

# TRAILS

WINNIPEG



## Strategic Trails Plan for Winnipeg

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**The Algis Corporation**

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Part I. Background and Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Summary and Recommendations.....	4
1.2 Purpose of Study .....	10
1.3 The Winnipeg Trails Association.....	13
1.4 The Manitoba Recreation Trails Association .....	15
1.5 Rivers West.....	17
1.6 The City of Winnipeg .....	19
1.7 Study Methodology .....	21
1.8 Report Structure .....	21
<b>Part II. Trail Associations and Stakeholders .....</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1 Bishop Grandin Greenway Inc.....	22
2.2 The Harte Trail.....	27
2.3 The Normand Park Residents Association .....	29
2.4 The Oak Point Urban Trail Association .....	33
2.5 The Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion™ Trail .....	34
2.6 The West Saint Paul Trails Committee .....	35
2.7 St. Norbert Heritage Trail .....	36
2.8 Henteleff Park Foundation Inc.....	38
2.9 Brookside Cemetary .....	41
2.10 Prairie Pathfinders .....	42
2.11 Save our Seine.....	43
2.12 Friends of Omand’s Creek .....	50
2.13 Forth Whyte Centre .....	51
2.14 Manitoba Cycling Association.....	53

**Part III. The Strategic Planning Process ..... 54**

3.1 The Strategic Planning Process ..... 54  
3.2 Results of the Strategic Planning Process ..... 57  
    3.2.1 Connectivity ..... 57  
    3.2.2 Physical Aspects ..... 58  
    3.2.3 Uses ..... 59  
    3.2.4 Tourism ..... 60  
    3.2.5 Marketing ..... 61  
    3.2.6 Organizational and Administrative  
        Support ..... 61  
    3.2.7 Funding and Fundraising ..... 62

**Part IV. Requirements for the Future ..... 63**

4.1 Connectivity ..... 63  
4.2 Physical Aspects ..... 64  
4.3 Uses ..... 65  
4.4 Tourism ..... 66  
4.5 Marketing ..... 66  
4.6 Funding and Fundraising ..... 67  
4.7 Technical and Administrative Support ..... 67  
4.8 Rationale for Budget ..... 69

## **PART I Background and Introduction**

### **1.1 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**


With the advent of the Trans Canada Trail concept across Canada, and the development work initiated by the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association in Manitoba (MRTA), public interest has developed in Winnipeg regarding the development and use of available trails and trail systems for wellness, recreation, walking, environmental education, cycling and many other leisure uses.

Rivers West Inc. in cooperation with the coalition of trails associations - the Winnipeg Trails Association (WTA) - commissioned a study early in 2003 to examine the status and plans of the various community based trails associations and how these might be linked to create a more connected trails system in Winnipeg including connections to the Trans Canada Trail.

Interviews were held with 13 community based trail organizations to determine their current status, future plans and opportunities for connections to other trails, greenways, parks or public spaces in Winnipeg. A strategic planning process was held with these groups to focus on future strategic directions for trails in the future. Maps for each of the trails associations stewardship areas were prepared including a Winnipeg wide trail map showing existing and potential trail linkages.

The strategic planning session resulted in the development of recommendations involving the following themes:

- Connectivity
- Physical Aspects
- Uses
- Tourism and Marketing
- Funding and Fundraising
- Technical and Administrative Resources



The major area of common interest is to connect various trails – including the Trans Canada Trail – into a larger whole to allow for a more integrated and continuous trail system in the City. A more linked and continuous trail system offers opportunities for greater community use including such functions as special events on trails, longer routes for bikes, walking and jogging, and opportunities for winter activities like cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

### **CONNECTIVITY PRIORITIES**

Trail connectivity priorities are categorized below in terms of the four quadrants of the City, namely:

- The North West – west of the Red River and north of the Assiniboine River
- The North East – east of the Red River and North of Nairn/Regent Avenue
- The South West – west of the Red River and south of the Assiniboine River
- The South East – east of the Red River and south of Nairn/Regent Avenue

In each designated quadrant, trail extension priorities are set out in order of importance based on the linking potential and ease of completion.

No prioritization between the quadrants in the City is proposed as the implementation process for connecting trails will be based on the cooperation of public and private landowners, available financial resources, and is unpredictable as to which specific trail segments can be linked within a given time frame.

A separate priority is set out for connections to the Trans Canada trail and to the outside of the City of Winnipeg boundary. This is an important consideration so as to ensure a link between the Trans Canada Trail outside of the City to the City trail system itself in a safe and effective manner.

## **PRIORITIES FOR TRAIL CONNECTIONS**

### **The North West Quadrant of Winnipeg (West of the Red River and North of the Assiniboine River)**

1. Perimeter Highway/Saskatchewan Avenue to Sturgeon Creek Greenway (also links the Harte Trail and the Trans Canada Trail)
2. Omand's Creek Greenway extension to Little Mountain Park (Omand's Creek should connect to Little Mountain Park to Seven Oaks Trail to rural West St. Paul)
3. The Hearts in Motion TM Trail connection to Little Mountain Park.
4. Connection and linkage from Hearts in Motion Trail to West St. Paul
5. A connection should be made between the west bank of the Red River from Selkirk Ave North to St. Cross Street including St. John's Park and the Redwood Bridge.

### **The North East Quadrant of Winnipeg (East of the Red River and North of Nairn/Regent Ave.)**

1. Support for emerging trail from Transcona between the Rotary Prairie Nature Park and the Fort Whyte Bio Reserve
2. The Trans Canada Trail south of Douglas Avenue between Henderson Highway and Raleigh Street should be developed.

### **The South East Quadrant of Winnipeg (East of the Red River and South of Nairn/Regent Ave.)**

1. Save our Seine and Bishop Grandin Greenway should be completed

2. Bishop Grandin connection should be made with Henteleff Park, Normand Park, and to South Perimeter Highway to reach St. Norbert
3. The Trans Canada Trail connection over the Winnipeg Floodway should be developed

### **The South West Quadrant of Winnipeg (West of the Red River and South of the Assiniboine River)**

1. The Fort Whyte Centre should be connected to the Assiniboine Forest and to the Harte Trail. In addition, the Trans Canada Trail south entry to Fort Whyte Centre should be connected.
2. The Harte Trail should be connected to Fort Whyte Centre and then with the Perimeter Highway and onto Sturgeon Creek Greenway
3. The Trans Canada Trail on Bishop Grandin Boulevard between the Red River and Brady Road should be developed.
4. The Trans Canada Trail on the east side of the Perimeter Highway between the Harte Trail and Roblin Boulevard should be developed.
5. St. Norbert should be connected between the Trans Canada Trail, Cloutier Drive and onto King's park and beyond. (Connections should also include the trails from LaBarriere Park to the Trappist Monastery to Maple Grove Park to Bishop Grandin and to the Seine River )
6. The Oak Point Sub-Division should be assessed by the City of Winnipeg as a future connection to the south central part of Winnipeg

### **Connections to the Trans Canada Trail**

1. The connection between Crow Wing trail and the City needs to be resolved to make it safe for pedestrians
2. The connection between the Red River North Trail and the City needs to be resolved to make it safe for pedestrians

Recommendation:

- *That the City of Winnipeg, in consultation with the WTA, MRTA and Rivers West, work together to connect existing trails to create longer and more continuous trail runs – with loops of various lengths throughout the city – and also improve connections to trails outside of the city in the Red River Valley, as set out in the City wide map.*

These specific trail linkage recommendations are set out in the large scale Winnipeg Trails map prepared by Kevin Nixon.

## **OTHER PRIORITIES**

The other priorities of the study include:

- Physical Standards – accessibility, signs, interpretation, trails standards, maintenance, other common trail elements
- Uses – all forms of non-motorized uses should be permitted; multi-seasonality etc.
- Tourism – a new opportunity for visitors; an added attraction and amenity of the city
- Marketing – develop a detailed marketing and communication approach to the entire trail system
- Technical and Administrative Resources – major support needed to implement recommendations of WTA report

**A complete set of specific recommendations to carry out all priorities determined by the consultative process are set out in Parts III and IV of this report.**





## **RESOURCE NEEDS**

The Winnipeg Trails Association and its members are all volunteers with the exception of the Fort Whyte Centre. Their efforts are entirely dependent on volunteers. Assistance to accelerate the trail links and related activities (marketing, administrative and program support etc. outlined in Part IV of this report) will require financial resources to retain professional, technical and administrative support for a three year period to accelerate the process of completing various priority trails and creating linkages between trails and related supports.

Approximately \$100,000 per annum for a three year period will be required.

These resources will assist the WTA and MRTA to work with the trails associations and the City of Winnipeg to help link, promote and market the expanded trails system expeditiously.

More details about the specific types of activities these funds will support are set out in Part IV of this report.

### **The City of Winnipeg Parkway System Review**

It is also recommended that the City of Winnipeg review and adjust its 1993 City-wide Riverbank Parkway System to take into account the opportunities offered by the existence of the various community based trails systems in various parts of the City.

The combination of the WTA trails in concert with a complementary City policy on its parkway system will help to accelerate the process of integrating the Winnipeg trails system in the future.

