

Emerson-Franklin



Emerson-Franklin CDC
June 2020 Survey Results

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Summary

On June 15, 2020 a newsletter and survey were mailed-out to residents within the Municipality of Emerson-Franklin. The newsletter-survey package included a 2019-2020 year-in-review of the Emerson-Franklin Community Development Corporation (CDC), while the survey sought feedback and input for the upcoming year of CDC activities.

From June 15 through July 17, two hard-copy surveys and three electronic-copy surveys (via website) were collected. Three respondents indicated the Municipality of Emerson-Franklin as their place of residence, while the others specified Woodmore and Roseau River.

The survey included a total of six questions, ranging from tourism ideas, economic development opportunities at the border, and community infrastructure improvements. Three key themes emerged from the survey, that being: Interpretive Material, Local Products, and Trails & Waterways.

The findings from this survey will be used to develop a local placemaking toolkit. This toolkit will contain more detailed ideas, examples, and questions around the places in Emerson-Franklin people currently enjoy visiting, how they can be improved, and how gaps can be filled where needed.

Key Themes

“Entering Canada should be delightful, curious, entertaining, practical and should show our Canadian pride!”
– Resident from Woodmore, Manitoba

Interpretive Material

Four out of five survey respondents identified signage, way-finding, or unique displays as fundamental to growing tourism, preserving heritage and highlighting unique community assets. One respondent said: *“Farm names/products should be posted creatively along Highway 201. With such long empty highways, a few signs along the way [could help] invite people to explore our community.”*

Other signage ideas include an Emerson-Franklin welcome sign; Tolstoi Heritage Centre display; Roseau River Park street banners promoting outdoor recreation; Louis Riel memorial in Emerson; and self-guiding displays throughout Fort Dufferin’s historical structures.

Three out of five ideas on how to celebrate unique community identity specifically mentioned Fort Dufferin and the journey of the Northwest Mounted Police across Western Canada during the late nineteenth century. One individual referenced an opportunity to enhance the Court House in Emerson as a place to remember Louis Riel and the heritage of the Red River Rebellion era.

Local Products

Each survey response emphasized either farm tours, farmstays, or farm visits with school groups as a key driver for growing tourism and celebrating community character. Two survey respondents suggest having “made at home” products be the focal point of any tourism or retail development strategy in Emerson-Franklin. Catfishing on the Red River, farming, raising herds and “living off the land” was another common description of Emerson-Franklin, which could be harnessed as an economic driver for Emerson.

Trails & Waterways

All three responses to Question 2 (i.e. What attractions are you most likely to recommend to a friend or relative?) mentioned either the Senkiw Swinging Bridge, Crow Wing Trail, or campground trails. One response to the question about how to celebrate community identity acknowledged the importance of canoeing and kayaking on the Red River, walking the Crow Wing Trail and enjoying campground amenities. One suggestion includes having an annual event based on the trails and waterways throughout the Municipality. A canoe or kayak derby was provided as an example.

Survey Results

Question 1. The 'Best Bets' for growing tourism activity in Emerson-Franklin focus on the Port of Entry, heritage identity, nature-based attractions, campgrounds and festivals, and agricultural tourism. What are your ideas on how to improve these qualities in your community?

