



# SIR WILFRID LAURIER

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## *Management Plan*



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# **SIR WILFRID LAURIER**

**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 a 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 Sir Wilfrid Laurier 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 Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "John Baird".

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



**Sir Wilfrid Laurier  
National Historic Site of Canada**

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**RECOMMENDED BY:**



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



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





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# 1. Introduction

Canada's extended family of national historic sites incarnates and reveals multiple facets of our nation's history, character, identity, and fabric. These sites are a fascinating window onto the way in which the past has left its mark on the Canadian landscape, and are part of the history and heritage of all Canadians.

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 of Environment 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 Sir Wilfrid Laurier 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 September 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

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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

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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 Parks Canada mandate 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 Sir Wilfrid Laurier 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**

Sir Wilfrid Laurier 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

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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 Sir Wilfrid Laurier, 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.



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## 2. Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site

Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site of Canada was designated a national historic site in 1938. The justification for its designation is as follows:

**The site, as the birthplace of sir Wilfrid Laurier, commemorates the life and work of this prime minister of Canada.**

*Wilfrid Laurier (1841–1919) was born in Saint-Lin, a modest village north of Montreal. His family and his social environment sparked an early interest in politics. After a brilliant classical education, Laurier enrolled at McGill University, where he completed his degree in law in 1864. Called to the bar the same year, he went on to practice as a lawyer for several years and also worked as a journalist. Politics was Laurier's passion, and in 1871 at the age of 30, he made his political debut as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Quebec. But starting in 1874, it was on the federal stage that Laurier truly came into his own. His ardent espousal of a moderate brand of liberalism won him the position of Minister of Revenue and Interior in the Cabinet of Alexander Mackenzie in 1877. It was a short-lived moment of glory, however: his party was defeated in general elections held barely a year later.*

*In 1885, the Riel affair rekindled his flame. The career he had launched some 15 years earlier took a new turn when, in 1887, he became Edward Blake's successor as leader of the Liberal Party. He thus embarked on another stretch of his long road to power. After defeating the Conservatives in the 1896 elections, Wilfrid Laurier was to hold power for the next 15 years. Upon coming to power,*



**Portrait of Laurier**  
Library and Archives Canada

*Laurier manifested an optimism supported by the events of his time: the Western world was then enjoying a return to prosperity. A resolutely forward-looking man, the “Father of Modern Canada” pinned hopes for his young nation on the development of Western Canada. To make good on his convictions,*

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*Wilfrid Laurier opened wide the country's gates to immigration, encouraged construction of a second transcontinental railway system, and stimulated colonization of these wide new lands. The "Western Boom" not only stimulated the Canadian economy, it further cemented the Confederation thanks to the creation of two new provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan, in 1905.*

*Immediately upon taking office in 1896, he was confronted with the particularly sensitive issue of school organization in Manitoba, where the provincial government had denied the rights of the French-speaking minority. Laurier proposed a halfway solution that only partially assuaged francophone and Anglophone groups. Laurier also ventured a compromise solution to the issues surrounding the 1899 Boer War.<sup>1</sup>*

*Wilfrid Laurier's penchant for compromise allowed him to remain in power for 15 years, earning him the nickname of the "Great Conciliator". But in 1911, this talent proved inadequate to the task of winning elections. The country was deeply divided over two issues, the treaty of reciprocity (free trade) with the United States and the creation of the Royal Canadian Navy. It was the end of a long reign at the head of the Canadian government. Laurier would, however, remain opposition leader until his death on February 17, 1919. He was laid to rest in Ottawa on February 22, with all the honours due to the great government leaders.*

Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site is located in the heart of the village of Saint-Lin-Laurentides in the Lanaudière region of

Quebec, about 60 km north of Montreal. It is dedicated to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the first francophone to become prime minister of Canada. An interpretation centre recalls his life, his political career, and the context of the times. A small house built in 1871 on a lot that belonged to his father allows visitors to learn more about his birthplace. The modest home, with its collection of over 600 pieces of period furniture and other objects, reproduces the interior of a late 19th/early 20th-century country home. With its vegetable garden, flowerbeds, shrubs, and shade trees, the yard serves as a rest and activity area. A 15 person tent is also available for school group activities. Near the interpretation centre is a parking lot with space for about ten vehicles. Several trees embellish the grounds of the centre.

The 1,133 m<sup>2</sup> commemorative site, or designated place, is made up of lots 1061 and 1062, where the house from 1871 is found. The site administered by Parks Canada, which totals .24 hectares, also includes lots 1063 and 1064, where the interpretation centre and parking lot are located. A map shows the designated place and the site administered by Parks Canada, as well as the buildings and other facilities on the property.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier is also commemorated at two other national historic sites. One of them, Laurier House National Historic Site in Ottawa, is also administered by Parks Canada. The other, the Laurier Museum in Victoriaville, is run by Société du Musée Laurier. The themes commemorated at these two sites differ from the commemorative intent at Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic

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1. This conflict pitted Great Britain against two small colonies of Dutch descendants in South Africa. Whereas the English Canadian imperialists made it a point of honor to defend the "mother country," French Canadian nationalists saw no reason to take part in a conflict that posed no threat to the Dominion. Laurier attempted to please everyone. He agreed to send 1,000 volunteers to South Africa on the condition that the costs of their participation be defrayed by the British army upon their arrival in Africa.

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Site in Saint-Lin-Laurentides, the only one of the three commemorating Laurier at his birthplace. Laurier House in Ottawa derives its historical significance from the fact that it served as the residence of two of Canada's prime ministers, sir Wilfrid Laurier and William Lyon Mackenzie King. As for the Laurier Museum in Victoriaville, its historical significance derives from its close association with Laurier. The museum showcases his family and private life, as well as his legal career and early political involvement. During the public consultation in September 2006, several of those in attendance asked that an explanation of the three Laurier commemoration sites be included in guides' presentations.



