

**Environmental Screening Needs for
Heritage Resources Resulting From the Construction of the
Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR)
at The Forks, Winnipeg, Manitoba**

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The Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR) is being constructed on a very rich archaeological site and will impact heavily upon the subsurface heritage resources. This activity will result from both construction activities and capping of this rich record in perpetuity.

The Forks Site includes The Forks- North Portage property, The Forks National Historic Site and adjacent lands. This site has had numerous (over 50) widely scattered Cultural Resource Management projects (Downie 2002). These have produced a rich but piece meal record. From these projects we have learned that The Forks Site has:

1. a record of many occupations beginning with numerous Precontact (Pre-European) First Nations camps/villages from at least ca. 6,000 years ago to early European fur trade developments, several fur trade occupations; emerging Metis development, the only local HBC experimental farm; a military presence in the 1840's; the social, political and economic core of development for the Red River Settlement in and around Upper Fort Garry; industrial development; immigration development; and major railroad developments,
2. the richest evidence of the ancient and recent archaeological heritage of any site in the Province,
3. one of the richest archaeological records in Canada,
4. an ever changing and increasingly rich record as new CRM (Cultural Resource Management) projects identify new Precontact cultures not previously identified.
5. with the possible impact on **10,000,000** artifacts, it has the largest record of heritage artifacts to be potentially destroyed from any site in Manitoba and one of the largest, if not the largest, in Canada.

The area that will be impacted by the CMHR within this very important site:

1. has a unique archaeological record that is different from any other parts of The Forks Site:
 - it has a record of numerous, 10-12 occupations in the AD 1000-1500 zone which is a ca. 2.5 meter deep deposit,

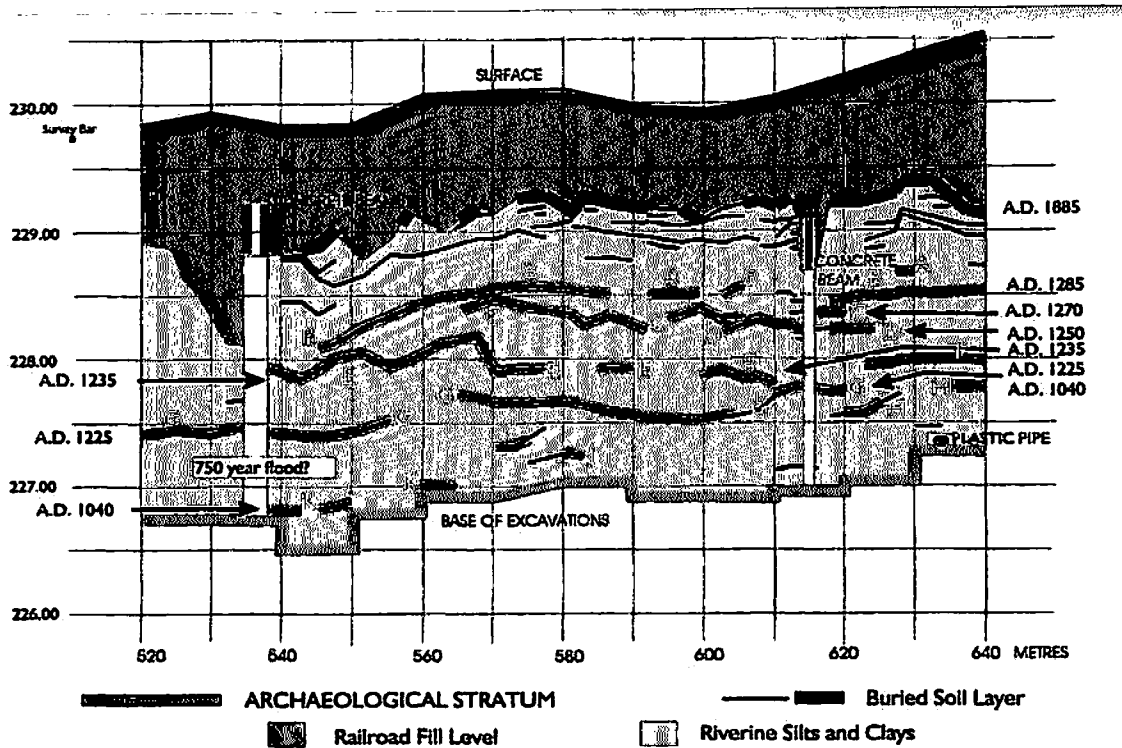


Fig. 1 Detailed occupational record (Quaternary Consultants, 2004)

- these numerous occupations exist as thin soil horizons with scatterings of camp/village activities,
- **each layer is a unique record** of layout, activities and artifacts left by First Nations gathered at the site during one or more events

