

OURS-Winnipeg Presentation

February 15, 2021

"Weighing in on the Proposed Winnipeg 2045
Plan: Sounding the Alarm for Greenspace"

SOS/OURS-Winnipeg Webinar

Outline

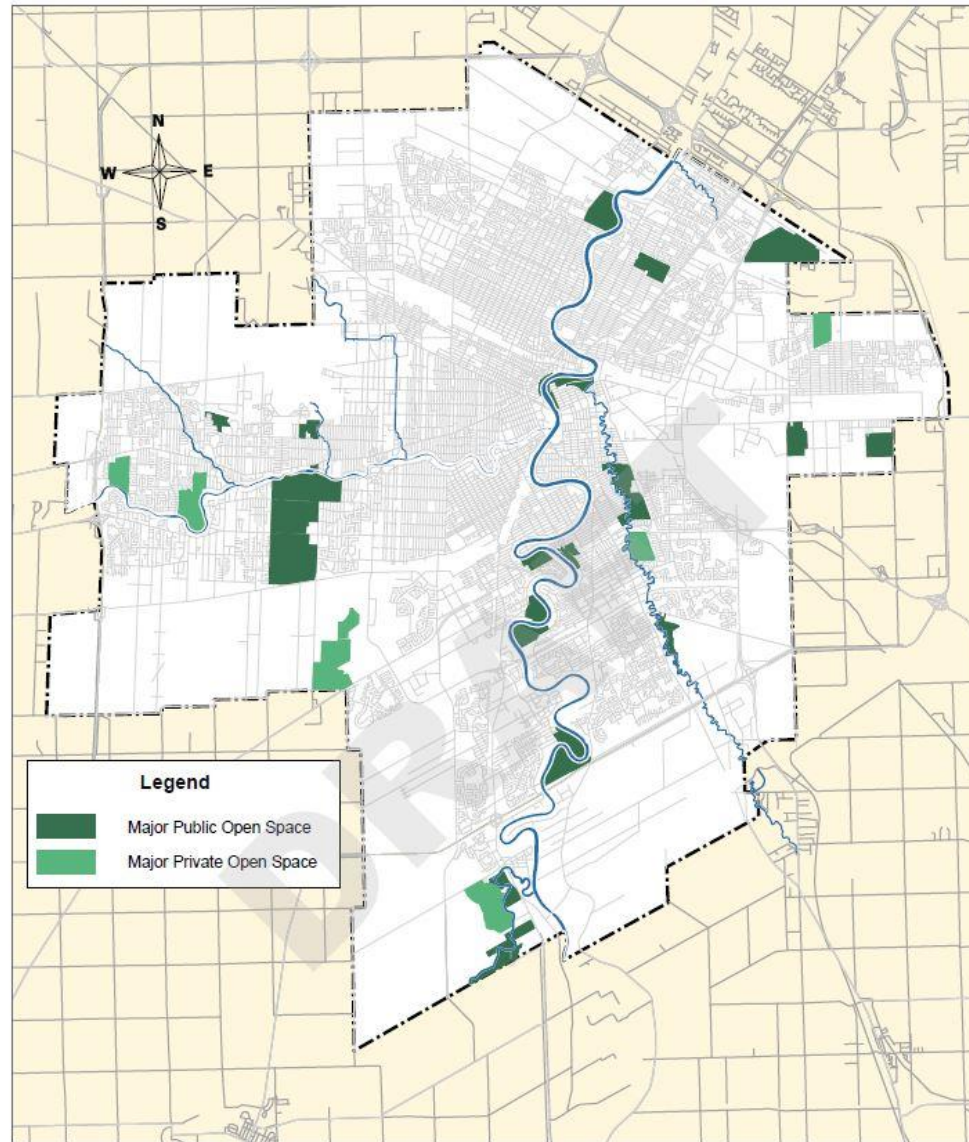
1. City Planning Documents -

- OurWinnipeg 2045 and Complete Communities – Major Open Space
- What do we want our city to look like in 25 years

2. Re-purposing Golf Lands

3. Vision

MAP OF MAJOR OPEN SPACES



Map 14

Major Open Space is a Chapter in Complete Communities

It refers to large parks that are identified on the map. They are “**municipal golf courses, regional parks and nature parks**” that “**provide public use and enjoyment**”. Public Major Open Spaces are Winnipeg’s largest parks located mostly along rivers.

