Agenda – Council – June 28, 2006

Report – Executive Policy Committee – June 7, 2006

Item No. 2 **Saint-Norbert - The Gateway to Winnipeg Project - Land Dedication Reserve**
File EP-2

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 7, 2006, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Riel Community Committee and submits the following to Council:

1. That funding to assist with the cost of the "Saint-Norbert - The Gateway to Winnipeg Project", in the amount of $50,000.00, be allocated from the Riel Land Dedication Reserve to Group' Action Saint-Norbert.

2. That the $50,000.00 allocated from the Riel Land Dedication Reserve be identified as additional funding for Winnipeg's share in the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement.

3. That the criteria of the Council Policy for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund be waived for any expenditures which do not qualify.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Agenda – Council – June 28, 2006

Report – Executive Policy Committee – June 7, 2006

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 7, 2006, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Riel Community Committee and submitted the matter to Council.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 30, 2006, the Riel Community Committee recommended:

1. That funding to assist with the cost of the "Saint-Norbert - The Gateway to Winnipeg Project", in the amount of $50,000.00, be allocated from the Riel Land Dedication Reserve to Group'Action Saint-Norbert.

2. That the $50,000.00 allocated from the Riel Land Dedication Reserve be identified as additional funding for Winnipeg's share in the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement.

3. That the criteria of the Council Policy for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund be waived for any expenditures which do not qualify.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing,

and forwarded the matter to the Executive Policy Committee.

March 6, 2006

Mr. Daniel Vandal, Director
Winnipeg Partnership Agreement

Mr. Justin Swandel
City Councillor, St. Norbert Ward
City Hall, Council Building
510 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 1B9

Dear Mr. Vandal and Mr. Swandel,

Enclosed please find a proposal as per our previous discussions regarding St. Norbert main street improvements.

This community enterprise is the result of an initiative by Group'Action Saint-Norbert, in partnership with key stakeholders, elected representatives from all three levels of government and organizations from the community, to revitalize historic St. Norbert.

We wish to extend our appreciation for the time that you have taken to discuss our district's priorities regarding the revitalization and funding possibilities for the community of St. Norbert.

Sincerely Yours,

Bob Roehle
Co-Chair
Group'Action Saint-Norbert

Janice Lukes
Secretary
Group'Action Saint-Norbert

c. Rod Bruinooge, M.P. Winnipeg South
Enclosure

Saint-Norbert

THE GATEWAY TO WINNIPEG

A Main Street Improvement Project

A proposal to:

WINNIPEG PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

And

ST-NORBERT COUNCILLOR, JUSTIN SWANDEL

Prepared by
Group'Action Saint-Norbert (GAS)
February 2006

I ABOUT THE APPLICANT: GROUP'ACTION SAINT-NORBERT

Group'Action Saint-Norbert (GAS) is a bilingual, not-for-profit community corporation dedicated to promoting the economic, social, cultural, environmental and historical interests of greater St. Norbert.

Group'Action Saint-Norbert's mandate is:

- To establish priorities for community economic development and speak with one voice in promoting the interests of St. Norbert;
- To facilitate and co-ordinate the implementation of agreed upon projects while respecting the autonomy of member organizations;
- To be a forum for discussion of community issues, a clearing house for information and dissemination of same, and a vehicle for sharing community resources;
- To champion and celebrate the Métis, francophone and multi-cultural heritage of the community;
- To be a central point of contact for outside officials and organizations; and
- To encourage citizen participation in the planning of their community.

The vision of Group'Action Saint-Norbert is to capitalize on the geographic, historic, cultural, linguistic and natural attributes of St. Norbert and thereby transform it into an economically and socially vibrant tourist destination while making it a better place to live, work, and play for its residents.

