

Renaissance BRANDON

Working for change in Downtown Brandon

Message from Chairman of the Board

On behalf of the board of directors of Renaissance Brandon it is a pleasure to provide this Year to Date Report. 2009 has seen a number of important changes for our organization. Now into our second full year of operations, we continue to work toward creating positive development and opportunity in Downtown Brandon.

Through our ongoing funding partnership between the City of Brandon and the Province of Manitoba, our board has been pleased to expand programming and assist in the renewal of the heart of our community. Throughout this report you will find highlights of this year's new programs and partnerships including our arts and culture grant, project grants and commitment of support for the Strand Theatre project and Princess Park improvements. This year's new projects expand our ongoing initiatives such as the rent abatement program and Wednesdays by the Fountain concert series.

Renaissance Brandon is pleased to have a new Downtown Development Specialist, Braden Pilling providing support to our board. Braden brings experience in real estate from his time in the United States and Canada and will work closely with the community and Economic Development staff. I hope that this addition will assist our efforts to communicate and deliver programs effectively along with our new website at www.renaissancebrandon.ca.

Finally, a thanks to this year's outgoing board members. Marlow Kirton, Jeanne Millis, Rod Lindenburg, John Zeke and Wayne McLeod served our organization well and I thank them for their time, energy and efforts. I know our new board members will continue to carry forward a vision for creating a destination downtown that supports new opportunities for living, working and entertainment.

Thank you for taking the time to review our report and we welcome your feedback as we look ahead to 2010.

Vince Barletta
Chairman
Renaissance Brandon

Year To Date Report
Operations

Current Board Members:

Vince Barletta (Chairman) – City Council
Corey Roberts (Vice-Chairman) – Business Owner – Clancy’s
Dave Burgess – Mayor
Doug Patterson – City Council
Patrick Love – M.I.T. Government Services
Keith Edmunds – Business Owner – Pennywise Books
Wendy Schabrel – Business Owner – Gypsy Jive Studio
Rod Ficek – Business Owner - Ficek Insurance
Kevan Sumner – Planner
Diane Hastings Fotheringham – Business Owner – Friends Fashion

Past Board Members:

Vince Barletta – City Council
Corey Roberts – Business Owner
Dave Burgess - Mayor
Doug Patterson – City Council
John Zeke - Retailer
Wayne McLeod – Credit Union CEO
Rod Lindenburg – General Cont.
Jeanne Millis – CA
Marlow Kirton – Property Developer
Diane Hastings Fotheringham

Ex-officio Board Members:

Brian Macrae, City Manager
Sandy Trudel, Economic Development Officer

Active Committees

Business Attraction Committee

Develops and evaluates resources and programs to strengthen and broaden the economic base of the Renaissance District. Current incentive programs: Rent Abatement and the Redevelopment Program.

Members:

Dave Burgess	Corey Roberts
Wendy Schabrel	Vince Barletta

Community and Culture Committee

Develops and evaluates resources and programs to encourage new projects or activities in the creative arts, culture and heritage sectors. Current program: Arts and Cultural Grant Program.

Members:

Corey Roberts	Doug Patterson
Diane Hastings Fotheringham	Kevan Sumner

Finance and Audit Committee

Identifies, assists in the development of and oversees financial policies that ensure adequate financial controls, budgets and financial reporting practices exist as set forth in the operational policy.

Members:

Patrick Love	Keith Edmunds
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1.0 PURPOSE:

This report is the second, annual report reviewing the achievements and challenges facing our downtown (The Renaissance District). Its purpose is threefold: to provide an overview of the prior year's highlights, to assess the current state of the downtown, and to propose strategic initiatives to help ensure the ongoing health of the Renaissance District.

2.0 WHAT HAS HAPPENED in 2009:

The Renaissance District in 2009 has seen positive change and momentum. Westoba Credit Union has completed their major expansion project, CMHA has begun their renovation of the Massey Harris building, Clancy's Eatery and Drinkery has made significant improvements to the interior and exterior of their building, the McKenzie seeds building has been purchased by a B.C. developer, the CPR building has been purchased by a Winnipeg developer, and the former Perth's building has been demolished creating potential for future development.

3.0 RENAISSANCE BRANDON HIGHLIGHTS:

Organization:

Five new Renaissance Brandon board members were appointed by City Council and began their duties in June, 2009. A half-time Downtown Development Specialist was hired in June, 2009. Day to day management of the Downtown Development Specialist and office space and equipment is provided by the Economic Development Brandon department.

