# The Fur Trade at Lachine

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## *Management Plan*

Parks Canada Parcs Canada

Canada

# THE FUR TRADE AT LACHINE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

Western Quebec Field Unit

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 Fur Trade at Lachine 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 Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.

**John Baird**
*Minister of the Environment*

**The Fur Trade at Lachine**
**National Historic Site of Canada**

# MANAGEMENT PLAN

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

**Alan Latourelle**
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada Agency

**Francine Émond**
Superintendent
Western Quebec Field Unit
Parks Canada Agency

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# 1. Introduction

**Inside the warehouse**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

Canada's national historic sites preserve and present tangible and symbolic elements of our country's cultural heritage. These exceptional sites are recognized under the law as having national historic significance.

Under the *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998), Parks Canada is entrusted with ensuring the commemorative integrity of our national historic sites. Sections 32.(1) and 32.(2) of the act require each historic site administered by the Agency to draw up a management plan that must be submitted to Parliament every five years. The management plan is used to implement general Parks Canada policy at the local level and is approved by the minister after public consultation. It sets the course for the long-term development and management of each national historic site and serves as a framework for subsequent management activities and for the planning and implementation of site-related projects. One of the goals of the management plan is to assure the commemorative integrity of the site, notably through application of the principles and practices of cultural resources management. Along with this strategic objective, the plan also determines measures to implement in order to deliver educational experiences that meet visitor expectations and foster appreciation of the historic site.

This management plan, the first ever developed for the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site, defines the criteria that Parks Canada and its partners will draw upon to ensure the protection, presentation, and management of site resources. It is the result

of a planning process that included public consultations to help determine future directions for the site development.

## 1.1 Overview of the management plan development process

This management plan is the work of a multidisciplinary team made up of Parks Canada employees. Plan preparation began with an assessment of previous management practices, a review of the current situation, and identification of issues to be addressed. Each of these issues was then analyzed in detail in accordance with legislative and policy directives, following which priorities were set in view to developing proposals for public consultation.

In August 2006, the team released a public consultation document describing the planning process and highlighting proposed management options for resolving outstanding issues. The public was invited to comment and make suggestions on management plan priorities. All the comments were then compiled, analyzed, and taken into consideration in the drafting of the management plan. After the consultation, a draft version of the plan was submitted for environmental review to ensure that proposed management measures would not negatively affect the site. The plan was then presented to the Minister of the Environment for approval. Once approved, it was tabled in Parliament.

## 1.2 The Parks Canada legislative and strategic framework for national historic site management

### *Legislation*

The Government of Canada ensures that the full range of Canada's history is represented through its network of national historic sites. As stipulated in the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act*, the minister responsible for national historic sites has the mandate to designate "historic places". The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada advises the minister on commemorating these sites.

### *National Historic Sites Policy*

The Canadian government's strategic objectives for national historic sites are as follows:

- Foster knowledge and appreciation of Canada's past through a national program of historic commemoration.
- 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.
- Encourage and support the protection and presentation of other places of national historic significance that are not administered by Parks Canada.

### *Cultural Resources Management Policy*

To ensure that national historic site resources are properly protected and presented, the Parks Canada Agency developed a *Cultural Resources Management Policy*. This policy is built around five guiding principles: value, public benefit, understanding, respect, and integrity. To apply these principles in concrete terms, cultural resources must be identified and evaluated, and their historic value duly taken into consideration in all actions undertaken. This includes preservation and protection measures, as well as initiatives to foster public understanding and enjoyment of these resources and ensure their judicious use.

The Parks Canada *Cultural Resources Management Policy* promotes an integrated, holistic approach. It applies to all activities affecting cultural resources, including protection, upkeep, appreciation, and use. The guiding principles are not mutually exclusive and yield more compelling results when considered as a whole. Cultural resource management practices play an integral role in sound site management and in all joint or shared management activities carried out by Parks Canada personnel and Agency partners. The principles of cultural resource management have been applied in drafting this management plan and will continue to serve as a framework for management decisions regarding site development and public use. Activities that may undermine the commemorative integrity of national historic sites will not be authorized.

## 1.3 Parks Canada strategic objectives

The mandate of Parks Canada is to protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations. Parks Canada has adopted a series of strategic objectives to guide its activities over the next five to ten years. The strategic objectives that will guide the management of the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site are as follows:

- Ensure that the commemorative integrity of the historic site is maintained.
- Promote awareness of Canadian heritage among Canadians and foreign visitors in order to foster greater understanding of the value of commemorative integrity and greater appreciation of Canada's network of national historic sites, parks, and marine conservation areas.
- Provide visitors with appropriate services for discovering and appreciating this national historic site while ensuring that visitor impact is kept to a minimum.
- Improve Parks Canada management by encouraging a management approach based on effective decision making and results.
- Manage human resources wisely and in such a way as to provide Parks Canada's highly qualified employees, who are representative of the Canadian population, with a highly stimulating work environment.

## 1.4 The role of national historic sites

The Fur Trade at Lachine is one of over 915 historic sites scattered across all the regions of Canada. These sites were all the scene of significant events in Canadian history or evoke important pages from Canada's past. Canada's national historic sites commemorate hundreds of years of human history and a rich array of political, economic, intellectual, cultural, and social themes.

National historic sites are important symbols of our identity and help make Canadian history a living part of our contemporary reality. Such sites are owned by federal, provincial, or municipal authorities, as well as companies and individuals. We all have a role to play as stewards of these remarkable properties. The national commemoration program is divided into several distinct but interrelated parts. In addition to Canada's 915-odd national historic sites, over 590 people and 365 other aspects of our history have been recognized as nationally significant. The most common form of commemoration is a bronze plaque. To commemorate places designated as national historic sites, the federal government may also acquire property to ensure its protection and promote it to the Canadian public. This was the case with the Fur Trade at Lachine, one of the 154 national historic sites currently administered by Parks Canada. These sites are part of a vital and irreplaceable heritage. By protecting them, we ensure that they are preserved for the appreciation and enjoyment of future generations.

The history of the fur trade in Canada is one of the many themes recognized as being of national historical significance due to its contribution to the development of the Canadian economy in the 18th and 19th centuries. Since 1957, a network of historic sites has been developed commemorating the fur trade across Canada. In Quebec, the Montreal area was chosen for this purpose. Ever since its founding, Montreal has been associated with the fur industry that helped it prosper. Its strategic position on the fur route made it a hub of trade between Canada and Europe.

The Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site of Canada was designated as the most appropriate site to commemorate the fur trade in the Montreal area. As an enclave within Lachine Canal National Historic Site, the Fur Trade at Lachine has several historic themes in common with the canal. Other sites that testify to the importance of the fur industry in the region are the Lachine Museum and the Hudson's Bay Company Gallery. They also help promote this important facet of our history.

