
CANADA AND ONTARIO INVEST IN LEGACY PROJECTS FOR 1812 BICENTENNIAL

Niagara Parks Funding will create jobs, boost local economy

March 20, 2010

FORT ERIE, ONTARIO – The Honourable Rob Nicholson, P.C., Q.C. Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice, and Attorney General of Canada and Kim Craitor, Member of Provincial Parliament for Niagara Falls, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services, today announced \$8.94 Million in stimulus funding that will benefit local workers and the local economy in the Niagara region by enhancing and investing in three Niagara Parks Commission infrastructure projects.

Today's investment of joint federal and provincial funding is for the revitalization of three heritage sites within the Park system (Old Fort Erie, Laura Secord Home and McFarland House) which will help support the Commission's overall War of 1812 commemoration efforts. The funding includes developing a new visitor centre and museum at Old Fort Erie to provide a legacy for the bicentennial celebration of the War of 1812.

The Niagara Parks Commission will be working on the consolidation of existing heritage buildings at its Laura Secord homestead site in partnership with the School of Restoration Arts Willowbank, by connecting them through a visitor centre with improved food service and retail amenities for visitors.

McFarland House Renovations would include necessary facility improvements in order to better accommodate the public.

"As stated in the Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada is proud to take an active role in the bicentennial commemorations of the War of 1812, an event that was central to shaping Canada's identity," said Minister Nicholson. "Today's announcement is good news for the Niagara region, not only for the local economy, but also as a reflection of the importance of commemorating the historic events that took place in this area so many years ago."

"Investing in a visitor's centre for Old Fort Erie will enhance the experience of visitors to the Fort and place the important role Fort Erie played in the War of 1812 into a proper context," said Niagara Falls MPP Kim Craitor. "This site will become an important starting point for our American visitors to start their tour of the prominent Niagara Frontier Battlefields during and beyond the Bicentennial celebrations."

"I want to personally thank our Federal and Provincial representatives, Rob Nicholson and Kim Craitor for their efforts in helping to secure this joint infrastructure funding", said NPC Interim Chairman Archie Katzman. "These investments in our past will allow us to properly showcase these venues and tell our unique stories so that future generations will know of the important contributions the residents, soldiers and warriors of this region made to the development of this country," Katzman went on to add.

Total estimated eligible project costs are \$8.94 Million. The governments of Canada and Ontario are each providing up to \$ 4.47 Million

The Government of Canada contribution for this project is being provided through the \$4-billion Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, a key component of Canada's Economic Action Plan, which invests in construction-ready infrastructure projects that can be completed by March 31, 2011.

The contribution from the Government of Ontario will be from the two-year, \$32.5 billion infrastructure commitment laid out in the 2009 Ontario Budget – *Confronting the Challenge: Building Our Economic Future*.

During these challenging economic times, the governments of Canada and Ontario have taken steps to get shovels in the ground and funding into targeted infrastructure projects across the province.

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LEARN MORE

Learn about the [Government of Canada's Economic Action Plan](#).

Learn about the [Government of Canada's Infrastructure Stimulus Fund](#) investments.

Learn how the [Government of Ontario is helping to build and revitalize infrastructure](#) across the province.

Scope of Projects:

1. Redevelopment of Old Fort Erie

- Construction of New Visitors Centre (incl. Theatre, Museum, Public Restrooms, archive workspace and storage space)
- Construct earth works to replicate the elements used during the time of the Siege in 1814

2. Update of McFarland House

- Expand and enclose orientation area
- Improve infrastructure and make it accessible for staff and visitors

3. Assemble a Village Within a Village at Laura Secord Homestead

- Construct an indoor gathering space to offer improved interpretive areas and opportunities to host larger gatherings (community events)
- Commemorate the role of women in the early history of Ontario and Canada

The overall goal of these projects is to improve and enhance the visitor amenities at these facilities, including providing greater access to those with accessibility issues and allowing for an expanded season of operations. The updates at each site will expand capacity especially to school and bus groups with greater orientation areas at each facility thereby allowing staff to offer a broader variety of programs. The result will be improved financial sustainability and much improved engagement of visitors well into the future.

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