from the local Aboriginal community hired on at the fort as tripmen to row York boats along the rivers to the north and west. Jerry and Betsey Johnstone traded hand-made tump lines to be used for portaging cargo on the long journeys across the west. Employees' wives, widows, children, extended families and local residents would pick berries and hops, cut hay and firewood, fish, make clothing, and work on the Lower Fort Garry farm while waiting for their loved ones to return.

Many of these people may have been among the over 2000 Saulteaux (Ojibway) and Swampy Cree peoples who gathered at Lower Fort Garry in 1871 to begin the treaty process. Later that decade, they might have

brought firewood to heat the barracks or gone to church services with the new recruits of the recently formed North-West Mounted Police.



Lower Fort Garry

Lower Fort Garry presents these stories and many more. Visitors to the site can hear these tales, touch a fur, smell and taste bannock as it is pulled from a stone oven, listen to the pounding of hammer on steel in the blacksmith's shop and tap their toes to songs of the past.

This management plan describes the long-term vision for the protection, presentation, use and enjoyment of this fascinating historic place. The plan focuses Parks Canada's decisions, collaborations, financial and human resources, on Lower Fort Garry's commemorative integrity. It also provides opportunities for meaningful visitor experiences, appreciation and enjoyment of the national historic site.

The current management plan is prepared under the provisions of subsection 32(1) of the Parks Canada Agency Act and will be reviewed under subsection 32(2) in 2011.

1.1 National Historic Sites of Canada

Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada is part of a system of Parks Canada protected heritage areas including National Parks, National Marine Conservation Areas, and National Historic Sites. Over 890 federally designated historic sites nationwide commemorate thousands of years of human history and a rich variety of themes that span political, economic, intellectual, cultural and social life of the country. Each site has had a nationally significant impact on Canadian history or illustrates a nationally important aspect of the history of Canada. Parks Canada operates 154 sites with the remainder being operated by other federal departments, provinces, territories, municipalities or private owners.

National historic site objectives are:

- to foster knowledge and appreciation of Canada's past through a national program of historical commemoration;
- to ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada by protecting and presenting them for the benefit, education, and enjoyment of this and future generations, in a manner which respects the legacy represented by these places and their associated resources; and
- to encourage and support the protection and presentation by others of places of national historic significance that are not administered by Parks Canada.



Visitors at the Big House

“Commemorative Intent” describes the specific reason a place is designated as nationally significant. Commemorative intent is drawn from the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), which are approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.



Visitors learning North-West Mounted Police drills

“Commemorative Integrity” is a concept used by Parks Canada to manage, evaluate and report on national historic sites. It is used to report to Parliament and the Canadian public on their condition and performance. A national historic site or park possesses commemorative and ecological integrity when:

- the resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site or park are not impaired or under threat,
- the reasons for designation as a national historic site or park are effectively communicated to the public; and
- the site’s heritage values, including those not related to the reasons for designation as a historic site, are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site or park.

1.2 Management Planning

Parks Canada is responsible for ensuring the commemorative integrity of national historic sites and must prepare management plans to be tabled in Parliament every five years. A management plan must have provisions for commemorative integrity, resource protection, and visitor use. This plan meets those requirements.

The development of this plan involved exchanging ideas and information among Parks Canada’s staff, the Aboriginal Community, stakeholders, the public and tour operators. Discussions with stakeholders were, at times, constrained by the planning schedule. It is intended, however, that implementation of the plan will involve ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders and the public.

The management plan was vetted for environmental assessment to ensure

proposed actions would not cause significant environmental impacts at the site. Upon approval by the Minister of the Environment, the management plan will be tabled in Parliament.

This management plan for Lower Fort Garry presents the direction that will guide Parks Canada and its partners in the protection, presentation and management of this national historic site for the next fifteen years with reviews scheduled in 2011 and 2016. The plan is the result of a planning process that began in 2004. It has included input from the public and others to shape the future direction for this national historic site.

1.3 Cultural Resource Management

This plan is based on cultural resource management. Cultural resource management describes generally accepted practices for protecting and presenting cultural resources found in national historic sites, national parks, and national marine conservation areas.

A cultural resource is a human work or place that has evidence of human activity or is associated with cultural or spiritual meaning. Its heritage value is recognized by designation or by the shared belief of associated communities that it has historical, cultural or spiritual importance. Parks Canada’s Cultural Resource Management practices entail:

- inventorying resources;
- evaluating which resources are cultural resources by identifying their heritage values;
- considering the heritage values in decisions and actions that may affect the protection and presentation of the individual cultural resources and the site as a whole; and
- monitoring cultural resources and actions to ensure conservation and protection.



Stone Fort, Red River Settlement. Glenbow Museum Archives

1.4 Lower Fort Garry: A Place of National Historic Significance

In 1928, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) commemorated the making of Treaty Number One with a plaque at Lower Fort Garry. In 1951, the site was acquired by Parks Canada on the recommendation of the HSMBC because of its national historic importance. In 2004, the HSMBC confirmed that commemorative intent of Lower Fort Garry was defined with these four main themes:

Lower Fort Garry is one of the finest collections of early stone buildings in Western Canada. Fur trade forts were typically made of wood and very few remain, but Lower Fort Garry's stone construction is one of the reasons it still exists.



A Red River Cart

Lower Fort Garry, as a Hudson's Bay Company post, was a focus for industry and transport, as well as a supply and distribution centre for the fur trade of the company's Northern Department.

Lower Fort Garry was a transshipment and provisioning centre, and the assembly point for the regional fur brigades that travelled the Red River-Portage La Loche-York Factory route. Lower Fort Garry's warehouses stored the local fur supply and provided the pemmican and agricultural produce that sustained the trade.

By the 1860s and 1870s, the trade traffic on American routes increased and Lower Fort Garry became a depot and supply point for interior destinations. Canadian brigades were now organized and provisioned at Lower Fort Garry rather than at Norway House or York Factory. By 1872, steamboats operating on the Red, Saskatchewan and Assiniboine Rivers replaced the Red River cart trains that had travelled from St Paul, Minnesota to Fort Garry and then across the prairies. In the 1880s, the Canadian Pacific



Illustration of Treaty One Negotiations at Lower Fort Garry
Glenbow Museum Archives

Railway arrived near Upper Fort Garry making the steamboat routes redundant.

Lower Fort Garry was the place where Treaty Number One was made between the Saulteaux (Ojibwa) and Swampy Cree First Nations people and the Crown. In order to open the west for peaceful settlement, the Federal Government sought treaties with the First Nations. Lower Fort Garry was chosen to host the event because it was a neutral

location and had the size and resources to accommodate the large number of First Nations peoples and the Federal Officials during the negotiations. Treaty Number One was made on August 3, 1871. It formed the model for all the subsequent numbered treaties in Western and Northern Canada.

Lower Fort Garry was used by the federal government for public purposes in the 1870s, notably as the first training base of the North-West Mounted Police.

The Government of the new Dominion of Canada, in response to reports of lawlessness, whiskey trading, violence against First Nations, and to forestall American expansionism, created the North-West Mounted Police to establish a Canadian presence in the West. After being formed in Ontario, a contingent of the North-West Mounted Police used Lower Fort Garry as a training base from the fall of 1873 until June 1874. Their “March West” would begin from Fort Dufferin near the U.S. border one month later.