## **1.2 PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to provide a snapshot of community-based trail and greenway organizations in the City of Winnipeg – as well as several adjacent trails such as the links to the Trans Canada Trail - in order to develop a common approach for improving and linking some of the City’s many trails and greenways into a larger, better connected system of trails in Winnipeg.

There are a multiplicity of community based organizations and stakeholders in Winnipeg who are the stewards for a variety of trails and greenways throughout the City. Many of these are not connected, some are in the early stages of development, others face challenges to develop and improve their respective trails. Some organizations represent trail use interests such as the Manitoba Cycling Association and the Prairie Pathfinders. Others have a stake in wellness, pursued by wellness type initiatives, such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba. Not all organizations are incorporated, most are volunteer driven, and few have any professional staff resources and rely on volunteers and the community to support their initiatives. Some groups are just in the process of formation partly as a result of this initiative.

### **Benefits of Greenways and Trails**

Greenways are corridors of protected open space managed for conservation and recreation purposes. Greenways often follow natural land or water features, and link nature reserves, parks, cultural features and historic sites with each other and with populated areas. Greenways can be publicly or privately owned, and some are the result of public/private partnerships. Trails are paths used for walking, bicycling, horseback riding or other forms of recreation or transportation. Some greenways include trails, while others do not. Some appeal to people, while others attract wildlife. For the purposes of this study, all forms of trails and greenways are collectively discussed as trails.


Trails and greenways positively impact individuals and improve communities by providing not only recreation and transportation opportunities, but also by influencing economic and community development. Some of the many trails and greenways benefits include:

- making communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces;
- encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles;
- creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation;
- strengthening local economies;
- protecting the environment; and
- preserving culturally and historically valuable areas.

Trails and greenways provide countless opportunities for economic renewal and growth. Increased property values and tourism and recreation-related spending on items such as bicycles, in-line skates and lodging are just a few of the ways trails and greenways positively impact community economies.

Trails and greenways also create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and low - or no - cost places to bike, walk, hike, jog or in-line skate. In doing so, they make it easier for people to engage in physical activity.

The potential of Winnipeg's trails is tremendous. A surprising number of trails and greenways already exist in the City and others are in the planning or development stages. These provide many opportunities for greenways, trail and park development and are or can be integrated with the City's parks and walkway system. However, many of these trails are not connected and are a local community resource without attracting the interest or awareness of the broader community. The discontinuity of these trails creates a challenge for the future – how to harness this community resource for the benefit of all Winnipeggers and visitors.



With a common approach, and the cooperation of the City of Winnipeg and private landowners, the existing trail system could be vastly improved, better connected, and create an environment for the pursuit of wellness, environmental enjoyment, fitness, tourism and recreation on a year round basis.


### 1.3 THE WINNIPEG TRAILS ASSOCIATION

The Winnipeg Trails Association (WTA) is an informal coalition of community based organizations, advocacy groups, and includes the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association (MRTA), the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, Rivers West, and The Forks North Portage Partnership.

Community based organizations participating in the WTA include the following:

- Bishop Grandin Greenway Inc.
- The Manitoba Recreational Trails Association
- Province of Manitoba – Culture, Heritage and Tourism Department
- Friends of the Harte Trail
- The Normand Park Residents Association
- The Oak Point Trail
- Luxton Residents Association
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba
- Transcona Trail
- Oak Point Urban Trail Association
- Friends of Omands Creek
- Bunns Creek Environmental Stewardship Association
- Fort Whyte Centre
- The Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion™ Trail
- The West Saint Paul Trails Committee
- St. Norbert - Group? Action Saint-Norbert
- Henteleff Park Foundation Inc.
- Prairie Pathfinders
- Save our Seine
- Manitoba Cycling Association

The purpose of the WTA is to work together with the major stakeholders – including Rivers West and the City of Winnipeg - to improve the trail system of Winnipeg and to coordinate community based actions leading to a common approach to the trails.



The inception of the WTA goes back to a series of meetings initiated by the MRTA which took place during 2001/2002, beginning in June of 2001 at Fort Whyte. During the winter of 2001/02, with the facilitation of the MRTA, the trail enthusiasts and trail group members who were meeting had decided, among other things, that a coalition model of organization was preferable to a formal board structure, that it was important to have all trail associations have the opportunity to be represented on the coalition, and that the coalition would not necessarily undertake the trail work that needed to be done, but would act more as an advocacy group for fundraising, marketing, setting priorities for trails in Winnipeg, etc. In addition, the beginnings of a city-wide comprehensive trail map was part of that winter's work. Through the efforts of Donna Beaton, Kevin Nixon, and Rosemary Dzus, this map was later fleshed out. By January of 2002, Paul Jordan had become the volunteer chair of the WTA, and by September of 2002, the concept of a city-wide study on trails had been introduced.


This study is sponsored by Rivers West and the Winnipeg Trails Association in cooperation with the City of Winnipeg. It was carried out by Al Baronas of the Algis Corporation and Kevin Nixon, parks planner, Planning, Property and Development Department for Winnipeg, who was assigned by the City of Winnipeg to assist in the preparation of individual trail maps plus an integrated City wide trails map and to consult with the various associations. In addition, there was support provided by Rosemary Dzus, Executive Director, Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, Lorna Hendrickson, Executive Director, Rivers West, and Ruth Marr, Randonnée Tours.

## **1.4 THE MANITOBA RECREATION TRAILS ASSOCIATION**

The Manitoba Recreational Trail Association (MRTA) is a registered non-profit charitable provincial association which exists to assist local trail associations with trail development and related issues in Manitoba. The MRTA is responsible for the development of the Trans Canada Trail in Manitoba. Under the guidance of the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, which oversees the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) in Manitoba, eighteen local trail associations are building the TCT from the Saskatchewan border near Madge Lake to the Ontario border near West Hawk Lake.

The roots of the MRTA go back to the mid-1980's, when a group of civil servants saw an opportunity for converting soon-to-be-abandoned rail lines into trails. The provincial government chose not to acquire the abandoned lines at that time, but in spite of this, the trail movement grew. In the early 1990's, inventory studies were done on abandoned lines to assess their recreational potential, and volunteers traveled throughout the province, promoting the idea of recreational trails. These initiatives were synchronous with the efforts of the Trans Canada Trail Foundation, as they began looking for an official trail council to steward the TCT in each province and territory. The MRTA became an incorporated body in 1992, and took the role of provincial trail council for the Trans Canada Trail Foundation in 1993. In 1998, the TCT Foundation received a substantial grant through the Federal Millennium Fund to fund staff positions for the provincial and territorial trail councils. A full-time executive director was hired for the Manitoba Recreational Trails Council through this program in November of 1998.

Later, in December of 1999, the provincial government allocated \$2.125 million to trail development in the province, to be administered by the MRTA. The MRTA disburses these funds to individual trail associations on a 50-50 cost shared basis. The province also designated the Trans Canada Trail as the Signature Millennium project for Manitoba. It was the designation of the TCT route through Winnipeg,



and the potential of ultimately linking together all of the trails in Winnipeg that led to the inception of the WTA.




## **1.5 RIVERS WEST**

Rivers West - Red River Corridor Association Inc./L'Association du Corridor Rivière Rouge (Rivers West) is a not-for-profit organization, incorporated in 1999. The Articles of Incorporation were revised in 2002 to reflect the expanded geographical boundaries of Rivers West (from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg) and its responsibilities for flood mitigation. The riverside region from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg is referred to as the "Red River corridor" and encompasses the people, land, water and resources along the River.

The mandate of Rivers West is to develop and implement a long-term tourism and conservation strategy focusing on the development, promotion and management of the natural, tourism, cultural/heritage and recreational resources of the Red River from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg.

Rivers West's vision is to make Manitoba's Red River corridor a destination. Rivers West works with stakeholders to create and promote a corridor along Manitoba's Red River that connects people with communities and attractions as well as the conservation, recreation, economic and tourism resources of the corridor.

Rivers West is committed to increasing and promoting access to the Red River and the resources found within the corridor and to ensuring that these are worth accessing. To meet this commitment, Rivers West has embarked on a strategy which focuses on marketing and promotion; cultural/heritage preservation and enhancement; tourism and economic development; and conservation (including flood mitigation and restoration of riparian habitat).



Rivers West is governed by a Board of Directors, reflecting First Nations, government and non-government stakeholders of Manitoba's Red River corridor. Its role is as:

- Marketing and promoting the Red River corridor as a tourism destination.
- Directing conservation and stewardship initiatives for the development of the greenway.
- Lobbying/advocating for the development, management and use of the river.
- Promoting economic development opportunities along the corridor, including the development of communities, facilities and infrastructure.
- Preserving, restoring, and/or developing the natural, cultural/heritage, recreational and tourism resources in this region.
- Assisting communities and organizations with obtaining financing to support greenway development initiatives.

Rivers West provided the funding for this study with the contribution and support of Canada Western Economic Diversification and the Province of Manitoba.

## 1.6 THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

In 1993 City Council adopted the development of a City-wide Riverbank Parkway System for the City of Winnipeg comprising sixteen sections of riverbank along the Red and Assiniboine Rivers within City limits.