LIEU HISTORIQUE NATIONAL DU CANADA DU

# Commerce-de-la-Fourrure-à-Lachine

## Contexte régional

# *The Fur Trade at Lachine*

*NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA*

## *Regional Context*

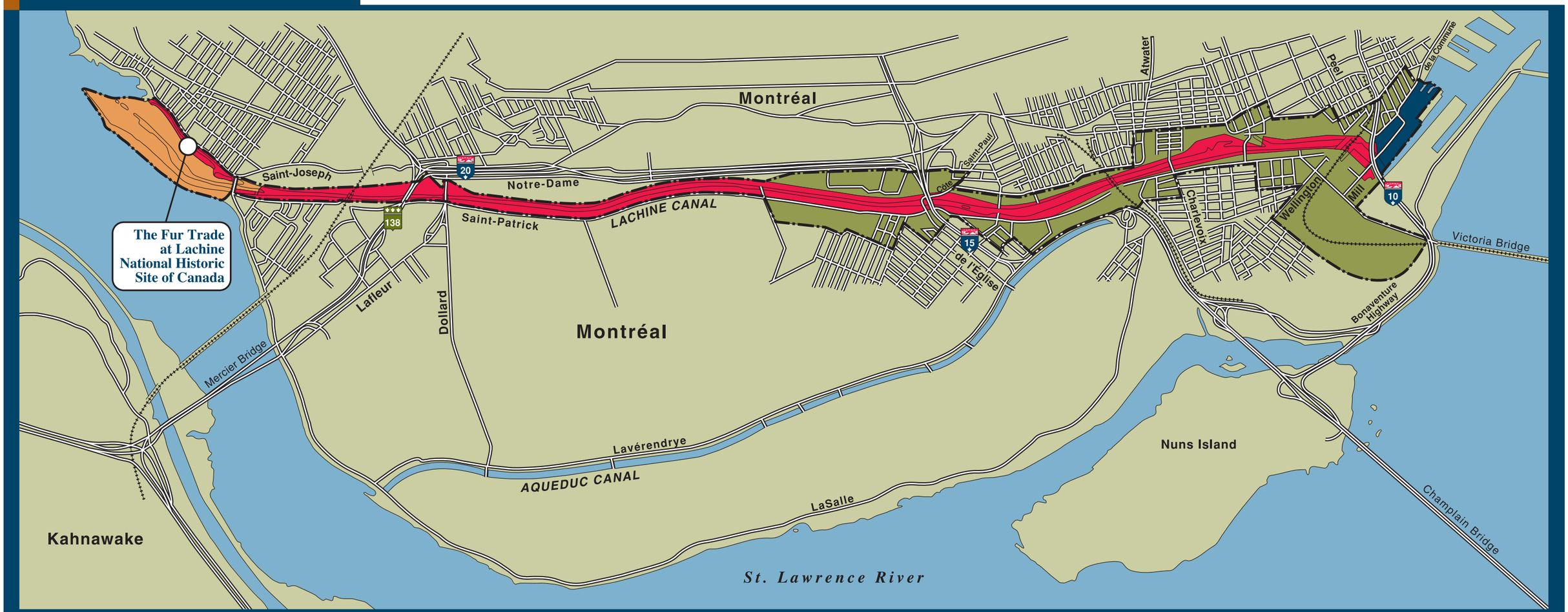
## Lieux historiques nationaux du Canada
## *National Historic Sites of Canada*

1. Bataille-de-la-Châteauguay
   *Battle of the Châteauguay*
2. Caserne-de-Carillon
   *Carillon Barracks*
3. Coteau-du-Lac
   *Coteau-du-Lac*
4. Commerce-de-la-Fourrure-à-Lachine
   *The Fur Trade at Lachine*
5. Fort-Chambly
   *Fort Chambly*
6. Fort-Lennox
   *Fort Lennox*
7. Louis-S.-St-Laurent
   *Louis S. St. Laurent*
8. Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier
   *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*
9. Sir-George-Étienne-Cartier
   *Sir George-Etienne Cartier*
10. Louis-Joseph-Papineau
    *Louis-Joseph Papineau*
11. Manoir-Papineau
    *Manoir Papineau*
12. Canal-de-Lachine
    *Lachine Canal*
13. Canal-de-Chambly
    *Chambly Canal*
14. Canal-de-Carillon
    *Carillon Canal*
15. Canal-de-Saint-Ours
    *Saint-Ours Canal*
16. Canal-de-Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue
    *Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue Canal*

# The Fur Trade at Lachine

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Location of the Site




## LEGEND

- THE FUR TRADE AT LACHINE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA
- LACHINE CANAL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA
- PARKS CANADA
- OLD PORT OF MONTRÉAL CORPORATION INC.
- CITY OF MONTRÉAL AND QUEBEC GOVERNMENT
- CITY OF MONTRÉAL, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