Later, as government institutions in the new Province of Manitoba were created, Lower Fort Garry again played a support role. At different times, Lower Fort Garry served as an interim penitentiary and an asylum while facilities were developed elsewhere. Many of the buildings at Lower Fort Garry still bear evidence of these uses.

1.5 Key Issues Facing Lower Fort Garry

This management plan will broadly guide future site operations, cultural resource management, the visitor experience, communications and outreach and will specifically address the following issues facing Lower Fort Garry:

Renewing the Relevance of the Program and Increasing Attendance

In past decades, Lower Fort Garry contributed to Winnipeg’s social, recreational and cultural life as a meeting place for activities and events. Beginning in 1956 when Lower Fort Garry began operating

as an historic site, visitation grew with each new building’s restoration and the development of interpretation and other new programming. Visits to Lower Fort Garry peaked in 1973 with more than 300,000 visitors. However, by 2006, attendance stabilized at around 35-40,000.



Visitor with interpreter

This decline is attributable to factors such as increased competition, the introduction of entry fees, regional economic downturns, limited funds for marketing, social changes such as the introduction of Sunday shopping, and changes in the way visitors are counted. However, the decline in use underscores the vital need to better connect with Manitobans and Canadians through programs and services that are inviting, engaging and related to their interests and needs.

Telling Broader Stories of the Fort, the Fur Trade and Western Canada

The 1994 Management Plan for Lower Fort Garry narrowly defined the themes for the site focusing on the 1850s. The 2004 Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) has opened the door to a broader range of stories. Since 2004, programming at the site has started to incorporate these themes. However, there is more work to be done. Parks Canada needs to ensure that all of the themes of the site are presented, that it has the capacity to tell its stories from multiple perspectives, and that it can place those stories in a broader context.

In addition, given its substantial operations and proximity to the Winnipeg market, Lower Fort Garry can take on larger roles on behalf of Parks Canada – bringing national messages into its program and linking the broad themes and stories of many of our national historic sites that deal with the fur trade, Aboriginal history, the North-West Mounted Police and the development of Manitoba and Western Canada. In particular, Lower Fort Garry can present the messages of northern remote fur trade sites such as York Factory NHS and Prince of Wales Fort NHS.

Partnering and Collaborating with Others

Parks Canada cannot address the two broad issues discussed above by working alone. Lower Fort Garry has started to be more proactive in seeking partners with mutual interests. However, to increase visitation, broaden the fort's offsite presence, and maximize use of resources, Lower Fort Garry will need to foster opportunities to partner and collaborate. The site will need to work with individuals, other levels of government, educational organizations, the Lower Fort Garry Volunteer Association, community groups, First Nations, Métis, tourism operators, and destination marketing organizations. It is Parks Canada's goal that our partners will build a deep and sustained personal commitment to the site through their involvement.



The Aboriginal Encampment.

2.0 The Planning Context of Lower Fort Garry

2.1 Regional Context

Lower Fort Garry is located 32 km northeast of the City of Winnipeg. In 2001, there were 619,544 persons in Winnipeg and approximately 100,000 more in the surrounding area, representing about 55% of the population of Manitoba. After years of relatively stagnant economic and population growth, the Winnipeg region is growing again. Suburban residential development in the Lower Fort Garry area is clear evidence of this trend. Winnipeg is the service centre for Manitoba and northwestern Ontario.

Winnipeg is known nationally for its arts and culture including ballet and opera companies, art galleries, museums, several theatre companies, and symphony orchestra. Winnipeg is home to several notable post-secondary educational institutions. The City hosts several internationally significant events such as music, cultural and theatre festivals. Also found in Winnipeg is the Hudson's Bay Company Collection, an important resource to those interested in the fur trade. The Manitoba Museum holds the ethno-cultural materials and a collection of artefacts; the Provincial Archives of Manitoba hold the Company's fur trade records.

Federally designated National Historic Sites thematically linked to Lower Fort Garry include The Forks, York Factory, Prince of Wales, Fort St. Andrews Rectory and Riel House. There are also provincially designated heritage sites along the Red River corridor, in close proximity to Lower Fort Garry, such as the Captain Kennedy House.

The rich cultural history of Winnipeg, the diverse cultural groups in the region,



Location Map

the wide range of festivals and performing arts, and the post-secondary educational institutions all combine to create a rich environment for partnerships at Lower Fort Garry.

2.2 Historic Context

The North American fur trade was expanding in the 19th century and the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers was the natural intersection of the north-south and east-west trade and transportation routes. After many years of heated competition, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and the North West

Company amalgamated in 1821 with the HBC taking possession of Fort Gibraltar, an old North West Company post located at the river's confluence. They renamed it Fort Garry, for Nicholas Garry, a HBC Governing Committee Member.

A severe flood in 1826 forced George Simpson, the Governor of the District, to direct that a new fort be built on a height of land to the north below the rapids at St. Andrews. Construction began in 1831, using locally quarried limestone. By 1838, the "Big House," a sales shop, and a warehouse were completed. However, the majority of



George F. Finlay sketch of Retail Store/Fur Loft 1847
Glenbow Museum Archives

Red River colonists and Assiniboine peoples who customarily did business with the HBC continued to reside near the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, and they successfully lobbied for the reconstruction of an HBC post near them.

Lower Fort Garry evolved into a transshipment centre, a provisioning centre and assembly point for the regional fur brigades that travelled the Red River-Portage La Loche-York Factory trade route. Lower Fort Garry's warehouses stored the local furs, trade goods and supplies and provided pemmican and agricultural produce to sustain the tripmen.



York Boat under sail Glenbow Museum Archives



A dog team at a fur trade post Glenbow Museum Archives

By the 1860s and 1870s, the volume of goods travelling over American routes increased and Lower Fort Garry became a depot and supply point for northern destinations. Brigades were now organized and provisioned at Lower Fort Garry rather than at Norway House or York Factory. By 1872, steamboats operating on the Red, Saskatchewan and Assiniboine Rivers replaced the Red River cart trains that travelled up from the south. With the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1880s near Upper Fort Garry, the steamboat routes became redundant.



George F. Finlay sketch of Lower Fort Garry 1847 Glenbow Museum Archives

In 1871, the Federal Crown desired to open the west to settlement and sought a suitable location with sufficient space and resources to undertake negotiations with the First Nations. Lower Fort Garry became the site of the negotiations between the Saulteaux (Ojibwa) and Swampy Cree First Nations people and the Crown that made Treaty One, the first of the numbered treaties that served as the model for later treaties.



Harper's Weekly illustration of the Treaty One negotiations
Glenbow Museum Archives

In response to the transfer of HBC territory to the new Federal Crown, American expansion into the West and criminal acts committed by American traders in Canadian territory, the Dominion Government, in 1873, authorized the formation of the North-West Mounted Police. Three hastily formed, and as yet untrained, contingents of North-West Mounted police arrived in Winnipeg in the fall of 1873. The winter was spent at Lower Fort Garry drilling and learning the required policing skills. In the spring of 1874, the contingent moved west to establish Canadian law on the western prairie.