Membership in GAS is open to all not-for-profit community organizations with compatible objectives. The majority of non-profit organizations in Saint-Norbert are members of GAS. Eligible community organizations include:

- Heritage Saint-Norbert (HSN)
- St. Norbert Arts Centre (SNAC)
- Behavioural Health Foundation (BHF)
- Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM)
- Entreprises Riel (ER)
- St. Norbert Parish-La Barrière Council, Manitoba Métis Fédération (MMF)
- Cloutier Drive Residents Association (CDRA)
- St. Norbert Business Community (future BIZ or merchants association)
- Chevaliers de Colomb (Knights of Columbus)
- St. Norbert Parish
- Laureate Academy / Villa Maria Retreat House
- St. Norbert Foundation (SNF)
- Local elected representatives i.e. City Councillor, MLA and MP
- Chalet Saint-Norbert
- St. Norbert Community Centre (SNCC)
- Howden Community Residents Group
- French School Division (DSFM)
- Seine River School Division
- St. Norbert Provincial Heritage Park
- Mary Mother of the Church
- Protestant churches in St. Norbert
- Le Marché St. Norbert Farmers Market Coop Inc. (SNFM)
- Fort Garry Historical Society/St. Norbert Provincial Heritage Park

II ABOUT THE COMMUNITY: SAINT-NORBERT, GATEWAY TO WINNIPEG AND MANITOBA'S BIRTHPLACE

Now the southernmost suburb of Winnipeg, Saint-Norbert was, for most of its history, a rural community several miles from the city centre. It was settled in the early part of the 19th century by former employees of the North West Company--men who found themselves out of work following the company's amalgamation with the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) in 1821. These people of French and Aboriginal descent, originally made their living by taking part in the annual buffalo hunts and seasonal cart brigade work hauling goods between the Red River Colony and St. Paul, Minnesota for the HBC. But with the establishment of the first parish church in 1857, many St. Norbert residents were persuaded to give up this lifestyle in favor of a farming life.



Louis Riel Mural / Mural Louis Riel

During the Red River Resistance of 1869-1870, the small community of St. Norbert (named after Norbert Provencher), played a key role in the eventual outcome. The first decisive move of the Resistance took place when Louis Riel, the local Métis leader, directed a group of men to construct a barricade just south of St. Norbert to prevent, McDougall, the newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Rupertsland from taking control of the colony on behalf of the federal government. Father Noël Ritchot, the local parish priest, was subsequently sent by Riel to Ottawa to negotiate the terms of Manitoba's entrance into Confederation with the Canadian government. (Manitoba is Cree for "God who Speaks".)

Fast facts about St. Norbert

- History: St. Norbert is where Manitoba began in 1870. It is where Louis Riel and Fr. Noel Ritchot formed their Provisional Government.
- Geography: St. Norbert is the front door to Winnipeg for thousands of U.S and eastern Canadian tourists, as well as the majority of tourists arriving by car to Manitoba.
- Red River Floodway: It is home of the gate to the world renowned Red River Floodway.
- Cultural: St. Norbert was founded by the Métis involved in the fur trade, and continues to be home to many of their descendants.
- Linguistic: St. Norbert is a bilingual French-English community, one of three such designated bilingual wards in Winnipeg.
- Nature: St. Norbert is a nature paradise with abundant and diverse flora and fauna, two rivers, and two provincial parks.

III PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The founding of Group'Action Saint-Norbert (GAS) in 2002, and its subsequent incorporation as a non-profit organization in 2004, gave all stakeholders in St. Norbert an opportunity and a formal vehicle to come together as a community. This proved to be an important decision at a critical juncture in this historic community's development. Prior to this the community's awareness of its history, culture and strategic location was in serious decline.

Seven major priorities for community economic development were subsequently identified and adopted by GAS and its partners through consultations, surveys and other community processes.

1. Economic development; merchants' association/BIZ
2. Bilingual signage along Pembina Highway
3. Floodway tourist and recreational initiatives
4. St. Norbert Heritage Trails and Trans Canada Trail
5. Heritage, cultural and tourism development in old St. Norbert (including the Pollock property at the juncture of the Red and LaSalle Rivers)
6. 55+ Housing
7. Bilingual community newsletter/guide

Prior to this, Étienne Gaboury of Gaboury Préfontaine Perry in partnership with Entreprises Riel and CDEM had conducted a community visioning process and documented their results in a report entitled, *Riel-Vision-Riel; Un Encadrement Pour Le Developpement (December, 1999).*

In a short three years, GAS has become widely recognized as having achieved significant success in advancing these seven priorities. A number of important milestones have been achieved despite the fact that all were volunteer driven.