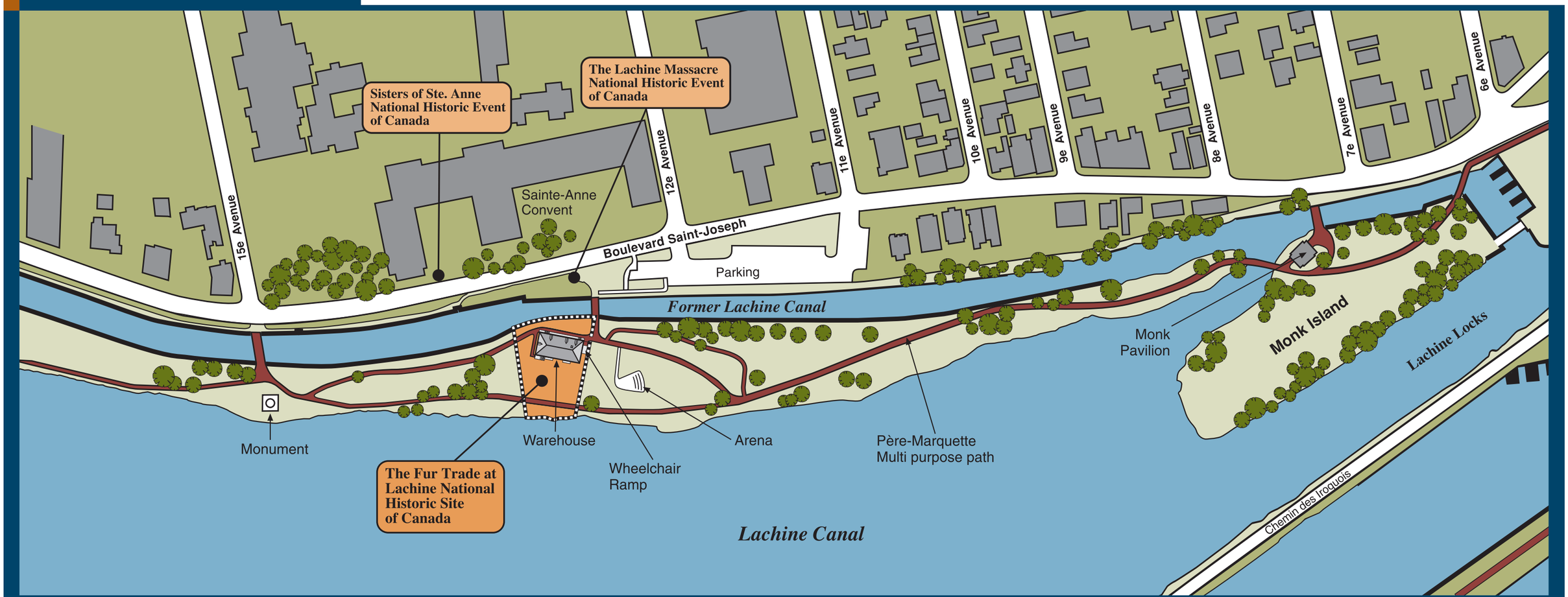
0 0,5 1 1,5 2 2,5 KM

N

# The Fur Trade at Lachine

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Bounderies of Historic Site




## LEGEND

- MULTI PURPOSE PATH
- PARKS CANADA PROPERTY
- THE FUR TRADE AT LACHINE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA BOUNDARIES

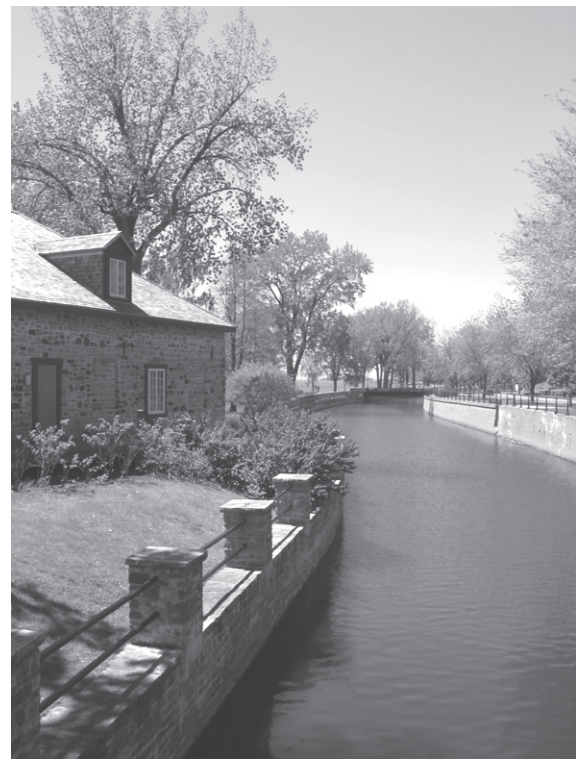
0 10 20 30 40 50 Metres

N

# 2. The Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site

Three potential sites were brought to the attention of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada for developing an interpretation centre on the history of the fur trade in the Montreal region: the North West Company warehouse on rue Sainte-Thérèse in Montreal, the Hudson's Bay Company warehouse in Lachine, and a number of other North West Company buildings in Terrebonne. In February 1970, the Board issued an advisory to the effect that the recommendation be postponed and resubmitted to the Fur Trade and Indigenous Populations Committee. In June 1970, subsequent to a second historical report on the Lachine warehouse determining the date of construction and a report from the secretary on the physical condition of the fur-trade-era buildings in Lachine, Terrebonne, and Montreal, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada concluded that the Hudson's Bay Company warehouse in Lachine was the most suitable of the three Montreal-area buildings for interpreting the fur trade.

Located at the junction of ocean and river shipping routes, Montreal was the warehousing and administrative centre for the biggest fur companies in North America—the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. The region continues to occupy an important place in the international fur industry, especially in the processing and retail sectors.



**Fur Trade at Lachine Warehouse**
Parks Canada / A. Kedl

In 1977, Parks Canada acquired the Lachine warehouse and adjacent property from the Sisters of Saint Anne and began research into the historic value of the building. Unfortunately, the building was ravaged by fire in 1979. It was, however, completely restored by the following year. In March 1982, the interpretation concept identifying site themes and objectives was approved. The site was officially opened in 1985.

# 3. Commemorative Integrity of the Site

The commemorative integrity of national historic sites is one of Parks Canada's core objectives. The notion of "commemorative integrity" refers to the overall condition or character of a historic site. A national historic site is said to possess commemorative integrity when:

- The resources that symbolize or represent its significance are neither impaired nor threatened.
- The reasons for the site's national historic significance are clearly communicated to the public.
- Its heritage values are respected by all site decision makers and stakeholders.[1]

Commemorative integrity statements are drawn up for each national historic site. These statements define the site's commemoration objective, describe and attribute a value to the cultural resources found there, and identify the commemoration messages to be presented to the public. The following pages are based on the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site of Canada commemorative integrity statement, which was approved in 2000.[2] This site was also subject to a commemorative integrity evaluation in August 2005. The highlights of the evaluation have been appended to this document. The evaluation's conclusions are very important because they are incorporated into the management objectives and measures described in Chapter 7 of this plan. The main issues are related to the presentation of messages of national historic significance in the exhibition, and the need for further historic and archaeological research.

1. Parks Canada, Guide for writing Commemorative Integrity Statements, 2002.

2. Parks Canada, Fur Trade at Lachine NHSC–Commemorative Integrity Statement, 2000.

# 4. The Commemorative Intent

**Engraving by W.H. Bartlett, entitled "Working a Canoe up a Rapid"**
Library and Archives Canada

The commemorative intent specifically identifies what the Fur Trade at Lachine should commemorate. It is a statement on the national significance of the site based on the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and approved by the minister.

In 1985, on the occasion of the national parks centennial, a commemorative plaque recalling the adventure of the fur trade was placed on the Lachine warehouse.

**The commemorative intent is as follows:**

The Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site commemorates the fur trade in the Montreal area.

# 5. Fur Trade at Lachine Today

**The old canal**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

## 5.1 Cultural resources and messages

As mentioned in the pages above, one of Parks Canada's main goals is to preserve and protect historic site cultural resources of national historic significance. Here is an overview of the current situation with respect to cultural resources.

### 5.1.1 Cultural resources of national historic significance

***Historic site and significant landscape***

Taken together, the elements of this historic site are part of a contemporary landscape bearing witness to the evolution and history of the fur trade warehouse. They foster understanding of the sites national historic significance through the presence of tangible markers of the past. The heritage value of the site lies in the ongoing links between the central elements of this landscape: Lake St. Louis, the wharves, the canals of 1825 and 1848, the warehouse, and the area's traditional urban fabric. The elements of the landscape that characterize the site are the followings:

- The strategic location of the building along the St. Lawrence River, the principal route to the interior of the continent, as borne out by the subsequent canal construction of 1825 and 1848.
- The views of Lake St. Louis, a reminder of the connection between the building's warehouse role and the site above the Lachine Rapids from which canoes would set out for the heart of the continent.