LIEU HISTORIQUE NATIONAL DU CANADA DE  
**Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier**

Contexte régional

**Sir Wilfrid Laurier**

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

**Regional Context**



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

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





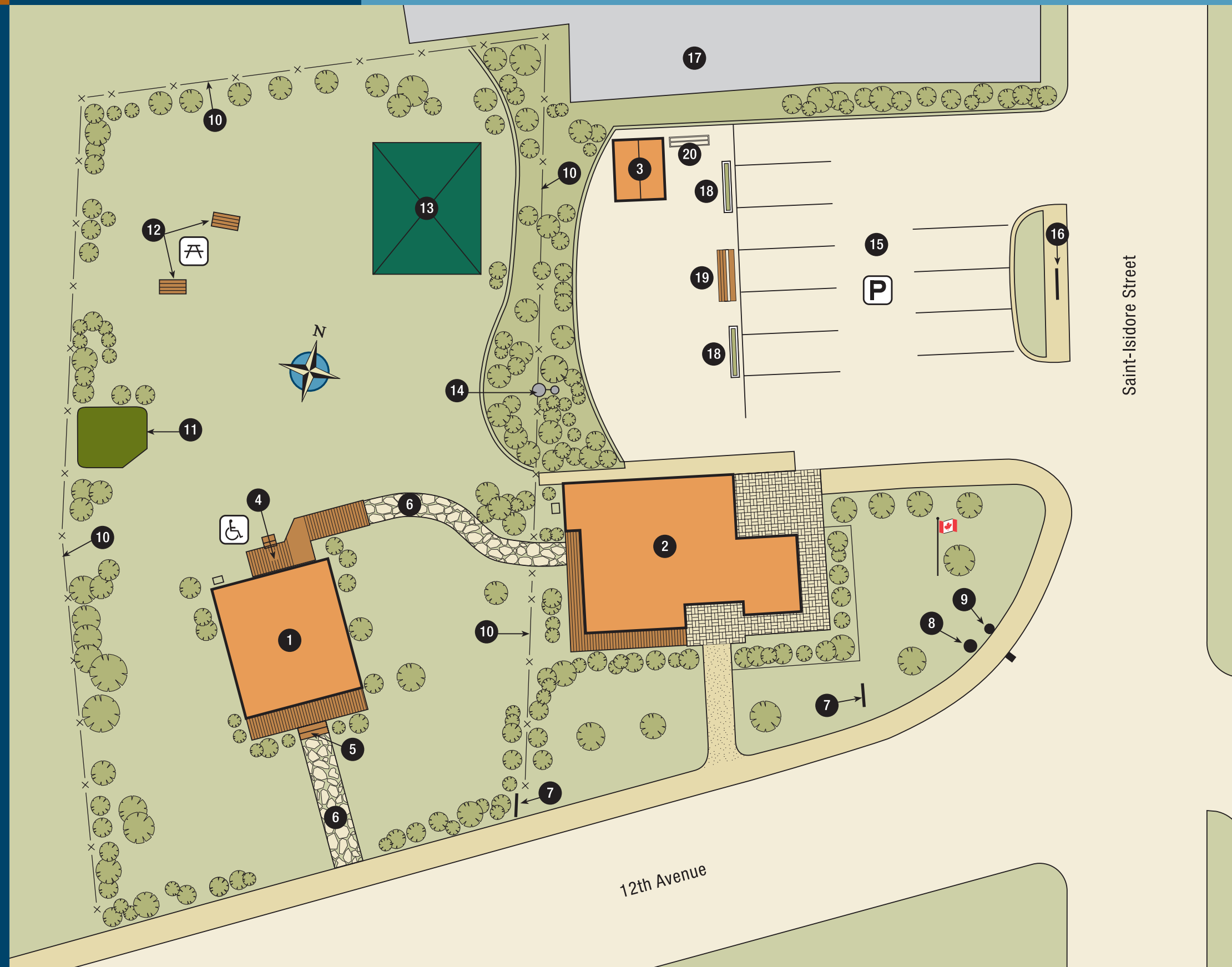
# Sir Wilfrid Laurier

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Location







**LEGEND**

- 1 Robinette House (Laurier)
- 2 Visitor Reception Center and Administration
- 3 Shed
- 4 Stairs and Entrance for Persons with Disabilities
- 5 Stairs
- 6 Trail
- 7 Identification Sign
- 8 Fire Hydrant
- 9 Traffic Light
- 10 Fence
- 11 Garden
- 12 Picnic Tables
- 13 Big Top
- 14 Streetlight
- 15 Parking
- 16 Identification Sign
- 17 Adjacent Building
- 18 Flower Container
- 19 Bench
- 20 Bicycle Rack



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### 3. A Fundamental Concept: Commemorative Integrity

The notion of commemorative integrity is a concept used by Parks Canada to describe, plan, and monitor the condition and integrity of national historic sites. A national historic site is said to possess commemorative integrity when :

- The resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat.
- The reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public.
- The site heritage values are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.<sup>2</sup>

A commemorative integrity statement was drawn up for Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site based on the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The statement, which was approved in 2002, determined the scope of the designated site, established the reasons for its designation, described the cultural resources found at the site, attributed them a value, and identified the commemoration messages to be communicated to the public. This site was also subject to a commemorative integrity evaluation in April 2006. 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 6 of this plan. The main weaknesses identified by the evaluation have to do with the effectiveness of communicating messages of national historic significance.

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2. Parks Canada, *Guide to the Preparation of Commemorative Integrity Statements*, 2002.





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## 4. Analysis of the Situation



**Robinette House**  
Parks Canada / J. Audet

### 4.1 Background

In December 1937, an order in council authorized the Department of Mines and Resources (then the department overseeing Canada's national parks) to acquire Wilfrid Laurier's birthplace (lot 1061) in Saint-Lin with a view to establishing a national historic park. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada believed the house to be the former prime minister's birthplace, an assumption since disproved. Nonetheless, the Robinette house, as it is known, stands on land once owned by Laurier's father. It replaced a house in which Laurier himself may have been born, and where he spent part of his childhood. This

land and the presumed remains of the Laurier house are thus closely associated with sir Wilfrid Laurier.

At its May 19, 1938 meeting, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada declared sir Wilfrid Laurier's birthplace to be of national historic significance. In April 1939, the Department acquired the adjacent lot to the east (lot 1062), demolished the outbuildings, moved the house to the centre of lots 1061 and 1062, and landscaped the surrounding grounds. The newly expanded site was equivalent to the original property owned by Laurier's father. In 1940, the house was renovated inside and out according to a concept

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developed by ethnologist Marius Barbeau. Prime Minister Mackenzie King officially opened the new park on November 20, 1941, the 100th anniversary of Laurier's birth. In 1969, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, which was responsible for national historic sites at the time, decided to expand the site, purchasing two additional lots on the east side of the property (lots 1063 and 1064) further to recommendations made by landscape architect Frederick G. Todd in 1938. In 1971, the Department built a small interpretation centre on one of the lots and put in a parking lot. A modest exhibit on Laurier's life and career was created at the centre. In 1972, the house was renovated and refurnished in late 19th/early 20th-century country style. On July 28, 1977, an order was issued creating Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Park.

## **4.2 Cultural resources of national historic significance**

At Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site, the following cultural resources have been recognized as being directly linked to its designation as a national historic site (level 1 resources).

