

# **Report to Government**

**Public Consultation Committee  
On the proposed  
“New Women’s Jail”**

**March 23, 2005**

## Executive Summary

The Public Consultation Committee, assigned to seek input from the public and provide advice to Government on the replacement of the Portage Women's Jail, acted on the basis of two possible scenarios:

1. The most appropriate location for a Correctional facility, should a decision be taken that one all encompassing facility be established.
2. The most appropriate location or locations, should a healing lodge type facility in addition to a conventional medium security correctional centre be recommended.

Based on these consultations, the Committee puts forth the following recommendations for Government to consider:

- The Committee is strongly of the view that Manitoba's services to incarcerated women should ideally consist of three components:
  1. A conventional facility that can provide a wide range of Correctional Programs and Services that is culturally appropriate and based on a woman's centered approach.
  2. A Healing Lodge facility that can provide culturally appropriate programming and that focuses on longer term sentenced aboriginal women.
  3. Transitional housing and assistance to allow those released from custody to reconnect with the community in a positive way.
- It is the view of the committee that a single conventional facility could not meet the continuum of needs that exist for those women in Provincial custody. It is the opinion of the committee that a conventional facility should be located in the Headingley/St. Francois Xavier area. In its deliberations, the Committee is strongly aware of the fact that over 70% of Provincial women inmates are Winnipeg residents. The Committee feels that the ability to conduct and maintain regular family visits and contact would greatly be enhanced by locating a facility closer to the Winnipeg area. A location adjacent to the City of Winnipeg will also facilitate regular and easy access to legal counsel and to specialized community services and program providers. The Committee is also mindful that existing Correctional employees residing in the Portage La Prairie area could commute to this location, as expressed by a great many staff during the consultation process. As a consequence the economic impacts on the Portage area are expected to be minimal.

The Committee also noted that the majority of women in custody are in remand status and as such need to be able to appear in Court, primarily in Winnipeg.
- The Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge located in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan should serve as a model for the proposed Manitoba Healing Lodge. Further; it is

recommended that a “Council of Elders” be involved in adapting this model for use in Manitoba. The Committee is of the opinion that the design of the Healing Lodge be similar to that of Okimaw Ohci.

- It is recommended that the proposed Manitoba Healing Lodge be located in the vicinity of the Portage La Prairie area and that residents housed there be those with longer sentences. For the healing and change process to occur, a minimum 6 month residency period is advisable. The women placed at the Healing Lodge need to meet established criteria and be of Low Risk to the community.
- The Committee recommends that following the establishment of a Southern Healing Lodge and after a period of time, an evaluation occur to determine if a similar facility could be established in Northern Manitoba, if it is determined there is a sufficient need to warrant a second Healing Lodge.
- The Committee recommends that partnerships occur to establish transitional housing resources, located in the City of Winnipeg and be community owned and operated, offering culturally appropriate programming. It is essential that the healing lodge and transitional housing serve women only. Any pressures to establish co-gender facilities should be strenuously resisted.
- The Committee, in drafting its recommendations anticipates the active participation of the Correctional Service of Canada in the establishment of the Correctional Centre and Healing Lodge facilities and expresses the hope that a similar level of interest will exist relative to transitional housing resources.
- The Committee will present a series of recommendations concerning the physical structure and programming requirements for the proposed new facilities, in a more detailed report that focuses on the needs the women’s correctional facility should address. Among these are that specialized mother and child units; special needs and maximum security spaces and a culturally appropriate healing room (round room) be included in the design of the new facility.
- The Committee recommends aggressive staff hiring initiatives, which will see recruitment of more aboriginal women to work with the large percentage of aboriginal women residing in either facility.
- The Committee recommends that enhanced culturally appropriate and gender based training and programs be provided to all existing and new staff hired to work in these facilities.
- The Committee strongly recommends that the placement of women in conflict with the law, see the use of the proposed Healing Lodge and Transitional Housing as alternatives to incarceration in a conventional facility.

- The Committee acknowledges that the recommendations of this report are compatible with the position paper from the Correctional Service of Canada, concerning their involvement in the construction of a new facility(s) in Manitoba.

### **Preamble**

On December 20, 2004, Attorney General Gord Mackintosh jointly with Transportation and Government Services Minister Ron Lemieux, announced the formation of a Consultation Committee, to seek public input and provide advise to the Government of Manitoba, concerning the plans to replace the aging Portage Correctional Centre, a female detention facility in the City of Portage La Prairie. The Committee, chaired by Ms. Lucille Bruce with the assistance of committee members Ms. Gladys Cook and Mr. Dick Scott, were tasked with studying the issues surrounding the selection of a new site and providing recommendations to Government by March 31, 2005.