Council identified 5 criteria to be used as a means for establishing development priority of the various sections of riverbanks. These included:

- Linkage potential was used to measure the potential of connecting major points of interest or leisure activity along the rivers.
- Land ownership was used to evaluate the proportion of the riverbank in public ownership for each riverbank section.
- Public benefit evaluated the relative benefits to be derived by the public from the establishment of each riverbank section. For example some sections of riverbank traverse more densely populated areas than others and would therefore have a higher public benefit.
- Costs were investigated in order to evaluate relative costs to be incurred in the establishment of each section of riverbank.
- The final criteria was referred to as "Other Factors" and was used to assess the importance of factors such as there being an alternative source of funding or a stewardship group being active for a specific section of riverbank.

Council also initiated the first phase of development to be the establishment of the following six sections of riverbank:

1. **The Assiniboine Parkway** begins at The Forks and travels west utilizing the River Walk on the north bank of the Assiniboine River. From there it winds through the Wolseley neighbourhood to

Omand Park where it crosses the CPR rail bridge to the south bank of the Assiniboine River. It then proceeds west along Wellington Crescent and through Assiniboine Park. It ends at the Moray Street bridge.

2. **The North Winnipeg Parkway** begins at The Forks and travels north along the west bank of the Red River. It winds through the neighbourhoods of Point Douglas, St. John's Park, Luxton and Seven Oaks using quiet residential streets until it reaches Kildonan Park and the Chief Peguis Bridge.
3. **The Churchill Drive Parkway** begins at The Forks and proceeds south along the west bank of the Red River through the River-Osborne and Riverview neighbourhoods.
4. **The Fort Rouge Parkway** begins at The Forks and travels west along the south bank of the Assiniboine River until it reaches Wellington Crescent.
5. **The St. Boniface Parkway** begins at the confluence of the Seine River and the Red River. From there it travels south along the east bank of the Red River through the neighbourhoods of St. Boniface and Norwood West until it reaches Guay Park on St. Mary's Road.
6. **The Kildonan Parkway** begins at the Louise Bridge and is routed north up the east bank of the Red River. It travels through the neighbourhoods of Chalmers, West Elmwood and Kildonan Drive until it reaches the Chief Peguis Bridge.

The development priority of the Riverbank Parkway System was to be reviewed and re-assessed at least once every 5 years in order to re-affirm or adjust development priorities for the sections of riverbank in accordance with changing conditions and circumstances.

## **1.7 STUDY METHODOLOGY**

The methodology to develop the strategic trails plan involved a consultative process involving three steps. The first involved one-on-one interviews with all organizations that attended the plenary sessions of the Winnipeg Trails Organization group meetings. The second involved a strategic planning session involving the same (and some new) participating organizations held on March 26, 2003. Third, the draft report was reviewed by all organizations who commented and made contributions to the report. In essence, this is a consultation-based report reflecting the views and priorities of the Winnipeg Trails Association.

## **1.8 REPORT STRUCTURE**

This report is organized in four parts:

Part I	Background and Introduction
Part II	Trail Stakeholders in Winnipeg
Part III	Strategic Planning Process
Part IV	Requirements for the Future

In addition, this report is complemented by individual trail maps and a City wide trail map showing existing trails and possible connections to other trails, parks and greenways prepared by Kevin Nixon.

## **PART II. Trail Associations and Stakeholders**

The term “trail associations and stakeholders ” include the formal, not-for-profit organizations and informal groups that have taken on self-directed stewardship responsibilities for greenways or trails in Winnipeg. This also includes some of the advocates for trail uses such as cyclists, trail walkers and programmers for wellness such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Part II of the report outlines the current status and aspirations of each organization interviewed and includes the identification of proposed trail initiatives that they are supporting and promoting.

### **2.1 BISHOP GRANDIN GREENWAY INC.**

Bishop Grandin Greeway Inc. (BGG) is a community-based, volunteer organisation with a vision for greener, healthier and more sustainable communities. Since 1999, its work has been:

**“to create, enhance and conserve an accessible network of nature areas and public pathways that link and support both human and wildlife communities along Bishop Grandin Boulevard road, hydro and utility right of ways from the red to Seine Rivers”.**

**Bishop Grandin Greenway Inc.** is an incorporated non-profit organisation with Charitable Status with Canada Customs and Revenue Canada.

It has a Board of Directors, 30 formal memberships, and approximately 100 volunteers.

**Location:** The greenway is located in St. Vital along Route 165 (Bishop Grandin Boulevard) between the Red and Seine rivers on both sides of the boulevard.

The greenway encompasses the entire Hydro corridor along the north side of the roadway and the road Right of Way on the south side of the roadway.

**Parameters:** The corridors extend for approximately 4.3 kilometres (2.67 miles) and encompasses approximately 43.8 hectares (108 acres) of land in total.

The north corridor encompasses 33.8 hectares and the south 24.8 hectares respectively.

**Land Ownership:** The majority of the north side utility corridor land is owned by the City of Winnipeg and Manitoba Hydro. Land to the north of the corridor is primarily privately owned with the exception of the lands bordering the Red and Seine rivers.

BGG is negotiating a secondary land use agreements with Manitoba Hydro to give it status with respect to permitted uses. BGG also works with the City of Winnipeg regarding land use.

**Vision:** is green, healthy and sustainable communities for all

**Mission:** To create, enhance and conserve an accessible network of nature areas and public pathways that link and support both human and wildlife communities along Bishop Grandin Boulevard.

**Goals:**

- To link citizens, community and nature.
- To facilitate community development , involvement, interaction and sense of stewardship.
- To provide an opportunity for the community to enjoy healthy active lifestyles along the Greenway in balance with the preservation of native species and natural areas.
- To enhance natural habitat and active living areas along the Bishop Grandin Greenway.
- To increase awareness, appreciation and knowledge of the area's natural and historical value.

- To engage in meaningful consultation with the community in order to address needs, aspirations and desires for the greenway.
- To develop the appropriate resources and supports to ensure the long-term viability of the Bishop Grandin Greenway.

**Objectives:**

- To gather information from the community through a variety of methods to gain an understanding of their needs, desires and concerns and to address issues arising within the project plans.  
Through consultation with the appropriate resources, the Bishop Grandin Greenway task force will reclaim natural space and reinstate natural habitat that have been compromised in past development.
- To create and beautify green spaces and pathways with a variety of plants, trees, wild flowers (e.g. orchids) while protecting the natural habitats (ponds).
- To create and maintain a continuous trail, and mini trails, that facilitates recreation activities, remains universally accessible to the public of all ages, and ensures the safety and security of the users and surrounding community.
- To create an awareness and communication campaign that verbalises the developments of the plans and invites input and feedback from the community
- To create a fundraising plan that ensures the sustainability of the project.
- To research similar projects to gain insights into pitfalls, other options, as well as solutions that ensure safety and security for those in the adjacent neighbourhood.
- To create thematic venues of space that highlight active living, wellness, history, education and nature appropriate to the various landscapes along Bishop Grandin.

**Master Plan:** In the fall of 2001, the McGowan Russell Design Group prepared a Conceptual Master plan for a portion of the greenway. This area is located between the pedestrian underpass west of St. Mary's Road and up to Ste. Anne's Road along the north side of Bishop Grandin Boulevard.



**Activities:** This organisation is very active in its mission to create the Greeway. In 2002, it purchased almost a thousand young trees, shrubs and wild berry bushes and planted these with volunteers. In addition, it lobbied St.Vital Centre to contribute to its cause by “rescuing” some native bush stock from their proposed parking lot expansion, transplanting these onto the north side.

BGG is an active fund raiser. It has received grants from the Manitoba Recreational Trail Millennium Fund, the City of Winnipeg Community Initiatives program and the Manitoba Community places program.

BGG has participated with the City of Winnipeg in the planning and design of a paved multi-use trail from St. Mary’s Road to Dakota to be built by the City in 2003.

**Needs and Challenges:** As an organisation, BGG needs more active volunteers and talent for its volunteer board. It also needs administrative support to support the activities of the Board and its volunteers.

**Future Priorities:** Connectivity issues on the Red river side to St. Vital Park and the Red River dyke on the south side need to be addressed. As well, continuity of the greenway to the east side of St. Anne’s Road needs consideration.

As a result of the Healthy Community Conference, the group agreed that:

- The area holds great potential and can become a model of how to develop similar right-of-ways around the world
- It is a vital pathway linking communities and natural habitat areas

- As an existing green corridor linking two very rich and diverse riparian areas (river ecosystems), it is a unique opportunity to consider reinstating the natural habitats which have been compromised with past development
- This initiative could become part of a city wide pathway system

In addition, it is collaborating with the St. George and Worthington neighbourhood as part of the Building Communities Initiative.

**Information:** BGG c/o Youville Centre, 6 – 845 Dakota Street, Winnipeg MB R2M 5M3.  
Contact BBG members or via Youville Centre – 255-4840

**President and Chair of the Board:** Mike Balshaw

## 2.2 THE HARTE TRAIL

The Harte Trail is part of the Trans Canada Trail and is designated as green space by the City of Winnipeg. It is the longest linear trail in Winnipeg and was formally opened in July 2002.

**Location:** It is located at the southern edge of Charleswood, running east west between the Perimeter highway and the Assiniboine Forest. It is approximately 5.5 kilometres in length.