### **4.2.1 Designated place**

From 1837 to 1867, this property (lots 1061 and 1062) belonged to Wilfrid Laurier's father, Carolus Laurier. In all likelihood, Wilfrid Laurier was born in the house that stood on the property at the time, and that served as the family's main residence.

The designated place is associated with sir Wilfrid Laurier, the former prime minister of Canada. He was born in Saint-Lin and it was there that he spent his childhood, underwent his early influences, and developed the traits that were to mark his character.

### **4.2.2 Presumed archaeological remains**

Lots 1061 and 1062 are presumed to harbour the remains of Carolus Laurier's two-unit home (where Wilfrid Laurier was probably born) and the related outbuildings (shed, stable, and a few other small structures). These presumed remains bear witness to the environment in which Wilfrid Laurier lived as a child in Saint-Lin and to which he returned on visits to his family during his years as a student in L'Assomption and later in Montreal.

The exact nature, scope, location, and condition of these vestiges are currently unknown, as no archaeological work has been carried out to date. An assessment remains to be performed. The presentation of the remains of the Laurier house and its outbuildings would enhance the authenticity and heritage value of the site.

### **4.2.3 Ethnological collection**

Three artefacts related to sir Wilfrid Laurier are currently preserved in storage in Quebec City: a letter from the former prime minister to his nephew Charles, a gold pommel cane, and an arrowhead sash presented by Laurier as a gift to his political organizer W. Rivet in 1900. Although few in number, these objects reflect Laurier's political activities, as well as his relations with his family. They are in good condition.

The Parks Canada ethnological collection on sir Wilfrid Laurier also includes a variety of objects conserved and displayed at Laurier House National Historic Site in Ottawa. These objects used by Laurier in the course of his official duties include furniture, a red Oxford University gown dating from 1897, a ceremonial costume, and a number of personal effects. The site also houses the souvenir photo album given to then prime minister

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William Lyon Mackenzie King upon the official opening of the Saint-Lin historic site on November 20, 1941. These objects testify to Wilfrid Laurier's public life, his official duties as prime minister of Canada, the honours conferred upon him, and the countless activities he participated in his official capacity. Although closely linked with Laurier, the resources at Laurier House National Historic Site in Ottawa are used to present the site and are conserved at the site.

The Laurier Museum in Victoriaville and the National Archives of Canada also house objects related to sir Wilfrid Laurier. The Laurier Museum collection includes furniture, accessories, and other objects that

belonged to Laurier and his wife, as well as furnishings from Laurier's law office. As for the National Archives, they are home to an imposing collection covering Laurier's political career. These holdings include correspondence, memoirs, notes, printed documents, speeches, personal and family papers, and documents from Laurier's secretary.

The Saint-Lin-Laurentides site unfortunately has few ethnological objects related to Laurier's career and political life. The presence of Level 1 objects and archival documents in exhibits at the site would enhance its authenticity and help illustrate Laurier's long career.



**Red gown and ceremonial costume in the Laurier Room at Laurier House National Historic Site in Ottawa**  
Library and Archives Canada



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### 4.3 Other cultural resources

This category includes resources, values, and messages that are not recognized as nationally significant, but are nonetheless of historical importance for the site (level 2 resources). These resources include the following:

- The landscaping and physical attributes of the property, which are associated with landscape architect Frederick G. Todd
- The Robinette house, a.k.a. the “Laurier” house
- Certain presumed archaeological remains
- The ethnological collection
- Other Laurier commemorations
- The regional and national networks
- Certain complementary messages to be communicated to the public

The landscaping of the Parks Canada property attest to the efforts begun in 1937 to commemorate and present the house, which at that time was presumed to be sir Wilfrid Laurier’s birthplace. The present-day Parks Canada site corresponds in part to the plans drawn up by landscape architect Frederick G. Todd in 1938.

The Robinette—or “Laurier”— house was built in 1870–1871 on land where the Laurier family had its main residence at the time of Wilfrid’s birth. This house replaced the Laurier family home, which is thought to have been either demolished or moved shortly before 1870 when André Robinette acquired the land. In 1939, the Robinette house was moved from the western edge of the property to the centre of lots 1061 and 1062.

The house is a particularly interesting example of mid-19th century Quebec vernacular architecture. It is a good illustration of traditional housing styles and the way of life in Saint-Lin in Laurier’s day. The Robinette House was recognized by the Federal Heritage Building Review Office in 1998. The house is in good condition.

Archaeological vestiges of other structures that once stood on lots 1061 and 1062 are also presumed to exist on the property. They include the former site of the Robinette house and its outbuildings prior to the 1939 move, the site of another house and its outbuildings, and a boutique and storehouse. These vestiges attest to domestic, craft, and commercial activity in the heart of Saint-Lin in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries. The exact nature, scope, location, and condition of these vestiges are currently unknown, as no archaeological work has been carried out to date.

Close to 600 ethnological objects are on display in the various rooms of the Robinette house. Of these, 22 date from when the house was first furnished by Marius Barbeau in 1940. The interior was refurnished in 1972. The furnishings and accessories on display in the house evoke country life and domestic activity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Objects in the ethnological collection are in good condition, but the atmosphere is not controlled, and the high levels of relative humidity tend to rust iron objects and cause wallpaper to peel. However, the site does have a maintenance plan for its ethnological collection.

An additional 80-odd objects from the ethnological collection are stored at the Quebec City service centre. They include a commemorative plaque, a bronze bust of Laurier,



**Interior of the Robinette house**  
Parks Canada

a number of photos and original drawings by Frederick G. Todd, and press clippings on the official opening of the house in 1941. These commemorative and archival materials attest to the government's early initiatives to commemorate the life and work of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his birthplace. They are in good condition.

In addition to Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada has commemorated Laurier's residence in Ottawa, where he lived from 1897 to 1919 (Laurier House), as well as his Victoriaville home, where he lived from 1876 to 1896 (Laurier Museum). The Canadian government also commemorates his tomb in Ottawa's Notre-Dame cemetery. As a public figure, Laurier has also been commemorated at various locations by other authorities through plaques, statues, monuments, and place names.

## **4.4 Heritage presentation and public education**

Messages are communicated through the heritage experience made available to visitors. Guides currently play a central role in communicating site themes during visits to the interpretation centre, the house, and the grounds. The small exhibition at the centre, the historic house, the objects in the ethnological collection, and the vegetable garden are the main interpretation tools used by the guides when touring the site with visitors.

