

The Megaphone

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meg·a·phone [meg-uh-fohn] –noun

1. a cone-shaped device for magnifying or directing the voice, chiefly used in addressing a large audience out of doors or in calling to someone at a distance.

www.dictionary.com

Hello everyone!

In this week's *Megaphone*, I want to fill you all in on the progress we've made on the GPS Heritage Tour Project.

I have talked to many of you over the last month in the project area personally about this, at consultation meetings or on the telephone, but we'd like to keep all of our members, and everyone else, in the loop on what's been happening, where things are at, and how we hope this project is going to turn out!

First, for any of you who don't know the background, the GPS Heritage Tour is a pilot project MAS is developing in cooperation with many, many partners in the heritage and tourism fields. The concept is that travellers on the TransCanada Highway, from the Alberta border to just east of Moose Jaw, will be able to download a program that they can use to get information about all the great heritage sites they are passing by, just off the beaten path!

We're planning the program will work in a variety of formats (cell phone, MP3, etc) in conjunction with the travellers' GPS systems. At an appropriate point on their route, as they approach each heritage site on the tour, an actor will begin telling a heritage story that we hope will engage the traveller, and encourage them to turn off the highway, southward, to take in some of the great heritage sites and communities they may not have known existed!

This is a pilot project, and currently only heritage sites in the southwest part of the province are able to take part. We will be selecting only 10 to 12 sites in the area for this pilot. In future, though, if the pilot goes well – who knows where we could go!

Our current funders for Stage One of the project, from October until December, are the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport (\$12,000) and the Architectural Heritage Society of Saskatchewan (\$1,000) Thank you to both of you! Their support has enabled us to begin the site selection process.

Application forms are now available for sites in the project area who meet the eligibility requirements, and forms must be submitted by November 30. If you are a public location with a significant heritage focus in the project area and have not yet been contacted by me, please email me at gpsheritagetour@sasktel.net to get a copy of the application! By the end of December, we will have selected the 10 to 12 locations, and be ready to move to Stage Two of the project.

Stage Two, which begins in January 2010, involves research, website preparation, narrative and image development, and work on cross-promotional activities – such as encouraging other heritage sites near the selected locations to cross-promote their sites with those on the tour, and encouraging tourism and economic development plans that support the tour. We

want everyone and every community to be involved, and be able to take full advantage of the interested tourists we hope this project will draw!

The Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) is the anticipated funder for Stage Two of the project (\$100,000). However, this funding has not yet been finalized, so additional sponsors may also be needed. We're going to do our best to put this project together as quickly as we can, as funding is available – ideally, we will be able to launch in early July 2010.

We have many great partners currently providing very significant non-monetary support as well, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their contributions to the project! Our current non-monetary support partners are:

Museums Association of Saskatchewan; SaskTel; Southwest Tourism; South Central Enterprise Region; Royal Saskatchewan Museum; Saskatchewan Council for Archives and Archivists; Aboriginal Tourism Association of Saskatchewan Inc. (ATASI); Natural Resources Canada; RCMP Heritage Centre; Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society; and Parks Canada.

Given our current funding situation, we are not yet able to contract needed service suppliers for Stage Two. However, while we are waiting, I am doing some preliminary research on the availability of those suppliers. We will not be able to finalize our budget, nor contract any suppliers officially, until we have funding in place – but we want to be ready to go!

So, if you are interested in putting your name on a list to be contacted in January 2010 with additional information regarding potentially supplying paid services to the GPS Heritage Tour Project in any of the areas listed below, please email me by Friday, December 4, 2009. You may not be the only ones contacted, but you will get all of the information first!

We are researching the availability of potential contractors for the following services:

- 1) archival/historical research of our tour sites;**
- 2) actors to provide our narratives;**
- 3) photography & video services;**
- 4) recording/documenting studios (including sound and recording technicians); and**
- 5) tour website development.**

You do not need to submit details of your fees or experience; we are conducting preliminary research only, and just your name and contact information, and the area you are interested in, will assist us in building a list to start working from when funding is available. (Note - By signing up now, you are guaranteed only to receive additional information on supplying services to the project as soon as that information is available.) I know we have some great people in our heritage community with a wide range of abilities who could do a great job in any and all of these areas, so I hope I hear from you!

I have set up a dedicated email address for the GPS Heritage Tour Project, so if you have questions, wish to apply for the project, or wish to put your name on a list of potential suppliers for Stage Two, please email me at gpsheritagetour@sasktel.net I'll update everyone again in January about which sites have been selected, and how the funding finalization is going. In the meantime, *The Megaphone* is back on November 25 with another feature on member activities – talk to you then! - Lisa