**Trail History:** The Harte Trail is an abandoned rail bed built by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad and operated from 1894 to 1972. The historical Prairie Dog steam train saw the last use of the tracks. CN rail transferred the right of way to the City of Winnipeg. The City designated the trail as a public green space in perpetuity for the purpose of becoming part of the Trans Canada Trail system.

**Friends of the Harte Trail:** The Friends of the Harte Trail have accepted stewardship of the trail. There is no formal incorporation of this organisation but it has a board of directors, a membership, a constitution, and holds annual general meetings in public. As well, it raises funds for trail improvement, co-ordinates volunteers, and is the advocate for the preservation and public use of the Harte Trail. It issues tax receipts for donations to trail improvements.

**Mission:** To recognise the Harte Trail as a biologically diverse and separate ecosystem which will be managed and preserved for present and future generations.

**Constitution:** The Friends of the Harte Trail have a Constitution which defines membership and fees, officers, duties of officers, nominations, elections and terms of officers, finances, annual meetings and amendment procedures.

**Legal Arrangements:** There is a legal agreement between the Friends and the City of Winnipeg regarding the preservation of the natural state of the Harte Trail.

**Planned Activities for 2003:**

- Installation of historical plaque to reflect the history of the trail
- Signage in addition to the Trans Canada trail signs
- Access improvements to the trail over a wet spot
- Information kiosks to inform the public about the Harte trail and the role of the Friends
- Carry out “donate a bench” initiative with local business community
- Mayor issue is to connect more effectively to the Assiniboine forest as well as to connect to other trail initiatives such as that of Fort Whyte.
- Interest is expressed in exploring an alternative connection to the Trans Canada trail and a connection to an extended trail loop to the northern part of the City.

**Information:** Don Seymour or Hilary Hanson, 779 Municipal Road, Winnipeg MB, R3R 1J5.  
Telephone: 897-5991. Email: [dseymour@mts.net](mailto:dseymour@mts.net) and Web Page at [www.mrta.mb.ca](http://www.mrta.mb.ca)

## 2.3 THE NORMAND PARK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

The Normand Park Residents' Association (NPRA) is a non-profit organization incorporated in September, 1990. Its membership consists of all households (about 200 houses) in the Normand Park subdivision located on the east side of St. Mary's Road between its intersection with Warde Avenue and Redview Drive. The Residents' Association was created in response to a number of issues, including zoning requests that arose during the development of Normand Park. One of the fundamental problems which the residents of this new neighbourhood wanted resolved was an end to ongoing delays in the establishment of the subdivision's planned green-space, a linear park along the eastern bank of the Red River. Landscaping the "park reserve area" was a requirement of the developers' Development Agreements with the City of Winnipeg.

The overall goals of the NPRA are:

1. Promotion of orderly and enhanced growth of Normand Park, including opportunities to participate in and assist in its development;
2. Promotion of opportunities for recreation and entertainment for the residents, and
3. Promotion of sociability and friendship among residents.

The first major undertaking by NPRA was a concerted lobbying and fund-raising effort for development of the subdivision's riverbank park. As the City of Winnipeg was responsible for approximately one-half of the costs of landscaping the linear park as well as enforcement of the Development Agreements a joint effort of community consultation and planning was initiated. A neighbourhood survey, conducted by the City of Winnipeg, and a number of community meetings concluded that the residents wanted a passive park that promoted walking and bicycling and one that could accommodate a play structure and large enough fields/grassed areas to permit informal team sports. If these requirements would be met, the residents were also supportive of an initiative to restore natural areas/wildlife habitat in the park

area. Since the construction of the primary dyke and the first streets for the subdivision in 1986, the linear park area (a floodplain) had deteriorated to numerous large areas of dirt and large areas of weeds.

Landscaping of the linear park took place in the summer of 1992. Two natural areas were created, one adding to the native riverbank forest along the riverbank and a “prairie grassland habitat” on the downward slope of the primary dyke. A crushed limestone pathway with two entrances to the park, one off Normand Park Drive and the other off Redview Drive were constructed. The remaining park areas were sodded. Approximately \$90,000 was raised by NPRA for the purchase of plant material (native trees and shrubs. NPRA has augmented and husbanded the natural areas reestablished with additional plant material and maintenance (extensive weed-pulling and watering) work by yearly Green Teams (a provincial funding program).

They made common cause to encourage the City and the developer to transform the lands in question into an acceptable form of linear park for community use. The Association also initiated a community survey to identify the types of uses that this riverside park should have. This resulted in a consensus to build a walking trail the entire length of the river park zone.

The Association made application to a variety on environmental programs as well as regular application to the Green Team and raised funds to transform these lands for community use. Their objective was to create a natural area and to encourage the development of natural species – a riparian habitat - as well as creating the walking trail.

The adjoining map identifies the location of the walking trail and riverside greenway. It is approximately 1 mile in length but is not well connected in either its northern or southern edges.

## **FUTURE POTENTIAL**

Discussions with Liese Dorber, former president of the Association, indicated the possibility of developing a connection to the Henteleff Nursery lands, currently used by the City as a nursery but with an active planning process underway to allow for the development of public access and use. A future connection to this property would significantly extend the greenway from Normand Park. and, more importantly, show a commitment to pathway development along the east side of the Red River in South St. Vital.

The following points were suggested:

- Suggest the Henteleff group and the NPRA jointly ask the City of Winnipeg to undertake the legal procedures needed to gain public access to those lands between the two sites (i.e. for example, an easement) which would not be approved for development and would be acquired by the City through a land dedication once the lands were rezoned from Agricultural. Early city possession of these future park lands would mean the work needed to restore the natural habitat (a process already occurring in some spots in the absence of farming,) and to raise funds to extend and connect pathways could take place now.
- Suggest a connection to the pathway system running through River Park South (a pathway intersects with St. Mary's Road just north of Normand Park) and its connection through to Royalwood across the Seine River. Signage and a limited community information program (possibly through the community club newsletters) would be positive.
- Suggest a pedestrian bridge across the Red River to University of Manitoba which has large potential given access to the large and growing communities in South St. Vital extending all the way to Lagimodiere Blvd.

- Suggest a pathway in the linear park along east bank of Red River in River Pointe subdivision and its connection through the St. Amant Centre properties to the south, and St. Vital Cemetery north of Bishop Grandin.
- On the southern side of this greenway, there may be a long term possibility to link to a new bicycle path or other pedestrian link when St. Mary's is realigned in the future.

Contact: Liese Dorber – Normand Park Residents Association Inc. - [liese.dorber@wd.gc.ca](mailto:liese.dorber@wd.gc.ca)



## **2.4 THE OAK POINT URBAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

The Oak Point Trail is located on the Oak Point CN right-of-way in south Winnipeg between Wellington Crescent and Taylor Avenue in River Heights. The property is currently owned by the Canadian National Railway company.

The trail is approximately 7 blocks long and has a hard top where the original rail line existed. A large percentage of this trail is bordered by a combination of indigenous bush and an arboretum of 275 trees, with an average height of 30 feet and 120 ornamental shrubs, planted by the neighbouring residents. The trail is actively used by walkers, cyclists, runners, cross-country skiers and gardeners for several decades.

The Oak Point Trail is represented by a loose association of interested community members who were active in opposing the development of a residential subdivision along the 17 acre property.

The trail is located strategically as it links Wellington Crescent and the Assiniboine River area to various neighbourhoods in south Winnipeg including Fort Rouge, Whyte Ridge, Lynden Woods and others. Rout 90 from Taylor Avenue to Bishop Grandin need upgrade to make it a pedestrian/cyclist friendly connection route. The association is concerned about the future redevelopment of the CN property and are seeking ways to ensure that any future commercial development on this property provide for a trail right of way.

Area Councillor Garth Steek is promoting the acquisition of the property for recreation path/greenspace through a land swap with the CNR. Once this takes place the local community will be able to become formally active in further development of the trail.

Contact: Doug Geddes – tel: 489-8689

## **2.5 THE SEVEN OAKS HEARTS IN MOTION™ TRAIL**

The Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion™ Trail is located in the north part of the city and is a 42 kilometre signed urban walk, winding through residential streets, parks, as well as Kildonan Park. Unlike some other trails, it is not a traditional “greenway”, but an eclectic walk involving traditional hard edged urban landscape, sidewalks and parks. The Seven Oaks trail was officially opened on Canada Day in 2002.

The genesis of the Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion Trail comes from a partnership between the Seven Oaks Neighbourhood Resource Network, residents and businesses of the local community, a representative of the City, the Regional Health Authority and the active participation of the Heart and Stroke Foundation’s Hearts in Motion™ program. The Seven Oaks School Division is also participating to promote greater use of the trail by schools.

There is extensive signage on this trail, directional as well as signs for every kilometre, a contribution for the Hearts in Motion™ program. As well, a brochure has been developed which outlines the walking route for the trail, including the identification of 14 washroom locations and 17 historical sites. Access to washrooms in service stations, shopping centre, and other establishments reflects the strong support of the community for the Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion Trail. Sponsors for the trail brochure include Manitoba Hydro, MTS, the city of Winnipeg and the Seven Oaks Neighbourhood Resource Network.