IV SAINT-NORBERT – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The focus of this funding proposal is on two of Group'Action Saint-Norbert's' seven community development priority projects, namely:

- Economic development; merchants' association/BIZ
- Bilingual signage along Pembina Highway

Saint-Norbert is a community on the southern most edge of the City of Winnipeg and serves as the City's gateway to approximately 21,000 vehicles traveling through the community each day or over 7.5 million vehicles per year. Entreprises Riel, the economic development corporation for St. Norbert, operates a bilingual tourism information center in the community over the summer months and serves approximately 5000 tourists during that time. Tourists are primarily American and Eastern Canadian.

At present, a visitor to our great city is greeted by a featureless drive through one of Winnipeg's jewel communities. Signage is all but absent and certainly not representative of the wealth of attractions in close proximity to this six lane thoroughfare. Scrub Chinese Elms line the center median and struggle to survive the dense traffic and street salt. Street lighting is limited to the unimpressive Cobra lights. A single blue and gold aluminum sign indicates one's entry into the city limits and it boldly states 'One Great City'. A Winnipeg bound visitor has traveled through St. Norbert without noticing they are passing through an historic community. At the Perimeter Highway, the northern limit of St. Norbert, a few street banners with the words 'Winnipeg' on them were installed a number of years ago. Clearly showing their age, these signs effectively indicate that the City of Winnipeg begins here rather than at the southern limit of St. Norbert.

With 90% of all traffic coming into Manitoba via Pembina Highway (Highway 75) and passing through St. Norbert, it is clear that Winnipeg has not yet seized the opportunity to create a true gateway into the City. Since our city has only one chance to make a first impression, it evident to GAS and the community of St. Norbert that Winnipeg would greatly benefit from an enhanced front entrance. An improved entry into Winnipeg, and particularly into the community of St. Norbert, would encourage visitors to stop, visit, contribute to the local economy and get a glimpse into Manitoba's early history.

Improvements to St. Norbert's main street would allow the City, the Province and the local community to capitalize on the area's rich bilingual and Metis heritage and present multi-cultural character to everyone's economic and cultural benefit. This is the thrust of GAS's proposal to the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement.

V PROJECT SPECIFICS:

1. **Major feature entrance signs to Winnipeg and St. Norbert (2)**
   The project includes the design, construction and installation of two major gateway signs: one welcoming visitors to Winnipeg and St. Norbert from the south and another welcoming visitors to St. Norbert from the north. It is necessary to create a visual impact and set the stage for a travelers' visit to our city. The proposed bilingual signs would be installed on the center median of Pembina Highway on the outer limits of the community.
   Cost: $80 000

2. **Banner program**
   This project would include designing street banners to bring life, movement and color to the street. These would reflect the flavour of the community; its culture, its heritage, its vibrancy and its artistic character. Attractive banners would help to dress up the otherwise drab streetscape and the bland design of the existing Cobra lighting standards. Local schools and the St. Norbert Arts Center could be commissioned to design and construct the banners.
   Cost: $18 700 (44 x $175 plus brackets at $250 per)



3. **Flower power**
   As an additional means to dress up the existing cobra lights and bring vitality to the street, this project would see hanging flower pots/boxes installed on the existing Cobra street lamps. Flowerbeds and sidewalk planters will also be designed, installed and prepared for yearly plantings. Sustainability of this initiative is described later in this proposal.
   Cost: $21 400; (43 x $300 per pair of basket hangers; $7000 for 4 beds; $75 x 20 planters = $1500)



4. **Park benches**
   This project proposes the installation of a series of unique/distinguishable park benches along the St. Norbert's main street and at significant heritage and community attractions. GAS would also work with the City of Winnipeg and install waste receptacle in close proximity to the benches to allow for a cohesive look while encouraging a clean environment.
   Cost: $7 500 (15 x $500)

5. **Bilingual way finding signage**
   Because it is currently difficult to recognize that St. Norbert is a designated bilingual community with an abundance of heritage, cultural and other attractions, this project initiative proposes to design and install unique bilingual way finding signage that will encourage traffic to stop and visit the community. The proposed signage in Canada's two official languages will serve as testimony to Canada's and St. Norbert's uniqueness in North America and Prairie Canada. It should be noted that most of St. Norbert's attractions are free e.g. provincial heritage parks, city parks, historic sites and landmarks, Red River Floodway gates etc. These community treasures/attractions not only tell the story of Manitoba's past but also hold the key to tourism dollars, economic development and local employment opportunities.
   Cost: $22 750 ($2000 x 7 large and $350 x 25 small)

6. **Architectural design**
   To ensure a consistent look in the above projects, the GAS requires the services of a competent landscape architect and a design firm to design the signage and banners.
   Cost: $20 000

VI PROJECT COORDINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

GAS has the benefit of having a community development corporation as a partner. Entreprises Riel has a mandate to support community and economic development in the bilingual district of Riel which includes St. Norbert. GAS and Entreprises Riel will therefore work in partnership to oversee the implementation of the above noted projects. This contribution will be in-kind.

