

LANDMARKS



**Significant Heritage Buildings of the
Town of Minnedosa**



This project has been developed by Heritage Manitoba on behalf of the Town of Minnedosa.

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2026

On the cover: View of Minnedosa ca. 1900 (Archives of Manitoba).

Landmarks

Significant Heritage Buildings of the Town of Minnedosa

In 2008, the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism developed an initiative called *Special Places: Identifying A Community's Best Heritage Sites*. The introductory guidebook for the initiative describes the intent of these kinds of projects: "A community's historical evolution is presented in concrete form by its surviving buildings, structures and sites. These places, which together define the range of community life, from the modest houses and utilitarian commercial operations, to the inspiring and dramatic churches, schools and public buildings, are the final and resolute expression of a community's past and of its character.

"The scores of buildings that together define any community, are too numerous and even complex to put into a meaningful and cogent story. For heritage purposes this kind of challenge is usually met by identifying a few key buildings, structures and sites that can be shown to sum up significant aspects of local history. These places are the ones that can most effectively stand in for the others, and define important qualities and themes of the whole community.

"Developing this list of notable buildings and sites starts with an inventory, which is then reduced to increasingly smaller numbers through analysis and assessment, until those with major historic significance have been identified."

The Special Places initiative is being undertaken in 44 communities and rural municipalities across Manitoba, with all steps and activities developed according to the best-practices approaches of Historic Resources Branch (HRB).

The Minnedosa Special Places project was undertaken in 2009-2010, with the first stage being the creation of a comprehensive and detailed inventory of sites of potential heritage interest. That inventory, which ultimately featured 143 buildings and sites, was carried out by a consultant secured by HRB. Follow-up assessments and final evaluations were carried out in 2026.

The final “short list” of 13 buildings and sites ultimately determined to effectively sum up the main historical and architectural themes that define the Town of Minnedosa include these selected places:

Buildings

Minnedosa Court House

70 3rd Avenue SW

Former Minnedosa Dominion Post Office

103 Main Street South

Canadian Pacific Railway Station

Railway Avenue at Main Street North

St. Mark’s Anglican Church

108 2nd Avenue SW

Phelps Store

50 Main Street North

Former Bank of Hamilton

76 Main Street South

Tilson Place

149 – 2nd Avenue SW

McKay House

110 – 4th Street SE

McMillan House

225 Main Street SW

Currie House

66 – 3rd Avenue SE

Sites

Minnedosa War Memorial

Main Street at 1st Avenue SE (Water Avenue)

Minnedosa Cemetery

2nd Avenue SE

Minnedosa & District Heritage Village

100 Heritage Park Crescent

Each building and site on the short list is presented on the following pages with an accompanying Heritage Value Statement that elucidates that building or site’s key heritage attributes. This kind of text is one of the ultimate goals of a Special Places project. The Heritage Value Statements that have been developed here are based on an initiative inaugurated in the early 2000s by Parks Canada in association with all provinces and territories, including Manitoba. The project was called the Historic Places Initiative (HPI), and its goal was to develop a pan-Canadian approach to heritage conservation and communication.

An important aspect of HPI was to develop consistent and reliable approaches that would clarify what makes certain buildings and sites historically significant. The Heritage Value Statement was a key part of that process. HPI documents note that such a statement “seeks to identify what matters and why. It explains why a historic place is important to the community.

Naming the heritage values of a place makes it possible to identify the physical qualities that express its values, and also helps determine what aspects of the place need to be conserved.”

It goes on: “Heritage value is what makes a historic place significant to a community of people. It is comprised of the many meanings and values that people attach to a place. Traditionally, historic places have been valued mainly for their historical associations and/or architectural importance.” It is this approach that has been used for the Swan Valley Region Special Places project.

As a collection, these buildings and sites define many aspects and themes from each municipality’s past, and do so through places that are at once significant, but also interesting and attractive. They are places that the people of the municipalities can look to with pride. These places remind us of past glories, but also suggest an enduring sense of community.