They are located within City boundaries. La Barrier and Little Mountain Parks are not included.

The parks are not named. There is only a picture.

These parks have areas over 40 hectares (or 100 acres). All of the city owned Golf Courses are included. Half of the golf courses are smaller than 100 acres.

The light green areas are private open spaces. Because they are private they can be sold and developed like the old Southwood Golf Course at the University of Manitoba.

The darker green parks are publically owned. Examples are King’s Park, Kildonan GC, St. Windsor Park GC , Whittier Park, Assiniboine Forest, Rossmere, Buhler Park, Bois des Esprit and more.

Major Open Spaces

- Described as “attractive for development”
- Opens the door to development, is enabling
- Sets out “a multistep process for how this would occur”
- Natural area and tree protection would happen as a “component of development applications in a Major Open Space”
- These large parks are irreplaceable

Large and Small

- Large and small developments are options
- Large developments require a formal development application process and could include subdivisions and phasing
- Small developments of one acre have an “Exemption” and do not require as formal a process

No Limits

- For both options there are no limits as to how many applications could be accepted or proposals approved
- It appears to be an ad hoc process over the duration of the 25 year plan

Concern

The phrase “in the event that Council wishes to consider any of these lands to another use” is concerning.

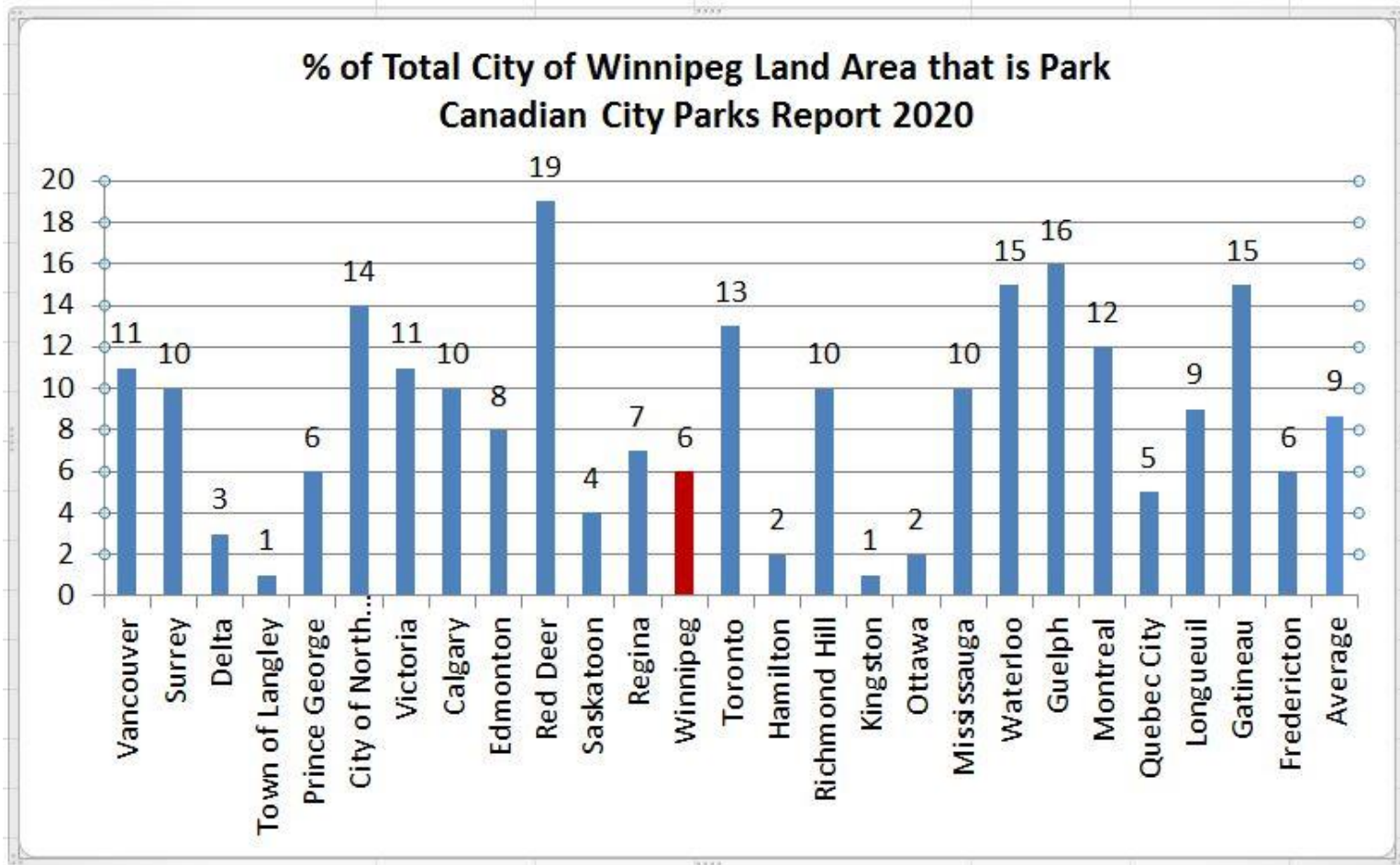
The John Blumberg Golf Course, a City of Winnipeg Public asset was easily declared Surplus in 2013 with the intention of sale for development.