Created in 1972, the modest interpretation centre exhibition has undergone only a few minor changes over the years. It was developed before the themes and objectives for the site had even been defined. In other words, current exhibition content does not accurately reflect the reasons for the site's designation or the contextual messages of the commemorative integrity statement. Now over 35 years old, the exhibition barely skims the surface. To do justice to the subject matter, it needs to be replaced. However, the 34 m<sup>2</sup> of space currently available in the exhibition room is a major constraint for conveying the diverse and abundant contextual messages.

Visitors taking a guided tour of the historic house learn about family life in the local countryside in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Guides explain the routines and seasonal rhythms, using the furniture and everyday objects on display. The interior of the house has not changed in 30 years. It is the focal point of

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the visit, and currently showcases the kind of environment in which Laurier grew up. It conveys none of the contextual messages on his career or his life in politics. Yet these are the core themes to be communicated to the public.

Existing historical sources are underused in the heritage presentation activities currently available. There is no historical overview to transmit or provide context for the messages identified in the commemorative integrity statement.

Laurier is commemorated at three national historic sites, two of which are administered by Parks Canada. The reasons for the sites' designations vary. The two other sites commemorating Laurier have numerous cultural resources available to help explain these reasons, whereas the level 1 cultural resources available at Saint-Lin-Laurentides are virtually non-existent.



**Young visitors at the site**  
Parks Canada / N. Rajotte

A website for the site was created in April 1999. It provides website visitors with information on Laurier based on the knowledge available at the time, as well as practical visitor information. It neither reflects current trends in Internet development nor meets the needs of the clientele.

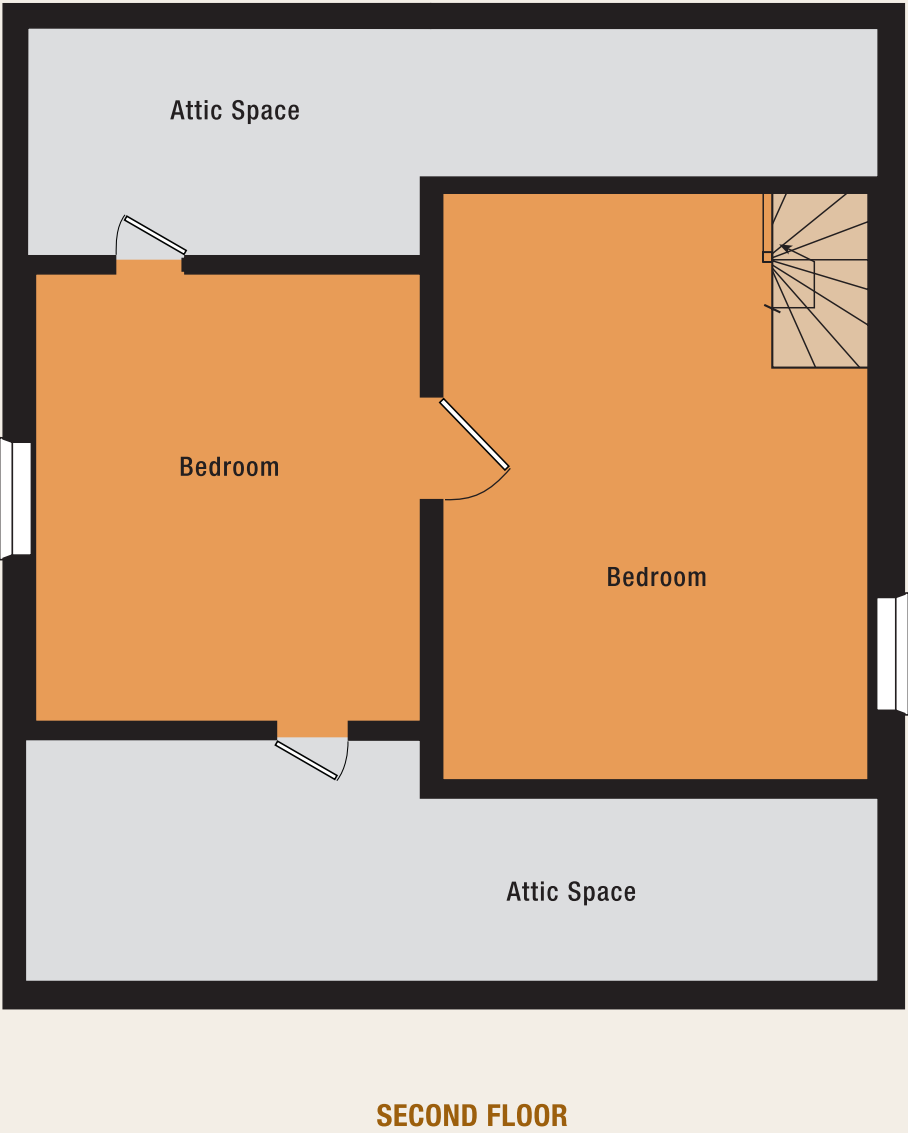
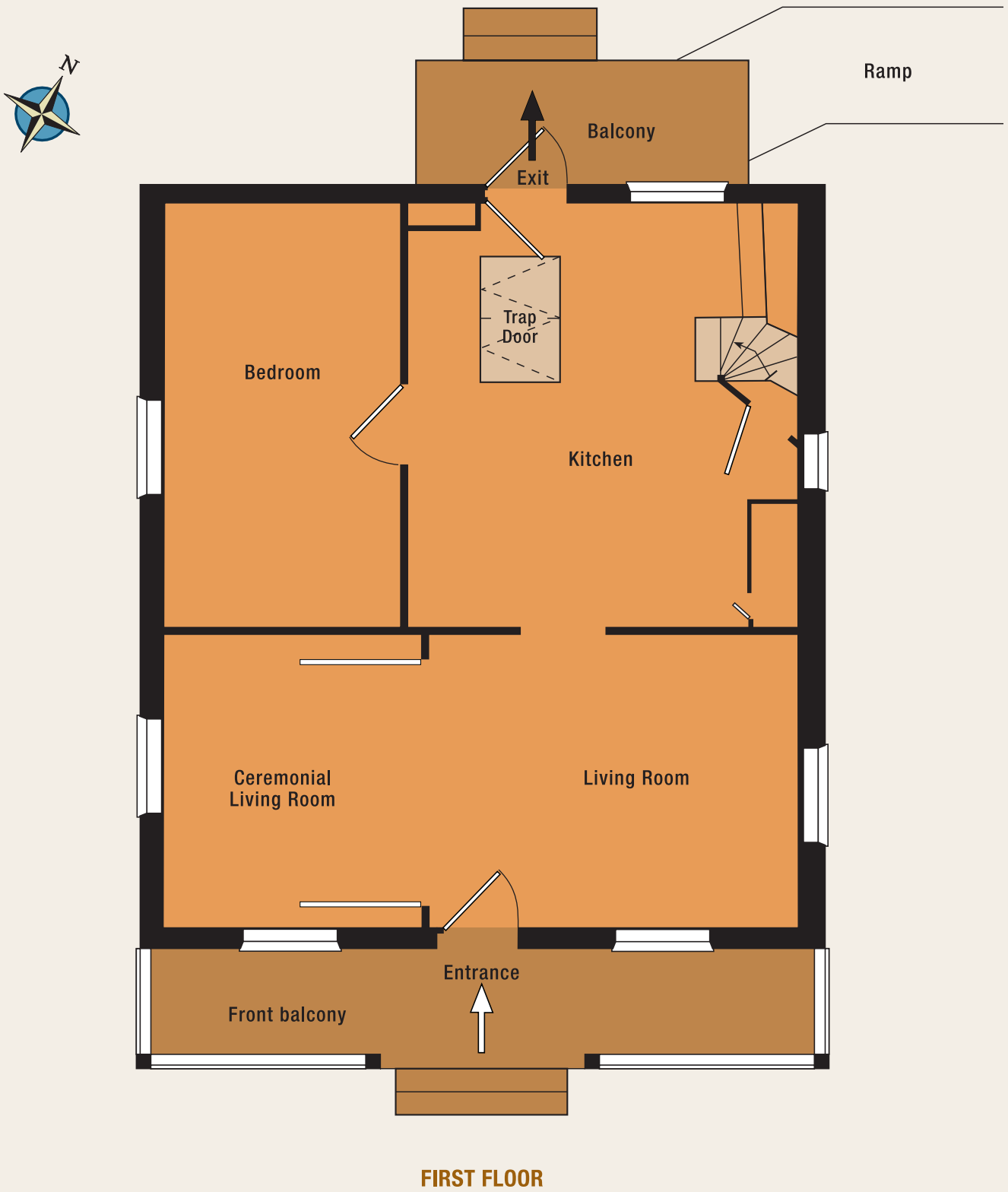
At present, most of the contextual messages identified for the site are not communicated to the public. The heritage presentation needs to be completely revamped, taking into account what is offered at the two other Laurier historic sites.