St. Norbert currently has a small but vibrant business community on Pembina Highway south of the Perimeter Highway. Group 'Action Saint-Norbert has been meeting with the merchants to determine whether there is sufficient business density and/or interest to create either a business improvement zone (BIZ) under the City of Winnipeg by-law, or a more loosely structured merchants' association which can speak and act with one voice in promoting the business community's interests. The object of this initiative is to promote profitable economic development and provide a mechanism by which the community can maintain the proposed streetscaping improvements i.e. flower beds, flower baskets and planters.

Because it is home to the very popular Le Marche Saint-Norbert Farmers Market Coop Inc. as well as being strategically located as Winnipeg's front door for thousands of tourists, St. Norbert has the potential to become an attractive and busy tourist and shopping destination featuring interesting boutiques, cafes and recreational and tourist services and attractions. A BIZ or Merchants' Association working with Entreprises Riel and the community at large would be an effective and powerful voice in promoting the interests of St. Norbert and its many attributes.

St. Norbert is home to a Katimavik project for the next three years. Young bilingual adults will therefore be available to assist with the planting and maintenance of flower beds and other community improvement initiatives. As in previous years, it is anticipated that Green Teams funded by the provincial government will also be available to support such initiatives. In both cases the cost will be primarily volunteer time.

VII BUDGET FOR MAIN STREET DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	Timeline	Project cost
Major feature entrance signs	April 1st, 2006 to March 30th, 2007	$ 80 000.00
Banner program		$ 18 700.00
Flower hangers and planters		$ 21 400.00
Benches		$ 7 500.00
Bilingual way finding signage		$ 22 750.00
Architectural design		$ 20 000.00
Total		**$ 170, 350.00**

The above proposed projects will serve as a strong foundation and catalyst to attract further investment by the private sector in the community. Reviving community pride will foster renewed interest in volunteerism and hence Group'Action Saint-Norbert's effectiveness in promoting positive community development.

This proposal speaks only two of Group'Action Saint-Norbert's seven major priorities as identified by the community. (See **Attachment 1** for a progress report on the remaining priorities.) This proposal will advance and reinvigorated many of GAS's priorities.

VIII OTHER GROUP'ACTION SAINT-NORBERT INITIATIVES

Working with Entreprises Riel, CDEM and its own membership, GAS is committed to implementing economically, culturally and environmentally viable projects which will contribute to the revitalization of the community and strengthen the understanding that has been created between the Francophone, Anglophone and Métis communities since it was established in 2003. This strategic alliance will allow the community's non-profit organizations and commercial businesses to maximize their effectiveness by sharing resources, avoiding duplication of effort, and coordinating their planning and promotional activities.

The following is a summary of the goals GAS hopes to achieve by the implementation of this project:

- Capitalize on the existing natural, locational, linguistic and historical attributes of St. Norbert to develop economic and cultural advantage for the community i.e. two rivers, a rich flora and fauna eco-system, gateway to Winnipeg for tourists, Floodway gates, birthplace of Manitoba, Métis heritage, bilingual and multi-cultural character;
- Revitalize the community by injecting tourism dollars into the local economy and attracting new investment;
- Foster closer alliances and working relationships among community groups and strategic partners;
- Develop local expertise and stronger coordination mechanisms and skills for successful project implementation;
- Attract new businesses to the greater St. Norbert area and create jobs particularly for youth;
- Leverage government funding for new projects by securing investment dollars from the private sector;

IX CONCLUSION

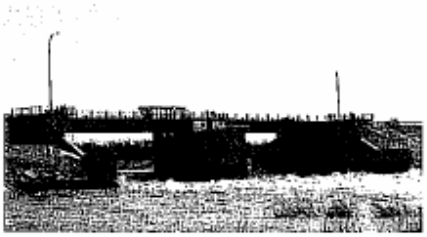
The implementation of this project will have a direct and immediate economic impact on the greater St. Norbert area, a bilingual and multi-cultural community that has played a significant role in shaping Canada's history and today is a microcosm of the country. By building on local attributes, expertise and citizen commitment, concrete and sustainable economic development objectives can be realized for the benefit of all members of the community. The ripple effect of this success will be felt well beyond the borders of St. Norbert.