Winnipeg is facing a growing population, public health concerns, climate change impacts and a global pandemic.

Reduction of public green space is not the right way for the City to go.

Selkirk, Manitoba is far ahead of us with its approach to climate change and greenspace. It has a bylaw that prioritizes natural assets and places a value on every tree.

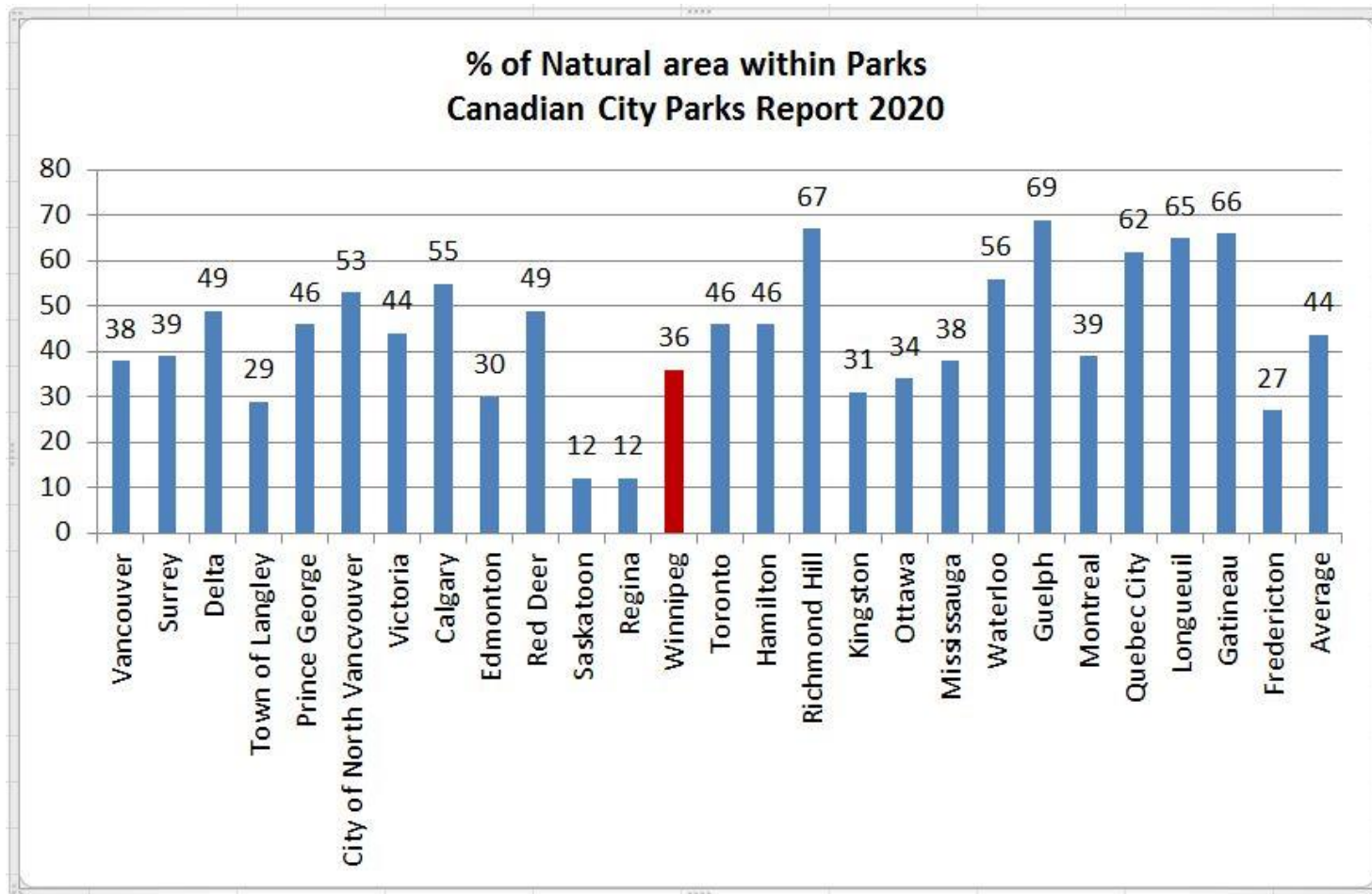
Winnipeg is below average – Park land



Loss of greenspace perspective

- 6% of Winnipeg's total city area is public park land. This is below the average of 9% for Canadian cities. (2020 Park People Report)
- The Golf lands are not included in the 6% They make up an additional 1% of total city area. Adding them to the parkland total could increase total Winnipeg park area to 7% which still leaves Winnipeg below average compared to other major Canadian cities.

Natural Areas – Below Average



Natural areas below average

36% of Winnipeg's parks are natural areas, below the average of 44% for Canadian cities. (2020 Park People Report)

Other cities have greenspace plans, Biodiversity and Naturalization plans. Winnipeg could and should do more to preserve and expand natural areas

We ask for

1. an Amendment to the Major Open Space Chapter of Complete Communities to **remove** all development options

We ask for

2. the City to implement a Biodiversity Strategy to protect parks and natural areas (in place of a development plan)

Make a Biodiversity Strategy an action item in the Complete Communities list of plans

Major Canadian cities have biodiversity strategies: Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, Calgary and Montreal