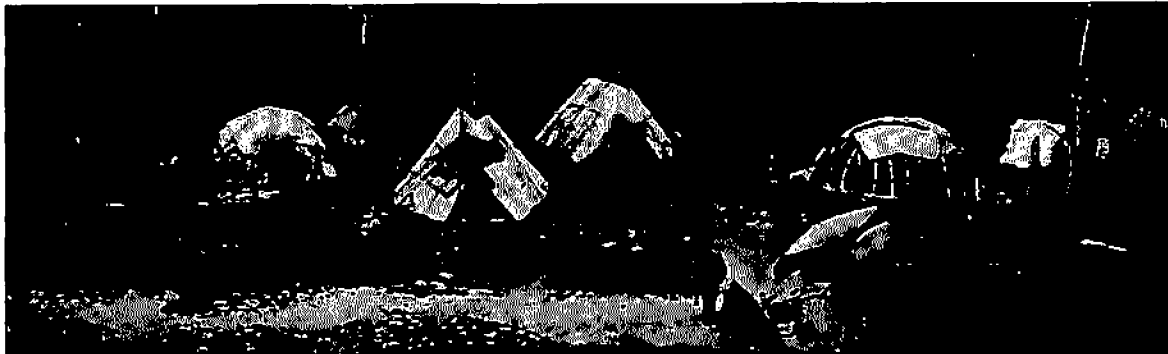


Fig. 2 Village scene showing numerous activities (Manitoba Museum, Boreal Gallery)

- fragments of this record have been recovered in adjacent CRM work on Waterfront Drive and in the Canwest Global Park,
- at present, the widespread backhoe and auger testing has not been able to match up the various old soil levels and their various occupations within these 2.5 metres,

- it may also yield evidence of earlier Blackduck occupations ca. AD 700, Archaic occupations ca. 3,000 B.P. (before present), and other occupations back to 6,000 B.P. or even older.
- B. has the only heritage record in Manitoba that appears to confirm very ancient oral traditions of First Nations
- two different First Nations elders have reported that their traditions refer to a **major peace meeting** of 8 or 9 groups that took place over 500 years ago,
 - the area to be impacted has evidence of several occupations that have a wide variety of different ceramics found together, suggesting that several Native First Nations came together,
- C. has “by far” the most intensive archaeological record at this site and any site in Manitoba and one of the highest in Canada
- backhoe testing yielded 71,874 artifacts in 21 of 24 scattered trenches representing an accumulated total tiny area of 53m² (Quaternary Consultants 2004; Falk 2006),
 - if the entire footprint of the structure, ca 7,000 m², and even 3,000 m² of additional space were excavated through this dense occupation zone, there could be an estimated **10,000,000** artifacts recovered or destroyed
 - at deeper levels, additional artifacts may be located
 - if the entire impact area including sewer lines, road construction and other amenities is larger than the 10,000 m² of the 31,000 m² of the total property, then many more artifacts will be recovered or destroyed.

We concur, in principal, with the heritage recommendations on pages 14-15 of the draft report of the Environmental Screening Report (received May 09, 2006) but they tend to be too vague and they are missing some important details.

“1. The proponent must consult the heritage advisory committee of the Forks-North Portage Partnership for guidance and to explore opportunities for collaboration.”

- Must consult with the landlord, The Forks-North Portage Partnership, and its Heritage Advisory Committee for guidance and to reach an agreed upon strategy to recover, interpret, protect and conserve the heritage resources.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration

“2. The proponent must consult Parks Canada on potential effects and mitigation once more detailed design of the building and site are available.”

- Must consult with Parks Canada and The Forks National Historic Site as **various design proposals are being contemplated and developed** so that mutually beneficial solutions can be achieved; consultation after the final designs are completed is often too late to properly address problems.

“3. The proponent must fulfill requirements of the Manitoba Heritage Resources Act including obtaining a Heritage Permit prior to construction and implementing prescribed measures to ensure protection of heritage resources.”

- The measures to be implemented must be comprehensive and rigorous to match the quality of the rich and unique heritage resources that are endangered.
- The standards must meet the concerns of the The Forks-North Portage Board, The Forks National Historic Site, and Parks Canada.
- The standards must include comprehensive analyses, including detailed analyses and documentation, pottery reconstructions, comprehensive dating, and current state of research including trace element analyses.
- The research results must be produced in formats that can be appreciated by a wide range of audiences including the groups represented by the heritage (e.g., First Nations), the general public and the academic research communities, including written, digital and exhibit formats.
- The choice of CRM proponent must be chosen on the basis of ability to do the best job to recover, analyze, and interpret these highly valuable heritage resources rather than those who may do it cheapest but in an inferior manner.