ATTACHMENT 1

Group'Action St.Norbert's Community Priorities and Progress Report

1. **Floodway tourist and recreational initiatives**
2. **St. Norbert Heritage Trails – Trans Canada Trail**
3. **Heritage, cultural and tourism development for Old St. Norbert**
    - **(including the Pollock Property at the juncture of the Red and LaSalle Rivers)**
4. **55+ Housing**
5. **Bilingual Community Guide/Newsletter**

1. Floodway tourist and recreational initiatives



This community priority, first identified by Gaboury, Préfontaine, Perry Architects' in their 1999 report, *Riel Vision Riel; Un Encadrement Pour Le Developpment,* resulted from community consultations conducted in partnership with Entreprises Riel and CDEM.

Group'Action Saint Norbert subsequently received an overwhelming response to its 2004 Red River Floodway Community Survey of community attitudes toward the recreational use of the Floodway lands in general and the area surrounding the gates in particular. The Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority has indicated that a portion of the $650. million plus Floodway expansion funding is earmarked for interpretive, recreational, and tourism purposes. The purpose of the GAS survey was to solicit input and ideas from the residents of the greater St. Norbert area on both sides of the Red River, South of the Perimeter Highway.

The next step is for GAS to initiate and coordinate a feasibility study on the economic, recreational and cultural potential of the area adjacent to the Floodway gates. A business plan and land use study will also be required prior to the establishment of the proposed interpretive centre showcasing the functioning of the Floodway. A related study is already underway in partnership with Rivers West to determine compatible recreational uses along the entire length of the Floodway corridor.

Summary of GAS successes to date:

- Conducted a community survey on Recreational Use of Red River Floodway Lands in greater St. Norbert funded by Entreprises Riel (www.mrta.mb.ca/stnorbert);
- Initiated formation of the Red River Floodway Coalition to lobby government (See Floodway and Greenway Activities at: www.riverswest.ca);
- Represented on Steering Committee of $200 thousand Recreation Study of Red River Floodway expansion;

Future GAS initiatives:

- Lobby MFEA to implement recreation and tourism initiatives requested by the community;

2. St. Norbert Heritage Trails and Trans Canada Trail





St. Norbert Heritage Trails are an integral part of the Trans Canada Trail (TCT), the longest trail system in the world. Trail boundaries within the community of St. Norbert are: Cloutier Drive on the north and the Red River Floodway channel on the south.

Working with the City of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, the St. Norbert Heritage Trail team successfully negotiated a re-routing of the Trans Canada Trail through Old St. Norbert via Av de la Digue and Av de l'Eglise. Previously routed down Pembina Highway, the Trans Canada Trail bypassed a number of points of interest as well as significant cultural and historic sites. The first leg of the TCT, the Sentier Cloutier Trail, was completed in the fall of 2005 after a successful two-year $200 thousand fundraising campaign. The City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba and local residents and community groups funded the construction and paving of this 2.0 km. leg of the TCT. The next step is the further development of heritage trails connecting to the Trans Canada Trail system as it passes through Saint-Norbert.

The Saint-Norbert Heritage Trails are a series of walking, biking, cycling, horse, and water trails which connect to the Trans Canada Trail system as it passes through the community. These 30 km. of trails, some existing some under development, and some being planned, weave through the rich cultural heritage and natural environment of the community of St. Norbert.
Located along these trails is the site where Louis Riel and Father Noël Ritchot launched the Resistance of 1869-70. This action led to the creation of a Provisional Government that ultimately negotiated the terms under which Manitoba entered into Confederation in 1870, just one of many significant events which occurred at St. Norbert. The richness of the area's history is recognized by two provincial heritage parks and a national heritage site. Three provincial heritage sites also offer history buffs a glimpse into a captivating past. Today these sites provide the perfect setting for enjoying a nature hike, taking a leisurely paddle down the river or simply whiling away an afternoon with a fishing line while absorbing St .Norbert's historic connections to the past.