Strategic Planning:

The Downtown Development Specialist has developed a seven step strategic action plan with corresponding tactics to focus efforts and is guided by the Economic Development Officer. Renaissance Brandon is in the process of a RFP to secure a facilitator/consultant to develop a secondary land use plan for the Renaissance District. An additional strategic planning session is being researched to facilitate the refinement of the organizations strategic goals and to develop branding and marketing tools and resources.

Renaissance District Business Surveys:

A short, written survey was conducted with 50 Renaissance District businesses. A few significant results are outlined below:

1. 70% agreed there was sufficient parking for their customers. Of the 30% who disagreed, Renaissance Brandon will determine if these businesses are in similar locations. If so, location specific parking solutions can be identified.
2. There was a dramatic shift in the results from Downtown Brandon being safe during the day (97% agreed or strongly agreed) to Downtown Brandon being safe during the night (41% agreed). Any safety programs or initiatives developed by Renaissance Brandon should focus on evening safety first.
3. Only 25% of the businesses surveyed indicated they had plans to expand or grow their business, which is significantly below the overall Brandon average.
4. 84% of the businesses surveyed would recommend downtown Brandon to other entrepreneurs providing a key element to the attraction of additional businesses to the Renaissance District.

The Renaissance District:

By utilizing PCensus, a data resource housed with the Economic Development Brandon office, a **demographics** package has been compiled for the Renaissance Brandon district. These demographics are from the 2006 census and will establish a benchmark for measuring key indicators of growth and/or decline within the District. This data will also allow Renaissance Brandon to identify residential/population trends when subsequent census data is available.

2006 Census Data	Renaissance District	
		%
Total Population	792	
2006 Population by Age	792	
0 to 24 years (24 years)	222	27%
25 to 34 years (10 years)	152	19%
35 to 54 years (20 years)	206	26%
55 years and over (30 years)	228	28%
Average age of population	41.2	
Median age	37.6	
Families	138	
Children per family	0.9	

2006 Census Data	Renaissance District	
Households	496	
Average household income	\$27,918	
15 years and over – individual income Under \$10,000	217	32%
15 years and over – individual income \$10,000 - \$19,999	204	30%
Occupied Dwellings	500	
Owned Dwellings	48	10%
Rented Dwellings	448	90%
Dominant building type	Apartments	
Dominant period of construction	Before 1946	33%
Average value of owned dwelling	\$90,718	
Average gross monthly rent	\$469	

In addition, Renaissance Brandon has compiled a complete property inventory database for the District, which enabled staff to determine the existing **commercial mix** in the Renaissance District. The results

from the commercial mix study clearly indicate a large percentage of downtown businesses are service, destination orientated, which leads to less pedestrian traffic.

According to the American Planning Association, “the goal should be to assure that key areas, such as downtown business districts provide a variety of uses that serve local residents and visitors, as well as various income levels. Furthermore, one of the most significant features of vibrant downtowns and central business districts is diversity, or a robust mix of land uses, whether local, national, small or large. In many cases, the businesses contributing to an ideal mix are the smaller, locally serving and locally owned. Ultimately, the identity of a community comes from not only the history, architecture and the built environment generally, but from the businesses located within the district. Local governments are beginning to use zoning regulations as a powerful tool to create a balanced mix of land uses downtown and in business districts. In doing so, they are correctly recognizing a vital component of creating and maintaining a vibrant and sustainable downtown.”

This data will serve as a benchmark for identifying the ideal commercial mix for the Renaissance District and influence the development of a secondary land use plan.

2009 Survey Data	Renaissance District	
Total Number of Businesses	169	
Food/Entertainment	16	9%
Other	2	1%
Public	15	9%
Retail	33	20%
Service	103	61%
Comparison	36	22%
Convenience	10	6%
Destination	106	63%
Food/Entertainment	16	9%
Free Parking Spaces	78	
Metered Parking Spaces	552	
Monthly Parking Spaces	61	
TOTAL	691	

Renaissance Brandon Web-Site

Renaissance Brandon has developed and launched a new, interactive web-site to serve as a multi-purpose tool/resource. The web-site provides information, collects survey data from downtown merchants and Brandon residents, showcases Renaissance District property for sale and for lease, features innovative downtown businesses, and provides communication tools for the general public. In addition, a RFP for the development of a Renaissance Brandon logo and branding tools has been issued. Once complete the logo will be incorporated into the website and shortly thereafter Renaissance Brandon will publicly launch the web-site.