### *Built heritage: the Hudson's Bay Company warehouse*

The Hudson's Bay Company warehouse is the main cultural resource at the Fur Trade at Lachine. Located just off Boulevard Saint-Joseph at number 1255, it is a one-storey rectangular stone building measuring approximately 229 $m^2$. It was build in fall 1803 for Alexander Gordon, a former fur trade clerk at the Timiskaming trading post, and a North West Company shareholder. The warehouse remained in the Gordon family until 1833, when it was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company, which used it until 1861. It was purchased by the Sisters of Saint Anne, who deeded it to the federal government in 1977. Restored in the early 1980s by Parks Canada after a fire that destroyed everything except the stone structure and a good part of the frame, it was transformed into an interpretation centre on the history of the fur trade in the Montreal region.[3]

The warehouse currently has problems with humidity, which varies considerably throughout the year, and inadequate fresh air supply during the months it is closed to the public. These problems affect the structure of the warehouse and accelerate deterioration of doors and windows.

### *Vestiges of old buildings*

According to a notarized deed dated 1806, Alexander Gordon's property comprised a number of other buildings in addition to the warehouse, including at least one large wooden house and two barns on the current site of the Sisters of Saint Anne convent. There were also three small wooden houses with outbuildings to the immediate east of the warehouse on what is today Parks Canada property. The exact purpose of these buildings is not known, but their link with the fur trade warehouse complex makes them cultural resources of national historic significance. Although little is known of the fate of these other buildings, old pictorial material shows other structures were still present near the warehouse until at least 1923. Occupation levels related to the fur trade undoubtedly lie buried in the embankments along the canal.

No archaeological excavations have been carried out, depriving Parks Canada and the public of vital historical knowledge for presenting the sites cultural resources.

**View of the warehouse**
Parks Canada / A. Kedl

3. For a more complete architectural description, see the commemorative integrity statement.

***Moveable resources***

The archaeological collection includes objects from Montreal's fur trade era. Over 30 artefacts dating from the first quarter of the 19th century were found in the cellar of the warehouse, including bowl, plate, and saucer fragments and storage containers, as well as fragments of pipes and glass bottles.

### 5.1.2 Other cultural resources

***Archaeological remains associated with the occupation by the Sisters of Saint Anne***

Inside the warehouse, we find various vestiges associated with the laundry (1870-1897), including two levels of occupation, as well as the base of a brick boiler. Outside are the possible remains of verandas, sheds, and other structures added between 1861 and 1910 as use of the building changed (dormitory, laundry, classroom, and servants' quarters). Nearby are traces of what appear to be landscaping elements, including pathways, sidewalks, fences, and gardens, as well as the possible remains of the houses and outbuildings on the east side of the warehouse.

***Moveable resources***

The ethnological collection comprises over 370 archaeological fragments. Many of them are associated with the laundry facilities in operation between 1870 and 1897. Buttons of various materials, glass containers, iron objects of unknown use, a key, fine-tooth combs, architectural hardware, and pieces of iron and ceramic pipe recall the activity of this period.

### 5.1.3 Messages of national historic significance

Below is the list of messages of national historic significance to be conveyed at the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site.

***Key message:***

The Montreal area played an important role in the history of the fur trade in Canada.

***Supporting messages:***

- The fur trade played an important role in Canada's economic, political, social, and cultural development.

**Warehouse interior**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

- In addition to actual trade, fur trade–related activities in the Montreal area also included administration, trading post supply, fur storage and processing, not to mention the export of raw pelts and manufactured products.

- From the earliest days of the *coureurs des bois,* the Montreal area played a central role in the fur trade, which for many years was the driving force behind its development.

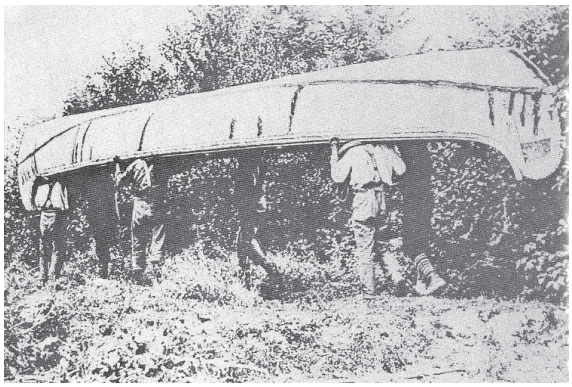
- Many Montreal-area residents held key positions in financing and managing the fur trade or in manning the canoes and travelling the trade routes for fur merchants and companies.

- From the 17th century, most of the big companies active in the North American fur trade operated in the Montreal region.

- The North West Company, an association of independent merchants, and the Hudson's Bay Company merged in 1821. The merger reinforced Montreal administrative role in the fur trade and marked the end of its dominance as the main fur transshipment hub.

- The Montreal area was home to infrastructures associated with all aspects of the fur trade, including warehouses, workshops, and offices.

- Located upstream from the rapids blocking the St. Lawrence River in Montreal, Lachine was the arrival and departure point for fur trading expeditions.



**Old photo of a Hudson's Bay Company freighter canoe being portaged like a Montreal canoe, i.e., upside down, with the gunwales resting on the men's shoulders**
Library and Archives Canada

- Alexander Gordon built a fur trade warehouse in 1803 when Lachine was a major warehousing centre for furs and trading goods.

- The construction of the Lachine warehouse came at a time when the fur trade was still flourishing in Montreal, even though other economic sectors like the wood industry had begun to develop.

- Today, this building is one of the last vestiges of the fur trade warehousing activity that once flourished in Lachine.

- The Hudson's Bay Company established its North American headquarters in Lachine in 1826 and purchased the Gordon family property in 1833.

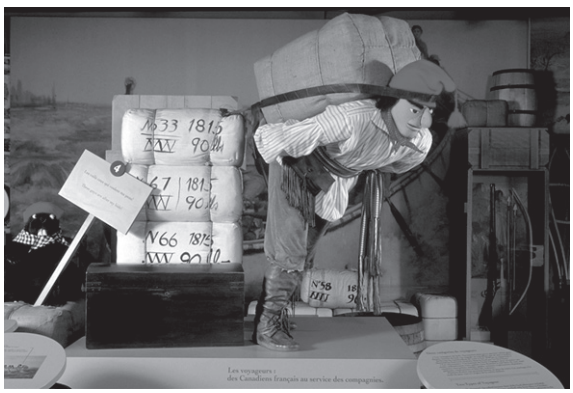
- Montreal continues to play an important international role in the fur industry, notably in the processing and retail sectors.