“4. The proponent shall minimize ground disturbance below the fill level (as identified by Quaternary Consultants 2004) in accordance with final design for the site.” (see Appendix A)

- Quaternary Consultants 2004 noted that only generalized recommendations could be made because the footprint and subsurface parameters were unknown (p. 157).
- It is important to reiterate that in addition to the archaeological monitoring for recovery there must be adequate resources for comprehensive analyses and a variety of reports.

“5. If disturbance is required below the fill level identified above, a systematic professional salvage archaeological investigation is required and must be conducted in accordance with any Heritage Permit issued by Manitoba under the Heritage Resources Act.”

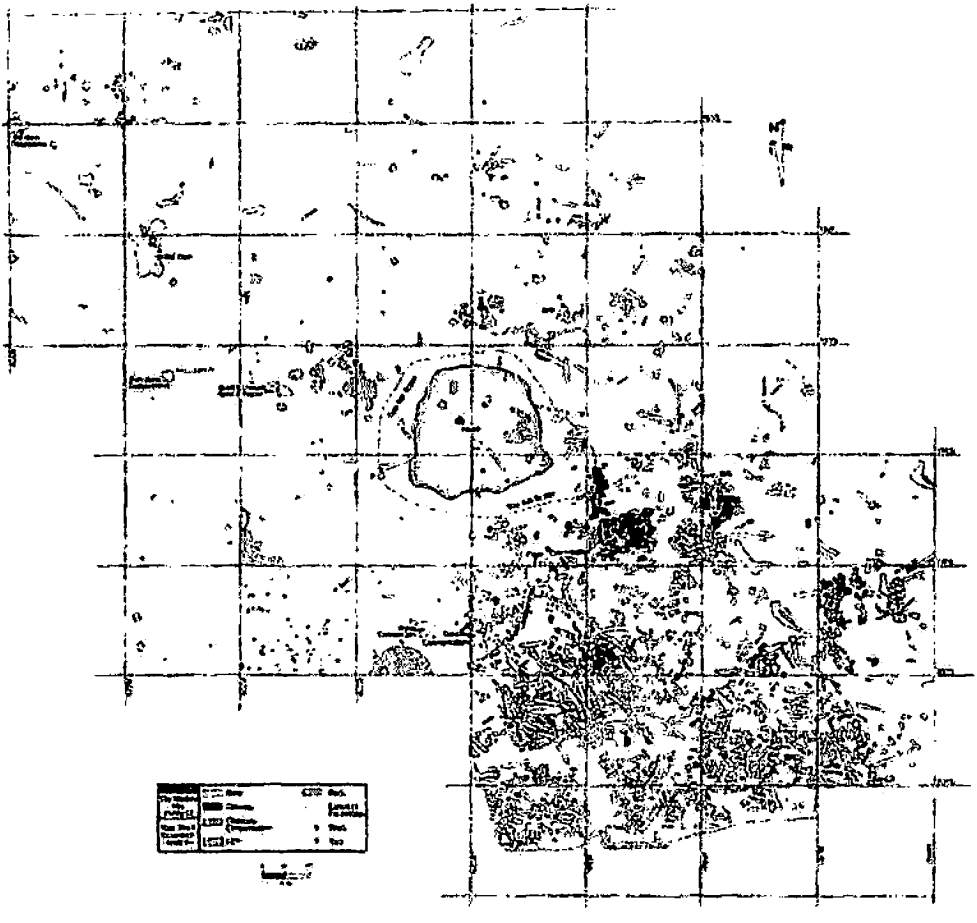
- The entire area that is disturbed must be recovered according to the highest standards; to allow any portion to not be recovered results in a permanent loss of our heritage and history. It is similar to burning rare unpublished documents that hold insights never previously revealed.

“6. Block excavation must be undertaken to provide contextual information for the salvage of the archaeology and mitigation of accumulative effects on the site. The nature, size and location of the block excavation will be determined as part of the heritage mitigation plan submitted in support of a Heritage Permit for development of the site.”

- The nature, size, location, and mitigation must also fulfill the vision of The Forks-North Portage Board regarding their responsibility and concerns about the heritage for which they are responsible.
- A block excavation is necessary in order to discover activity areas and camp activities with associated tools in close proximity, reconstruct broken artifacts and clearly define soil horizons and the associated camp activities.
- Identifying and defining individual camp levels and associated activities are particularly difficult at this portion of the site because several of the camp levels are separated by only a few centimetres of soil, the occupational debris is discontinues across the site, and the old sod levels fluctuate slightly.
- The block excavations are powerful tools for exhibit development.
- Auger hole samples, in contrast, are widely-spaced, non-representative “pin-prick” samples that often exhibit “recovery trauma”.