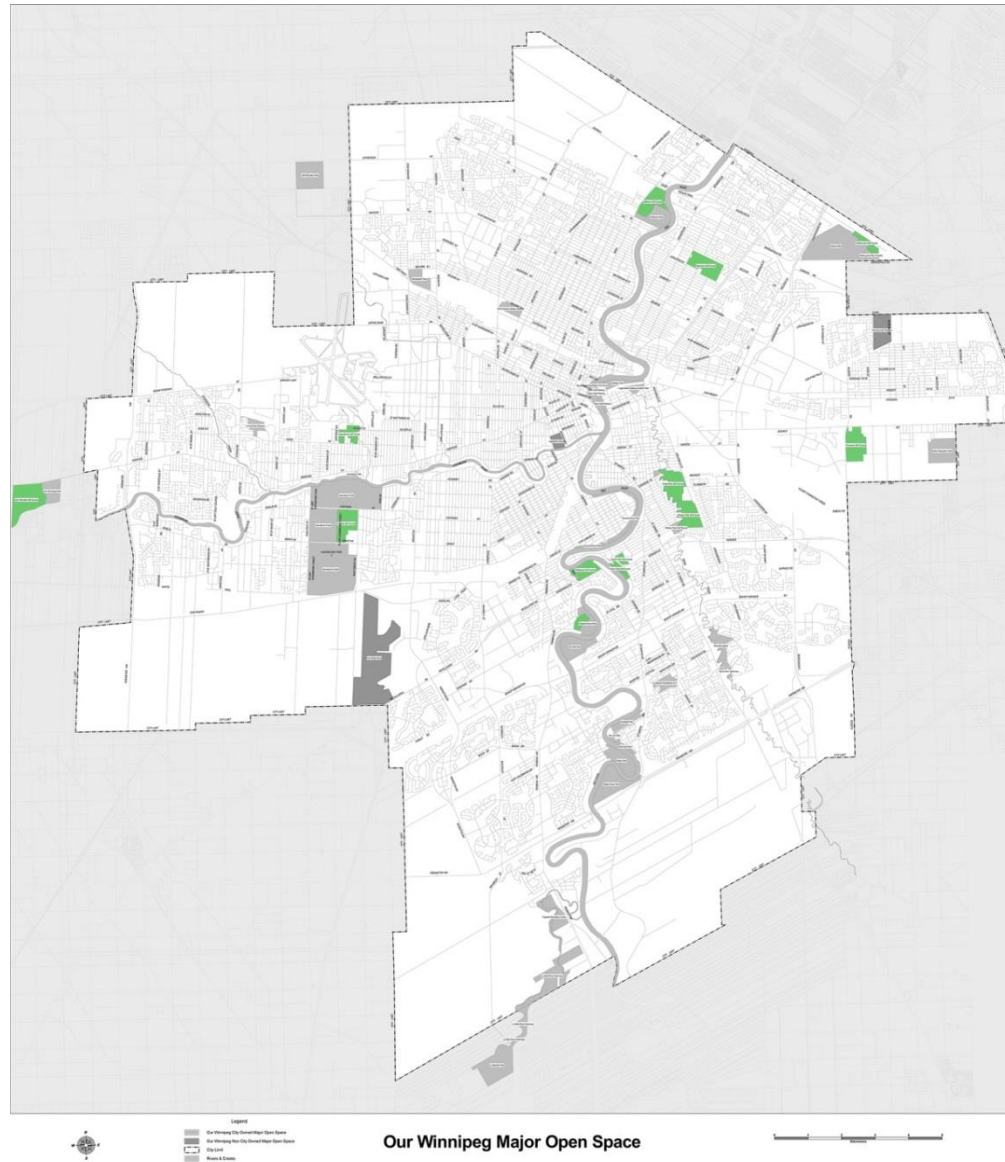
Timeline

- On Jan 28 2021 Council approved advancing the draft planning documents to a Public Hearing process
- Date for Public Hearing TBA , anticipated early May
- Mayor and Councillors indicated they want to hear from the public

Repurposing up to 30% of Golf Lands

- The 2020 City Budget approved a Plan for Repurposing up to 30% of all Public Golf Lands.
- Residential development on golf lands is an option.
- Proceeds from the sale of Blumberg Golf Course and other City properties declared surplus are to be deposited into the new Transformative Fund.
- The fund will assist with City infrastructure deficit.(Sale of asset to balance budget)

12 City Owned Golf Courses



The map shows the city's 12 publicly owned golf courses. They are zoned parkland and are mostly along river corridors. They are less than 1% of total city area and are highly valued because of their locations. Blumberg is included in the 30%

- Golf courses are publically owned urban greenspace assets
- They provide significant wildlife habitat
- Some are 100 years old
- They are used year round both formally and informally
- They protect the river corridor, absorb storm water and help with flood management
- Provide nature based solutions
- They had a balanced budget since before the Pandemic
- There were 30% more golfers in 2020 and numbers are forecast to remain higher than before
- They bring in revenue that pays to maintain them and in essence keep them as greenspace

Timeline for Repurposing Report

- Closing date for RFP March 11
- City will select a bidder to write report
- Report expected to be available to Council in December 2021