For this task, the Committee took into consideration:

- How and where consultations should take place;
- What building location optimizes the program goals for the facility including safety and security considerations, the potential to support family and community contacts, and to strengthen programming that helps offenders re-enter the community;
- What location is closest to the range and continuum of services that support the ongoing needs of a correctional facility including emergency care;
- The regional economic impacts and job labour market implications of the locations under consideration;
- The level of stakeholder and local community acceptance of a correctional facility site;
- Whether a single conventional correctional facility will meet Manitoba's needs or whether a Healing Lodge facility may be required as well;
- A comparison of the estimated costs of operating from the locations under consideration; and
- The location preferences of potential funding partner agencies such as the Correctional service of Canada.

For this process to occur, the Committee established three Public Hearings, which were held in the City of Portage La Prairie, The City of Winnipeg and the City of Thompson respectively. In addition to the public hearings, the Committee held private meetings and had an opportunity to tour various Manitoba Corrections Centres as well as the Correctional Service of Canada operated "Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge" in Maple Creek Saskatchewan. As a part of this process, the Committee also felt it extremely important to hear from women currently residing in the existing Portage Correctional Centre, as well as from the corrections staff working at the facility.

This endeavor in its entirety garnered substantial input from the community at large, including advocacy groups, local governments, businesses and the general public, all of which will be identified at the end of this report. The Committee wishes to acknowledge

and thank the representative groups who provided valuable input and information, during the process of these consultations.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations and summations are based on the findings of the committee during the process of the consultative process. The Committee feels strongly that these recommendations will serve to enhance the security, safety and programming needs of women who come into conflict with the law, in addition to recognizing the alternatives to traditional sentencing options in the form of Healing Lodges and Transitional Housing options for women re-entering the community.

The Committee is strongly of the view that Manitoba's services to incarcerated women should ideally consist of three components:

1. A conventional facility that can provide a wide range of Correctional Programs and Services that is culturally appropriate and based on a woman's centered approach.
2. A Healing Lodge facility that can provide culturally appropriate programming and that focuses on longer term "sentenced" aboriginal women.
3. Transitional housing and assistance to allow those released from custody to reconnect with the community in a positive way.

### Recommendation 1

**It is the view of the Committee that a single conventional facility will not meet the continuum of needs that exist for those women in Federal and Provincial custody. It is the opinion of the Committee that a conventional facility should be located in the Headingley/St. Francois Xavier, Manitoba area.**

**Commentary:** The Committee recognizes that the replacement of the Portage Correctional Centre for women is of significant importance and that any action to initiate this process should proceed expeditiously. Through its deliberations, the committee is strongly aware of the fact that over 70% of Provincial inmates are Winnipeg residents. Of particular note are statistics that suggest this segment of the prison population is on the rise.

With these facts in mind, the Committee is of the opinion that any facility established for the housing of women residents, must meet a wide range of service and programming requirements, closest to a major centre where access to these resources is readily accessible. The Committee also feels maintaining regular family visits and contacts, is a necessity in keeping residents connected to the community. The location of a facility closer to the Winnipeg City area would enhance these contacts. Additionally, a location adjacent to the City of Winnipeg would facilitate easy access to legal counsel

and specialized community services and program providers. It should be noted further that a location closer to Winnipeg would make for easier access and transportation to Court services, where the majority of the women's individual cases are heard. These facts were made pointedly clear and reflected during discussions with current residents and staff of the Portage Correctional Centre.

Among the location criteria expressed by Correctional Services of Canada was access to a teaching hospital. The recommended location of greater interest is that during interviews with "Manitoba women" residing at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, the themes reflected by the women were reminiscent of discussions at Portage Correctional Centre.

Where it concerns the existing staff of the Portage Correctional Centre, the committee feels that a location in the vicinity of the Headingley/St. Francois Xavier area would mean a commute to the work site, but one far less intrusive or difficult with a placement within the perimeter of the City of Winnipeg. The further benefit of this is that families residing in the Portage La Prairie area would not need to leave the community or have concern with seeking other employment opportunities. During the Committee's discussions with staff, a great many indicated that although they would prefer to have a facility remain in the Portage La Prairie area (those who live in the Portage area), that a commute to a location as described would be acceptable. This is of great importance as the employability of the existing staff would remain intact.