The Steamer Colville tied to the floating warehouse at Lower Fort Garry 1879
National Archives (C-80056)

With the birth of the Province of Manitoba, Lower Fort Garry was pressed into new roles as the new Provincial

Government began to establish the services required to provide effective administration. Existing buildings and developments were used while programs and facilities were created. From 1871 to 1877, the Warehouse Building at Lower Fort Garry was leased by the HBC to the Provincial Government to serve as a penitentiary. With the opening of the Stony Mountain Penitentiary, the prison at Lower Fort Garry closed.

Again, in response to an absence of Provincial facilities, the HBC agreed to lease the Warehouse Building to serve as an asylum for the mentally ill in 1884. Historic accounts indicate, however, that these facilities were used sparingly.

In the local region, the store at Lower Fort Garry was the source of trade goods for the surrounding parishes of St. Andrews, St. Clements, and St. Peters. The fort was a major purchaser of excess local produce. In addition, the farm, industrial complex and adjacent fishery employed many regional residents.



Frederick Remington's interpretation of a HBC Store
Glenbow Museum Archives

The HBC operated Lower Fort Garry until 1911, at which time it closed operations and leased the fort to the Motor Country Club who operated a private golf course until 1962. In 1951, the HBC donated the fort to the National Historic Sites Division of the Government of Canada who administered the Motor Country Club's lease until it expired. Subsequently, Lower Fort Garry began the transformation to the National Historic Site of Canada that it is today.

2.3 Lower Fort Garry's Evolution as a National Historic Site

In 1963, uniformed interpreters began to guide visitors at the site. By the 1970s, costumed animators began to role-play characters from the historic fur trade period. Since then, costumed interpretation has played the most significant role in helping visitors to understand and appreciate the fort's past.

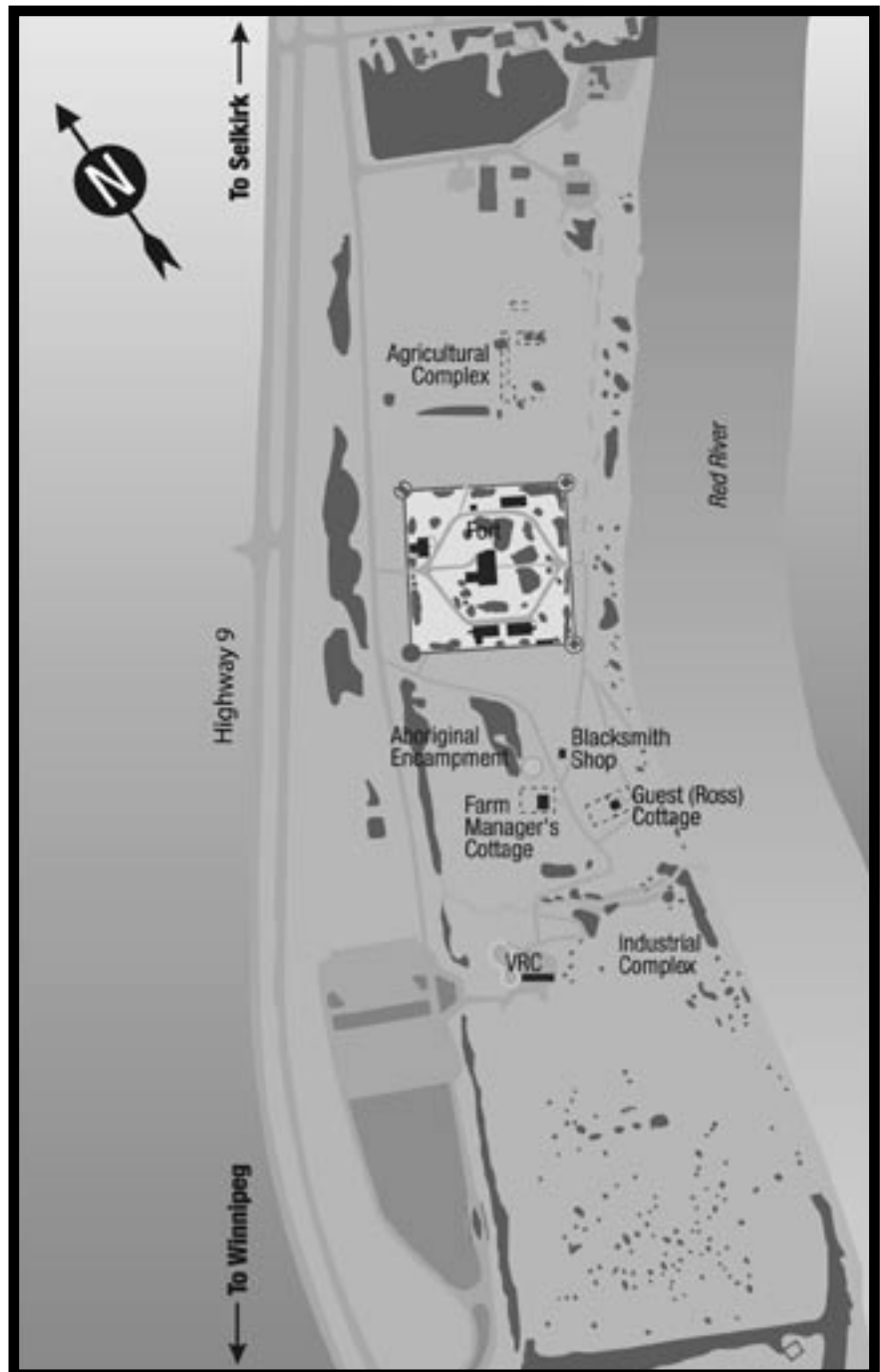
During the 1960s and 1970s Parks Canada initially focussed upon restoration, reconstruction and site improvements including the acquisition of land to reroute Highway 9, restoration of historic buildings and the walls, development of sewer and water infrastructure and construction of a visitor reception centre and maintenance compound. During this period, site visitation steadily grew as new projects were completed and opened to the public.

Interpretive themes emerged and were revised as archaeological and restoration projects were undertaken.

By the early 1980s, site interpretation focussed on the 1850s - a pivotal time in the fort's history. The costumed interpretation program introduced new characters and themes. New programs created opportunities for volunteer participation and public engagement.

In 1994, the first management plan for Lower Fort Garry provided direction for the management of cultural resources, commemorative activities, site operations, communications and marketing. A significant objective of that plan was the transfer of the Hudson's Bay Company Collection to the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg. This collection has since formed the basis of a new Hudson's Bay Gallery at the Museum.

3.0 Current Situation



Site Map

In 2005, an evaluation of commemorative integrity was undertaken at Lower Fort Garry. It concluded that the built heritage resources and related artefacts were being well protected and that extensive communications and educational opportunities were being provided to visitors. Three primary challenges were identified:

- some archaeological resources relating to the Industrial Complex were threatened by flooding from Monkman Creek;
- messages relating to the 2004 Statement of Commemorative Integrity had not all been incorporated into the communications program;

- a comprehensive evaluation of resource value of all historical and archaeological objects was still incomplete.

The Monkman Creek issue was subsequently resolved by a stream bank rehabilitation project. The other two issues are addressed in this plan.