As noted above, in February of 2004, Group'Action Saint-Norbert in partnership with Entreprises Riel, conducted a Recreational Use of Red River Floodway Lands survey in the greater St. Norbert area. The results of the survey were submitted to the Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority in response to their call for Expressions of Interest Regarding Recreation and Economic Opportunities associated with the proposed Red River Floodway expansion. There were three significant survey responses, namely:

- 85.1% strongly supported the development of walking trails
- 77.3% strongly supported cycling paths
- a strong preference for non-motorized recreational activities.

Summary of GAS successes to date:

- Secured the use of the land and developed the Sentier Cloutier Trails portion of the TCT system in St. Norbert;
- Completed a $200 thousand fund drive with private donors, and municipal and provincial governments to finance construction of Sentier Cloutier Trail;
- Re-routed the Trans Canada Trail through Old St. Norbert;
- Secured 14 acres of property, via gift to the City of Winnipeg, for future trail
- development;
- Entered into a three year financial support partnership with Fort Garry Rotary
- Club to continue trail development in the community;
- Formed partnerships with local MLA to fund walking and exercise clubs;
- Held a number of high profile events to promote trail development and usage i.e. Trails Festival, Trailhead Unveiling and Sod Turning, Winter River Walks, Monastery and Ghost Walks, Bike Rides, etc.;
- Researched area walks for interpreters at the St. Norbert Provincial Heritage Park;

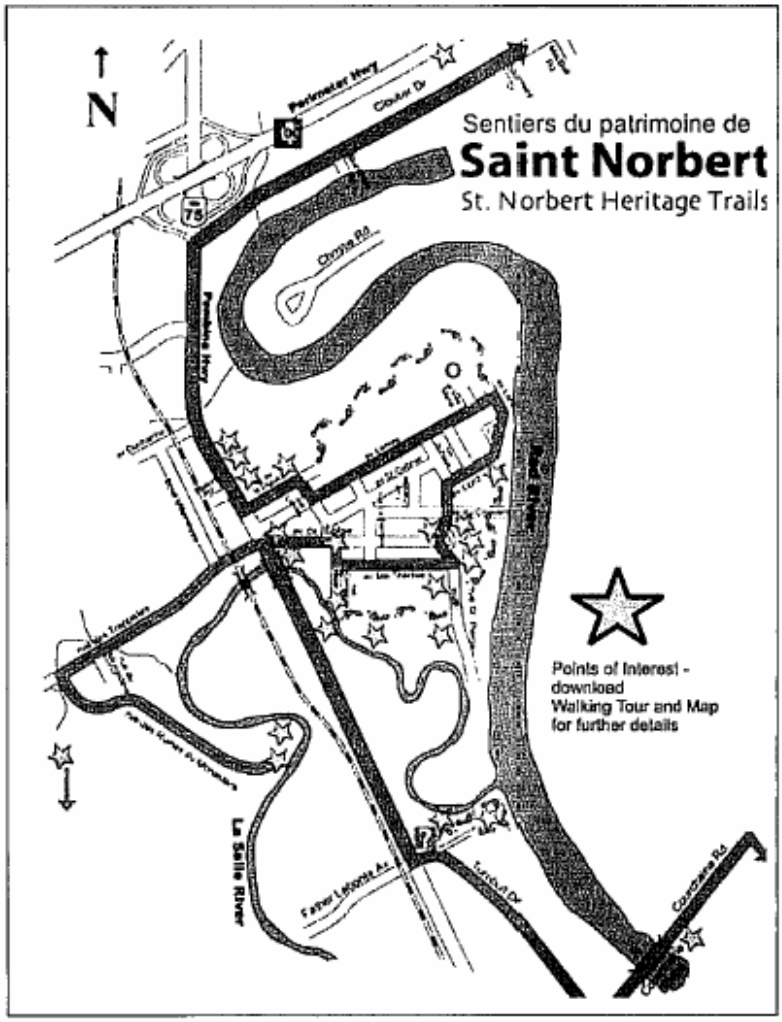
Future GAS initiatives:

- Fundraise for the "Discovery Program", a project to raise the profile of the past four years of community trail development via interpretive signage, brochures, school course material etc.;
- Plan phase two of trail development in conjunction with expansion of Red River Floodway.