As a consequence, it is anticipated that the proposed location would have a minimal economic impact on the City of Portage La Prairie. The possibility exists that an increased number of job opportunities will exist for Portage residents in light of the fact that the proposed facility is anticipated to require a substantially larger workforce than the existing Portage facility.

## **Recommendation 2**

**The Committee recommends that the Government of Manitoba establish a Healing Lodge for sentenced women, of which the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge located outside of Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, serves as a model. The Committee is of the opinion that the size and design of the Healing Lodge be similar to the 28 bed capacity of Okimaw Ohci. The Committee further recommends that the Manitoba Healing Lodge be guided in its development and implementation, by an appointed Counsel of Elders.**

**Commentary:** The Committee had an opportunity during the consultative process, to tour the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge, located in the Cypress Hills near Maple Creek, Saskatchewan. Through this tour and opportunity to speak with offenders and staff, The Committee received a great appreciation for the benefits of establishing such a facility and the impacts on the women being housed there. Of greatest value was the opportunity for the Committee to speak with several Federal inmates who were Manitoba residents (including many who had previously served sentences in Portage) who repeated the views expressed by women currently incarcerated in Portage. Without exception both inmate groups expressed a desire to see the location of a new facility closer to Winnipeg. Their

reasons were to better maintain family contacts, better access to program resources and specialized services, as well as court.

The Committee also learned through this process, in discussion with the women at Okimaw Ohci and Portage Correctional that many women will request sentencing options that see them having to serve Federal time, as opposed to receiving a Provincial sentence, where a term of confinement would be served at the Portage Jail. This action typically sees the women being transferred even further from their home province, but provided them with better opportunities for programming, education and accommodation during their sentence.

On the subject of the Healing Lodge, statistics provided through the Correctional Service of Canada indicate that better than 78% of the women leave the facility on early parole and further, that the rate of women becoming re-involved with the law is significantly lower as compared to other Canadian women's Correctional Centres. The women who attend to Okimaw Ohci are there with a desired wish to change and move on with life in a more meaningful and positive way. In some cases, women have actually waived their eligibility for parole, to better prepare themselves for when they are released. This determination factors in, as well as the enhanced programming opportunities, a focused and well entrenched culturally appropriate methodology to the healing journey of these women.

One of the main and probably most crucial aspects to the success of this facility is that the barriers existing with the typical custodial setting are removed, simply by the way staff and offenders relate to each other, specifically like family. Line staff is referred to as "big sisters" while the Director is referred to as the Kikawinaw (Our Mother).

The Committee is strongly of the view that as the Government endeavors to establish a process to construct a Healing Lodge that they seek the input of an appointed Counsel of Elders, to ensure that the appropriate considerations are taken into account when designing the facilities and relevant programs. This counsel of elders is to serve as an advisory group for the design and transitional implementation teams.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Committee recommends that a "Southern Healing Lodge" be established in the vicinity of Portage La Prairie and that after a period of time, an evaluation occur to determine if a similar facility could be established in Northern Manitoba, should it be determined there are sufficient needs to warrant a second Healing lodge.**

**Commentary:** The Committee recognizes the need to establish a Healing Lodge for sentenced aboriginal women in Manitoba. This recognition stems from the need to see alternative placements for low risk women within the Manitoba Corrections system and one that is culturally based, offering an element of spirituality to the process of healing and re-connecting with the community. The Committee feels very strongly that women placed at the Healing Lodge must meet specific criteria (similar to Okimaw Ohci), and be subject to a residency of a minimum of 6 months, in order for the healing and change processes to occur. The Committee is of the opinion that the Manitoba Healing Lodge should not be co-gender and any pressures to move in this direction should be strenuously resisted.

After a period of evaluation (to be determined) and based on need, the Government of Manitoba should analyze the feasibility of establishing a Northern Healing Lodge for sentenced aboriginal women.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**The Committee recommends that the Government of Manitoba invest in a wider range of program delivery options to women incarcerated within the Corrections system. These programs should be focused on providing women with an equal range of programs and services as male offenders, for opportunities to seek positive change.**

**Commentary:** During its process of discovery, the Committee discovered that the range of service and programs offered to women offenders was less than that of their male counterparts. In conducting its research of program offerings in other Canadian jurisdictions, the Committee became aware of and advises Government to look into the following options, which are inclusive but not limited to:

- Work Placements through Prison Industries
- Work assignments through operational requirements (i.e. laundry, cleaning, kitchen, maintenance, etc)
- Basic Literacy (Grades 1 to 5)
- Adult Basic Education (Grades 5 to 10)
- G.E.D. (Grade 12 equivalency)
- Correspondence Classes (regular high school / university and/or college through established partnerships with the respective learning institution)
- Family Literacy programs ( a program that teaches inmates how to read to their children and access authors and books appropriate for the ages of their children)
- Art & Crafts Programs
- Native History & Culture Programs
- Creative Writing workshops
- Computer Learning
- Special interest projects (i.e. resume writing, poster making, aboriginal artwork, etc)
- Library Services
- Women's Substance Abuse Programming
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Addictions Awareness
- Special workshops relating to women ( Health Matters, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effect)
- Holistic Self Care Programs
- Children's Visiting Programs ( program developed to strengthen relationships between incarcerated women and their children through culturally relevant holistic approaches)
- Anger Management



- HIV/AIDS/HEP C education & prevention and harm reduction

In addition to the above noted, the Committee is of the opinion that incarcerated women have access to special activities such as cultural events in the areas of:

- Round Dances
- Family Day
- Winter Festival
- Summer Sports Day
- Sharing Circles
- Sweat Lodges
- Feasts
- Women's ceremonies and teachings
- Powwow's

### **Recommendation 5**

**The Committee recommends that the conventional facility and the Healing Lodge incorporate accommodation plans for specialized Mother / Child living arrangements, in addition to child friendly visitation spaces.**

**Commentary:** The Committee feels that the provision of Mother /Child accommodations is a positive step in maintaining the nurturing bond between mother and child, of which is critically important in the formative years of a child (birth to 4 years old). In most cases, women who give birth while incarcerated are subject to having their child removed from them to be placed into the care of the inmates' family or be made wards of the province. In Manitoba, for those mothers who would be eligible to care for their child in a custody setting, this option is not possible due to the physical structure constraints of the existing facilities. The Committee advises that where possible, women who meet the criteria have access to care for their children in specialized units within the confines of the conventional correctional facility or the Healing Lodge.

The Committee further is of the opinion that "child friendly" visiting spaces be incorporated into the design of the facilities, for a more positive experience during mother/child visitations.

### **Recommendation 6**

**The Committee recommends that the new conventional correctional facility incorporate appropriate living accommodations, for women who are requiring maximum security and/or special needs.**

**Commentary:** The Committee in its tours of the various correctional facilities recognizes that attention must be paid to the appropriate living accommodations and design features for the housing of maximum security and/or special needs offenders.

This is inclusive of harm reduction designed rooms, surveillance capabilities, drainage, colour schemes, staffing requirements and specialized approaches in working with these classifications of women.

### **Recommendation 7**

**The Committee recommends that the Government of Manitoba establish partnerships for the development of Transitional Housing resources in the City of Winnipeg that are community owned and operated, offering culturally appropriate programming to women.**

**Commentary:** Many women, who leave custody, re-enter the community without being prepared for their return. In most cases, this results in returning to the same set of circumstances which originally brought them into conflict with the law. To better prepare these women, the Committee advises the Government that the establishment of partnerships with Transitional Housing resources would be a meaningful way to have women better prepare themselves to deal with a return to the community, by providing the resources to assist them in getting “back on their feet”. Transitional housing would directly link these women to a vast network of aboriginal resources in the community, to provide the necessities of positive change. The Transitional Housing resources must be those that are community owned and operated, providing a culturally appropriate and women’s centered approach.

This issue was not originally in the scope of the Committee’s mandate, but throughout discussions became a primary consideration, due to the reality of what women face when leaving a term of incarceration. It is hoped that as these partnerships occur, that in time placement into a transitional home, could replace traditional jail sentences for low risk women offenders.

### **Recommendation 8**

**The Committee recommends that the Government of Manitoba incorporate enhanced culturally appropriate training programs to all new and existing staff who will be working in the new facilities. The Committee further recommends that all staff working in the conventional facility and Healing Lodge be trained in offering programs and services that are “women’s centred”.**

**Commentary:** The Committee in its deliberations is strongly of the view that the Government must place a greater emphasis on the application of culturally appropriate programming to staff, in the delivery of service and programs to the offender. The Committee strongly feels that working with women in the correctional environment is not the same as working with the male population and that training and programs focusing on a women’s centered approach must be incorporated in the conventional facility and the proposed Healing Lodge. Women have unique needs that cannot be met with the traditional methods of incarceration; the Government is advised to develop/implement approaches to deal with these challenges.