## **4.5 Visitor services**

At Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site, admission is charged in accordance with the type of visitor, all services are available in both official languages, and the buildings meet all universal access standards.

Visitor reception and interpretation services are provided by guides. Visitors are greeted at the entrance to the interpretation centre, then directed to the exhibition, which they can visit on their own or with a guide, depending on staff availability. Guides then take visitors on a tour of the historic house, adapting the interpretation activity to their needs. On summer weekends in July and August, the house also serves as a backdrop for staff in historic costume depicting the kind of people that once shared the neighbourhood with the Laurier family.













Young visitors at the site  
Parks Canada / N. Rajotte

Two fun teaching activities have been developed especially for elementary school students. They appeal to children's natural curiosity about history to present a glimpse of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's life and the times in which he lived. Other activities are also available for groups of adults and older students.

Special activities at the National Historic Site include *Canada Day* celebrations, *Reapers and Rigadoons*, the *Lanaudière Heritage*

*Festival*, and the *Village Festival*. The special activities program<sup>3</sup> changes over time depending on the resources available, expressions of interest, and the opportunities that arise. Cooperation with the local community and the broader region is crucial to bolstering the range of activities offered. During the public consultation, participants suggested creating activities on the history of Saint-Lin-Laurentides to better anchor the historic site in the community. Another suggestion was to create links between the site and other historic buildings in the municipality. One participant also noted the need for more historical research to clearly establish these links.

The interpretation centre is a simple, one-storey contemporary structure measuring around 148 m<sup>2</sup>. It includes the visitor reception desk, a small exhibition hall of only 34 m<sup>2</sup>, a staff area, and washroom facilities. The visitor reception and interpretation facilities date from the early 1970s and are more than a little out-of-date with respect to current standards and trends. Although the surrounding urban environment has been significantly altered, the architecture and features of the centre do not fit there, nor do they match the neighbouring historic house. In addition, the centre tends to hide the house from view.

The grounds of the property are planted with trees, shrubs, flowers, and a vegetable garden and are used for school group and special activities. A large tent in the back of the property is also available on these occasions.

The visitor capacity of the facilities is very limited. There is space for a maximum of five people at the visitor reception desk,

3. Special activities help bring the site to life, diversify visitor profiles, ensure visibility, and contribute to community cultural life.

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and the exhibition room holds a maximum of 15. As for the house, no more than 15 people at a time can visit, accompanied by a guide, although the grounds and tent partially compensate for the limited indoor space. The parking lot, which has a capacity of around ten vehicles, is totally inadequate for buses.

## 4.6 Site visitation and use

Visitors to the national historic site can be divided into three categories: school groups, other organized groups, and individual visitors.

The site officially opened its doors to the public in 1941. With its period furnishings and interest sparked by the commemoration of sir Wilfrid Laurier's life and work, it enjoyed considerable popularity. From the 1970s through to the late 1980s, the National

Historic Site was also reputed for the women who worked on site in period costume making crafts and domestic products using techniques from mid-19th and early 20th century rural Quebec.

In 1975, the historic site, which at that time was open all year round, welcomed 18,911 visitors. In 1981, attendance was 9,970, and in 1990, 8,230. That same year, the municipality's tourist information booth was moved from the National Historic Site parking lot to another part of town. Since the early 1990s, the site has been open to the public just under four months a year. In 1995, it attracted 3,642 visitors. By 2005, the number was 2,741.<sup>4</sup> Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site is open Monday to Friday from early May to mid-June, and every day from mid-June to early September. Since the site's revenue-generating capability is closely tied to the number of paid admissions and the price of entry, its potential in this regard is very limited at present.



**Outdoor activity on the grounds**  
Parks Canada / N. Rajotte

The decline in attendance is largely due to the following factors: the shortened season, budget cuts that have limited operating resources, the abandonment of craft and household activities, the transfer of the tourist information booth, the introduction of admission fees in 1995, the abandonment of outdoor concerts, increased competition from new regional tourist attractions, the limited space available for indoor activities, and the site's location off main tourist circuits. The outdated interpretation centre exhibition

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4. Of these 2,741 visitors, 2,031 were individuals, 307 were from school groups, and 403 were from other organized groups. Fully 61% of them paid admission and visited the interpretation centre and the house. The others participated in outdoor activities only.

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and the unchanging decor of the house have also undermined the site's power of attraction, especially among organized groups and local and regional clienteles who have visited before. And although the site works hard with the limited means available to promote dialogue and collaboration with other cultural and tourist sites in the area, it has to compete with attractions in the Greater Montreal and Lanaudière regions.