Contact: Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba: tel. 949-2000 or [khayward@heartandstroke.mb.ca](mailto:khayward@heartandstroke.mb.ca)

## 2.6 THE WEST SAINT PAUL TRAILS COMMITTEE

The West Saint Paul (WSP) Trails committee is a subcommittee of the Rural Municipality (RM) of West Saint Paul. The WSP Trails Committee is made up of community members and representatives from the RM - Council; WSP Recreation, Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba. Liability for the trail has been secured through the Rural Municipality. The trail is a continuation of the Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion Trail.

The route is still in the development stages - with a few alternative routes mapped out – and starts by coming out Main Street (riverside) winds through Riverdale neighbourhood, by the boat launch, under the perimeter near the river - running parallel to the road up to Main Street - north to Nye Avenue and either to Baldock and across the creek (Bridge needed) or crossing at Main Street. Linking up with Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg, a few private landowners to the north, to Minnehaha/Hiawatha/Kenebeek - can cross Main at the lights to the school to do a loop of their trail (asphalt), back at the corner of Minnehaha/Kenebeek -through the Royal MB Yacht Club to the Hydro right of way to Lister Rapids development - to Fred Byle Park and then north through a few private land owners and on to St. Benedict's Retreat and Conference Centre – linking in with their trail coming out on River Spring Drive back close to the river where you cut through to Rivercrest development and the Rivercrest Community Centre. Plans stop there but the intent is that a trail would continue north past Rivercrest and by the row of cemeteries/private land owners - all the way to St. Andrews.

Another phase would be to link to the West side of Main Street and the WSP Recreation Site (located on Holland Road - on the north side of the perimeter highway between Main and McPhillips - beside Mulder Construction).

Contact: Janis Ollson, West St. Paul's Trail Association: [janis@middlechurchhome.mb.ca](mailto:janis@middlechurchhome.mb.ca) tel: 336-4126

## **2.7 ST. NORBERT HERITAGE TRAIL**


The St. Norbert Heritage Trail is the southern entry point into the Village of St. Norbert and the City of Winnipeg. The St. Norbert Heritage Trail is part of the Trans Canada Trail System.

Connecting from the Crow Wing Trail, which originates in Emerson, MB, the St. Norbert Heritage Trail runs through St. Norbert Provincial Heritage Park, the village of St. Norbert, the Trappist Monastery Ruins and many historical locations in and around the village of St. Norbert.

Exiting from the village, the St. Norbert Heritage Trail follows Cloutier Drive, also a designated section of the Trans Canada Trail, through a provincial nursery, past market gardens and ends at a large “Type A” forest. The Trans Canada Trail then connects with Kilkenny Drive and follows through to King’s Park.

The first phase of the St. Norbert Heritage Trail is well underway. The Cloutier Drive Residents Association is working with the City of Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba to secure a license for trail development on the Provincial Property just to the north of Cloutier Drive. The Province is very supportive of this initiative on their property and is working with various City Departments to ensure its success. The planned trail development target date is Spring 2004.

Formal organization of residents of St. Norbert is underway to develop phase two of the St. Norbert Heritage Trail through the village of St. Norbert.



An extensive vision plan has been prepared already, which links the Trans Canada Trail proposed route through St. Norbert, with potential to link to Maple Grove Park, Save our Seine and other links, thus extending and connecting this trail considerably in the south part of Winnipeg.

**Information:** Janice Lukes, President, Cloutier Drive Residents Association  
Telephone: 275-7659, email: [jlukes@shaw.ca](mailto:jlukes@shaw.ca)

## **2.8 HENTELEFF PARK FOUNDATION INC.**

The Henteleff Tree Nursery is operated by the City of Winnipeg Public Works Department. It is located adjacent to the Red River in St. Vital, on land remaining from the Henteleff family farm, which was expropriated by the City in the 1960s.

It is bounded by the Red River to the north, undeveloped lands to the south, St. Mary's Road to the east and agricultural land across the river to the west. The site is well connected by transit, bike trails, and walkways.

In 1996 a report titled "The Henteleff Tree Nursery" outlined the unique natural, agricultural and historical values of this site. One of the recommendations made in that report was that the site should be explored to develop the land as an operating nursery/arboretum, as an historical landscape site, and as a riverside park.

In 1999, the City considered an exchange of the existing nursery frontage on St. Mary's Road for land immediately south, where the Henteleff family home still stands. This has been resolved and a revised concept plan is being prepared by The Henteleff Park Foundation Inc. This plan proposes development of hiking and cycling trails, as well as potential future development that would create a landmark park, celebrating the cultural and historical history of the area and the establishment of an interpretive centre, which will mark the foregoing as well as the Métis history in the area.

Currently the nursery holds trees bought by the City from commercial growers for City projects. There is already some unofficial public use of this property at present.

A series of landscape improvements and public amenities are suggested to take advantage of the site's inherent qualities. These include interpretive trails, buffer plantings, picnicking sites, and a canoe

launch. The implementation of the project is community driven and the Concept Plan relies on an active volunteer base working with the City of Winnipeg.

### **Connectivity**

One of the plan goals is to connect the site with the adjacent communities such as the south St. Vital Parkway, St. Vital Park, the Bishop Grandin Greenway and Maple Grove Park. It also contemplates a pedestrian connection to Normand Park riverside park.

A joint committee between The Henteleff Park Foundation and the City of Winnipeg has been established, working towards an agreed Concept Plan and implementation of same.

The three founding members of the Henteleff Park Foundation Inc. include Yude M. Henteleff, C.M., Q.C., Christine Common-Singh and Nick Carter

The purposes and objects of The Henteleff Park Foundation are cited below.

*To assist and be associated with the development and enhancement for public use the lands legally described as...(legal description)... a park celebrating the historic, cultural and natural history of the said lands and the surrounding area of St. Vital, and the continued use of same for such purposes, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to promote and to provide the public with:*

- (a) Historical, cultural and environmental education;*
- (b) Public recreation, including establishment of multi-use walkways, interpretative signs and trails, picnicking sites and the like;*

- (c) *The park's historical connection to river traffic, Metis occupation, marketing gardening generally and the Henteleff family be establishing in the park an interpretive centre and other visitor amenities;*
- (d) *Preservation and enhancement the unique landscape of the site, including biological, wildlife and bird habitat;*
- (e) *Connecting the site with adjacent developments, such as the South St. Vital Parkway, Bishop Grandin Greenway, St. Vital Park, Frobisher Park, Trans-Canada trail system and the like;*
- (f) *Establishing an arboretum as part of the park;*
- (g) *Recreational and educational opportunities in the park, which will be intimately connected with preservation and improvement of the site's natural environment.*

*And to raise funds from all sources including the general public for the purpose of furthering any one or more of the foregoing objectives.*

Contact: David Henteleff – [david@henteleff.mb.ca](mailto:david@henteleff.mb.ca) tel: 477-1809



## **2.9 BROOKSIDE CEMETERY**

The City of Winnipeg, The Heart and Stroke Foundation, working with Red River Community College, and area residents and local businesses, have established a new trails committee focused on the Brookside Cemetery trail development.

A 5 kilometre trail throughout the cemetery is proposed. In addition to that, a walking tour/booklet of the cemetery is being developed with gravesites highlighted as points of interest. This is all part of the 125 year celebrations in 2003.

The Brookside Cemetery is located in the north west part of Winnipeg and presents an excellent location to develop a walking trail and corridor.

In the future, this could also connect with a number of other public amenities and create an opportunity for the use of the Red River Community College as well as the adjoining neighbourhoods.

Contact: Rick Thain – Cemeteries Administrator: Tel: 986-4392

## 2.10 PRAIRIE PATHFINDERS

**Prairie Pathfinders Inc.** is a non-profit group originated by four women who promote walking through a wide range of activity, much of it volunteer. With their publishing, guided walks, website, illustrated talks and many other promotional efforts, the Prairie Pathfinders are fulfilling their mission to make walking an established recreational pursuit in Manitoba.

The **Prairie Pathfinder Walking Club** is an impressively large group of walking enthusiasts. In less than three years, the club has grown to include more than 300 active members. It organizes regular scheduled walks in the Winnipeg area every Monday and Tuesday as well as a number of special hiking events in a selection of locales throughout the province.

Prairie Pathfinder representatives have provided the City with a number of detailed suggestions to the regarding their concerns and interests in improving the trails throughout the City.

Contact: [www.prairiepathfinders.mb.ca](http://www.prairiepathfinders.mb.ca)

## **2.11 SAVE OUR SEINE**

Save Our Seine River Environment Inc. was established on September 5, 1990 to preserve, protect and enhance the Seine River.

One of the fundamental objectives of SOS is to promote the development of an ethic of environmental stewardship with local citizens through leadership, public education and participatory activities. This goal is pursued through innovative demonstration projects that illustrate the principles of environmentally sustainable development. To this end, Save Our Seine holds at least two public participation events every year - the Annual Greening and the Annual Cleanup.