Renaissance Brandon Projects

- Completed the demolition of the Beaubier Hotel to make way for the YMCA expansion project
 - Conceptual design work for the \$17 million YMCA redevelopment is finished and construction is anticipated to commence late 2009 or early 2010.
 - Once complete, the expanded facility will encompass 70,000 square-feet and include a leisure pool, competition pool, gymnasium, weight and conditioning areas, childcare facility, as well as other multi-use space. The facility was designed to meet the needs of today's residents and future leisure needs.
- Provided funding assistance approval for the Kristopher Campbell Skate Park
 - Officially named the Kristopher Campbell Memorial Skateboard Plaza, the project entails the development of a 26,000 square foot skate plaza on a vacant lot located at the south-west corner of 9th Street and Princess Avenue. Formerly the home of the stately Prince Edward Hotel the site had succumbed to default use as a gravel parking lot since the hotel's demolition in 1980.
 - Renaissance Brandon has granted \$75,000 towards the \$1.05 million dollar project. The bulk of the funding is through the Province and Government of Canada Building Canada Fund (\$700,000).
 - The need for a formal skate plaza was driven by the growth of what was commonly considered a renegade activity. With no defined place to partake in the sport, the entire City of Brandon became a glorified skate park. Use of public and private property that was not built to skate park standards, resulted in ongoing property damage. Of greater importance was getting skateboarders out of harm's way and off the street where they would often compete with vehicular traffic.
 - The years that passed saw a plan developed in conjunction with community stakeholders and most notably, the skateboarders themselves. Through widespread consultation, a design was developed that is intended to replicate desirable features that skateboarders enjoy riding, only now they will be found in a safe, attractive and resilient setting.

Economic Benefits:

Developing an entertainment venue attracting the youth and their parents to the Renaissance District will provide existing downtown businesses with an opportunity to attract additional revenue from increased visitors to downtown. In addition, new business opportunities will be created targeting the skate boarder demographic. City transit may also benefit from the skate park patrons who are not of legal driving age

- Provided funding assistance approval for the Community Futures Westman Knowledge Based Incubator Program
 - The Knowledge Based Incubator will be located within the Renaissance District and bring as many as 15 jobs to downtown. Prior to populating the incubator, renovations in the amount of \$340,000 will be undertaken to fully modernize a unusable, currently vacant space. Renaissance Brandon has leveraged a \$75,000 grant through the Redevelopment Program to bring an additional \$281,000 from the Federal Government to the district.
 - The primary focus will be on technology entrepreneurs building high growth ventures. Brandon has several small companies that have high growth potential that are, as of now, operating in isolation from each other, in spaces that are not conducive to creative thinking and in spaces that discourage customer and investor contact. Additionally, there are students at Brandon University and Assiniboine Community College with commercially viable ideas whom, provided the right environment, would choose to stay in Brandon rather than seek out startup assistance in another city.

Economic Benefits:

Technological change strongly influences economic growth. Investments in research and development are closely linked to raising productivity levels, which have helped improve living standards in many advanced economies. Innovative economies typically exhibit the following characteristics:

Higher rates of economic growth

Greater job growth

Higher productivity

Greater investment in people and capital

Greater capacity for the economy to attract and retain highly qualified people

Can generate higher paying wages

- Provided conditional approval of the Strand Theatre project Renaissance Brandon which includes \$474,000 in funding over two years to help the Brandon Folk Music and Arts Society (BFMAS) transform the dilapidated movie theatre into a multi-use community and performance arts centre.
 - The funding from Renaissance Brandon is contingent on the Strand Project successfully receiving funding from the provincial and federal governments.
 - BFMAS recently submitted a community spaces, federal application for \$1.4 million. The decision making process is anticipated to take approximately 6 months. If approved, the Provincial government has verbally indicated they will contribute the remaining, approximately \$1 million. The federal deadline for completion of the project would be spring of 2011.

Renaissance Brandon Incentive Programs

- Rent Abatement Program

2 applications were received resulting in one approval.
Gain(s): The relocation of Mecca's Performing and Theatre Arts Centre will more than double the size of their existing space. The incentive helped keep a growing business, in expansion mode to stay in the Renaissance District.
- Redevelopment Program

This program was launched in June, 2009. One application has been received and ratified by the Renaissance Brandon Board.
Gain(s): A knowledge based incubator project in partnership with CF Westman leverages Renaissance Brandon investment dollars with federal dollars for the renovation of a currently un-useable space/property. In addition, CF Westman resources provides an opportunity to support start-up businesses and attract existing businesses to the Renaissance District. Graduating/expanding business from the program will be enticed to stay downtown utilizing our existing Rent Abatement program.
- Cultural Grant Program

7 applications were received resulting in 4 approvals.
Gains: Enhancement to Cruise Night with the addition of live, local entertainment, retention of the highly successful Rock the Block event, organized by BUSU, promotion of downtown through photography exhibits, which also expands the Renaissance

Brandon picture library and the Words Alive, literacy festival was hosted within the district.