Minnedosa Court House



(1920 Charles Meyers)

70 3rd Avenue SW

The Minnedosa Court House is the most historically significant building in the community, at once a symbol of Minnedosa's important place in the province's judicial system—one of just nine historic court houses still standing—and our finest piece of architectural design. The Minnedosa structure (completed in 1910) is an elegant and innovative piece of design, planned by Samuel Hooper, the Provincial Architect from 1904-1911. Developed on an L-shaped plan, the main entrance was situated at a corner, rather than at the centre of one of the main facades, creating a dramatic situation, emphasized with a handsome cupola rising above the roof line. Carried out in the Classical Revival style, Mr. Hooper combined fine limestone blocks on the main floor with red brick on the second level to create a striking contrast. The building is at once functional, containing courtrooms, a jail and clerk's office, and beautiful.

Former Minnedosa Dominion Post Office



103 Main Street S

The landmark Minnedosa Dominion Post Office, designed in an eclectic style drawn from various architectural traditions, is a fine example of the type of multi-purpose structures the federal government erected in medium-sized centres prior to 1914. Designed by Chief Architect David Ewart of the Department of Public Works, the facility's layout combined a number of functions, including a customs office, inland revenue, an examining warehouse, a residence and, in later years, Royal Canadian Mounted Police offices. The first of four nearly identical post offices erected in regional centres in Manitoba, this building was well-adapted to its role, serving Minnedosa and the surrounding community for nearly six decades. An outstanding community symbol, the building continues to accommodate numerous public functions. The Minnedosa Dominion Post Office is a Municipal Heritage Site.

Canadian Pacific Railway Station



Railway Ave at Main Street North

More than any other building from the early twentieth century, the railway station was the built symbol of progress and hope. It was where the powerful steam locomotive and trains of cars roared to impressive stops and it was where mail, passengers and cargo arrived, often in a frenzy of activity. The railway companies designed sets of standardized buildings for use throughout their systems. At Minnedosa, the Canadian Pacific Railway built this station in 1910, replacing an earlier building that had succumbed to fire. With its broad expanse of roof, interesting dormers and generous fenestration, it is an excellent example of its type.

St. Mark's Anglican Church



108 2nd Avenue SW

St. Mark's Anglican Church is the community's finest example of church architecture. Built in 1903-04 to replace the first church, from 1885, St. Mark's is an exquisite example of church design. Built on a cruciform plan, with two extending sections toward the altar area, the church features a subdued interpretation of the Gothic Revival style, the preferred architectural vocabulary for Protestant church buildings of the time. Hallmarks of the style, like the steeply pitched roofs and pointed windows, are here combined with reddish granite blocks that are set off with red-tinted window surrounds. The site also features a rare Manitoba example of a lych gate, a traditional feature of old English churches that was used during funeral services – providing shelter for a coffin and mourners before a burial.

Former Bank of Hamilton



76 Main Street South

The Bank of Hamilton arrived in Minnedosa in 1902 and built this impressive building in 1910. In its architecture the building combines two essential qualities that every bank operation employed in the early 1900s – a sense of strength and stability and of quiet sophistication. And the style that banks invariably turned to was Classical Revival, with its symmetrical facades, flat roofs, orderly fenestration, and details like the ones seen here – pilasters on the main façade and a deep cornice encircling the building towards the roofline. The Minnedosa building was veneered with red brick and highlighted with limestone lintels over doors and windows. Later a Bank of Commerce, the building has renewed life as lawyers' offices.

Phelps Store



50 Main Street N

Originally Phelps' Store and later Chipperfield's, this building (built in 1909) is the best remaining Minnedosa example recalling the kind of large, sturdy operations that defined the commercial throughfares of every Manitoba community in the early twentieth century. With its bulky form, containing a wide range of goods, and impressive Romanesque Revival architecture—with features like broad brick corbel tables at the front cornice and large round-arched windows—the old store is a landmark along Minnedosa's Main Street. Where most other Minnedosa storefronts have been had their facades updated, the old Phelps' Store remains as a distinct reminder of an older and more substantial aesthetic.

Tilson Place



149 – 2nd Avenue SW

The Myers House is one of the most substantial and refined Queen Anne Revival-style dwellings found in modestly sized communities in southwestern Manitoba. To create interest and a sense of elegance, its design relies on a balanced massing of elements and various shapes, angles and building materials, rather than an abundance of ornamentation. The home also is noted for its large well-planned site and rich interior. Built for Judge Robert Hill Myers and his family in 1902, the structure is an important feature of the historic development of Minnedosa and a landmark in the community. The Myers House is a Municipal Heritage Site.