Port of Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Promote a more global information centre for the Province.” • “Reinstate longer hours of operations at Tolstoi Port of Entry.” • “Port of Entry is not a tourist attraction. Its a place where people are force to wait for hours sometimes in line just to go through customs. They want to get out of there as fast as possible and continue to their home.”
Heritage Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Fort Dufferin! Lots of opportunity here.” • “Signage.” • “Further develop Tolstoi Heritage Centre’s interior refurbishment so displays can be developed to highlight the community’s heritage.”
Nature-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Catfishing on the Red River” • “Having a fishing area that is more welcoming/fishing off the river bank, etc.” • “Promote ‘living off the land’ on a small self-contained farm.” • “Promote Roseau River Park, Senkiw Swinging Bridge & Crow Wing Trail” • “Tours for canoe outing & bbq/catered meal, team-building exercises, youth and school groups, camping/wilderness clinics, canoe/kayak clinics.” • “Fishing on the Red River.” • “Canoeing, kayaking and rafting at Roseau River Park.” • “It is amazing how many people drive to Emerson to see our annual Flooding that happens on the Red. Adding a removable floating dock to Fort Dufferin so people could fish there or get access to the Red.” • “The world class fishing on the Red River at Emerson should be promoted.”
Campground & Festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Putting in service sites for campers at Roseau River Park would bring in more campers to the Park.” • “Hydro sites at Roseau River Park.” • “Advertising” • “Develop Tolstoi Park for camping, improve Roseau River Park camping.” • “More Festivals should happen at Fort Dufferin.”
Agricultural Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We should focus on educating our existing communities/residents on local agriculture/farms since it is a big part of the municipality.” • “Promote young farmers working the land or raising herds (e.g. cattle, sheep, pigs, etc.)” • “Farm stays within municipality, farm visits for school groups.” • “As far a agriculture, educating our own community in the ways of farming would be a great start.”
Other Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Signage is your best bet for tourism which is lacking in Emerson. We should have a beautiful sign saying Welcome to Emerson were people could come and take pictures.”

Question 2. What attractions are you most likely to recommend to a friend or relative?

- “Recreation at campgrounds, trails, rivers, show pride for the community!”
- “I would recommend them to see Fort Dufferin, Home of the RCMP. as well as the Swinging bridge in Emerson and Senkiw.”
- “Roseau River Park & Senkiw Swinging Bridge, Tolstoi Harvest Festival.”

Question 3. A Tourism Study undertaken by the CDC outlines ideas on how to celebrate the unique features of each community. This might include investing in street decor, seasonal events, or other public spaces. What ideas do you have on how to celebrate your community’s identity?

- “Fort Dufferin”
- “Signage”
- “Farm names posted creatively along Highway 201”
- “Farm produce or any products made at “home” posted on those signs”
- “...with such long empty highways, a few signs along the way to invite people to explore our community.”
- “Support the use of rural halls—Could we start holding meetings in many different venues?”
- “Banners or a large sign to promote Roseau River Park with camping/canoeing/kayaking, annual canoe derby.”
- “Fort Dufferin, home of the RCMP and the bringing of Mennonites and other people to Manitoba and Western Canada by steamships should be celebrated.”
- “Western Canada and the jail house where Louis Riel was incarcerated are located in Emerson.”
- “The CPR is currently putting new cedar Shingles on the former CPR station in Emerson. I understand that CPR will be doing more upgrades to the station. They should be contacted as to what their plans are with possible joint promotion of this historical site.”

Question 4. Port Authority Concept Study undertaken by the CDC outlines the possibility of developing lands near the Emerson Port of Entry into a regional commercial/industrial hub. What type(s) of commercial (e.g. restaurants, shops, hotel) and industrial activity (e.g. warehousing, milling, truck maintenance) do you envision at the Emerson Port of Entry?

- “All of the above! Entering Canada should be delightful, curious, entertaining, practical and provide jobs. Show our Canadian pride!”
- “A gas station and restaurant are definitely the first steps.”

Question 5. An objective of the CDC is to attract economic opportunities by ensuring a fair level of infrastructure and services are in place for residents and investors. What improvements do you think are needed in your community in order to attract families and business, while helping to retain youth and aging populations?

Beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Making the town more presentable (sidewalks & curbs, keeping main street in Emerson clean, big steel dike wall does not look very presentable.” • “Have a nice welcoming sign as you enter town of Emerson.” • “Clean up and beautify Main Street and Dominion Street.” • “Give residents an incentive to look after their houses and yards so that they at least look presentable.”
Sidewalk Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Fort Dufferin! Lots of opportunity here.” • “Signage.” • “Further develop Tolstoi Heritage Centre’s interior refurbishment so displays can be developed to highlight the community’s heritage.” • “Work on cleaning up our own community. Our sidewalks need to be redone.”
Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “With 4 campgrounds, an RV repair shop would be appreciated! Fully stocked parts department would save campers a trip to Steinbach or the City.” • “A café/ice cream shop ... retro?” • “Crafts, Canadian made goods, locally produced products.” • “A welcoming “open door” shop with Cultural gifts, art, and preserves– Indigenous, Ukrainian, polish, Mennonite, etc.”
Financial Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Lower taxes within the LUD of Emerson.” • “Give away empty town lots for free to people looking to build homes within a time frame. (Plum Coulee did this)”
Other Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Consistent and reliable cell and internet service throughout every community in the municipality.” • “Look at fixing LUD of Emerson’s underground sewer and drainage systems.” • Increase the high of the hydro and telephone lines on the truck route so that farm machine can go through the town safer.” • “Keeping our schools and having a Doctor in town is a big attraction. Keeping our skating rink and swimming pool going is also an attraction to young families.”

Question 6. Please feel free to leave any further comments, questions or concerns below.

- “You have to make people want to live here, and solely focusing on creating more jobs will not bring people in. Once people want to live here, businesses and jobs will follow.”
- “Would like to know where the proposed Economic Development Zone is along Hwy. 75 Would like to know the outcome of this survey. CDC Board should have a Public meeting to let the community know the results of this survey and what their next plan ahead is.”
- “More signage is needed to promote what Emerson has to offer – perhaps along highway 29 in North Dakota and along Highway 75.”

Next Steps

Placemaking Toolkit

The survey results outline a number of ideas and qualities on how to celebrate community character, draw investment at the Port of Entry, and improve infrastructure. A Placemaking workbook has been created as a tool to specify and further build upon these unique tourism and community-building qualities in Emerson-Franklin. You may download a copy of the workbook from our website. Alternatively, you may contact the CDC directly to request a mail-out copy of the workbook.

Tourism Action Plan

Ideas gathered from the survey, workbook and AGM will help establish a Tourism Action Plan which will structure the investment and development of tourism activities to be undertaken by the CDC between 2020-2022.

CDC Annual General Meeting - September 22, 2020

The CDC Annual General Meeting is scheduled to take place at **7:00 p.m. September 22, 2020**, Dominion City Community Hall. Please visit our website for updates at www.emersonfranklincdc.com.

Appendix A

EMERSON-FRANKLIN NEWSLETTER SURVEY

SPRING 2020

We want to hear your ideas/feedback on how to continue the momentum forward. Please spend 5-10 minutes answering these questions to help guide CDC activities for 2020-2021.

1. The 'Best Bets' for growing tourism activity in Emerson-Franklin focus on the Port of Entry, heritage identity, nature-based attractions, campgrounds and festivals, and agricultural tourism. What are your ideas on how to improve these qualities in your community?

Port of Entry

Heritage Identity

Nature-based

Campgrounds & Festivals

Agriculture

2. What attractions are you most likely to recommend to a friend or relative?

3. A Tourism Study undertaken by the CDC outlines ideas on how to celebrate the unique features of each community. This might include investing in street decor, seasonal events, or other public spaces. What ideas do you have on how to celebrate your community's identity?

Please specify your community/municipality

4. A Port Authority Concept Study undertaken by the CDC outlines the possibility of developing lands near the Emerson Port of Entry into a regional commercial/industrial hub. What type(s) of commercial (e.g. restaurants, shops, hotel) and industrial activity (e.g. warehousing, milling, truck maintenance) do you envision at the Emerson Port of Entry?

5. An objective of the CDC is to attract economic opportunities by ensuring a fair level of infrastructure and services are in place for residents and investors. What improvements do you think are needed in your community in order to attract families and business, while helping to retain youth and aging populations?

6. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey questionnaire. Please feel free to leave any further comments, questions or concerns below. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Emerson-Franklin



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