Wednesday by the Fountain

The event ran for 10 evenings during the summer of 2009. The event was changed to Wednesday from Thursday to avoid a conflict with Music in the Park. Through Wednesday by the Fountain, Princess Park received two enhancements: a custom tarp, which provides a removable roof for the stage and electrical upgrades; a power box for the stage and additional outlet sources closer to 8th Street and Princess Avenue for the farmers market.

Approximately 2000 people attended the events over the summer. The cost to operate Wednesdays by the Fountain in 2009 was slightly over \$30,000, approximately \$16,000 under budget.

4.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS (see financial reports on page 10)

Renaissance Brandon received \$250,000 from the City of Brandon, and 180,000 from the Province of Manitoba which included \$5,000 for the development of the Renaissance Brandon web-site.

EXPENSES: (as of October 31, 2009)	
Administration	\$1,601.31
Arts And Cultural Grants	\$6,000.00
Web-Site	\$4,700.00
Payroll	\$20,300.00 (till Dec. 31, 2009)
Rent Abatement	\$9,500.00
Wednesdays by the Fountain	<u>\$29,531.73</u>
Total Expense	\$71, 633.04
NET INCOME:	<u>\$196,384.33</u>

5.0 LOOKING FORWARD

2009 was a positive year with the announcement that both the McKenzie Seeds building and the CPR building had been purchased and would be developed by outside investors. These announcements confirm the atmosphere of opportunity and optimism that exists within the district. The Orange Block was purchased and brought from an unusable state to space that is ready to be occupied. The building will house commercial space on the main level and residential on the upper level. Renovations are nearing completion. Westoba Credit Union's \$8 million dollar expansion was fully complete in late 2009 with the addition of Brandon's first second floor pedway. The former Perth's building was demolished opening the door for redevelopment of the Rosser Avenue and 13th Street site. The Massey Harris housing project is progressing well, with notable visual improvements through the installation of new windows throughout the building and the construction of balconies. The demolition of the Beaubier Hotel, and confirmation that the Kristopher Campbell Skateboard park is proceeding moved the community several steps closer to their vision of developing a recreational corridor along Princess Avenue.

In 2010 Renaissance Brandon intends to capitalize on the growth that occurred within the District in 2009 through proactive communications around the progress being realized in Downtown, the promotion of Renaissance District development and lease incentives, the development of a renaissance

district specific marketing package that will be beneficial to property owners, potential businesses, developers and real estate agents and the completion of a secondary land use for the district, to ensure the vision for the district is supported by a Renaissance District specific land use plan. Staff will strive to develop a strong connection with the McKenzie Seeds and CPR Station owners. By doing so, Renaissance Brandon will increase the likelihood that the “highest and best” uses for these important downtown properties will be selected and consistent with the Renaissance Brandon vision. In conjunction with a secondary land use plan, an underutilized properties database will be created. This database will enable Renaissance Brandon to pro-actively analyze opportunities within the district and communicate such to interested parties. In order to ensure maximum utilization, Renaissance Brandon will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of current incentive programs while simultaneously developing and implementing new incentive programs that are reflective of market conditions and development trends.

6.0 COMMUNICATION MATTERS

Five (5) press releases were issued in 2009 and an on-line forum was implemented to allow the general public a medium for sharing their thoughts, ideas and concerns about their downtown. Press releases and the online forum can be accessed via www.renaissancebrandon.ca

7.0 CONCLUSION

At this time in our downtown’s evolution there is reason to be optimistic of its future. Several key Renaissance Brandon initiatives, such as the Skate Park and the YMCA project promise to add to the downtown’s growing and unique “sense of place”. There is, however, a need to further refine, complete and implement a well rounded set of strategic initiatives that formulate a secondary land use plan that models the Renaissance Brandon vision. This will maximize the opportunity to ensure continual, positive momentum and sustainability.

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11/05/09

Accrual Basis

Brandon Downtown Development Corporation
Balance Sheet Summary
As of October 31, 2009

	<u>Oct 31, 09</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	403,429.22
Total Current Assets	403,429.22
Other Assets	5.00
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>403,434.22</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	403,434.22
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>403,434.22</u>

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11/05/09

Accrual Basis

Brandon Downtown Development Corporation
Profit & Loss Standard
January through October 2009

	<u>Jan - Oct 09</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Contributions and Support	268,017.37
Total Income	268,017.37
Expense	
Administration	1,601.31
Arts and Culture Grants	6,000.00
Payroll	20,300.00
Rent Abatement	9,500.00
Website Development	4,700.00
Wednesday by the Fountain	29,531.73
Total Expense	71,633.04
Net Ordinary Income	<u>196,384.33</u>
Net Income	<u>196,384.33</u>