

5th Annual Municipal Excellence Award

Embarking on a Main Street Heritage Conservation District Project

Town of Carberry Implemented in 2006/2007

In early 2006, the Town of Carberry Council voted to explore the possibility of establishing a Heritage Conservation District on 2 blocks of Main Street. Council recognized the unique and irreplaceable nature of the collection of century-old buildings located therein. The predominantly brick buildings had been falling into disrepair and were being covered with modern building materials such as tin and vinyl siding. Council wished to explore the economic and social implications of undertaking a massive downtown revitalization project to one day bring these buildings back to their former glory.

We chose to focus on 4 key principles to attain as much community support as possible, thereby ensuring success of such a project.

- ❑ **Inclusion** – seeking input from the many stakeholders involved from the Municipal Government to the private property owners affected
- ❑ **Transparency** – ensuring the process is shared openly with the affected stakeholders
- ❑ **Building trust** – taking the time to gauge support within our local government and private sector
- ❑ **Demonstrating** the benefits to the stakeholders

Phase 1

Phase 1 of our project involved researching the process, benefits and potential impediments in establishing a Commercial Heritage Conservation District, **the first of its kind in Manitoba.**

The next critical step was to inform our Main Street Building Owners of the proposed undertaking, and to stress our commitment to soliciting their valuable opinions. To ensure success, their support and involvement was critical.

Phase 2

Phase 2 involved the hiring of an Architectural/Communications firm to lead the process and visioning sessions with stakeholders.

The consultant held 2 Town Hall style meetings; one to listen to and receive input from the property owners and various community stakeholders, and the second to present a community strategy based on the input from the first meeting.

The meetings were extremely successful, and, based on the input from all attendees, the community rallied to move forward with the Heritage District concept.

Phase 3

Carberry's Municipal Council voted to proceed with the establishment of a Historic Conservation District and passed the necessary bylaw. The following commitments from Council solidified their position to the community:

- Public Spaces – as a show of confidence in the project, Town Council developed a Heritage Park on a corner lot at the entrance to the proposed Historic District. More public space improvements will follow in the heritage theme.
- Building Survey – The Town acquired grant money and retained a structural engineering firm to inspect individual buildings and assess their structural integrity. This will provide a template for sustainability and repair work and, more importantly, inspire confidence in the property owners.
- Municipal Matching Grants – Town Council has set aside \$2,000 per year per property to help Main Street Building owners undertake cost-effective and historically sensitive exterior renovations to their buildings.

This project has been an incredible success story for the Town of Carberry and could act as a template for other small communities looking to preserve their heritage. This will undoubtedly provide a sense of place for our citizens; increase civic pride; create renewed investment in Main Street; increase property values; and provide a unique and marketable tourist attraction to benefit our entire region.

Respectfully submitted by: Laurie Robson, Economic Development Officer,
Town of Carberry/RM of North Cypress

Contact Information: Telephone: 834-6616; E-mail: edo@townofcarberry.ca



AMM Municipal Excellence Awards Submission
Town of Altona & Town of Plum Coulee
Regional Police Services Agreement

PART 1:

Municipalities: Town of Altona; Town of Plum Coulee

Implementation Date: April 1, 2008

Type of Project: Regional Police Services Agreement

PART 2:

After the most recent census in 2006 the Town of Plum Coulee reached a population of 770 which required them to arrange for its own police protection either by continuing with the RCMP, establish their own service, or entering into an agreement with another police service. As part of their exploration of the options available to them, the Town of Plum Coulee approached the Town of Altona about the possibility of having the Altona Police Service provide policing to Plum Coulee.

After several months of study and consultation, including with Manitoba Justice, each community granted approval to sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of police services within the Town of Plum Coulee. Effective April 1, 2008, the three year agreement is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to effectively satisfy the ongoing requirements of each municipality.

Under the terms of the agreement the Altona Police Service (APS) provides the citizens of Plum Coulee with a level of policing consistent with the Provincial Police Act and the APS regularly reports to the Council on the police related activities within the Town. The officers are available in the community office for a set number of hours per week while further "proactive" patrols and general investigations occur on a daily basis. Reactive response to emergency calls is serviced 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Both communities take great pride in the uniqueness of the project as their example is the only one of its kind currently in place in Manitoba where a police services agreement exists that is endorsed by Manitoba Justice. In fact, the agreement stands as a model for future regional policing initiatives.

For the Town of Altona, the agreement has allowed them to reduce some of their current costs while continuing to provide the high standard of service their residents have come to expect. Additional benefits include broadening the APS intelligence base and satisfying a response to Council's call for increased regional focus and collaboration. As the pressure and scrutiny on smaller police services continues to grow, this arrangement also helps increase the APS future survivability and ability to meet those pressures by utilizing their existing police service infrastructure to work "harder and smarter".

With the requirement for the Town of Plum Coulee to arrange their own police services (pop over 750), came the ability to qualify for the Provincial General Assistance Grant which is used in part to cover the cost of the "fee-for-service" contract. While the grant does not fully cover such costs, the subsidy of the agreement by the ratepayers of the Town of Plum Coulee is minimal, especially in relation to the value that is being provided to the Town. Despite having no major concerns with the RCMP, who policed Plum Coulee prior to the agreement, the Town was excited to be able to provide a more consistent response to emergencies and, more importantly, provide the residents with increased visibility and community policing. This includes working with local businesses, seniors, and children in the school.

The first year has been completed and the feedback from both council's, the APS, and members of both communities, especially Plum Coulee, has been nothing but positive. The proposed benefits that served as the basis for entering into the agreement were met and both the Town of Plum Coulee and the Town of Altona are confident that there is no reason why those benefits will not carry forward into the future and in fact continue to add value to each.

Contact: David Wolanski, CAO - Town of Plum Coulee
204-829-3419
dwolanskipcoulee@mts.net

Russ Phillips, CAO – Town of Altona
204-324-6468
russp@townofaltona.com