3.1 Cultural Resources

The cultural resources at Lower Fort Garry are extensive and varied reflecting the site's evolving role in Canadian society, from fur trade post to national historic site.

3.1.1 Structures

The extensive range of buildings and structures at Lower Fort Garry are maintained according to conservation standards and guidelines. They include:



The Salesshop/Fur Loft



The Warehouse



The Big House



The Men's House



The North West Bastion and Bakehouse



The South West Bastion



The South East Bastion



The North East Bastion/Powder Magazine



The Doctor's Office



The Guest (Ross) Cottage



Grist Mill archaeological excavations 1967

3.1.2 Archaeological Resources

Since 1962 archaeological investigations and research have identified components to 25 structures and approximately 105 cultural features and/or activity areas. Most of these are Level 1 cultural resources.¹ They include resources directly associated with the interior of the fort such as house features, privies and cookhouses. North of the bastions and walls are several archaeological features associated with the agricultural complex. These areas once held gardens and barns for oxen, horse and cattle. Along Monkman Creek are the remains of the Industrial Complex and features associated with shipping and boating. South of Monkman Creek are remains of the Miller's House and pre-contact aboriginal encampments. Historic documentation suggests there are at least another 83 unverified structures or activity areas, reinforcing the need for



Retaining wall and drain comprising part of the brewery complex

archaeological investigations to be part of all site developments.

3.1.3 Archaeological/Historic Objects and Associated Records

Extensive archaeological work conducted at Lower Fort Garry has generated a vast collection of records and the recovery of close to 350,000 artefacts. The majority of these are now housed at the Western and Northern Service Centre in Winnipeg. Approximately 1650 of these are maintained as a reference collection while an additional 885 artefacts are in a Parks Canada's "National Reference Collection" in Ottawa.

Lower Fort Garry also has an extensive collection of representative artefacts housed at the site and at the Western and Northern Service Centre. The richness and quantity of the artefacts makes them an important fur trade collection and a valuable part of the Lower Fort Garry story.



Historic objects in the Sales Shop

3.2 Visitors

There is no one typical visitor to Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site. There is no one typical visit. Renewing programs and services and involving partners is essential to meet the needs of diverse market groups and users and to ensure Lower Fort Garry will be a valued and relevant heritage institution in the future.

¹ A Level 1 cultural resource is any artefact or building directly related to the reason(s) for designation as a historic site. A Level 2 cultural resource is any resource that is not directly related to the reason(s) for national significance, but nonetheless still has heritage value. The Cultural Resource Management Policy of Parks Canada values Level 1 resources most highly but Level 2 resources must still be managed for heritage values.

Visitors and Users of Lower Fort Garry

Tourists: These visitors to Winnipeg and Manitoba will find themselves at Lower Fort Garry NHSC for a few hours as part of a visit to the region. They travel by private vehicle, they may have heard of the site through tourism information sources, on the website or from local referrals. They typically visit during the summer months when full service programming is offered. Tourists may also be part of a larger organized group, participating in a scheduled itinerary of activities. There are indications of growth in “heritage themed” tour operations that could link Lower Fort Garry to other sites and attractions.

Local and Regional Residents: These visitors are mainly from the Winnipeg region, arriving in family groups, by private vehicle and tend to arrive on weekends and holidays, and frequently include visiting friends and family. They are an important target for special events and new programs meant to encourage repeat visitation. Children from the local area make up the majority of summer and spring break day camp participants.



Visitors with interpreters

School Groups: This important group visits primarily in the spring in organized visits that incorporate curriculum-linked learning activities. The majority of school groups are in the grade levels with strong linkage to Manitoba’s social studies curriculum.

Aboriginal People: For Aboriginal people, Lower Fort Garry has personal relevance – it was the place where Treaty Number One was made. It was a home and workplace for many First Nations and the Métis peoples. They are personally connected to the stories and history and have an important role in connecting and sharing it with Canadians.



A Picnic at Lower Fort Garry

Volunteers: This significant group has a willingness to personally engage in heritage programming and activities that complement Parks Canada’s efforts and help to serve the needs of the visiting public. It is a growing group of highly motivated individuals and organizations who are eager to contribute to the program, improve this important heritage institution, and give back to the community.

Casual Visitors: Local residents are an important constituent group. These visitors enter the site for personal reasons such as dog walking or to purchase meals at the restaurant. They typically do not partake of programs or services offered at the site.

Event Participants: These visitors attend Lower Fort Garry for specific functions such as meetings, conferences, special programs, weddings, socials and other private events.

3.3 Visitor Services and Facilities

Visitor Services and Facilities

Lower Fort Garry has a modern Visitor Reception Centre (VRC) with a theatre, exhibit space, a gift shop, a cafeteria/restaurant, a multi-purpose room, and a covered picnic shelter. Over the past few years, significant improvements were made to the VRC, to make it more functional and adaptable for different uses. Energy conservation technologies were installed to reduce the building's operational costs.

With the redevelopment, the VRC can now offer program options and serve different markets. Complementing this capital investment, the site has staffed a business affairs officer to market the site and its facilities and to manage the growing suite of special events and third party use.



The Visitor Reception Centre

Improvements have been made to the site's accessibility by providing two electrically powered carts offering visitors easy access to the historic grounds, and a barrier-free lift at the Big House. Historic buildings, by their nature, present access challenges. Improved or alternative access to facilities and messages are regularly considered and implemented.

Lower Fort Garry operates significant infrastructure in support of its operations: access road and parking lot, a modest fleet of light and heavy vehicles, a water treatment plant and a sewage treatment plant. This entire infrastructure is nearing the end of its life. Options and priorities for recapitalization are under review.



Visitor carts

Marketing and Promotion

In 2005, Parks Canada developed a formal partnership with Travel Manitoba. That partnership, along with ongoing relationships with Destination Winnipeg, Rivers West and others are helping the site to reach southern Manitobans and longer-range markets. Activities have included shared advertisements, the organization of media tours, and tourism and trade show representation. Pre-trip information is provided through the Parks Canada website, various print materials and listings in destination marketing organization publications.

3.4 Heritage Presentation

Personal Programming

The robust costumed interpretive program at Lower Fort Garry, delivered by seasonal staff, summer students and volunteers, is of excellent quality and receives high visitor satisfaction scores (Parks Canada 2005 Visitor Survey). However, this same survey indicates that many visitors do not retain the heritage presentation messages.

Currently, most programs are offered from May to September, with limited programs available by request during the winter. The program continues to place a significant focus on the early 1850s, a time when Lower Fort Garry was the focal point of fur trade society in the lower Red River area. However, the site has begun to expand beyond this format taking a more client-based and flexible approach to programming.

Today, programming is presented by first or third-person costumed interpretation, guided tours, thematic talks, scripted plays and other demonstrations. The site has incorporated “theme days” with innovative and changing programming, including very popular Children’s Days when young visitors are “hired” as fur trade employees and perform jobs, make crafts and learn about the site. The site’s cooperating association, the Lower Fort Garry Volunteer Association, offers popular week-long day camp programs in July and August.