### **Recommendation 9**

**The Committee recommends that the Government undertake on aggressive staff hiring initiatives, which will see the recruitment of more aboriginal women to the Correctional Officer profession, to balance the over-represented population of aboriginal women offenders within the Corrections system.**

**Commentary:** The Committee recognizes that aboriginal women in custody, contributes to the major portion of the women population within Manitoba Corrections. To better reflect the needs of aboriginal women and the provision of spiritual assistance, the Committee is of the opinion that more must be done to see the recruitment of aboriginal female staff. The Committee recommends that linkages be sought with the vast aboriginal resources and service providers to attract and recruit women to the Correctional Officer profession.

### **Recommendation 10**

**The Committee recommends that when planning the design of the conventional Correctional Centre and the Healing Lodge, that consideration be taken for the potential for expansion in living accommodation in addition to ensuring appropriate storage facilities.**

**Commentary:** Through the committee's tours and discussions with staff during the consultative process, the committee became aware of and was advised that space considerations are at a premium in the facilities. This is true in both the Provincial and Federal corrections systems. The Committee recommends that when the design process occurs, that appropriate consideration is given for the potential for expansion of living accommodations and further that provisions be made for "ample" storage capacity at either facility.

### **Recommendation 11**

**The Committee recommends that an appropriate level of Health Care services be developed for the new facilities, inclusive of; 24/7 nursing, enhanced access to specialized services and appropriate Health Care Units.**

**Commentary:** The Committee feels strongly that when developing Health Care services for the new facilities that special attention should be paid to the unique needs of women. It is of the understanding of the Committee that the general needs of incarcerated women is much different than those of males and that a "higher level" of service is required. Any new conventional facility is recommended to be equipped with 24/7 nursing and health service coverage, in addition to providing the appropriate space for triage and observation purposes. Women offenders should have appropriate access to medical and counseling professionals to address required needs.

### **Recommendation 12**

**The committee recommends that the operating cost for the locations under consideration does not materially differ regardless of the location if it is within a 100km radius of the City of Winnipeg.**

**Commentary:** The Committee was charged with considering the operating costs of operating from the locations under consideration. Based on information provided by officials from the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation and Government Services construction costs would not significantly differ between a near Winnipeg or a Portage area location. Minor reductions in operating costs would be experienced relating to transporting prisoners to Winnipeg Courts the closer the facility is to these Courts. The largest costs associated with operating Correctional facilities relate to the payment of staff salaries. These would not vary regardless of the location chosen

### **Recommendation 13**

**The Committee views the location preferences of the Correctional Service of Canada as being complementary to the recommendations of the Committee with regards to the location of both the conventional correctional facility and the healing lodge.**

**Commentary:** Specific comments relative to the location of the recommended facility received in a position paper from the Correctional Service of Canada were:

- Located as close as possible to the women's home communities. Within 100 km of essential community resources defined as a university or college, a range of mental health services, a teaching hospital and an Aboriginal community.

The committee notes that CSC would require "at least 20 beds" and that "These beds would be used for minimum/medium security women only" The committee was advised that there were 28 women given federal sentences in Manitoba in 2003-2004. Of these 18 were Aboriginal women. Twenty-four of the federal offenders were from the Winnipeg area.

### **Summation**

The Committee wishes to express to Government their honour in being appointed to be involved in the consultative process, concerning the replacement of the Portage Women's Jail. This task was immense in scope and the Committee took into consideration very seriously the information and input acquired during this discovery process. The Committee focused very much on the need to see a balance in the delivery of service to women offenders, specifically to the realities of an over represented aboriginal population. With this in mind, these recommendations seek to address the need to build in and focus on aboriginal culturally appropriate methodologies, which can be incorporated into the staffing and delivery of service and programs to women offenders.

In closing, we the Committee, submit these recommendations for consideration of Government, signed this day of March 23, 2005.