The messages of national historic significance are conveyed to the public through a permanent exhibition, an attractive display that recounts the history of the fur trade in the Montreal area during the first half of the 19th century. A team of Parks Canada guides provides interpretation services, which include guided tours of the exhibition and theme activities on summer weekends. Individuals can take a self-guided or guided tour, whereas as school and other groups have access to various interpretation activities and programs. Guided tours vary in length from 90 to 120 minutes.

In its current form, the theme of the site as defined in 1979 differs from the commemoration objective set forth in the commemorative integrity statement because it limits the period covered. This undermines the commemorative integrity of the site and interferes with message transmission since little or no attention is paid to the fur trade prior to 1800 and after 1850, or to Lachine's former role as Canada's leading inland port and a major warehousing centre. The situation is attributable to a lack of historical knowledge on these topics, but also to the presentation concept developed at the time.

A number of participants at the public consultation made comments on the exhibition. Requests were made to tell the full story of the fur trade in the Montreal area, to incorporate the individual histories of people involved in the fur trade, and to improve information provided about Aboriginal involvement in the trade.

The scope and complexity of the commemorative intent set forth in the commemorative integrity statement pose several challenges for site employees. Certain periods in the long history of the fur trade in the Montreal area are much more well documented than others. In addition, available cultural resources are not equally representative of all the periods. The current facility is poorly suited to presenting the theme due to the small size of the site's main cultural resource



**Warehouse interior**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

**Interpretation activity**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

(the warehouse and its surroundings). The visitor capacity is also very limited. Staff, for their part, have very limited space available, which compounds the difficulties.

Although not directly linked to the commemoration objectives, level 2 messages about the period when the Sisters of Saint Anne occupied the warehouse are nonetheless important for understanding the history of the site. The Sisters of Saint Anne acquired the land and buildings from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1861 and set up classrooms in the warehouse as well as dormitories and apartments for their employees. A number of archaeological remains are associated with this era. At present, messages about this period are conveyed by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque on the northwest corner of the warehouse, and occasionally by the guides.

## 5.2 Visitor services and facilities

The Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site provides various visitor facilities and services. Located 12 km from downtown Montreal, the site can be reached by public transit, by bike on the Lachine Canal National Historic Site multipurpose path, or by car. There is a 50 car parking lot along Boulevard Saint-Joseph. From there, a small bridge over the first Lachine Canal leads to the site.

Most of the facilities and services on site are found in the old warehouse, including visitor reception, washrooms, a small sales counter,

**Greeting visitors**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

and an exhibition room. The 174 $m^2$ exhibition room is divided into 8 islands along all four walls. The central area is used for interpretation activities and audiovisual presentations. None of the islands can be viewed by more than 10 visitors at a time.

Outside, there are rest areas and picnic sites, a multipurpose path, and a small amphitheatre with a capacity of 50. The site is accessible to the mobility impaired. The Borough of Lachine handles various groundskeeping duties and performs maintenance on the bike path and parking lot.

## 5.3 Visitor attendance and public use

The historic site welcomed its first visitors in 1985. Attendance increased until it hit a record 45,000 visitors in 1992 (the year of Montreal's 350th anniversary). Subsequently, and especially since 1995, when admission fees were introduced, attendance has

fallen, reaching its lowest level ever in 2005 at 12,048 visitors.[4] This decrease is most notable among travel agency tour groups and, in 2005, the school group clientele.

The decline in attendance has also had an impact on visitor makeup. School groups now account for 26% of the clientele. A survey of individual visitors in 2001 profiled the clientele attracted to the site.[5]

A total of 58% of the clientele of the Fur Trade at Lachine is from Quebec, with another 11% from other Canadian provinces. The Greater Montreal area (30 km radius) accounts for fully 47% of all visitors. Foreign visitors make up 31% of the total, 8% from the United States, and 23% from other countries, mainly Europe (15% from France). For many of them (82%), it is their first visit. Individual visitors spend an average of 44 minutes in the exhibition room, while adult and school groups enjoy a 60 minute guided tour. Special visits and activities are available for the following types of groups: school, social and cultural, tourist, French as a second language students, and scouts. As for individual visitors, they can take advantage of theme activities offered on summer weekends.

During the public consultation, a number of those present mentioned the importance of improving signage near the site so that passers-by and people using the multipurpose path would know this was a historic site open to the public.

## 5.4 National and regional networks

The Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site is part of the network of national historic sites commemorating Canadian heritage. It commemorates Canada's fur trade and has close historical ties with Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site. Located within the Lachine Canal National Historic Site, the Fur Trade at Lachine warehouse presents a theme related to that of the canal.

The warehouse is located in the heart of Old Lachine, an important historic and architectural complex on the Island of Montreal. With its historic heritage homes, churches, rectories, and convents, this district bears eloquent witness to local history. The Fur Trade at Lachine is near the Lachine Museum, which encompasses the national historic site of LeBer-LeMoyne House, Saints-Anges Gardiens Church, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St. Stephen's Anglican Church and cemetery, and Sainte-Anne Convent.[6] The Lachine Rapids, located just on the outskirts of Lachine, are also recognized for their national historic importance.

4. Of these 12,048 visitors, 3,118 were from school groups, 2,257 were from other groups, and 6,673 were individuals

5. See the 2001 survey of individual visitors produced by Marketing and Program Affairs, Parks Canada, 2002.

6. The list of landmarks comes from the brief submitted by the Lachine Historical Society as part of the public consultations in September 2006.

## 5.5 Ties with the local and regional community

Since it opened in June 1984, the historic site has actively collaborated with a number of local organizations and individuals. For the local community, the Fur Trade at Lachine is a prestigious resource that serves as a heritage showcase. Over the years, the team at the national historic site has also forged close ties with schools. Clientele from this segment consists of schools from Greater Montreal school boards.

The Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site is known among local tourism industry members as an attraction likely to interest local, regional, and tourist clienteles, especially with its location in Old Lachine, which has become a cultural, natural, and heritage focal point. Lachine has become a choice destination according to the City of Montreal website.[7] Since and even prior to the site's opening, good relationships have been established with the Borough of Lachine, and in particular with the Recreation and Culture Department, which runs the local Lachine Museum. In summer 2006, a very popular new activity called the Lachine Archaeo-Trek was set up thanks to the cooperation of the Lachine Museum, the Lachine Canal National Historic Site, and the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site, whose team also maintains good relations with local historical societies and Musée Sainte-Anne de Lachine.