SOS operates as a non-profit, volunteer based organization, and is a registered charity (Charitable Tax Registration No. 89399 6975 RR0001). Over 600 members support and volunteer with SOS. The Executive and Board of Directors is comprised of the following members:

Jules Legal, President (to retire in 2003)

Beverley Sawchuk, Fundraising Chair and Acting President

David Watson, Vice-President

Sylvie Hébert, Treasurer

J. P. Brunet

Paul Desrosiers

Serge LaRochelle

Vera Mandryk

Nathan Laser

Advisory Board Members serve in a consultant capacity and include the following:

The Honourable W. Yvon Dumont, Former Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba  
Cheryl Heming, City Naturalist  
Harold Thwaites, Former President of SOS  
Marcel Ritchot, Former President of Manitoba Recreational Canoeing Association  
Constantina Douvris, Landscape Architect, Gaboury Prefontaine Perry  
Mylene Crete, Journalist, La Liberte  
Kathy Taylor-Hallick, Former President of Canadian Recreational  
Canoeing Association  
Dr. David van Vliet, MCIP, Department of City Planning, Faculty of  
Architecture, University of Manitoba

In Fall, 2002, SOS hired its first full-time employee, David Danyluk. As SOS coordinator, David assists with general administration, marketing and the fundraising campaign. He has been hired for a 16-week term, with assistance from a Human Resources Development Canada program. Additional funding applications to extend his term are currently in progress.

The Seine River meanders through the City of Winnipeg, Manitoba towards the Red River. It is an urban forest and a ribbon of green running through the south east part of Winnipeg and includes a wide range of greenspaces, natural environments, extensive wildlife, heritage resources, trails and bridges.

The Seine River is proposed as a model of sustainable development in the City of Winnipeg. The area that S.O.S. is pursuing is some 26 kilometres in length featuring riparian woods, nature paths, and many historic sites that have yet to be interpreted.

The SOS organization has undertaken a significant variety of activities:

- It acted as a consultant to the City of Winnipeg’s Task Force which prepared the Seine River Greenway Study in 2000.
- It organizes annual Seine River clean ups and greenings
- It lobbied for the repair of the siphon structure that channels the Seine River under the Winnipeg floodway.
- It recommended construction of riffles ( artificial rapids created by arranging stones in a “v” formation ) on the Seine River.
- Developed pedestrian trails along the Seine River.
- Advocated the City regarding the Southglen Bridge.

SOS has received numerous awards for its work including the Certificate of Environmental Citizenship from the Federal Government, the International Coalition of Water Stewardship in the Red River Basin, and the Manitoba Sustainable Development Award of Excellence.

### **The Goals of SOS**

1. Preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment & heritage resource of the Seine River.
2. Restore & repair features of the environment that have been degraded.
3. Improve water level, flow & quality
4. Raise the public's awareness of all aspects of the Seine River
5. Improve the environmental behavior of private industry, governments and the general public.
6. Improve appropriate public access along the Seine River (by low-impact nature trail & by canoe)



## **The Role of SOS**

1. To monitor the Seine River environment
2. To act as a critic/advocate
3. To be an instigator of projects (initiate projects to be carried out by others)
4. To be a proponent of projects (initiate projects to be carried out by SOS)
5. To act as an 'expert resource'
6. To carry out and promote ongoing public education.

## **A Vision and Plan for the Seine River**

The plan is composed of a number of components. An outline of the components is as follows:

1. Establishment of a protected natural corridor
2. Restoration of the river
3. Restoration of the riparian environment
4. Reestablishment of a Seine river development authority
5. Completion of an urban nature trail and canoe route, the length of the seine
6. Establishment of a public education component

For additional information on SOS see their web site at [www. saveourseine.com](http://www.saveourseine.com)

## **Recent Highlights**

SOS has raised \$110,000 to purchase *Bois des Esprits* and protect this pristine forest as an unspoiled, natural environment for hiking and canoeing

In a City of Winnipeg survey prepared in October, 2002, Winnipeggers selected “scenery/green space/open space” as one of the top five items valued most about our city. *Bois des Esprits* is under imminent threat because it lies within a 305-acre site to be cleared and developed as a 760-home residential subdivision. Unless sufficient funds are raised to protect the Grade “A” habitat (defined as the best quality and most sensitive to disturbance), most of it will be destroyed.

The City has committed \$1 Million plus \$600,000 in matching funds for the purchase, leaving SOS and the community to raise the shortfall of \$1 Million by December 31, 2003. Evergreen Common Grounds, a national urban land trust whose mission is to bring communities and nature together for the benefit of both, has partnered with SOS and the City in this campaign.

*Bois des Esprits* is located on the Seine River in Winnipeg, between Bishop Grandin Boulevard and Warde Avenue. The 81 acre forest is of exceptional quality, with a unique aspen grove and heritage tree candidates, including the largest tree in Winnipeg – a Cottonwood approx. 90' tall. This “*ecological jewel*” contains valuable wetlands and vestiges of old river oxbows. It is home to over 20 different mammals and 101 species of birds, such as blue herons, whitetail deer, beavers, fox, muskrat, and turtles. A recent naturalist survey found a rare species of dragonfly, the River Jewelwing, living along the Seine. In the 1850s, Louis Riel, Sr. and Benjamin Lagimodiere operated a water-powered mill at a bow in the river, north of John Bruce Road; the large grist stone from the mill now graces the entrance of Winnipeg’s St. Boniface Museum.

### **Proposed Projects**

The current request and interest of the SOS group is set out below. It encompasses a marketing project and physical improvement project. These project proposals are set out below:

### **Marketing to Increase Awareness and Educate Community - \$85,000**

- Eco-tourism officer to liaise with governmental and private agencies to promote The Seine River and facilitate a coordinated approach to the following marketing programs:
- A Real Berard historic map to promote historical elements as well as flora and fauna on the Seine.
- Increased promotion of the Seine's heritage at The Forks as a part of the Red River basin to recognize the historic, natural and recreational qualities of the Seine.
- Heritage designation of Riel Mill site to mark the significant historical and cultural importance of this site. SOS's long-term dream is to have a Canadian Heritage Interpretive Centre at this site, by working in partnership with the Manitoba Metis Federation, Union Nationale du St. Joseph, and all levels of government.
- Partner with other local and national stewardship groups to educate the public through newsletters, website and seminars as to the importance of greenway corridors and the benefits of preserving and restoring the natural world. A change in perspective will help people to grasp that ecological functioning is to see nature as a system of interconnected, interdependent and ever-changing parts.
- Partner with local organizations such as CNIB to establish and provide a unique canoeing/hiking program for their clients, in association with other groups such as Girl Guides and Scouts Canada.
- Increased advocacy of greenway legislation and creation of sensitive lands designation.



### **Physical Improvements Along the Seine River**

- Installation of interpretive signage/maps (bilingual) at key points along the Seine River, near trails or historical sites, in order to “brand” the greenway.
- Construction of riffles to improve the quality of fish habitat through development of healthy stream bank vegetation and improvement of low water levels.
- Completion of hiking trails in North St. Boniface and St. Vital areas
  - Youville
  - Morrow Gospel Church to Vic Wyatt House
  - Trail between Vic Wyatt House and Hindu Temple, providing access to Bois des Esprits and linking to the South St. Vital Trail
  - Some portion of the above trails to be wheelchair accessible.
- Create pedestrian access from Southglen bridge to Bois des Esprits trail
- Construct pedestrian bridge in St. Boniface. Funding in the amount of \$200,000 received preliminary approval in Fall, 2002, from the St. Boniface Building Communities Initiative, as part of a \$2.1 Million allocation for projects in Old St. Boniface. Final confirmation is pending.
- Creation of wheel-chair accessible canoe launches and docks along the Seine River

Contact: <http://www.geocities.com/saveourseine/saveourseine.html>

## **2.12 FRIENDS OF OMAND’S CREEK**

The Friend’s of Omand’s Creek (FOOC) was incorporated in 1996. It is headed up by Roger Geeves, Chairman and principle volunteer worker for this organization.

Omand’s Creek connects to the Assiniboine River and meanders through the St. James neighbourhood and beyond and is a well defined urban trail. However, it faces many gaps and challenges to make it a continuous trail through various types of urban challenges.

FOOC’s mandate is to rehabilitate the creek from its former status as an industrial ditch and develop an east bank trail system from the Assiniboine River to Little Mountain Park. Several kilometres of trail have been established, and extensive riparian rehabilitation, using native trees, shrubs and wildflowers, has been undertaken. FOOC has developed an excellent working relationship with a number of community minded developers who have built along the creek. The First Professional’s Inc, Wal-Mart site saw the developer introduce “Stormceptor” oil and water separators to handle the parking lot run off. This was a Manitoba precedent. Tri level government and private funding have contributed well over a million dollars towards F.O.O.C’s goals.

Contact: Roger Geeves: [roger.geeves@mts.net](mailto:roger.geeves@mts.net)

## **2.13 FORT WHYTE CENTRE**

Fort Whyte Centre is one of Canada's premier privately operated, non-profit, outdoor education and recreation facilities. It is located 20 minutes from the heart of Manitoba's capital, Winnipeg, and features over 400 acres of woodlands, wetlands, grasslands and lakes. All its buildings and select trails are wheelchair accessible.


Highlights of its facilities include a 70-acre Bison Prairie and viewing mound, more than 5 km of interpretive trails, family treehouse, birdfeeding stations, floating boardwalks, and songbirds, deer and waterfowl in their natural habitat.

Activities and programming available include year-round fishing in lakes stocked with Manitoba's best sport fish, and pursuits such as canoeing, hiking or bird-watching. Winter programming is offered and includes ice fishing, snowshoeing, skating or a ride on the super toboggan slide.