---

**Lucille Bruce, Committee Chair**

---

**Gladys Cook, Committee Member**

---

**Dick Scott, Committee Member**

Submitted: March 23, 2005

## Addendum

The Committee would like to acknowledge the following individuals, organizations, councils and local governments for their valuable input into this process:

### Portage La Prairie Public Hearing

**Mayor Ian MacKenzie - The City of Portage La Prairie,**  
**Reeve Jim Knight - The Rural Municipality of Portage La Prairie**  
**Chief Dennis Meeches – Long Plain First Nation**  
**Louis Lapointe**  
**Darren Van Den Barsche – Portage Labour Council**  
**Dave Omichinski – Portage Credit Union**  
**Lori Grenkow – Red River College Portage Campus**  
**Angela Roulette**  
**Garda Sinclair-Moran – Portage Friendship Centre**  
**Peter Yellowquill – Yellowquill Band, Portage La Prairie**  
**Sheila Yellowquill**  
**Harvey Carmichael**  
**Dennis Hallick – Portage School District**  
**Jim Ross**  
**Ed Neveau**  
**Chris Dyer – Portage Chamber of Commerce**  
**Honourable David Faurschou – MLA, Portage**

### Winnipeg Public Hearing

**Debra Parkes – Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba**  
**Cindy Brass – Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba**  
**Cheryl Tanner – North End Women’s Centre**  
**Nahanni Fontaine - Southern Chiefs Organization**  
**Edith Regier – Crossing Communities Art Project**  
**Charlene Lafreniere – Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin**  
**Wanda Ferland – Native Women’s Transition Centre**  
**S. Flett – Native Women’s Transition Centre**  
**Gloria Enns – Sage House**  
**Horace Massan**  
**D. Robinson – Mamawiwichiitata Centre Inc.**  
**Dennis Chartrand - Mamawiwichiitata Centre Inc.**  
**Geri Grayeyes**  
**Leslie Spillett – Mother of Red Nations Women’s Council**  
**Marilyn Courchene – Sagkeeng Clan Mothers**  
**Percy Bird**  
**Sharon Johnson**  
**Grand Chief Dennis WhiteBird – Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**  
**Gail Sweetland**

## Thompson Public Hearing

**Catherine Spence – Executive Coordinator, Northern Aids Initiative**  
**Mayor Ian MacKenzie – City of Portage La Prairie**  
**Sharyn French-Silinski – Long Plain First Nation**  
**Frieda Lapine - Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin**  
**Mayor Bill Comasky – City of Thompson**  
**Chief Ron Evans – Norway House Cree Nation**  
**Freda Lepine – Northern Aboriginal Iskwewak**  
**Diana Delaronde-Colomb – Wabowden Community Council**  
**Mayor Garry Zamzow – Town of Snow Lake**

## Formal Submissions

**Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies**  
**Manitoba Elizabeth Fry Society**  
**Crossing Communities Art Project**  
**Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin**  
**Northern Aboriginal Iskwewak**  
**The Town of Snow Lake**  
**The City of Portage La Prairie**  
**Rural Municipality of Portage La Prairie**  
**Long Plains First Nation**  
**City of Brandon**  
**Native Women's Transition Centre**  
**Portage La Prairie Chamber of Commerce**  
**Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**  
**Four Season Clan Mothers**  
**Wabowden Community Council**  
**City of Thompson**  
**Portage Credit Union**  
**Manitoba Government and General Employees Union, Portage Office**  
**Town of Lynn Lake**  
**Town of Leaf Rapids**  
**Rural Municipality of St. Laurent**  
**Swampy Cree Tribal Council**

## Letters of the Committee

**Brian Pallister, Member of Parliament, Portage-Lisgar**  
**Portage Neighborhood Connections Inc.**  
**Southport Aerospace Centre Inc.**  
**Portage Friendship Centre**  
**Portage La Prairie School Division**  
**Portage La Prairie Chamber of Commerce**  
**Portage Community Network**  
**Portage La Prairie Labour Council**  
**Prairie Abattoir**  
**Doreen Hart**

**Howard Massan**  
**Stephanie Sinclair**  
**CFRY/Mix 96.5 FM, Portage La Prairie**  
**Portage A.R.C. Industries**  
**Curves Fitness Centre, Portage La Prairie**  
**Austin Credit Union**  
**Heartland Community Futures Development Corporation**  
**Portage Plains United Way**  
**Dino's Appliance Sales & Service**  
**Travel Quest**  
**Steve Bergson**  
**Meyers Norris Penny LLP**

E-mail to the Committee

**Sandra Delaronde**  
**Sandy Trudel**  
**Shannon Empson**  
**Robert W. Bazylewski**  
**Howard Massan**  
**Garry Hanna**  
**Frank Bloodworth**  
**Edith Regier**  
**Diane Ludwig**  
**Debra Parkes**  
**Paula Benson**  
**William Whyte**