The site is located at the junction of two provincial highways. Heavy traffic generates extensive noise pollution that interferes with the visitor experience.

In 2001, a visitor survey was carried out among individual and group visitors aged 16 and over. The survey was used to draw up a visitor profile complete with travel and visit information.

The visitor survey revealed the following:

- A total of 28% of visitors were from the local/regional community,<sup>5</sup> 33% from Montreal/Laval, 26% from elsewhere in Quebec, 9% from Ontario, 3% from the rest of Canada, and 1% from abroad.
- Francophones accounted for 90% of visitors, and Anglophones 10%.
- Eighty-nine percent of those surveyed said it was their first visit to the site.
- The average size of groups of individual visitors was 3.8 people.
- Visits averaged 1 hour and 18 minutes in length.

Travel information:

- Twenty-three percent of visitors made the trip specially to visit the national historic site. For 40%, it was planned along with other activities. For 37%, the visit was unplanned.

Information about the visit:

- People visiting the site relied, in order, on the following information sources to plan their visit: brochures (including the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site brochure) and tourist guides (including the Lanaudière guide), road signs, recommendations from family or friends, chance, group tours, tourist information offices, and others.
- While at the site, 90% of visitors attended the activity in the backyard, 93% visited the interpretation centre exhibition, and 97% visited the house. Also, 24% took advantage of special outdoor activities, and 49% watched activities in costume. Participation rates for these latter activities were lower because they were one-time or weekend events.
- Satisfaction ratings for interpretation services: visitors gave high marks to the guided tour, the historic house, and activities with guides in period costume. However, the interpretation centre exhibition and the activity in the backyard were less appreciated.
- Satisfaction ratings for staff: visitors greatly appreciated the courtesy and professionalism of employees, as well as the welcome.

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5. The local community and region includes people living within a 50 km radius of the national historic site.

- As for the visit as a whole, visitors appreciated service in the official languages, the value of the experience, the visit in general, and the learning opportunities it provided. They were less satisfied with the recreational experience.
- Some visitors noted that the site was poorly publicized and suggested that more effort should be put into promotion and marketing.

## 4.7 Regional tourism context and positioning of the site

The Lanaudière tourist region is in central Québec, between the St. Lawrence River and the Laurentians. It encompasses six regional county municipalities, including Montcalm, where the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site is located. The site is near a major pool of potential tourists: Montreal, its suburbs, Laval, and the towns to the north.

Major cultural attractions in Lanaudière include the 19th century pre-industrial complex at Île des Moulins in Terrebonne, Oasis du Vieux Palais de justice in L'Assomption—the oldest circuit court in Quebec—Maison Antoine-Lacombe in Saint-Charles-Borromée, the Cuthbert chapel in Berthierville, and Musée d'art de Joliette.

Montcalm regional county municipality where the historic site is located is characterized by farming, fruit and vegetable growing, and horticulture. It has fewer tourist attractions than the rest of Lanaudière and

limited tourist infrastructures, especially for accommodation. Farm tourism, which shows good potential, also remains to be developed.

Various regional stakeholders are actively working to promote regional recreation and tourism products. The regional tourist association in Lanaudière coordinates promotion, development, and structuring of tourist activity. Joliette's convention and tourism bureau also encourages tourism by contributing to the development of tourism products and markets. Conseil de la culture de Lanaudière brings together organizations active in culture and the arts. The *Conférence régionale des élus(es) de Lanaudière* is active in tourism planning in the region. The region's recreation and tourism stakeholders are determined to make tourism a driving force for regional development. Many of them met to put together an action plan on tourism in the Lanaudière region.<sup>6</sup>

Partnerships have been developed with the region's tourism stakeholder organizations and their members to include Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site on regional tourist circuits promoted by these organizations. These circuits provide an opportunity to discover different facets of the region's history and culture. The National Historic Site participates in tour packages with other regional attractions.

The National Historic Site enhances the region's tourism appeal. It is a commemorative site where visitors can discover and learn about a political figure born in the region. In addition, the historic property contributes to the quality of life in the municipality with

6. Tourism action plan unanimously adopted by the Board of Directors of Tourisme Lanaudière, December 7, 2004.



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its attractively landscaped grounds and the special cultural activities held there during the summer season. It also helps attract visitors to the region. Although it is off major highways, it is part of a regional circuit well served by secondary routes.

In short, the National Historic Site contributes to the regional tourism industry through the services it provides as well as through joint promotion initiatives, participation in tour packages, and its role in organizing social and cultural activities.

In early 2002, various socioeconomic stakeholders from the municipality and the region formed a roundtable with a view to revitalizing a section of the Saint-Lin-Laurentides town centre and showcasing the town's heritage. The area in question, a block bounded by four streets, encompassed the Parks Canada site and other private land. The ambitious plan was recently revamped to focus on a "Main Street"-style revitalization. In a brief presented at public consultations, the town of Saint-Lin-Laurentides, Montcalm regional county municipality, and the Montcalm local development centre recommended forming a committee made up of various local stakeholders to draw up a comprehensive plan extending beyond the limits of the historic site. Parks Canada is invited to join the committee. The revitalization project could allow Parks Canada to assess development opportunities, for the Agency or a partner to pursue for the portion of the National Historic Site property that is not designated as being of national historic significance.

## 4.8 Administration and operations

The Government of Canada has committed to contributing to sustainable development<sup>7</sup> by guarding against pollution and protecting the environment in the performance of its duties. The *Sustainable Development in Government Operations* initiative supports this commitment by:

- integrating sustainable development principles in all federal government operations;
- coordinating and reporting on the federal government's efforts to "green" its operations; and
- sharing knowledge on sustainable development tools.

Parks Canada is one of the agencies and departments bound by the *Sustainable Development in Government Operations* initiative, and is required to draw up a sustainable development strategy.<sup>8</sup> These strategies are meant to ensure that government departments and organizations systematically take environmental, economic, and social concerns into account in their decision-making processes. They are also intended to encourage the revamping of policies, programs, and operations to foster sustainable development. For this reason, the federal government requires each department and agency to meet or exceed environmental standards, adopt exemplary environmental practices, and implement

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7. Sustainable development: Development that meets current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs.

8. [www.greeninggovernment.gc.ca](http://www.greeninggovernment.gc.ca)

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an environmental management system that allows it to green its operations. The Parks Canada Agency must report to Parliament on its efforts to meet its environmental responsibilities.