Fig. 3 Example of block excavation (left) and detailed pattern of evidence of several camp activities (below), e.g. Miniota Site (Landals et. al., 1994)



Other topics that need to be addressed as well.

1.WD recommends "that CMHR provide within their facility a means to represent the historic/heritage information obtained from archaeological investigations and tell the stories of earlier inhabitants of the site"

- Since this museum is being built at The Forks, it has a responsibility to share the stories of the people who were here and this recommendation should become an additional requirement or mandate.

- There are many stories of the First Nations including ancient success stories and their eventual displacement from this area which was part of their lands.
 - There are also many stories of immigrants who passed through, the development of local slums due to poverty, the rise of local businesses, the battle of the various trade unions among the railroaders, and many others.
 - There are many collaborative opportunities with various institutions such as The Forks National Historic Site, The Forks-North Portage Partnership and other institutions such as The Manitoba Museum.
2. The storage and care of the large collections from this site must be addressed.
- The previous collections from The Forks- North Portage lands have been deposited with The Manitoba Museum.
 - The previous collections of some 71,000 artifacts from the museum site are likely scheduled for The Manitoba Museum.
 - However, the size of these collections to be recovered are of such a magnitude that there will have to be consultation and resources identified to arrange for getting institutional commitment to take the collections and to cover the numerous costs such as storage facilities, computer database development, and staff to process the collections.
3. Timing is a major problem
- Quaternary Consultants identified the problem that a large amount of time is required cover a large sample area and that mitigation should begin well in advance of construction.
 - If construction is to proceed according to the proposed timetable, then unique steps will have to be taken such as removing the occupation layers in large blocks and conducting the fine tuned recovery and analysis in a warehouse.
 - Research, analyses, and report writing will need to continue during construction and program development as the museum develops.

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25.2 Recommendations

Twenty-one of the excavated trenches had cultural material in one or more levels. The only three sterile trenches are located in the northeastern portion of the site. In addition, the area along the south side of Water Avenue is known to not have archaeological deposits (Quaternary 2003b). Given that the preponderance of the area for the projected Canadian Museum for Human Rights contains significant heritage resources, some degree of impact can be expected. As the footprint and sub-surface building parameters are unknown, only generalized recommendations can be made at this point.

It is recommended that, as soon as the size and location of the footprint of the proposed structure is known, an archaeological mitigation program be devised. This program must address the scope of the impact and have a methodology which maintains stratigraphic and horizontal control for all recoveries. In such a program, the following situations must be addressed:

- ◆ If the proposed structure is to be constructed as slab-on-pile at grade, all pre-seating auger holes for the piles must be monitored by an archaeologist with all recoveries from the auger recorded as to location and depth. In addition, if the excavations of the piles for pilecaps exceeds 130 cm, these must be monitored by archaeologists.
- ◆ All excavations for services, i.e., hydro, water, sewer, and land drainage, must be monitored by archaeologists. If installation is undertaken by boring between vertical shafts, each excavation unit should be treated as an assessment trench with cultural layers removed *en bloc* for archaeological recovery. Open-cut installation is not recommended except at the extreme east end of the area as archaeological recovery of each of the cultural layers could add considerable time to the procedure.
- ◆ If the structure is situated in the central portion of the site and entails extensive sub-surface components such as a full or partial basement, the mitigation program must devise a mechanism whereby the archaeological resources can be removed *en bloc* for off-site remedial excavation. This will enable the construction of the facility to proceed and still ensure appropriate recovery of all cultural resources.
- ◆ The budget set aside for archaeological mitigation must be sufficient for both the field recovery component and the laboratory component to produce the reports required by the regulations of the Manitoba Heritage Resources Act. This becomes quite important especially due to the density of some of the cultural layers. More than 70,000 artifacts were recovered from the limited test areas of this assessment, encompassing approximately 53 m². The footprint size has been estimated at approximately 100,000 square feet and, if this is the actual area of a basement excavation, the mitigative program would result in the recovery of more than 10,000,000 artifacts. The laboratory processing, artifact analysis, and report preparation for such a massive compilation of data would require a considerable budget.

While not part of an archaeological mitigation program, it is also recommended that the stories of the peoples represented by the archaeological resources beneath the building be told within the facility. This can perhaps be done in conjunction with elders from the Aboriginal community.

Fig. 4 Quaternary Consultants, 2004