The making of Treaty Number One is of special significance at Lower Fort Garry. Annually, on the anniversary of the treaty signing, Lower Fort Garry provides special theme-based programs. This commemoration presents a number of challenges - presenting multiple perspectives on the meaning of the treaty in a respectful fashion, recognizing the modern dynamic context for treaty relationships between the Crown and First Nations and respecting the role of other Federal Government agencies in ongoing deliberations around treaties, treaty rights and obligations.



Big House interior

Lower Fort Garry’s role has been one of commemoration, presentation and education. To many First Nations people, the commemoration of the making of Treaty One has spiritual significance. To other Canadians, it is important to build an understanding that we are all part of the treaty. Operationally, it requires Parks Canada to carefully consider options to current programming to meet the needs of all visitors, and to address the issues created by our entrance fees on this annual special anniversary.



Interpreter with children

Heritage Presentation Media

Lower Fort Garry has a significant investment in media in support of the heritage presentation, including exhibits at the Visitor Reception Centre and the Museum Building, audio-visual presentations, displays and interpretive panels located throughout the site, and brochures. With the exception of the Museum Building exhibit, most of these media are dated and in need of replacement.

3.5 Administration and Operations

Lower Fort Garry is managed by the Manitoba Field Unit and at peak operation, employs 36 full time equivalent employees. The Superintendent of Lower Fort Garry also manages The Forks, St. Andrews Rectory and Riel House National Historic Sites of Canada.

An array of full-time, part-time and seasonal staff provides heritage interpretation program planning and delivery, as well as the co-ordination of special events and third-party use of the site. Forty summer students deliver the summer animation program with the assistance of approximately 100 Parks Canada volunteers.

The Western and Northern Service Centre in Winnipeg provides expertise in resource conservation, archaeology, historical research, collections management, professional training, and graphic design and communications. The Restoration Workshop provides repair and conservation services for heritage buildings and structures.

4.0 A Vision for Lower Fort Garry NHSC

Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site tells a rich, textured, story of Canada's past. The many chapters of this story evoke what our shared history means, and what it feels like to be Canadian today. The "whole" story of Lower Fort Garry is brought to life – from the Fur Trade and the site's role within the Hudson's Bay Company, to the making of Treaty One between the Crown and First Nations, to its contribution to the birth and growth of the Red River settlement.

Telling the whole story means sharing different perspectives and alternative interpretations, and understanding the vast array of resources and cultural values associated with the site. It also includes accepting controversy and contentious issues in an open and honest fashion, encouraging debate without making judgments. It places the stories of Lower Fort Garry in the broader context and history of Canada, making our history current and relevant to today's society.

More and more people see Lower Fort Garry as a place known for its dynamic and changing programming. They are pleasantly surprised and delighted by the program innovations offered by Parks Canada, partners, and volunteers. Staff has a solid understanding of the cultural resources as well as visitor needs and expectations.

They actively apply that knowledge to continuously improve service for different audiences. With the site's varied and dynamic programming, regional visitors return often, bringing their friends and relatives to this must-see destination.

Lower Fort Garry is a leading heritage attraction within Manitoba and the greater Winnipeg region. It is important to many sectors of Canadian society: education, culture and tourism, history and heritage, and the Manitoba economy. The site partners with other organizations because of the shared benefits of collaborative efforts. Lower Fort Garry is a trend-setting cultural attraction, eager to explore new and different opportunities that are complementary to the heritage presentation and protection objectives. Lower Fort Garry is sought out as an ideal venue for important events taking place within the region.

At Lower Fort Garry, Parks Canada demonstrates its commitment to stewardship. Its historic buildings, walls, artifacts, objects, and stories are cared for responsibly so that future generations can enjoy and learn from them. As well, the site plays a leadership role, advocating for the promotion, protection, use and celebration of our invaluable heritage legacy.

5.0 Management Plan Objectives and Actions

This plan consists of strategic goals, objectives, and key actions to guide Parks Canada and its partners in achieving the Vision for Lower Fort Garry NHSC. Strategic goals express the broad result to be achieved. Objectives are finer, measurable details of how the strategic goal will be achieved. The key actions are starting points for plan implementation and are a means to assess progress in achieving the site's vision over the coming years. As issues evolve, new actions will be identified and undertaken.

5.1 Cultural Resources

As outlined in section 3.1, there is a wide array of cultural resources at Lower Fort Garry including structures, archaeological remains, landscape features and collections. In general, Lower Fort Garry's cultural resources are well-maintained, protected, and communicated, reflecting Parks Canada's significant investment in the site since 1962.

5.1.1 Structures

Most of the standing structures associated with Lower Fort Garry underwent substantial modification during the use by the Manitoba Motor Club between 1913-1951, including the removal of those no longer deemed necessary. Beginning in 1963, the site saw a period of major restoration, development and reconstruction. This work focused primarily on the structures and facility development, and was accompanied by a large-scale archaeological program. Recent infrastructure investment, although on a more limited scale and reflective of current cultural resource management practices, has continued this process of site conservation in



Demonstrating the use of a draw knife

conjunction with development. As a result, Parks Canada has gathered sufficient detail about the buildings, their condition, past alterations and ongoing problems to be able to manage, protect and present them over the long term.

“Parks Canada protects nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage so that citizens of today and tomorrow can experience and be inspired by the special places and rich stories of our nation's past. Ecological and commemorative integrity are guiding management principles for national parks and national historic sites, and environmental sustainability is key to national marine conservation areas. These when achieved, ensure that Canada's national treasures are conserved for present and future generations”

(Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan 2005-2010)

Strategic Goal for Heritage Structures

- *Heritage values associated with the structures are respected and incorporated into the heritage presentation program.*

Objectives

- *To protect the buildings, walls and bastions from deterioration.*
- *To use the buildings as a means of presenting the broad and changing story of the site.*

Key Actions

- *Review and update the building conservation guidelines and implement a regular maintenance and monitoring schedule as outlined in the guidelines.*
- *Maintain the buildings according to accepted stewardship standards.*
- *Submit the Museum Building for review by the Federal Heritage Building Review Office. The Federal Heritage Building Review Office administers federally owned buildings that are recognized examples of Canada's architectural heritage.*



Monkman Creek after bank stabilization project

5.1.2 Archaeological Remains

The development of an archaeological resource inventory and a cumulative impact analysis in 2002 summarized four decades of past archaeological work and site interventions and has become a valuable tool for cultural resource management. For example, a major initiative undertaken in 2006 to stabilize Monkman Creek used key data from this document. Engineers factored historic engineering works, such as retaining walls, into the project design. The result was an integrated environmental, landscaping and engineering approach to creek bank stabilization that ensured cultural resources were the primary design consideration.



Monkman Creek bank failure

Strategic Goal for Archaeological Resource Management

Archaeological resources will be protected, unverified resources identified and archaeological information incorporated into the heritage presentation program.

Objectives

- *To use the cultural resource inventory and information derived from past investigations to aid in site development decisions.*
- *To include information obtained through past archaeological investigations into the heritage presentation program.*

Actions

- *Ensure the Cultural Resource Inventory and Cumulative Effects analysis is regularly updated.*
- *Ensure that actions and interventions undertaken at the fort do not harm known and suspected but unverified cultural resources.*
- *Develop a strategy to make archaeological information more accessible to users.*



Historic Objects in the Salesshop

5.1.3 Archaeological/Historic Objects and Associated Records

In 2005, storage of Lower Fort Garry's archaeological collection was upgraded to current standards. In addition, a sample of artefacts was selected for a higher level of care as part of the Lower Fort Garry Reference Collection. The purpose of this work was to ensure these resources were protected and available to support heritage presentation.