McKay House



110 – 4th Street SE

Like many other immigrants from Ontario who arrived in Manitoba during the 1880s, James and Mary Jane McKay toiled for almost ten years before they could build a house of suitable size and architectural appeal. James McKay was a skilled stonemason and carpenter and was able to complete the design and construction in 1892. The McKay House is actually Minnedosa's premier example that combines two locally favoured architectural qualities – the Southern Ontario Gothic Revival style and the use of local granite fieldstones. The Southern Ontario Gothic style is expressed here with an L-shaped plan, steep roofs with decorative bargeboards and a little dormer on the long side. A finely detailed wooden verandah links the two sections of the plan. The McKay House is a Municipal Heritage Site.

McMillan House



225 Main Street SW

There are still several stately brick homes in Minnedosa, with one of the most distinctive being the former McMillan House. Built in 1903-04 for John (a merchant and businessman) and his wife Annie, the house is a major statement – a grand two-storey structure with a tall roof and large dormers. Its signature feature is the projecting entrance bay, topped with a steep bellcast roof. Mr. McMillan ensured that his residence reflected his local status, with the site originally featuring a tennis court and a stable for his prized driving horses.

Currie House



66 – 3rd Avenue SE

Many early Minnedosa residents, of lesser means than their merchant and professional neighbours, could still satisfy their architectural ambitions with impressive smaller houses. One especially distinctive example was built for the C.H. Currie family in 1896. For their home, the Curries looked to a popular style of the day—Second Empire, with its distinctive steep mansard roof, and twinned dormers on each roof face—and then formed the walls with cut granite fieldstones. In its modest size, and careful detailing, the house is a jewel. It is possible that the stones for this building came from a locally renowned site, known as Stone Quarry Hill (about five miles southwest of town), where most of the material for local building projects was extracted.

Minnedosa War Memorial



Main Street at 1st Avenue SE (Water Avenue)

The Minnedosa War Memorial, a tall, elegant obelisk, set in a carefully manicured park on Minnedosa's Main Street, is one of 201 sombre dedications to Manitoba men and women lost to war. The details of the Minnedosa memorial (unveiled in 1921) – is marked at the base of the plinth with the names of four major battle sites in World War I: Ypres, Amiens, Vimy and Passchendaele. The shaft of the stone bears more troubling facts, with the faces of the stone inscribed with the names of 101 young men, most in their twenties, who were killed during that war. That number bears repeating: 101 local boys—nearly a whole generation—lost forever. An additional inscription adds this thought: "Their Names Liveth For Evermore." The memorial has an additional claim to significance, designed by Frank Worthington Simon, the architect of the Manitoba Legislative Building. Besides the base of a Legislative Building memorial, the Minnedosa obelisk is the only other Manitoba feature known to have been designed by this illustrious architect.

Minnedosa Cemetery



2nd Avenue SE

Minnedosa Cemetery, like other small-town graveyards, is a vital connection to the community's past, the final, enduring association to many of the pioneers who settled and built this place. But the Minnedosa site stands above so many others because of its setting – it is one of the most picturesque cemeteries in Manitoba. Placed on high ground to the east of town, the graveyard offers affecting views over an undulating landscape, with distant views to the fields of grain that stretch to the north and east. The cemetery is also marked with scores of exquisite marble and granite gravestones, themselves eloquent statements of the pioneering aesthetic that elevates old cemeteries to the realm of art.

Minnedosa & District Heritage Village



100 Heritage Park Crescent

The development of heritage villages became a popular method in the 1980s to protect and showcase collections of locally significant buildings. The Minnedosa and District Heritage Village is an especially effective example of this approach, with carefully restored buildings arranged across a sloped terrain, allowing for excellent views to the collection. There are nine important buildings that make up the site; the Manitoba Hydro Building (1912, an early example of the development of hydro power in Manitoba, top right), Agricultural Display Building (pictured, ca. 1900, one of only two octagonal display buildings in the province), Havelock School (1910, an excellent example of a typical one-room school, centre right), Cadurcis House (ca. 1910, a good example of a local farm house, lower right), Hunterville Church (1904, a fine example of a typical, modest Presbyterian church), Munro's Blacksmith Shop (1936, a nice example of a farm blacksmith operation), Hopkins Log Barn, Manley Log House (1880) and McManus Trapper's Cabin (early 1940s). A re-creation of the town's CPR Station is also on site.



Manitoba Hydro Building



Havelock School



Cadurcis House