

2018 Winnipeg Mayoral Forum Candidate Question

Master Plan for Green Space urgently needed

- 1. Do you support the urgent need for a Winnipeg 'Master Plan for Green Space' that includes a vision and a dedicated budget to protect, enhance, and expand green spaces? If so what would it take to ensure this happens?**

Background:

City of Winnipeg documents provide direction to planning for green space though action has yet to be realized. Unlike many other major Canadian cities, the City of Winnipeg does not have a Plan for Green space. Such plans lay out the rules to protect these areas, constraints to govern their development, and ongoing requirements for additional green space as the city grows. The City should now invest the time and effort (in partnership with its citizens) to create a Master Plan for Green Spaces.

Adding green spaces and tree cover will, however, require a shift to long term thinking – especially to plan ways to make room for nature and also accommodate new growth.

The purpose of a Master Plan for Green Space is to plan for the whole of the greenspaces in Winnipeg, and to hold accountable to those in power to their responsibility for putting in place requirements to protect and create green spaces that will benefit future generations...NOT to deal with green space issues on an ad hoc basis, as is the practice today.

The number of residents in Winnipeg continues to increase while the amount of greenspace does not. City-wide, Winnipeg parklands have actually decreased from 9,600 acres in 2013 to 8,900 acres in 2018. Only 2,800 acres (2%) of the city's parkland is classified as natural habitat.

The U.S. and Canada Green City Index compares 27 major cities using a variety of indicators. On average, 12 per cent of the land base in these cities is green space. Some cities, such as Minneapolis, New York, Ottawa, and Montreal have close to 20 per cent. By comparison, Winnipeg has approximately 7.5 per cent.

Directions from the City of Winnipeg Planning documents for green space:

"Recognize and preserve Winnipeg's parks, green spaces and riverbanks as green oases in our urban setting."

"Enable the protection of ecologically significant lands."

"Use and regularly report on a set of sustainability indicators, developed to meet best practices for sustainable development planning."

"Establishing an Urban Forest Management Plan."

"Protect and enhance public access to our riverbanks and forest environments and expand ecological networks and linkages"

References:

Urban green spaces: a brief for action By World Health Organization Regional office for Europe, 2017

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/342289/Urban-Green-Spaces_EN_WHO_web.pdf?ua=1

2018 Alternative Municipal Budget produced by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives includes a budget for a greenspace plan.

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/imagine-winnipeg>

TD Greensights Report, Creating a lasting legacy of community green spaces across Canada

https://www.td.com/document/PDF/corporateresponsibility/TD_CAN_17006_TD_GreenSpaces.pdf

Greener, cleaner and ready for the future - The City of London's 30-year Green Strategy for parks, green spaces, and natural landscapes. May 2018

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf

Nature Nearby, Accessible Natural Green Space Standards

http://www.ukmaburbanforum.co.uk/documents/other/nature_nearby.pdf

Healthy Built Environment Tool kit

http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/HBE_linkages_toolkit_2018.pdf

Edmonton and Calgary partnered with the Prairie Climate Centre for a nine paper series - Building a Climate-Resilient City. All include green infrastructure solutions.

<http://prairieclimatecentre.ca/publications/>

Vancouver hired a well-known environmentalist to guide green policy.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-hires-well-known-environmentalist-to-guide-green-policy-1.3937590>

Why the 'Greening' of Vacant Land Is a Smart Long-Term Investment in Cities

In this excerpt from "The Empty House Next Door," author Alan Mallach challenges cities to reimagine vacant properties into pocket parks, urban farms and other green space as a permanent commitment to sustainable infrastructure. <https://nextcity.org/features/view/why-the-greening-of-vacant-land-is-a-smart-long-term-investment-in-cities>

Our BiodiverCity, Calgary's 10-year biodiversity strategic plan is based on principles for the protection, development and management of Calgary parks and ecosystems in support of biodiversity. <https://cbc.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Our-BiodiverCity.pdf>

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Plan

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/parks/ParksPublications/RegionalParksPlan.pdf>

The main goal of the Green Network Strategy is to plan and sustain a healthy city by encouraging connection and integration of open space at the site, neighbourhood, city and regional levels.

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/about-breathe.aspx

Morden Urban Forest Management Plan

<http://www.mordenmb.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/City-of-Morden-Urban-Forest-Management-Plan-.pdf>

How cities compare

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/our-communities/lance/correspondent/Habitat-conservation-is-a-shared-responsibility-485171611.html>

U.S. and Canada Green City Index <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/our-communities/lance/correspondent/Habitat-conservation-is-a-shared-responsibility-485171611.html>

City of Brandon Green Space Master Plan

<http://brandon.ca/recreation-parks/greenspace-master-plan>

Mississauga Living Green Master Plan

http://www5.mississauga.ca/marketing/websites/livinggreen/downloads/LGMP2012_Final.pdf

Halifax Green Network Plan

https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-the-city/regional-community-planning/HGNP-Final%20Report_20180726_updated.pdf

Edmonton Urban Parks Management Plan

https://www.edmonton.ca/documents/PDF/UPMP_2006-2016_Final.pdf

The capital region growth strategy of the Partnership of the Manitoba Capital proposes concrete steps to establish a coordinated regional planning strategy. One of the five key objectives is Pillar No. 2: "Stewardship of land, water and resources — The health of natural resources, lakes and waterways is seen as critical to the region's future prosperity. The plan establishes goals for a coordinated approach to environmental and resource management. With built-in accountability and strong commitment to a long-term vision, the future of Manitoba's capital region could be a picture of dynamic, compact communities surrounded by healthy waterways and forests, and productive agricultural land anchored by a prosperous and vibrant capital city.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/examining-five-pillars-of-a-big-picture-plan-414311823.html>

Land under towers being wasted: study, Hydro should conserve tall grass prairie, researchers say <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/space-beneath-power-lines-could-help-tall-grass-prairie-conservation-441757553.html>