Strategic Goal for Archaeological/Historic Objects and Collections

Parks Canada's collection of artefacts and associated records are protected and maintained, as a valued resource used by Parks Canada and by regional cultural institutions that have a fur trade interest.

Objectives

- *To manage fur trade objects and records and to promote them as a means to partner with other heritage institutions such as the HBC Archives, the Manitoba Museum and the Rupert's Land Research Centre to enhance fur trade research.*
- *To incorporate records, photographs and artefacts into the heritage presentation program to meet the vision of broadening the range of experiences for site visitors.*

Key Actions

- *Identify key areas of the collection that require inventory and evaluation to develop priorities for ensuring longevity and accessibility.*
- *Make effective use of the records and collections to enhance the stories presented at the site.*
- *With partners, promote the value of the records and collection for fur trade research and outreach programs.*

5.2 Meaningful Visitor Experiences



Children's Day Participants

“Parks Canada aims to offer memorable experiences to help foster a shared sense of responsibility for environmentally and culturally sound actions that will extend beyond park and site boundaries and influence the values of Canadians as a whole. Experiences gained through visits to national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas provide visitors with a clear and strong sense of Canada, adding to the well-being and health of all Canadians.”

(Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan 2005-2010)

Actions taken by Parks Canada over the course of the past number of years have set the stage for developing meaningful and rich visitor experiences at Lower Fort Garry. In many respects, the groundwork has been laid, key investments are in place and new ideas are emerging and being tested. These efforts are starting to yield results. More importantly, they are fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and a strong service orientation. However, there is a strong need to maintain the momentum and continue to build a dynamic package of program, services and facilities that offer rich and meaningful visitor experiences.



Visitors at Lower Fort Garry



Children's Day participants



Setting up a tepee

Strategic Goal for Meaningful Visitor Experiences

Visitors to Lower Fort Garry have positive experiences that create lasting memories, making the site relevant and valued.

Objectives

- To deliver programs and services that are relevant to Manitobans and that increase attendance.
- To integrate a business and marketing framework into the development of visitor experiences.
- To continually evaluate Lower Fort Garry's service offer.
- To provide experiences that appeal to the senses, are adaptable to visitor needs and are changeable over time.

Key Actions for Innovative Program Development and Marketing

- Market research will be used to monitor emerging trends in tourism and leisure and to develop new products, experiences and facilities consistent with target audience needs and expectations.
- Efficiency in program development and promotion will be achieved by working with internal and external partners.
- Parks Canada will seek partners and sponsors involvement in program development and delivery.

Key Actions for Program Research and Evaluation

- Investment will be made in visitor information management, evaluation and client surveys as tools to build knowledge about visitors, their visits, and to be able to share this knowledge and evaluate our performance so that improvements are readily identified and implemented.

Key Actions for Third Party Use of Lower Fort Garry

- Operational practices and programs will be developed to facilitate third party use of Lower Fort Garry. Parks Canada will apply its revenue policy to these programs and will assess proposals against operational and policy considerations.

Key Actions for Revenue Sustainability and Growth

- Price structures will be regularly reviewed within the national and regional context.
- Treaty One commemorations on 3 August will continue as a special annual event. Options for current entrance fee on this anniversary will be assessed.

5.3 Public Understanding And Appreciation: Telling The Stories Of Lower Fort Garry

Parks Canada will create a heritage presentation program of learning activities that are entertaining, educational, and fact-based. The tours, costumed animators, events and other programs will speak with the authentic voices and perspectives of the many different cultures, societies and individuals that make up Lower Fort Garry's fascinating cast of characters and speak to the diversity of modern Canada.

They will tell stories that are vivid and compelling, stories with the breadth and depth of Canada itself. The programs will be carefully designed to engage people through their emotions and senses. This will ensure that people leave the site with a clear and enduring belief that this place is much more than a distant relic of the past because it has personal relevance to them today.



Interpreter with Children in the Fur Loft

The Key Stories

Lower Fort Garry is one of the best places in western Canada to experience one of the defining stories in the history of Canada ... the trade in furs, customs, cultures, beliefs and technology between Europeans and the original inhabitants of the country. The fort was a central trans-shipment centre for the

Hudson's Bay Company within the network of transportation routes and trading posts that spanned the continent.

Lower Fort Garry, as a Hudson's Bay Company post, was a focus for industry and transport, as well as a supply and distribution centre for the fur trade of the company's Northern Department

Lower Fort Garry was the place where Treaty Number One was made between the Saulteaux (Ojibwa) and Swampy Cree First Nations people and the Crown

Lower Fort Garry is one of the finest collections of early stone buildings in Western Canada

Lower Fort Garry was used by the federal government for public purposes in the 1870s, notably as the first training base of the North-West Mounted Police

The making of Treaty Number One at the site in 1871 was a pivotal event in the relationship between the First Nations and the Crown. It ensured that the two cultures would have a shared destiny and that all Canadians today are party to this treaty. The Treaty led to an additional ten treaties in northern and western Canada that set out the context for the settlement and development of vast expanses of the country and for the future of the First Nations who made the treaties.

The site played a role in the growth of the Red River settlement into Winnipeg and Manitoba. It was an early seat of governance and a farming and industrial centre.

The Métis provided the main workforce for the Hudson's Bay Company at Lower Fort Garry. Their prominent participation within Manitoban society, which began with the Red River settlement, continues to this day.

The fort was a training ground for the first contingents of North-West Mounted Police. This force, in a very new country, marched



Parks Canada volunteer with visitors

west from Manitoba in 1874 to secure the peace for future western Canadians.

Lower Fort Garry is closely linked thematically with many other historic sites including The Forks, St. Andrew's Rectory, Rocky Mountain House and northern remote sites such as York Factory and Prince of Wales Fort. Those links help Lower Fort Garry reveal larger stories of Canada such as the historic rivalry between the British and the French and the development of western Canada.

The historic buildings of the site are excellent examples of nineteenth century stone masonry and Red River frame

Strategic Goal for Public Understanding and Appreciation

To ensure that visitors to Lower Fort Garry have lasting memories associating the site with key events and themes in the history of Canada, in particular, the fur trade, Treaty One and the origins and growth of Manitoba.

Objectives

- *To ensure that the specific roles of the site in the fur trade, in the making of Treaty One and in the development of the West are set into a cultural, economic and environmental context that has evolved over time.*
- *To create and deliver highly entertaining, enjoyable heritage presentation programs and services for all visitors to the site so that they leave with positive and enduring memories of the messages as essential to their overall experience.*

Key Actions

- *The system of non-personal media will be renewed through the installation of projection, presentation and communications technology and media that will better support the future requirements of the overall visitor experience program.*
- *The design and content of future personal and non-personal interpretation programs will be developed to focus strongly on ensuring that the nationally significant messages of the site are creatively set within the context of contemporary issues. This will build personal relevance for all visitors into all messaging.*
- *Heritage presentation staff and volunteers will be prepared for the challenges of communicating to visitors multiple perspectives on historical events through appropriate training and collaboration work with partners and stakeholders.*
- *The program as a whole will be continuously evaluated by a variety of means to ensure that visitor and staff feedback and any formal social science research is in hand when assessments and revisions to the program are made.*

construction. They provide opportunities to learn about these early construction techniques and materials and the process of maintaining them today.