The Fur Trade at Lachine is also a member of numerous local and regional organizations, including Pôle des Rapides (an organization promoting heritage and tourist attractions in the southwest part of the city), the West Island of Montreal Tourism Bureau, Société des Attraits Touristiques du Québec, Société des directeurs de musées montréalais (participates annually in Montreal's International Museum Day), the Greater Montreal Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Montreal History Museums Group, the Lachine Chamber of Commerce, and the Kahnawake Mohawk community.

During public consultations in September 2006, a number of members of the public and partner organizations turned out to make suggestions to strengthen partnerships and collaboration opportunities.

## 5.6 Administration and operations

The Government of Canada is committed to the goal of sustainable development. It works to prevent pollution and protect the environment in the performance of its duties. Parks Canada Agency is one of the agencies subject to the Sustainable Development in Government Operations initiative and is required to prepare sustainable development strategies. The purpose of these strategies is to ensure that the departments and organizations involved systematically take into

7. http://ville.montreal.qc.ca

account environmental, economic, and social considerations in their decision-making processes. Parks Canada Agency must now report to Parliament on the efforts it makes to assume its environmental responsibilities.

Parks Canada is a leader in natural and cultural resource management. Its partners and the public recognize this and expect activities and facilities to be managed such that no resource is compromised. The Agency therefore has a special responsibility with regard to how it manages park facilities, historic sites, communities in the vicinity of parks, and business activities.

The Western Quebec Field Unit has an environment management system with several recommended measures that apply to the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site.

# The Fur Trade at Lachine

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Map of Main Cultural Resources

## LEGEND

- CULTURAL RESOURCES
- 1 THE LACHINE MASSACRE MONUMENT
- 2 FOOTBRIDGE OVER THE CANAL
- 3 WAREHOUSE
- 4 BUILDING REMAINS
- 5 BUILDING REMAINS
- 6 BUILDING REMAINS
- 7 BUILDING REMAINS

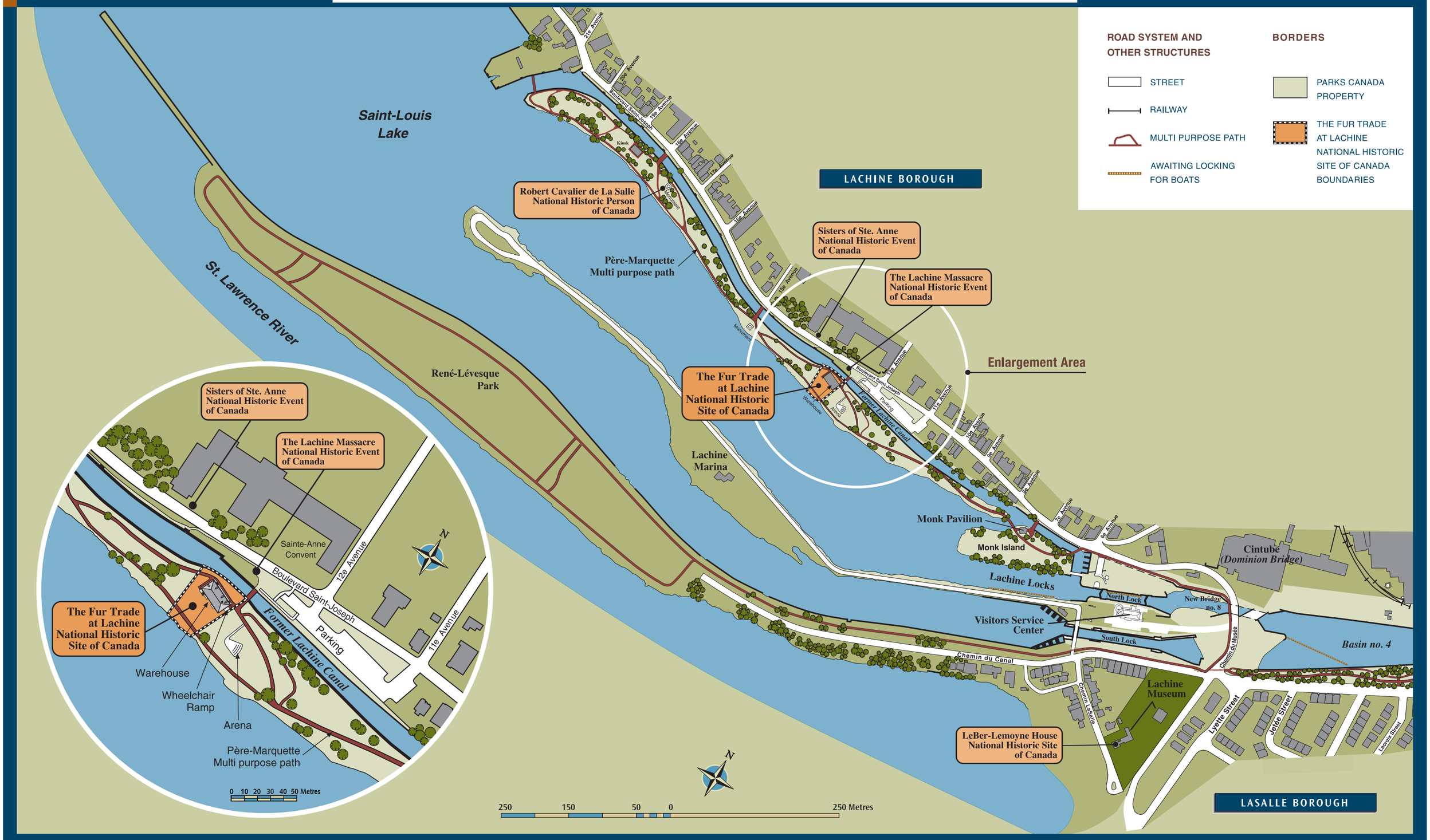
0 10 20 30 40 50 Metres

N

# The Fur Trade at Lachine

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Current Situation



# 6. Looking Ahead

The following section sets out the 15-year vision Parks Canada and its partners have for the future of the national historic site. Drawing on the laws and policies in effect at Parks Canada, this vision is concerned with preserving the site's commemorative integrity, offering visitors a memorable experience, and raising public awareness through educational services and outreach efforts. The management goals and measures proposed later on in this document are aimed at achieving this vision.

- The historic site will remain a protected site whose cultural resources–particularly the warehouse–are in an excellent state of integrity.
- The landscape features will have been documented and presented, thereby aiding understanding of the relationship between the building, its landscape features, the remains of former buildings, and certain infrastructures.
- The historic site will be a place of discovery and learning that presents the fur trade as practised in the Montreal area. It will highlight messages associated with the Commemorative Integrity Statement.
- Visitor attendance will be a reflection of the quality of the experiences available on site. Visitor expectations will be monitored to ensure that the visitor experience measures up. The visitor experience will also be diversified, attracting new clienteles.

