HERITAGE WINNIPEG

HERITAGE WINNIPEG CORPORATION

PRESENTATION

to the

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

CITY OF WINNIPEG

Tuesday, March 13th, 2007



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The City of Winnipeg, Province of Manitoba and Heritage Canada Foundation created Heritage Winnipeg in 1978 to promote the establishment of a heritage conservation area in the City of Winnipeg.

Today, 29 years after its conception, Heritage Winnipeg is a non-profit charitable organization which operates under the direction of a Board of Directors representing the general public, the City of Winnipeg, Heritage Canada, the Manitoba Historical Society and the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage. A staff implements the policies and objectives set by the Directors. We are the only organization of its kind in the Province, which through our many initiatives, enrich the lives of all Winnipeggers.

Our mission is to promote and encourage the conservation of historic/heritage structures and sites and attend to those matters which enhance and compliment this purpose. Emphasis is on restoration, revitalization, preservation, education and advocacy, in order to augment the cultural inheritance of the community, with consideration for pertinent logistics and feasibility.

Heritage Winnipeg has, over the years, contributed to the designation and the ongoing protection of the Exchange District as a National Historic Site ; and the City has benefited economically from heritage tourism and film activity generated by the existence of this historic district and the other heritage sites in Winnipeg, (Manitoba Film and Sound estimate the total value of investment to be in excess of $305.2 million on production activity between 2002-05), largely owing to the existence of the Exchange District.

Heritage Winnipeg not only promotes the City for its rich and colourful heritage but also provides access to a year-round resource centre with over 1000 publications for students, teachers, community groups, businesses and the public at large for research, and educational purposes. Annually Heritage Winnipeg responds to more than 3,000 requests for information and assistance in heritage matters. In addition, for nine years our organization has provided year-round work experiences for university and college students.

Education is a primary focus. Heritage Winnipeg on a year-round basis delivers presentations and walking tours to schools and community groups. In addition, in partnership with an elementary or middle school of choice, we annually participate in a special Manitoba Day celebration. We provide a full day of programming that celebrates Manitoba's heritage. In association with Creative Retirement, a series of concurrent workshops are offered to all students providing a fun, interactive learning environment. In addition Heritage Winnipeg actively participates in school heritage fairs, at the local school level and at the provincial level.

In 2004, Heritage Winnipeg successfully completed and launched a half a million dollar virtual website project which in 2006 had an average session time of over 7 minutes. The bilingual site showcases to an international audience over 3,000 archival photos, 170 historical vignettes and 85 – 360 degree VR interior tours of Winnipeg's built heritage.

Heritage Tourism continues to be a growing industry and in 2006, Heritage Winnipeg completed several historical vignettes, entitled "Manitoba Memories" for Red River Showcase which promotes heritage in Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota. In addition, we completed a highly visible and creative television commercial funded by The Winnipeg Foundation and produced by CTV. We continue to increase our visibility in the community.

Heritage Winnipeg is making a major contribution to the regeneration of the downtown by solely managing the highly successful Doors Open Winnipeg, which has been successful in promoting awareness, civic pride, economic spin-offs and over the past three years has resulted in over 110,000 site visits to downtown buildings. While downtown will remain the primary area for public participation, Doors Open will expand its geographical parameters in 2007 with the inclusion of the University of Manitoba, St. Norbert and West Kildonan. Heritage Winnipeg will also, continue the highly successful 'School Banner Project', the first of its kind in the world. This initiative is in collaboration with the teachers' in practicum at the University of Winnipeg and a chosen school. This project is entirely funded through project grants at a total cost of $170,000. The City currently contributes $15,000. Our project grants do not generally support any general administration.

Heritage Winnipeg has played a major role in encouraging the maintenance and redevelopment of heritage sites, encouraging building owners to maintain their properties and, through its advocacy role and the creation of a "Buildings at Risk" Database, the first known in Canada. We have been challenging City Council and developers to respect and invest in heritage properties by continually providing a positive reminder of the long-term value of our built heritage. Preliminary discussions are underway to make available this important resource to the City of Winnipeg, Department of Planning, Property and Development, Land Use Division.

Heritage Winnipeg plays a critically important role in working with and educating local property owners and community business leaders to encourage them to recognize that there are economic and environmental advantages to be gained through investment in heritage buildings. Since 1985, Heritage Winnipeg has been celebrating Heritage Day with our Annual Preservation Awards Ceremony giving much needed recognition to those who invest in the built heritage within the City of Winnipeg.

Heritage Winnipeg is currently undertaking a wide range of projects such as the redevelopment of the Upper Fort Garry historic site as a major tourist attraction, the publication of a history of the homes of Armstrong's Point, a Virtual Reality Theatre and an On-line Edu-kit.

Cindy Tugwell, Executive Director of Heritage Winnipeg serves as the elected Manitoba Governor for the Board of Heritage Canada Foundation giving Winnipeg national exposure and an opportunity to support issues important to Winnipeg. Heritage Winnipeg would like to thank the City of Winnipeg, for your recent request that heritage tax incentives be included in the Federal Budget to stimulate private sector investment. These cost sharing programs encourage private investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of existing heritage buildings and places and Heritage Winnipeg will certainly support this at the national level as it is important to our city.

The Province of Manitoba, in recognition of our work, provides $22,000 annually. The City of Winnipeg has for the past 17 years provided an annual grant of $9,000. With a fixed annual operating budget of approximately $100,000, this represents 'less than' 10% of our administrative costs.

Heritage Winnipeg is requesting an increase in the City's annual investment to $22,000. Heritage Winnipeg guarantees that at least three dollars will be secured for each dollar you invest as we raise the additional funds required to support our $100,000 operating budget. Project funding is separate from these funds and is generally much greater. Project funding generally does not allow for organization operation/administration dollars.