The site has been used for a wide assortment of other public purposes including as a penitentiary, an asylum and as a Motor Country Club. This re-use of public buildings reflects some of the changing needs of Manitoban society. Most recently, Lower Fort Garry has seen installations of cutting-edge energy efficient technology that demonstrate environmental stewardship and the need for better management of energy use in the twenty-first century.

5.4 Involving Canadians - Partners And Community Involvement

The future of Lower Fort Garry is based upon a model of partnerships and citizen involvement. Partnerships are critical to most aspects of the site's activities including program development and delivery, marketing and promotion, and employment and operations. While many partnerships currently exist, others need to be developed and nurtured. Partners include destination-marketing organizations, First Nations, Métis groups, tourism operations, local municipalities, education, and heritage organizations. Engagement can also be

Goal for Community and Partner Involvement

Parks Canada will expand opportunities for partnering and volunteering in order to engage Canadians deeply in the programs and activities at Lower Fort Garry.

Objectives

- *To develop sustained stakeholder relationships.*
- *To collaborate with partners to create new experiences, packages and programs.*
- *To foster vibrant and rewarding volunteer opportunities.*

Key Actions

- *Lower Fort Garry will collaborate with partners such as heritage organizations, Métis, First Nations, curriculum specialists, arts and tourism groups to produce new experiences, programs and products.*
- *Lower Fort Garry will seek out a small number of appropriate-scale events involving partners that are capable of generating high profile awareness within the Winnipeg market and media.*
- *Lower Fort Garry will foster relationships with the business community-particularly to encourage use of the meeting and convention capabilities of the Visitor Reception Centre.*
- *The independent Parks Canada volunteer program at the site will be expanded and integrated across the field unit by broadening recruitment strategies and creating enriching volunteer opportunities through exchanges, recognition and the targeting of professional, project-based volunteering opportunities.*
- *Lower Fort Garry will continue to nurture the relationship with the Lower Fort Garry Volunteer Association so that mutual needs are met in program design, delivery and event management.*
- *A database of stakeholder organizations and interested individuals will be created for use in site marketing and communications.*

at the individual level. Individuals have the opportunity to join the 100 existing Parks Canada volunteers or the long-standing cooperating association, the Lower Fort Garry Volunteer Association.



Grand entry at a meeting sponsored by the Southern Chiefs Organization

5.5 Stewardship

Being Stewards on behalf of all Canadians

Parks Canada holds the trust of Canadians to care for and manage significant resources: irreplaceable cultural resources, substantial contemporary buildings and infrastructure, and human and financial resources. This section addresses stewardship of modern assets and infrastructure that support the site's operation. This section also deals with the effective management of human and financial resources, and the site's contribution to the broader objectives of Parks Canada and the Government of Canada.

Stewardship of Infrastructure

Canadians have invested significant public resources in the infrastructure at Lower Fort Garry including the Visitor Reception Centre, access roads, parking lots, signage, picnic shelter and grounds. Less obvious but no less important are the water and waste water treatment infrastructure, maintenance compound, modest fleet of light vehicles and heavy equipment, information management technology and other assets.

In recent years, Parks Canada has recognized that much of its infrastructure is reaching the end of its life. However, replacing infrastructure with the same technology may not represent the best use of scarce resources. The recent recapitalization of the Lower Fort Garry's Visitor Reception Centre underlines the need for investments to meet multiple objectives in order to maximize return on the expenditure of public funds. That project incorporated the needs and expectations of current and future visitors, invested in new energy savings technologies to reduce operating costs, and incorporated design features that encourage greater partnership opportunities.



Solar panels at the Visitor Reception Centre Patio

Strategic Goal for Stewardship of Infrastructure

Lower Fort Garry will effectively manage its assets, respecting the substantial investment that the public has entrusted to Park Canada.

Objective

- *To manage contemporary assets at Lower Fort Garry using the established asset management program.*
- *To manage assets to achieve environmental stewardship objectives.*
- *To recapitalize contemporary assets as needed to meet program needs.*
- *To remove physical barriers to public enjoyment of the site.*

Key Actions

- *Parks Canada will participate in a regional water and waste-water study being undertaken by the Regional Municipality, and will consider the relative merits of partnering in this system versus recapitalizing onsite infrastructure.*
- *As projects are undertaken, barrier free access considerations will be part of project design.*
- *Lower Fort Garry will continue to take advantage of opportunities and programs offered by other Federal Departments and third parties to achieve stewardship objectives.*
- *Maintenance and recapitalization plans will be maintained current.*

Stewardship of Human Resources

With respect to our human capital, Parks Canada recognizes that our workforce is one of our most vital assets and is critical to implementing the vision and realizing the plan objectives. Parks Canada's corporate vision speaks to creating a workforce representative of the diversity of the Canadian population. At Lower Fort Garry, some stories must be told by Aboriginal voices – First Nations and Métis people - whose heritage is embodied in those stories.

In recent years, the site has taken active steps to recruit and develop a representative workforce. The site has also fostered leadership development of Aboriginal staff. There are opportunities for improvement, and this management plan clearly points to an enhanced role for Aboriginal people in all aspects of the management and operation of Lower Fort Garry.



Aboriginal interpretation

Strategic Goal for Stewardship of Human Resources

Parks Canada will create a representative workforce, with particular emphasis on incorporating Aboriginal voices into story telling.

Objectives

- *To foster partnerships with key organizations to create an effective workforce that employs innovative service delivery models and ensures the presence of Aboriginal voices.*

Actions

- *Parks Canada will create training opportunities for staff and managers to ensure that the work environment reflects Parks Canada's values and principles.*
- *Parks Canada will work with the Manitoba Métis Federation to ensure that appropriate employment and partnership opportunities are created.*
- *Employment opportunities for First Nations will be created wherever possible, with a particular emphasis on activities related to Treaty One Commemoration.*

5.6 Implementation

The management plan provides long-term strategic direction for Lower Fort Garry NHSC. It is a framework for more detailed planning and decision-making respecting future management and operations.

Implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the Manitoba Field Unit Superintendent. Implementation will be done through the Manitoba Field Unit business plan. The business plan identifies which actions of the management plan will be realized within a five-year time period. Any changes to the five-year forecast are captured by the annual review and updating of the business plan. Implementation of the actions may be reconsidered in response to new circumstances or information, unexpected opportunities or changing national priorities and decisions.

Progress on management plan implementation will be communicated through annual reporting and the Parks Canada State of the Protected Heritage Areas Report, which is updated every couple of years. The management plan will also be subject to periodic review and can be amended to reflect changes. The public will be consulted about major changes. The commemorative integrity statement will provide the direction required to identify and protect and present the historic resources, and guidance on promoting and presenting to the public to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the site.