A 10,000 square foot Interpretive Centre features fascinating exhibits, including the Aquarium of the Prairies (Manitoba's largest indoor aquarium); The Waterfowl Viewing Room; Dioramas; and much more! The 6,500 square foot Alloway Reception Centre offers a full range of visitor services, conference and meeting facilities.

The Fort Whyte Centre is a professionally run and staffed organization. It is the premier outdoor education and recreation facility in Winnipeg attracting many visits in summer and in winter.

It has recently acquired property where there is a proposal for the creation of the Albrechtsen Prairie Trail and the green corridor connection between Fort Whyte and the Assiniboine Forest and Park.



A significant opportunity exists to connect Fort Whyte to a broader trail system. Plans are developing which can link Fort Whyte both to Assiniboine Forest and Park and the Harte Trail as well. However, it poses some challenges as well because Fort Whyte is not a public space and must address its financial challenges via entrance and program fees. The integration of public trails to Fort Whyte will require careful attention and balance with the various stakeholders involved.

Contact: <http://www.fortwhyte.org/fwNews.html>

## **2.14 MANITOBA CYCLING ASSOCIATION**

The Manitoba Cycling Association represents the interests of the bicycle riding community. It is organized into two parts, one dealing with racing and another with recreation and transportation. It is a volunteer driven organization.

The MCA is particularly interested in linking trails as one of their high priorities. They have documented a number of problem areas and opportunities for resolving connection issues with the use of air photographs.

MCA representatives are interested as well in the development of multiple use pathways in the City and not just sidewalks. They are also aware of measures to protect sensitive trails from damage by bicycles such as the use of the “North Shore” model – a system of wooden ramps and structures – which protects the erosion of trails. The other priority they have is the promotion and increased self-sustainable transportation.

## **PART III. The Strategic Planning Process**

### **3.1 THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

The purpose of the strategic planning process was to develop common priorities for topics of interest to the trail associations. This process resulted in the definition of common areas of interest to all groups and represents the emerging collective vision while retaining the particular priorities of each individual trail association.

The following organizations participated in the March 2003 strategic planning session:

- Friends of The Harte Trail
- The Oak Point Trail
- The Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion™ Trail
- The West Saint Paul Trails Committee
- Henteleff Park Foundation Inc.
- Prairie Pathfinders
- Manitoba Recreational Trails Association
- Save our Seine
- Friends of Omand's Creek
- Manitoba Cycling Association
- Luxton Residents Association
- Transcona Trail Association
- Province of Manitoba – Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation


The process was facilitated by Al Baronas – The Algis Corporation, Kevin Nixon – The City of Winnipeg, Ruth Marr – Randonnée Tours, and Paul Jordan – Chair of the Winnipeg Trails Association. Additional support was provided by Rosemary Dzus, Executive Director of the MRTA, and Jason Bell, City of Winnipeg Parks Superintendent.

The structure of the strategic planning process involved the following:

- An overview of the process was explained to the trails associations in attendance
- Representatives self-organized themselves into three groups
- A work book guided the topics that each group discussed
- A presenter from each group provided a summary of the group’s deliberations
- The work books were submitted for integration into this report
- Maps for individual trail organizations were reviewed and marked up
- A city wide trail map was provided to allow for an overview of all trails and trail connection identification
- The conclusions in this report were further reviewed by the entire group at a plenary meeting in April 2003

The strategic planning process addressed the following topics:

- Connectivity – this refers to the connections within a specific trail and/or between trails
- Physical aspects –trail surfaces, plantings, signage, garbage receptacles etc.
- Uses – walking, cycling, wellness etc.
- Tourism
- Marketing
- Organization and Administrative Support
- Funding and Fundraising

- 
- Provision was made for the introduction of other topics, prioritization of topics, and project proposals
  - Maps were provided based on the one on one interviews plus the large City of Winnipeg trails map for review and modification



## **3.2 RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

### **3.2.1 Connectivity (See also separate maps for connectivity priorities)**

- A distinction was made between trails and greenways. Trails were viewed as routes for transportation and recreation and greenways for connectivity, habitat preservation and nature appreciation
- There are concerns about fully connecting all trails; for example, some areas need not be fully connected where there is concern to protect the habitat in sensitive natural areas; for example, along the Seine River
- Full access should be a principle to provide access to all trails according to the nature of the specific trail
- A principle was discussed for respecting the environment according to the nature of the specific trail
- A number of pedestrian bridges were suggested included from the vicinity of Henteleff Park over the Red River to the University of Manitoba
- Omand's Creek should connect to Little Mountain Park to Seven Oaks Trail to rural West St. Paul
- The Trans Canada Trail should connect to the Perimeter including a connection east to St. Mary's Road and to south St. Vital
- SOS suggests connection from the south end of the City to The Forks but expressed concern about not overly disturbing the habitat along the Seine River
- The west side of the Red River south trail system is fragmented and needs connections to link King's Park, Churchill Drive, and St. Norbert
- The south St. Vital parkway is partly connected. Suggest connecting Perimeter Highway, Bishop Grandin Greenway and St. Vital Park

- The Trans Canada Trail from south Main Street to Bunns Creek needs completion
- The Harte Trail needs to be connected to Fort Whyte Centre
- There is a need for a pedestrian bridge or boardwalk at Marj Edie Park
- A connection should be provided from Saskatchewan Avenue to Optimist Park to Sturgeon Creek Greenway
- West St. Paul trail surfacing should be provided under the Perimeter through West St. Paul on Main Street
- The trails from LaBarriere Park to the Trappist Monastery to Maple Grove Park to Bishop Grandin and to the Seine River should be connected
- The connection between Crow Wing trail and the City needs to be resolved to make it safe for pedestrians
- The connection between the Red River North Trail and the City needs to be resolved to make it safe for pedestrians
- The physical connections between trail systems need to be complemented with the historical aspects of each trail; that is, the heritage and history of each area needs to be connected
- There is a need for the WTA to participate in the planning of the trail and recreational aspects of the proposed floodway redevelopment which offers many opportunities for further trail development

### ***3.2.2 Physical Aspects of Trails***

- A uniform system of signs should be developed for all trails including the provision of distance markers at each kilometer to allow walkers to calculate the distance they cover as per the example in the Seven Oaks Hearts in Motion™ Trail
- Standards should be developed for trails based on the Universal Trail Assessment Process and guidelines and should be communicated at each trail to advise visitors on the type of trail, degree of difficulty, and other relevant information about each trail

- Trail head signs are needed to provide information to visitors about the specific opportunities and constraints for particular trails
- Recognition was given that different surfaces for different trails are acceptable in accordance with the surrounding environment
- The City should assist in the maintenance of trails
- Wooden structures should be provided in sensitive trail spots to prevent erosion. The “North Shore” model should be examined and adopted where appropriate to minimize damage from bicycles
- Other common physical elements should be included as appropriate at each trail including lighting, bilingual signage, historical interpretive signage, connectivity signage, raffles, handrails and steps, benches, switchbacks, garbage receptacles, and place holders for self-guiding maps and trail brochures
- Consultations should be held with the Canadian Centre on Disability Research to address the issue of accessibility on trails for the disabled; signage should take into account the needs of the disabled to ensure maximum access for all members of the community
- Volunteer groups should be established for trail maintenance
- Information provided at each trail should include locations of washrooms, restaurants and related physical amenities to assist with user comfort

### 3.2.3 *Uses*

- The concept of multi-seasonal use of trails was adopted
- All types of active and passive uses were identified for trails including: cycling, walking, jogging, historical interest, naturalist interest and environmental awareness, cross-country skiing, roller blading, equestrian, skating, tobogganing, birding, photography, access to canoeing and fishing, snow shoeing etc.

- The use of motorized vehicles (except wheelchairs) should not be allowed; conversely, all forms of self-propelled motion should be permitted
- Provision should be made for wildlife crossings and corridors where appropriate
- The use of the trails for family events, wellness events, fun runs, fundraising events, scavenger hunts, orienteering, school and group uses and the like should be programmed for the trail system in the future
- Inventories of natural resources should be undertaken for specific trails where this has not been undertaken
- Consideration should be given to develop arboretums where appropriate as additional attractions related to the trails
- The development of access points along trails for canoeing and fishing should be developed

### ***3.2.4 Tourism***

A variety of tourism opportunities were identified as follows:

- Tours should be packaged with private tour operators to incorporate the trail system as part of their tourism offerings integrating hotels, B and Bs, walking tours, historical tours, restaurants etc.
- Fishing, bird watching, botany tours, historical tours, cycling routes and similar activities should be offered and promoted
- There should be integration of the trails to the Splash Dash Water Bus
- The trail system should be linked to other attractions and amenities
- Shuttle services connecting to trails should be developed
- The public transit system should provide for bicycle racks
- Target markets that should be pursued should include rural residents, special needs groups, sports markets, tour operators, USA

### **3.2.5 Marketing**

A variety of marketing tools to promote the trails for a variety of purposes were identified as follows:

- A web page and links to other web pages such as the MRTA, the City, Provincial and City tourism entities, and related sites
- A passport system could be developed with sponsored incentives for visiting various segments of the trail system
- Events on trails should be marketed
- Partnerships should be developed with a variety of agencies such as the local business community, health care, chambers of commerce, neighbourhood networks, elderhostels, etc.
- Information should be provided in print form on trails including all aspects offered such as historical, botanical, wellness, special events etc. This should include maps and self-guiding brochures including information on location, distance, specific aspects of trails, washroom location, restaurants, B and Bs, bus services, distances involved etc.
- Information on trails should be provided to hotels, libraries, interpretive and tourism facilities, festival organizers, leisure guide, public service announcements to the media, seniors organizations, schools, levels of government etc.