Parks Canada is an acknowledged leader in natural and cultural resource management. Stakeholders and the public expect the Agency to run its operations and facilities in such a way that none of these management values are compromised. As a result,

the Agency has a special responsibility for how it manages its park and historic site facilities and its commercial operations.

The Western Quebec Field Unit has an environmental management system that includes certain measures applicable at Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site. But given the size of the site and its facilities, it has few environmental or sustainable development concerns.

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## 5. Looking to the Future



**Figures in costume in the Robinette house**  
Parks Canada / N. Rajotte

This section sets forth Parks Canada's 15-year vision for Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site. Drawing on the statutes and policies in effect at Parks Canada and discussions during public consultations, this vision aims to ensure the commemo-

rative integrity of the site, provide a memorable experience to visitors, and promote public awareness through educational services and outreach. The management goals and measures proposed herein are designed to help make this vision a reality.



**Sir Wilfrid Laurier**  
Library and Archives Canada

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**Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site:**

- Will remain a protected site with well-preserved cultural resources that, as the birth-place of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, eloquently testifies to the life and work of Canada's first francophone prime minister.
- Will be viewed as a place of commemoration, discovery, and learning that highlights the life and work of the former Canadian prime minister in the environment that forged his personality and guided his political action and thought.
- Will be a welcoming place that meets high quality standards for visitor service. Local and regional Involvement will enhance the activities and services available at the site.
- Will remain attentive to visitor needs and expectations in order to provide the type of experiences they seek as well as diversity to attract new clientele.
- Will receive a number of visitors commensurate with its capacity and enjoy an enviable reputation among exterior clientele. In the Lanaudière region, it will be recognized as a leader in cultural heritage protection and promotion, and as an important contributor to the regional tourism industry.
- Will have implemented a comprehensive strategy that follows federal guidelines for sustainable development, particularly in the area of environmental management. Its environmental leadership, which helps foster a healthy environment for people and biophysical and cultural resources, will be a positive force in the community.

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## 6. Management Objectives and Measures for Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site

Parks Canada will draw on the management objectives and measures described herein to implement its vision for Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site, ensure its commemorative integrity, and provide a quality visitor experience. To do so, it will rely on its own efforts and on cooperation and partnerships.

### 6.1 Protection of cultural resources

Protecting cultural resources is central to the Parks Canada mandate. Site protection is crucial to commemoration. Without proper protection, cultural resources cannot withstand the ravages of time, and visitors and the public at large will be unable to access them for their enjoyment and appreciation. Cultural resource management is applicable to the entire site, not only to individual cultural resources. The management objectives and measures listed below apply to Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site as a whole.

#### 6.1.1 Objectives :

- Respect the cultural resources and the values they represent in all work undertaken at the site.
- Make decisions based on appropriate and reliable information in keeping with *Cultural Resources Management Policy* principles and practices.
- Protect cultural resources and the values associated with them from deterioration caused by use or natural processes such as erosion and degradation.
- Preserve and protect physical features originally suggested by landscape architect Frederick G. Todd.
- Preserve and protect significant indoor and outdoor features of the Robinette house.
- Preserve and protect the objects from the Parks Canada ethnological collection using appropriate conservation methods.

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### 6.1.2 Management measures

- Conduct historical research related to archaeological work and the presentation of messages of national historical significance.
- Carry out archaeological work (inventory, assessment, localized digs, and lifestyle analysis based on material culture), particularly on remains dating from the period when the land was occupied by Carolus Laurier and his family (house and outbuildings).
- Ensure archaeological work and resource protection are incorporated into any plans for construction or engineering work at the site.
- Implement a system to monitor the remains of archaeological cultural resources.
- Promote municipal awareness of the need to protect the physical environment around the site against encroachment by incompatible businesses or other establishments.
- Perform regular upkeep on the Robinette house to maintain its significant features in good condition.

## 6.2 Heritage presentation and public education

Parks Canada is responsible for effectively communicating to the public the reasons why Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site

is of national historical significance. Onsite presentation activities and outreach programs are one means of doing so.

### 6.2.1 Objectives:

- Communicate to the public how the site is associated with Sir Wilfrid Laurier.
- Effectively communicate messages of national historic significance to the public by:
  - making optimum use of the cultural resources that symbolize and characterize the site's national significance and by fostering an understanding of the link between these resources, the site's history, and its national significance;
  - presenting these messages using reliable, well-documented information;
  - presenting them to visitors in an easy-to-understand way.

### 6.2.2 Management measures

- Complete the historical and archaeological research program by pursuing certain aspects in greater depth:
  - produce a summary of the historical knowledge of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's life and work;
  - review the historical literature on Sir Wilfrid Laurier's life and work;
  - draft a summary report on the historical evolution of the property and its structures (houses, outbuildings, boutique, storehouse, etc.).

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- Take steps to enrich the collection of ethnological objects illustrating Laurier's life and political career and use them to present the site:
    - recover the album of photos taken when Mackenzie King officially opened the Robinette house in 1941;
    - identify archival documents from various collections, including National Archives of Canada holdings that could be reproduced or borrowed for exhibit.
  - Develop a visitor experience concept (reception and interpretation) built around the commemorative integrity statement, the latest findings from historical, ethnological, and archaeological research, available space, available financial resources, and directions set out in the management plan.
  - Document, develop, and install a new exhibition on the life and work of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in keeping with the new visitor experience concept.
  - Draw upon the results of the archaeological research program to present, if possible, the vestiges of the house where Laurier lived as a child, along with the related outbuildings.
  - Inform visitors about the other buildings (level 2) that once stood on the Laurier property and how they were used, while respecting the visit concept framework.
  - Landscape the grounds and facilities to reflect the Laurier era and the reasons for which the site was designated, while also meeting operational requirements.
  - Produce a brochure and/or other materials explaining the reasons for the site's designation and the contextual messages.
  - Explore the possibility of collaborating with the Parks Canada network to publish a work presenting major Canadian political figures.
  - Establish formal ties with the other Laurier commemorative sites with the goal of sharing knowledge and significant objects, and developing a complementary approach to heritage presentation based on each site's respective reasons for designation.
  - Adjust the content of interpretation and other activities in order to better present the reason for the site's designation and the various contextual messages.
  - Ensure that people limiting their visit to the grounds of the site come away with a basic understanding of the reason for the site's designation.
  - Develop an outreach program to promote the site's existence and values and the reason for its designation, notably by updating and revamping the website and creating hyperlinks to the other sites commemorating Laurier and other Canadian prime ministers.
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of communications in terms of visitor understanding, retention, and recognition of key messages. Take appropriate corrective action if required.