6.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

Residual impacts are those impacts that will remain after the mitigation measures have been followed. Many positive residual effects will remain as a result of the implementation of the plan, for example: improved visitor experience, improved heritage presentation, increased protection of cultural resources and the creation and fostering of relationships with stakeholders.

There are a couple of initiatives identified in the management plan that could potentially result in negative environmental effects. However, these effects can be minimized through consulting with Parks Canada's Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office on any proposed maintenance and modifications of Recognized or Classified buildings on site. In addition, an increase in visitation has the potential to cause negative environmental effects. However, the implementation of mitigation measures would result in no residual important negative effects.

Public comments were sought via a newsletter, meetings with stakeholders and during open houses held at Lower Fort Garry, Selkirk and Winnipeg. Any public concerns raised were incorporated into the Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan. Generally, the broader public and stakeholders were supportive of the management plan direction.

The Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan will protect and present the site while enhancing its commemorative integrity. Taking into account the mitigation measures that are proposed in the strategic environmental assessment, including project specific environmental assessments, these actions will not result in important negative environmental effects.

Appendix

Strategic Environmental Assessment of Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment

This management plan underwent a strategic environmental assessment, as required by The Cabinet Directive on The Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals, 2004. The purpose of the assessment was to identify potential negative environmental effects of the plan directions, and to suggest actions to mitigate these effects.

Since the commemorative integrity of a national historic site sets the accountability framework for its management, the initiatives within the Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan will be evaluated for their possible impacts to commemorative integrity. Actions will be assessed to determine whether or not they impair or threaten both natural and cultural resources. In addition, the strategic environmental assessment will evaluate the socioeconomic effects of initiatives, and the possible impacts to the community. The assessment will also consider any cumulative effects of the individual actions. Cumulative effects occur when the effects of individual projects and activities combine with each other over time and distance.

Any proposals that are conceptual or staged could potentially be subject to a project specific environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)* or the “Parks Canada Management Directive 2.4.2 Impact Assessment” where details and effects can be assessed more accurately.

Geographic and Temporal Scope

The assessment covers the legal property boundaries, which include the designated area, of Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada (Lower Fort Garry) which is situated along the west bank of the Red River, 32 kilometres north of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The management plan is a strategic document that focuses primarily on the next five years, however, it has been written to look ten to fifteen years into the future. Therefore, the temporal boundary for this strategic environmental assessment will be ten years. The management plan will be reviewed every five years, and any changes made then will be assessed at that time.

Valued Components

Valued components are those features and resources that are focused on during the assessment because they significantly contribute to the stated value of the site. Lower Fort Garry consists of a parcel of land located along the Red River. There are no known threatened plant species, animals or sensitive habitats located at the site.

As a cultural site Lower Fort Garry has several buildings and structures that are Level 1 cultural resources that include the Big House and its Annex, the Sales Shop/Fur Loft, the Warehouse, the Men’s House, the walls and bastions of the stone fort, and the cottage located south of the stone fort. Three of these buildings are rated Recognized under the Federal Heritage Buildings Policy (the Men’s House, Southwest Bastion, and Warehouse) and two are rated Classified under the Federal Heritage Buildings Policy (the Big House and Furloft/Saleshop).

The Doctor's Office and Fraser House are considered Level 2 cultural resources.

Landscape features important to Lower Fort Garry include; the Red River, Monkman Creek, the 500 acres of high, level fertile ground on which the HBC reserve for Lower Fort Garry was established, and the King's Road.

In addition there are more than 125 000 artefacts and historic objects that have been recovered from archaeological investigations and although most have not been evaluated as to their status as cultural resources, there are undoubtedly thousands of Level 1 and 2 resources in this collection.

Actions to be Assessed

The management plan identifies actions to accomplish and enhance the following:

- Cultural Resources (Section 5.1)
- Meaningful Visitor Experience (Section 5.2)
- Public Understanding and Appreciation (Section 5.3)
- Involving Canadians – Partners and Community Involvement (Section 5.4)
- Stewardship (Section 5.5)

For each objective identified under these goals, actions that will result in either positive or negative environmental effects have been identified, potential impacts assessed and mitigations recommended.

Cultural Resources (from section 5.1)

The actions in this section will have positive effects such as increased protection of cultural resources and improved heritage presentation of the stories of LFG. These will be accomplished by actions such as updating the building conservation guidelines, conducting appropriate document checks to ensure known cultural resources are not adversely affected by implementation of initiatives, enhancing stories presented on site, and promotion of the value of the records and collection for fur trade research and outreach programs.

The only potential for negative effects is in the proposed maintenance and modifications of buildings on site. In order to preserve the heritage value of the buildings Parks Canada - Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada should be followed and conservation advice should be sought from Parks Canada's Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) for Recognized heritage buildings. In addition, consultations with the FHBRO should be undertaken before taking any action that could affect the heritage character of a Classified building.

Meaningful Visitor Experience (from section 5.2)

The actions in this section will have positive effects including increasing visitation and use by third parties and an overall improvement in visitor experience. These positive effects will be the result of market research, new programs, packaged tours, and an investment in current and appropriate media for the multi-purpose room.

Only the increase in visitation has the potential to cause negative environmental effects. However, this increase is expected to be small and mitigation measures such as asking people to following existing paths will reduce effects such as vegetation trampling to minimal levels.

Public Understanding and Appreciation (from section 5.3)

The actions in this section will have positive effects that include improving the visitor experience and heritage presentation through installation of new communications technology, appropriate training for heritage presentation staff and continuous evaluation of the program as a whole. In addition, the volunteers will see positive effects and benefit from appropriate training to prepare them for the challenges of engaging visitors.

Involving Canadians – Partners and Community Involvement (from section 5.4)

The actions in this section will have positive effects including improved visitor experience, and the creation and fostering of relationships with stakeholders and volunteers. This will be done through involving stakeholders in creating new programs and products, expand and continue the relationship with volunteers on site, and encouraging groups to utilize the site as a performance venue.

Stewardship (from section 5.5)

The actions in this section will have many positive effects including increasing access for all visitors through considering barrier free access in project designs. Consideration to the relative merits of partnering in the replacement of water and wastewater infrastructure and the recapitalization of assets will reduce costs. The protection of natural resources is also possible if energy and water efficiency are also considered in the decision on how to replace water and wastewater infrastructure.

Residual Effects

Residual impacts are those impacts that will remain after the mitigation measures have been followed. Many positive residual effects will remain as a result of the implementation of the plan, for example: improved visitor experience, improved heritage presentation, increased protection of cultural resources and the creation and fostering of relationships with stakeholders.

Although there are a couple of initiatives identified in the management plan that have the potential to result in negative environmental effects these effects can be mitigated and the resulting cumulative effects of the combined initiatives will not be important negative effects.

Public Consultation

Public comments were sought via a newsletter, meetings with stakeholders and during open houses held at Lower Fort Garry, Selkirk and Winnipeg. Any public concerns raised were incorporated into the Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan. Generally, the broader public and stakeholders were supportive of the management plan direction.

Conclusion

The Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan will protect and present the site while enhancing its commemorative integrity. Taking into account the mitigation measures that are proposed in the strategic environmental assessment, including project specific environmental assessments, these actions will not result in important negative environmental effects.