Prairie Naturalisation Zone /
Zone de naturalisation de la prairie

St.Norbert Heritage Trails
www.mrta.mb.ca/stnorbert



3. Heritage, cultural and tourism development for Old St. Norbert



St. Norbert is a unique community with a storied history, one that includes a past life as a vital trading centre, the starting point for annual buffalo hunts, and a transportation hub beginning in the early 1800s. As the entrance to Winnipeg, birthplace of the Province of Manitoba, and home of the Red River Floodway gates, St. Norbert has evolved into a picturesque residential suburb that maintains its links to an intriguing history.

The heritage, culture and tourism development objective/priority recognizes St. Norbert's unique opportunity to develop and exhibit its Métis, francophone and multi-cultural heritage. Several landmarks in the area that were important in the creation of the Province of Manitoba remain unmarked and their story untold. The fact that most tourists visiting Winnipeg travel by car up Highway 75, presents St. Norbert with a unique opportunity to become a tourist destination in its own right. This priority addresses the need to recognize, preserve and proclaim the history and heritage sites in old Saint-Norbert including its significant role in nation building.

Summary of GAS successes to date:

- Organized community familiarization tour for three levels of government and community leaders;
- Produced a community guide in partnership with the St. Norbert Community Centre focusing on area highlights;
- Produced a tourism brochure for mass distribution;
- Facilitated and coordinated a three year Katimavik program in the community;

Future GAS initiatives:

- Work with three levels of government and economic development organizations to plan and implement heritage and tourism initiatives;



St. Norbert Arts Centre / Centre des arts de Saint-Norbert

4. 55+ Housing

At present there is a significant demand and need for affordable 55+ housing in the community for both French and English speaking residents. Many people who have lived most of their lives in St. Norbert are forced to leave the community for lack of affordable seniors' housing. GAS is currently working with a developer on a new 55+ condominium project. While this is a welcome initiative in the community, affordable rental and/or condominium housing for independent seniors continues to be a priority issue.

Summary of GAS successes to date:

- Worked with a developer and the community to encourage construction of a 40 plus unit condominium on Pembina Highway.;

Future GAS initiatives:

- Liaise with developers to secure additional 55+ residential developments;
- Survey greater St. Norbert area residents and surrounding communities to identify specific 55+ housing demands/needs;

5. Bilingual Community Guide/Newsletter



A bilingual brochure was developed in 2004 and then updated in 2005 to promote St. Norbert as a tourist destination. The 54 page booklet, which included a self guided walking tour highlighting the sights and attractions in St. Norbert, was linked into the Manitoba Trails Association website. Also included in the brochure was an events calendar of activities, a large fold out map of the grounds of the St. Norbert Arts Centre and paid advertising by the local business community. A production run of 7000 proved to be completely inadequate due to the unexpected demand from tourism offices around the province. The 2005 edition was reduced in size to a fold out one page brochure but production was increased to 20,000 copies to meet demand. Although paid advertising covered a significant portion of the cost of producing the brochures, additional one time only funding was secured from a local family foundation. Hence, one of GAS's priorities is to secure sufficient funding on an ongoing basis to publish regular updates of this publication and other bilingual promotional material.

In addition to the above noted tourist guides, GAS was involved in publishing three issues of a bilingual community newsletter in cooperation with the St. Norbert Community Centre. Although the newsletter was well received by the community, the additional costs associated with printing and translation could not be sustained on the basis of paid advertising revenue and volunteer labour. GAS would like to secure permanent funding to revive this initiative and produce a quarterly bilingual community newsletter.

Summary of GAS successes to date:

- Produced five newsletters/tourist guides in partnership with the St. Norbert Community Centre;
- Produced a Katimavik activities issue in January, 2006;

Future GAS initiatives:

- Secure sustainable funding for translation and printing services for a regular/quarterly bilingual community newsletter.

Group'Action Saint-Norbert has also supported a number of other community organizations and projects. In November, 2005, for example, GAS was instrumental in organizing and welcoming a group of Katimavik students to St. Norbert for the first time. This bilingual posting of 10 to 12 rotating Katimavik students should benefit the entire community for nine months each year over the three-year project.

GAS also facilitated the donation of the Pollock property at the south end of rue St. Pierre to the City of Winnipeg to be preserved as a wilderness park in perpetuity. This 14 acre parcel of land at the juncture of the Red and LaSalle Rivers is primarily virgin river bottom forest and home to abundant indigenous flora and fauna.