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## 6.3 Visitor experience and partnerships

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, the possibility for visitors to learn, discuss, make discoveries, and be entertained, and partnerships. This section deals with points that will help visitors discover and appreciate the site so that they have a pleasant and memorable experience.



**In the vegetable garden**  
Parks Canada / N. Rajotte

### 6.3.1 Objectives

- Offer the various clienteles diversified and compelling visitor experiences that correspond to their specific needs and interests.
- Gain a better understanding of the needs, interests, and expectations of current and potential clienteles.
- Get the local community and region involved to improve the services available at the National Historic Site.
- Make the site a bigger draw by enhancing heritage presentation.
- Take measures that are necessary to increase and optimize attendance at the site while preserving the quality of the visitor experience and its commemorative integrity.
- Maintain attractive landscaping for site users by harmonizing its various natural components.
- Work in cooperation with the regional tourism industry and the national network of Parks Canada sites—especially those commemorating former Canadian prime ministers—to ensure good visibility for the site and boost awareness.
- Position the site as a key regional tourism stakeholder in the areas of heritage protection and education.
- Contribute, as a National Historic Site, to the development of local and regional social and cultural activities and the promotion of the region's cultural heritage.



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### 6.3.2 Management measures

- Update data on potential markets (Strategic and Marketing Action Plan, 1997–2000).
- Revamp available services and maintain visitor interest by working with local collaborators and partners to develop activities that meet diverse needs, expectations, and interests.
- Ensure attendance and guide service use are measured and documented.
- Measure visitor experience and satisfaction and take appropriate corrective action if required.
- Prepare and update public safety and law enforcement plans.
- Form a roundtable to better integrate the site at the regional level, foster partnerships, and encourage a sense of “ownership”.
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy that takes into account the regional marketing plan.

## 6.4 Administration and operations

To reduce the environmental impact of its operations, Parks Canada has adopted a structured and consistent method called an environmental management system.<sup>9</sup> The National Environmental Management Systems Framework targets 14 environmental aspects, such as ozone depleting substances, solid waste management and water conservation.

### 6.4.1 Objective:

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

### 6.4.2 Management measure:

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

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9. The environmental management system is a tool to help organizations and businesses use the principles of environmental stewardship in their decision-making process.



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## 7. Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Management Plan for the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site 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 Sir Wilfrid Laurier Management Plan will have a positive impact on commemorative integrity.



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## 8. Implementation

Over the next five years, Parks Canada will rely on this plan for management guidance at the Sir Wilfrid Laurier 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
Conduct historical research related to archaeological work and the presentation of messages of national historical significance			X	X	
Ensure archaeological work and resource protection are incorporated into any plans for construction or engineering work at the site	X	X	X	X	X
Promote municipal awareness of the need to protect the physical environment around the site against encroachment by incompatible businesses or other establishments	X	X	X	X	X
Perform regular upkeep on the Robinette house to maintain its significant features in good condition	X	X	X	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
Develop a visitor experience concept built around the commemorative integrity statement and the latest findings from research				X	X
Establish formal ties with the other Laurier commemorative sites	X	X	X	X	X
Adjust the content of interpretation and other activities in order to better present the reason for the site's designation and the various contextual messages	X	X			
Ensure that people limiting their visit to the grounds of the site come away with a basic understanding of the reason for the site's designation			X	X	
Develop an outreach program to promote the site's existence and values and the reason for its designation, notably by updating and revamping the website and creating hyperlinks	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluate the effectiveness of communications in terms of visitor understanding, retention, and recognition of key messages	X	X			

VISITOR EXPERIENCE, PARTNERSHIP AND OPERATIONS					
	Year 1 2007-2008	Year 2 2008-2009	Year 3 2009-2010	Year 4 2010-2011	Year 5 2011-2012
Revamp available services and maintain visitor interest by working with local collaborators and partners to develop activities that meet diverse needs, expectations, and interests	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 and take appropriate corrective action if required				X	
Form a roundtable to better integrate the site at the regional level, foster partnerships, and encourage a sense of “ownership”	X	X	X	X	X
Prepare and update public safety and law enforcement plans				X	X
Update and execute the site’s environmental management system	X	X	X	X	X





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# Appendix A

## Studies, research reports, and other reference works

Bélanger Réal, Parks Canada, *Histoire économique et sociale de Saint-Lin, 1805-1883, et l'importance sociale de la famille Laurier*, 1975.

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Parks Canada, *Interprétation Québec, Concept d'animation historique, maison Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier*, June 1976.

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Parks Canada, *Corporate Plan 2005/06–2009/10*, 2005.

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Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, *State of the Parks 1997 Report*, 1998.



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# Appendix B

## Commemorative Integrity Evaluation Summary

Under the *Parks Canada Agency Act*, Parks Canada must ensure the commemorative integrity of the national historic sites and regularly report to Parliament on the state of the protected heritage areas under its stewardship. The commemorative integrity evaluation conducted on Sir Wilfrid Laurier National

Historic Site of Canada is in response to this requirement. The evaluation also provides site management with information about the strengths and weaknesses of the site in terms of its commemorative integrity. The evaluation is based on the site's commemorative integrity statement and Parks Canada's *Cultural Resource Management Policy*. It also complies with the standards set forth in the *Commemorative Integrity Rating Guide*.

A multidisciplinary team conducted the assessment on April 20, 2006.

The overall commemorative integrity rating for the site is five out of ten (GRY), which represents moderate degradation alteration.

The site is subject to two threats that could impact both the site and its resources and cause significant degradation. The two threats—air pollution and noise pollution — have the same source: heavy truck traffic on the highway in front of the site. Trucks cause significant noise and air pollution.

COMPOSITION SCORE	
Total	Condition of commemorative integrity
10	Unchanged
9	Minor change
8	
7	
6	Moderate change
5	
4	
3	Major change
2	
1	Substantial change

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The main strong points identified are as follows:

- The reason for designation. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada did not designate the house, but rather Sir Wilfrid Laurier's birthplace, to commemorate his life and work.
- The guides. Without them, few messages would be communicated.
- Compliance with the principles of cultural resources management. These principles are consistently reflected in management practices. Moreover, the site has good relations with the community.

The main weaknesses identified are as follows:

- Only 1 of the 23 contextual messages associated with the reason for designation is communicated in an appropriate manner.
- Messages unrelated to the reasons for the site's designation are virtually absent and very difficult to present in the house. Reasons for the designation as well as other unrelated messages must be better presented, and visual presentation materials redone.
- Archaeological resources are not identified.
- Regular maintenance on the Robinette house is insufficient to keep it in good condition.

The main weaknesses identified are as follows:

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

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.
- N.R.:** Not rated because the information is not available.
- + 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 (↓).