### **3.2.6 Organizational and Administrative Support**

A variety of organizational, logistical and support was identified as follows:

- Support for all trails groups is needed to assist with membership lists, administrative support, copying, etc.

- Support for all trails groups in seeking easements and other legal instruments to facilitate connections over public and private properties
- Support for developing fundraising proposals
- Professional planning assistance to all trail associations
- Assistance for volunteer coordination
- Insurance to address public liability issues – could the City provide an umbrella liability policy ?
- Assistance to establish trail maintenance volunteers

### ***3.2.7 Funding and Fundraising***

The following ideas were identified to assist trail organizations with fundraising:

- Take advantage of greenhouse gas reduction under the Kyoto accord
- Develop neighbourhood networks to access WRTA funds
- Initiate trail events to raise funds

## **PART IV. Requirements for the Future**

Based on the individual meetings and the strategic planning process with the trails associations the following major topics will require attention in order to pursue the collective vision of the Winnipeg Trails Association.

### **4.1 CONNECTIVITY**

The major area of common interest is to connect various trails – including the Trans Canada Trail – into a larger whole to allow for a more integrated and continuous trail system in the City. Recommended connection points between specific trails have been described above ( and are also outlined and prioritized in Part I of this Report ). The reader is also invited to review to the individual trail maps and the large City wide trail map (available separately) to identify and describe the connections that are envisioned.

The benefit of linking the trails will be the opportunity for longer trail routes, allowing for greater trail distances to be covered by trail users in the future.

Individual trail associations will still pursue their specific connectivity issues within their stewardship areas where there are still substantial challenges for some associations, for example, Save our Seine, Fort Whyte Centre, Omand’s Creek, and a number of others.

#### **Recommendation:**

- *That the City of Winnipeg, in consultation with the WTA, MRTA and Rivers West, work together to connect existing trails to create longer and more continuous trail runs – with loops of various lengths throughout the city – and also improve connections to trails outside of the city in the Red River Valley, as set out in the City wide map.*

- *The Transit system and The Forks Splash Dash water bus should be linked to the wider trail system in the future as opportunities emerge. Transit buses should provide for bicycle racks where appropriate.*

## **4.2 PHYSICAL ASPECTS**

The physical aspects of trails refers to the quality of the trail surfaces, signs, trail access, interpretive signs, maintenance and related matters.

### **Recommendations:**

- *It is recommended that all trails, as appropriate and possible, use the criteria of the Universal Trail Assessment Process. In general, trails present a variety of experiences from hard packed surfaces based on abandoned rail lines, natural paths, city sidewalks etc. Standards should be set in general but individual trail associations will determine their particular needs and capabilities in relation to the proposed assessment process.*
- *In addition, consultations should be held with the Canadian Centre on Disabilities Research to address accessibility policies and issues for the disabled community.*
- *A common system of trail signs be developed and installed in the future which respect the needs of individual trail associations while integrating the overall City wide trail system.*
- *In addition to signs, a City wide plan should be developed for garbage receptacles, benches, riffles, wooden structures for sensitive trail portions (the North Shore model) and other common elements to make trails more user friendly.*



- *A cooperative approach for trail maintenance be developed between the WTA and the City of Winnipeg.*
- *Consideration should be given to the development of educational and interpretive opportunities, and access to rivers for canoeing and fishing.*
- *The Winnipeg Trails Association should seek financial support from all levels of government to secure capital funds for common trail elements such as signs, benches, garbage receptacles, riffles, wooden (North Shore model) structures, interpretive signs, and trail surface improvements.*

### **4.3 USES**

#### **Recommendation:**

- *Only non-motorized uses should be permitted on trails. Motorized wheelchairs will be permitted.*
- *More specifically, multi-seasonal uses that should be permitted include cycling, walking, birding, photography, jogging, cross country skiing, orienteering, tobogganing, snow shoeing, equestrian and the like subject to the capacity and location of specific trails.*
- *Provision should be made for wildlife crossings and corridors where appropriate.*
- *The use of trails for community events should be encouraged e.g. family events, fun runs, fundraising events, school uses and the like.*

## 4.4 TOURISM

As the trail system in the City becomes more developed and better connected, this presents an opportunity for the development of tourism as an added attraction and amenity in the City.

### Recommendation:

- *Rivers West, with its vision of making Manitoba's Red River corridor a destination, should seek opportunities to include existing and future city trails into its support for tourism development. This might include identifying potential packages for tour operators and seeking new target markets such as Manitoba visitors from outside the city, and the international market such as the U.S., as well as adjoining provinces.*

## 4.5 MARKETING

An aggressive marketing campaign should be developed in the future to present the Winnipeg trails as an opportunity for the local community and outside visitors, both national and international.

### Recommendations:

- *A detailed marketing and communication plan should be developed for the entire trails system under the auspices of the WTA. This should address relevant target markets and tools – web pages, brochures, heritage interpretation, events, public service announcements, and related marketing tools. Partnership opportunities should be maximized with organizations such as Rivers West and MRTA.*

- *Information on trails should be provided to tour operators, hotels, interpretive facilities such as tourism information centres and museums, the City’s leisure guide, libraries, schools, seniors organizations, sports organizations as well as levels of government.*

#### **4.6 FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING**

Individual trail associations have developed expertise at fundraising and take advantage of public funding sources on an ad hoc basis depending on their volunteer base and individual knowledge. This can be substantially strengthened by the continuous interaction of the various trails organizations and partnerships with the local business community and various community organizations such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The Manitoba Recreational Trails Association is the administrator for the Manitoba Millennium Trail Development Program, and has been providing funding for trail development in Winnipeg since 1999.

However, to move this level of expertise to a higher level of knowledge may require a more formal structuring of the WTA in the future depending on the level of formality or informality that they wish collectively to pursue.

#### **4.7 TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES**

All trail associations are volunteer driven and supported, with the exception of the Fort Whyte Centre. The progress of the development of any particular trail system has been dependent on their own individual initiatives and level of energy and local support. In some cases, particular trails have been developed and supported by one or a few individuals.

To move the trails system forward – both at the local trail level and at the level of greater connectivity between individual trails – will require the provision of technical and administrative resources to be made available to trails associations on a collective and individual basis.

Specific needs that are required include planning support, administrative support, volunteer support, marketing and communication, tourism development, fundraising and special events. To date, Winnipeg trail groups have made use of the resources of the MRTA and the city to provide them with information.

**Recommendation:**

*That a three year program of financial support be provided in support the Winnipeg Trails Association to help carry out their common priorities as reflected in this report.*

*A budget of \$100,000 per annum for three years is recommended.*


*The specific purpose of these financial resources would include:*

- *Professional planning resources for the WTA to help accelerate the planning and implementation of the trails and trail connections for existing and emerging trails in the City. (\$25,000 to \$50,000 p.a.)*
- *Common program support to the WTA in order to advance the development of Winnipeg's trails by undertaking projects with a common priority such as the development of common communications strategy, signs and wayfinding, marketing tools such as brochures and a web page, and administrative support for the WTA. (\$25,000 for common program support and \$25,000 for administrative support.)*

### Rationale for Budget

The proposed funds recommended above would provide for the following activities:

<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
\$35,000 to \$50,000	Professional planning services and support (term planner or consulting company)	<p>To accelerate the linking process between trails (and some work within some trails under development), a professional planner or firm on contract would work with the trails associations and the City to help acquire easements, work with private landowners, and other authorities ( Hydro, the Province ), to develop the specific trail links listed in this report and to assist the WTA in the planning of trails and trail extensions and connections.</p> <p>In practical terms, this could be a part-time professional planner and a landscape firm on contract addressing different needs.</p>
\$25,000 to \$50,000	Common support services to WTA –program support and administrative support	<p>Nearly all associations are volunteer driven and have common challenges such as volunteer coordination, maintaining membership inventories, on site supervision during summer trail projects, fundraising, marketing, and administrative support.</p> <p>Depending on the collective needs of the WTA at any time, this support fund could assist them to develop a common communications plan, common signage and wayfinding, mapmaking, develop a common marketing brochure, a common trail maintenance approach, a web page etc. The emphasis for the use of these funds is to focus on common program supports which are of benefit to all trails associations and help advance the trails system as a whole. It would be allocated on an as required basis by the WTA in accordance with the Strategic Plan report. A budget of \$25,000 for common programs support is proposed.</p> <p>The administrative support part could be an administrative person and office with computer and duplicating facilities and a meeting room. This could be an expensive element and may need some creative help to make the modest budget of \$25,000 work well. For example, the City or the Province could offer up some office space for the WTA administrative support function.</p>



This program of activities and the proposed budget will achieve the goals of the WTA as reflected in this report.

The proposed budget allocation does not provide for the costs of land acquisition or the capital improvement projects (signs, trail improvements, plantings etc.) which the associates of the WTA continue to seek with the support of public programs and levels of government.