

## 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?***

#### **Perspective:**

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 Master 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.

A green space plan is not to be equated with the ongoing Recreation and Parks strategy which focuses largely on recreation facilities and services. The recreation strategy is largely driven by budget concerns, following years of under spending. While there is some overlap the green space plan focuses on parks, natural areas, urban forest, and healthy waterways on private and public spaces with strong links to social, health, ecological, and environmental responsibility.

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

“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. Key messages:

1. Urban green spaces provide multiple benefits and constitute a necessary feature of healthy settlements.
2. The benefits of urban green spaces can be maximized through adequate planning, design and evaluation.
3. Local authorities are responsible for protecting and maintaining existing urban green spaces

[http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/342289/Urban-Green-Spaces\\_EN\\_WHO\\_web.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/342289/Urban-Green-Spaces_EN_WHO_web.pdf?ua=1)

Manitoba 2018 Alternative Municipal Budget produced by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives includes a budget for a green space 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](https://www.td.com/document/PDF/corporateresponsibility/TD_CAN_17006_TD_GreenSpaces.pdf)

Nature Nearby, Accessible Natural Green Space Standards

[http://www.ukmaburbanforum.co.uk/docuents/other/nature\\_nearby.pdf](http://www.ukmaburbanforum.co.uk/docuents/other/nature_nearby.pdf)

Healthy Built Environment Tool kit

[http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/HBE\\_linkages\\_toolkit\\_2018.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/HBE_linkages_toolkit_2018.pdf)

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>

### What other cities are doing:

Cities and Biodiversity: Exploring how Edmonton and Montreal are mainstreaming the Urban Biodiversity Movement <https://www.biopolis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Cities-and-Biodiversity-Exploring-how-Edmonton-and-Montreal-are-Mainstreaming-the-Urban-Biodiversity-Movement.pdf>

Cleveland and Detroit - Why the ‘Greening’ of Vacant Land Is a Smart Long-Term Investment in Cities. Challenge to 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>

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

Through networks like Local Action for Biodiversity, Edmonton and Montréal are working with other municipalities as they integrate biodiversity considerations into all aspects of their governance and development planning. <https://www.biopolis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Cities-and-Biodiversity-Exploring-how-Edmonton-and-Montreal-are-Mainstreaming-the-Urban-Biodiversity-Movement.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/>

Halifax land originally slated for development is set to open in 2019 as a wilderness park. "It means a lot to be able to say we did this so the next generations after can experience it."

<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/local/nova-scotia-commits-1-million-for-halifax-wilderness-park-243231/>

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](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>

<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](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](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](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>