- Opportunity for public input has not been indicated until after the document is received by Council

Asks for golf courses

Remove the residential development option from the re-purposing golf lands report

- The benefits of and need for ample green spaces must be factored into post-COVID urban planning
- Eliminating 100 year old green spaces claiming it will stop sprawl will simply delay sprawl a year or two and large parks such as Windsor, Canoe Club, Kildonan and other golf courses will be gone forever

A Vision for Greenspace

In the 1960's the Metropolitan Council of Winnipeg had the vision to create 1000 acres of new parks and exceeded that plan.

One of the parks was Blumberg and its golf course. Others were Kings Park, Little Mountain Park, La Barrier, Maple Grove and Bonnycastle.

- Parks, urban forests and natural areas are important climate change mitigation tools, contribute to the mental and physical health of the community and support biodiversity.
- A growing and denser population will require more park land, not less
- If the City sells off some of these lands for development, they will be lost forever
- It is doubtful the City in the future will ever be able to afford to replace them with equivalent aesthetic value or size
- They benefit the economy and contribute to our image as a city



Master Plan for Greenspace

OURS-Winnipeg advocates for a Master Plan for Greenspace to be part of Winnipeg 2045

[United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration \(2021 - 2030\)](#)

"Green spaces need to be placed at the heart of urban planning."

Contact OURS-Winnipeg

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Support protection of urban greenspace

Thank you