



The Promenade du Lac-des-Nations is a versatile, 3.5km path that surrounds the lake of the same name. Its construction started in the fall of 2002 with an important redevelopment of Esplanade Street which now offers paths for both pedestrians and cyclists and important landscape design. The fountain/cascade and the Halte des Nations' rest stop offer two high quality rest areas. The pathway is kept clear and accessible all yearlong to allow the population to enjoy nature in the middle of the city. In the winter, a 1.3km skating track is built on a section of the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations' north shore, welcoming skaters from the Jacques-Cartier Park up to the end of Esplanade Street.

In the summer of 2003, the project continued toward the west side with the reconstruction of the foot and bike paths in Jacques-Cartier Park and the relocation of the grade crossing under the Jacques-Cartier Bridge.

The construction of the Passerelle du Pont-Noir was completed during the winter of 2003. The architectural objective was to design a structure that while being quite imposing structurally, should remain invisible ... Mission accomplished! The footbridge is a scale reproduction of the railway's black bridge located right behind it, which disappears in the landscape.

The east side of the grade crossing's black bridge posed another important structural challenge. How to link the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations to the bike path that is just on the other side of the railway track in the Champ des Buttes? It was impossible to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross a railroad yard since trains were too often stopped. It was too expensive and too imposing architecturally to build a bridge that would allow people to cross over the trains so the only possibility left was to cross under the black bridge... Mission accomplished once again! The pathway to access the west side of the city was built under the lake's water level. For this great realization, Groupe S.M. received the 2004 environmental award of the Grands Prix du Génie-Conseil.

These last two structures presented several environmental challenges and have been realized in conformity with the requirements of the ministère de l'Environnement du Québec, the Canadian Coast Guard and Fisheries and Oceans Canada who requested that a fish habitat compensating base be created upstream from the passerelle du Pont-Noir.

The promenade continues on the south shore of the lake. The development of this buffer strip also posed important environmental constraints. With a lot of attention, the path was outlined in a way to preserve the wetlands by managing soil with important industrial past, by designing hillocks of vegetation creating visual screens and by including indigenous species of plants. For security reasons, because of the presence of the railroad yard, fencing has been installed along the south section.

The presence of a very sensible zone required the construction of a 135-meter footbridge. It is specifically to protect the bank that the structure was built, the historic low wall was restored and a balustrade was installed on Versailles Street. In the summer 2005, the construction of the Passerelle des Drapeurs was completed. Pedestrians, cyclists and skaters can now circulate safely on the 3.5km path.



In the spring 2005, the patrimonial balustrade was rebuilt in the utmost respect of its original architecture and in the desire to protect Sherbrooke's heritage work. The Corporation started the development work of the Passerelle des Drapeurs in the summer of the same year. This infrastructure completes the 3.5km path of the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations, thus enhancing the beauty and security of this exceptional site located in the heart of the city. Sherbrooke, Cité des Rivières made the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations an excellent destination for Sherbrooke residents and tourists.

The Promenade du Lac-des-Nations was realized thanks to the participation of the Infrastructures Canada-Québec 2000 program, the Fonds d'action québécois pour le développement durable (FAQDD), the Conseil régional de développement de l'Estrie (CRD) and the City of Sherbrooke.



A park user interception survey done in the summer of 2004 demonstrates that the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations is a highly appreciated and popular place to visit. Investments, coming equally from the City of Sherbrooke, the Government of Canada and the Government of Québec through the Infrastructures programs, allowed the creation of a superior quality site. The survey results clearly state that this attraction, unpopular in 2002, welcomed more than 250,000 visitors in the five months of use in 2004 – from May 1st to August 30th. More than 10% of the visitors were from outside the city. These results are more than satisfactory and exceed the hopes of the Corporation. In 2005, more than 270,000 persons used the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations, a 22.8% increase.

The Sherbrooke region can only be delighted with the Sherbrooke, Cité des Rivières' project since the population now has an exceptional site in the middle of the city where it can practice physical activities, observe fauna and flora and participate in several events all year long.

In order to continue the development of its infrastructures, Sherbrooke, Cité des Rivières will proceed to the redevelopment of the Magog River Gorge, to the restoration of the old CP train station to serve as a public market and as a meeting point for the tourist train and to the construction of a multi-function "green" building to house an Environment House, among others. These projects, which will come to life in the weeks to come and will consolidate important placements already done, will generate significant investments coming from the private sector.

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The infrastructures completed until now are in line with a perspective of sustainable development and aim at the improvement of the quality of life for Sherbrooke residents while ensuring the development of a new economic sector: pleasure tourism.

The development works undertaken by Sherbrooke, Cité des Rivières and the City of Sherbrooke go beyond the required environmental standards. Mitigation measures have been put into place in order to protect the Nations Lake, its banks and the quality of the environment in Sherbrooke.