**Interpretation activity**
Parks Canada / S. Fabris

- The Fur Trade at Lachine and Lachine Canal national historic sites will be complementary in nature yet each preserve their own unique character.
- Regional community involvement, including First Nations, will enhance the activities and services offered.
- The historic site will have implemented a sustainable development and resource strategy. It will influence the community through its environmental leadership in support of a healthy environment for humans, cultural resources, and biophysical resources.

# 7. Management Objectives and Measures

Thanks to the management objectives and measures described herein, Parks Canada Agency will be able to achieve the vision set out for the Fur Trade at Lachine, guarantee its commemorative integrity, and offer a quality experience and effective outreach program. It will do so through its own efforts as well as through collaborative and partnership initiatives.

## 7.1 Heritage protection

The protection of cultural resources is one of the main foundations of the Parks Canada mission. For a site to be commemorated, it must be protected. Without adequate protection, cultural resources cannot resist the passage of time, and visitors cannot access them to enjoy and appreciate them. Cultural resource management applies to management of the entire site as well as to each of its cultural resources. The related management objectives and measures below apply to the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site in its entirety.

### 7.1.1 Objectives:

- Manage the site according to cultural resource management policies;
- Preserve those features that characterize the site's landscape and maintain the spatial and visual relationships between its various components;
- Ensure the facilities take into account the site's historic spatial organization and preserve its heritage character;
- Communicate the historical value of its cultural resources to the public;
- Protect the walls and other original elements of the building that convey its historical evolution;
- Ensure that the archaeological remains are identified and their integrity is protected;
- Protect the physical integrity of the movable resources.

### 7.1.2 Management measures:

- Conduct historical research in connection with the archaeological work and the presentation of contextual messages, including research on houses associated with the warehouse, other warehouses in the sector, the Simpson facilities across from the warehouse, and merchant activities;
- Conduct archaeological work (inventory, evaluation, and localized digs), notably with regard to First Nations presence, the houses associated with the warehouse, and the riverbanks (remains of the wharf);
- Introduce a monitoring system for the cultural resource remains;

- Ensure that archaeological work and the protection of archaeological resources are part of the engineering and landscaping work performed at the site;
- Conduct an analysis of the warehouse shell, obtain recommendations on eliminating the problem of humidity level variations, and apply the appropriate corrective measures.

## 7.2 Heritage presentation and public education

Parks Canada has a responsibility to effectively communicate to the public the reasons justifying the importance of the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historical Site. Onsite activities and outreach programs are means of fulfilling this responsibility.

### 7.2.1 Objectives:

- Communicate the historical value of the cultural resources to the public;
- Effectively convey messages of national historic importance to the public by:
  - Maximizing the use of cultural resources that symbolize and characterize the site's national importance, thereby helping the public to understand the links between these resources, the history of the site, and its national importance;
  - Presenting these messages in their totality based on accurate, documented data;
  - Presenting them in a way that visitors understand;
  - Setting up methods and tools for measuring how effectively these messages are being transmitted.
- Communicate to the public the site's significance within national and regional heritage networks.

### 7.2.2 Management measures:

- Draw up a heritage presentation plan that integrates the main messages of national historic significance in the Commemorative Integrity Statement while meeting the comfort requirements and expectations of clienteles;
- Conduct historical research to better understand the ties between the Lachine Canal and the Fur Trade at Lachine national historic sites and integrate them into public presentations;
- Measure visitor understanding of the messages of national historic significance;
- Upgrade the website to convey information to clienteles unable to visit the historical site.

## 7.3 Visitor experience

The presence of visitors at the historic site is essential to presenting the cultural resources and communicating identified messages of national historic significance. A tour of the site is the best way to raise awareness of the value of the cultural resources and related national messages of historic significance.

Parks Canada will seek to increase and optimize attendance at the site. To do so, we suggest leveraging the organization's strengths, which are its personalized welcome, the guided tours and activities it offers, and the possibility for visitors to learn, discuss, make discoveries, and be entertained. This section deals with points that will help visitors discover and appreciate the site so that they have a pleasant and memorable experience.

### 7.3.1 Objectives:

- Better understand the needs, interests, and expectations of current and potential clienteles;
- Offer various clienteles diversified, significant, and compelling visitor experiences that correspond to specific visitor needs and interests;
- Get the regional community involved to improve the services available at the national historic site;
- Take measures necessary to increase and optimize attendance at the site while preserving the quality of the visitor experience and its commemorative integrity.

### 7.3.2 Management measures:

- Better announce the presence of the historic site to people who use the multi-purpose path, and work with the Borough of Lachine to improve signage on Boulevard Saint-Joseph;
- Develop a communications program to reach target clienteles and boost attendance;
- Conduct research to better understand the expectations and needs of current and potential visitors;
- Measure visitor experience and satisfaction;
- Ensure attendance and guide service use are measured and documented;
- Upgrade the website to better meet visitor needs;
- Prepare and update public safety and law enforcement plans.

## 7.4 Partnerships and community involvement

Parks Canada Agency is determined to emulate past successes and create new relationships and cooperation opportunities with the community, municipalities, local and regional heritage groups, and First Nations.

### 7.4.1 Objectives:

- Work with the regional tourism industry to ensure high visibility for the site and increased awareness of it;
- As a national historic site, take part in local and regional events and the development of local and regional heritage;
- Develop a sense of local and regional community belonging and ownership, particularly among First Nations.

### 7.4.2 Management measures:

- Continue and strengthen joint action and cooperation with local and regional tourism stakeholders in order to share clienteles and improve services;
- Include local and regional individuals and organizations (particularly First Nations) in development projects and the organization of special activities;
- Create an advisory board to help the site better integrate into the region and continue to develop partnerships and people's sense of ownership of the site.

## 7.5 Administration and operations

### 7.5.1 Objective:

- Adopt sound environmental practices in all operations and continually strive to improve the site's environmental efficiency.

### 7.5.2 Management measure:

- Update and execute the site's environmental management system.

# 8. Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment

The management plan for the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site of Canada was examined in accordance with the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals (1999). Implementation of the management plan measures will promote the site's commemorative integrity and protection of its cultural resources, which is in accordance with the site's Commemorative Integrity Statement. The strategic environmental assessment was conducted based on the preliminary version of the management plan so that the proposed mitigation measures could be incorporated into it before a final decision was made on management measures. This allowed the preliminary plan to be adjusted accordingly. The analysis shows that there are few sources of stress and most of the sources of stress have no or a weak impact. The potential negative effects can be reduced by applying known technical measures or other means that have proven effective in the past. More in-depth environmental assessments of projects will have to be conducted at a later planning stage when sufficient details about the project are known. It can thus be concluded from this strategic environmental assessment that, based on the information available, the management measures in place for this site are acceptable. Overall, the strategic measures presented in the management plan are in keeping with Parks Canada's mandate and management policies, and the Fur Trade at Lachine management plan will have a positive impact on commemorative integrity.

# 9. Implementation

Over the next five years, Parks Canada will rely on this plan for management guidance at the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site. The implementation strategy in the table on the following pages sets out an order of priority for the management measures to be introduced over the life of the plan. This list of priorities takes into account comments made at the public consultation. Parks Canada Agency uses its annual business planning process to determine how it will achieve its objectives. In the coming years, the Western Quebec Field Unit will endeavour to implement all management measures identified as priorities by drawing on its current budgetary resources or any additional one-time funding it may receive and by concluding community partnership agreements.

Progress on the implementation of this management plan will be assessed annually as part of the business planning process. In five years, the management plan will undergo a comprehensive examination aimed at evaluating its progress and new issues that emerge.

| Heritage Protection | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Year 1 2007-2008 | Year 2 2008-2009 | Year 3 2009-2010 | Year 4 2010-2011 | Year 5 2011-2012 |
| Ensure that archaeological work and the protection of archaeological resources are part of the engineering and landscaping work performed at the historic site | X | X | X | X | X |
| Conduct an analysis of the warehouse shell and obtain recommendations on eliminating the problem of humidity level variations | X | X | X | X | X |
| Conduct historical research associated with archaeological work and the presentation of contextual messages | | X | X | | |

## Heritage Presentation and Public Education

| | Year 1 2007-2008 | Year 2 2008-2009 | Year 3 2009-2010 | Year 4 2010-2011 | Year 5 2011-2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure visitor understanding of the messages of national historic significance | X | X | | | |
| Conduct historical research to better understand the ties between the Lachine Canal and the Fur Trade at Lachine and integrate them into public presentations | | X | X | | |
| Upgrade the website to convey information to clienteles unable to visit the historical site | | X | X | | |

## Visitor Experience

| | Year 1 2007-2008 | Year 2 2008-2009 | Year 3 2009-2010 | Year 4 2010-2011 | Year 5 2011-2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Better announce the presence of the historic site to people who use the multipurpose path and work with the Borough of Lachine to improve signage on Boulevard Saint-Joseph | X | X | | | |
| Develop a communications program to reach target clienteles and boost attendance | X | X | X | X | X |
| Ensure attendance and guide service use are measured and documented | X | X | X | X | X |
| Measure visitor experience and satisfaction | | X | | | |
| Upgrade the website to better meet visitor needs | | X | X | | |
| Conduct research to better understand the expectations and needs of current and potential visitors | | | X | X | |
| Prepare and update public safety and law enforcement plans | | | | X | |

| Partnerships, Community Involvement, and Administration | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Year 1<br>2007-2008 | Year 2<br>2008-2009 | Year 3<br>2009-2010 | Year 4<br>2010-2011 | Year 5<br>2011-2012 |
| Continue and strengthen joint action and cooperation with local and regional tourism stakeholders in order to share clienteles and improve services | X | X | X | X | X |
| Include local and regional individuals and organizations (particularly First Nations) in development projects and the organization of special activities | X | X | X | X | X |
| Create an advisory board to help the site better integrate into the region and continue to develop partnerships and people's sense of ownership of the site | X | X | X | X | X |
| Update and execute the site's environmental management system | X | X | X | X | X |

# Appendix A

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# Appendix B

## Summary of the Commemorative Integrity Assessment

The *Parks Canada Agency Act* states that in the national interest, the commemorative integrity of national historic sites must be ensured and Parks Canada must report to Parliament regularly on the state of protected heritage areas entrusted to it. The assessment conducted of the commemorative integrity of the Fur Trade at Lachine National Historic Site is aimed at complying with this requirement. Such assessments also provide management with information on site strengths and weaknesses with regard to commemorative integrity. This assessment was based on the site's Commemorative Integrity Statement and the Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy. It also meets the standards indicated in the *Commemorative Integrity Rating Guide*.

| CI COMPOSITION SCORE | |
|---|---|
| Total | Condition of commemorative integrity (CI) |
| 10 | Unchanged |
| 9 | **Minor change** |
| **8** | |
| 7 | |
| 6 | Moderate change |
| 5 | |
| 4 | |
| 3 | Major change |
| 2 | |
| 1 | Substantial change |

The assessment was entrusted to a multidisciplinary team and conducted on August 15, 2005.

On a scale of one to ten, the commemorative integrity composite score for this site is **8** (Y Y G), indicating a slight deterioration. There is no threat to the site that could affect the site itself or its resources and result in major deterioration, except for the problem of humidity in the warehouse, which endangers the beams and framework.

The main strengths identified during the assessment are as follows:

- The resources are, with a few exceptions, in good condition. There is no immediate threat to the site.
- The site complies with and follows the cultural resource policy.
- The heritage guide team strives to and is capable of making up for the exhibition's shortfalls.
- Visitor satisfaction is high, but we know the current exhibition must be revamped.

The main issues identified are as follows:

- The exhibition, which dates from 21 years ago, is deficient in terms of message delivery. Certain messages are missing, such as the Montreal fur trade before 1800, the French and American period, and Lachine's role as Canada's main inland port and warehouse area.
- Archaeological and historical research needs to be done. There is no inventory of archaeological sites or a conservation plan. Historical research is required to better understand how to make the link between the Fur Trade at Lachine and the Lachine Canal national historic sites.

The assessment results are as follows:

| CONDITION OF RESOURCES SUMMARY | Y+ |
|---|---|
| Resources directly related to the reasons for its designation | G |
| Other resources | Y |
| Types of cultural resources: | |
| I. Designated site | N.A. |
| II. Landscape and landscape elements | G |
| III. Building and structures | Y+↓ |
| IV. Archaeological sites | Y |
| V. Objects | G |
| Other heritage resources | N.A. |
| **EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY** | **Y** |
| Reasons for the national historic site designation | Y- |
| Messages not related to the reasons for the designation | Y |
| Media effectiveness | G |
| Public understanding | R |
| Scope and complexity of perspectives presented | Y |
| General values of national historic sites | G |
| **MANAGEMENT PRACTICES SUMMARY** | **G-** |
| Inventories and assessment of cultural resources | Y |
| Compliance with cultural resource management practices and principles | G- |
| Archives and records | G |
| Maintenance programs | Y |
| Followup and corrective measures | G- |

Legend:

**G: Green:** Good and effective, with no current deficiencies. Green indicates there is no threat to the site's commemorative integrity.

**Y: Yellow:** Fair, with mild to moderate deficiencies. Improvements are required.

**R: Red:** Poor and ineffective, with significant deficiencies or absence of defining characteristics.

**N.A.:** Not applicable.

**+ or -:** The current condition of the site is at the upper or lower limit of the colour rating.

**↑ or ↓:** Indicates a trend toward improvement (↑) or deterioration (↓).

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