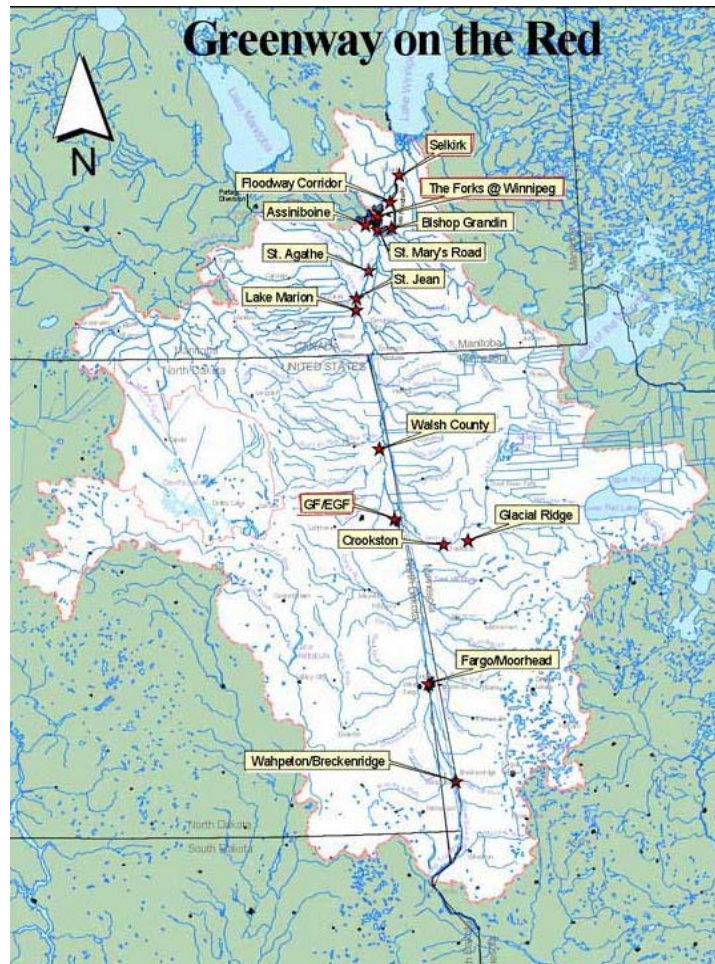


# RED RIVER GREENWAY:

## A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

FOR

RIVERS WEST – RED RIVER CORRIDOR ASSOCIATION INC.



November 2004  
RAS Consulting

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	1
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	7
<b>2. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS</b>	7
<b>3. BACKGROUND</b>	7
<b>4. DEFINITIONS</b>	10
<b>5. VISION, GOALS AND BENEFITS</b>	11
5.1 Vision	11
5.2 Goals and Benefits	11
5.2.1 Biodiversity	11
5.2.2 Riverbank stability	12
5.2.3 Water quality	12
5.2.4 Flood damage mitigation	12
5.2.5 Manitobans and visitors	13
5.2.6 Economic development	13
<b>6. PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	13
6.1 Multiple use greenway	13
6.2 Clear vision.	14
6.3 Build on success	14
6.4 Utilize existing amenities	14
6.5 Change riparian cultural perspective	14
6.6 Grass roots movement	15
6.8 Build partnerships	15
6.9 Design to comfort level	15
<b>7. DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES</b>	16
7.1 Property	16
7.2 Length of greenway	18
7.3 Existing greenway components	18
7.4 River south of Winnipeg not mapped for navigation	19
7.5 Most trail development away from river	20
7.6 Need for central coordinating service	20
<b>8. BUILDING SUPPORT</b>	20
<b>Existing programs/agencies</b>	21

8.1 Riparian Tax Credit	21
8.2 Liability indemnity	22
8.3 Environmental Farm Planning	22
8.4 Access to trees, native cover, materials	23
8.5 The Protected Areas Initiative (PAI)	24
8.6 Hometown Meeting Places	24
8.7 Heritage Grants Program	24
8.8 Community Places Program	24
8.9 Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC)	25
8.10 Managing the Water's Edge	25
8.11 Riparian Health Council	25
8.12 Sustainable Development Innovations (SDIF)	26
8.13 Red River Basin Commission (RRBC)	26
8.14 Manitoba Recreational Trails Association (MRTA)	27
8.15 City of Winnipeg	27
8.16 Nature Conservancy of Canada(NCC)	28
8.17 Conservation Districts	28
<b>Proposed</b>	28
8.18 Compensation for lands out of production	28
8.19 US CREP program	28
8.20 Participant recognition	29
8.21 Special Status for Participating Property	29
8.22 Public education	29
<b>9. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	30
<b>10. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS</b>	35
<b>11. RESOURCES</b>	38
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	41
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	43
<b>APPENDIX C</b>	44
<b>Figure 1 Hypothetical stretch of river before greenway</b>	
<b>Figure 2 Hypothetical stretch of river with greenway</b>	
<b>Map 1</b> (maps prepared by Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram)	
<b>Map 2</b>	
<b>Map 3</b>	
<b>Map 4</b>	
<b>Map 5</b>	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the spring of 2004, Manitoba Premier Gary Doer and the Governors of North and South Dakota, and Minnesota agreed to the establishment of a greenway along the entire length of the Red River, from its headwaters at Lake Traverse in the U.S. to Lake Winnipeg, in Manitoba. Two organizations, Rivers West – Red River Corridor Association Inc. (Rivers West) in Manitoba and Greenway on the Red in the US, were to lead the initiative in their respective jurisdictions. This report is the result of that endeavour and outlines a proposed strategy for the Manitoba portion of the greenway.

This report and the recommendations contained herein are largely the result of fruitful discussions with the many interested and cooperative people who live and work in, or provide services to, the area, including political authorities, conservation and like organizations, government departments and landowners.

Defined broadly as a linear open space along a natural corridor such as a river, there are several basic types of greenways, each with applicability in the Red River valley: recreational, ecological and cultural/historic.

Unlike most greenways, the proposed Red River Greenway is targeting a stretch of river nearly 250 km long. This greenway must be variable in its nature, and over its course, would include a collection of all three types of greenways. Completion of the greenway will likely require the development of a series of greenway pods, developed incrementally and linked together along the river by buffer strips of river bottom or planted forest or prairie cover.

In order to reflect the variable nature of the proposed greenway, a proposed vision is:

*A contiguous greenway consisting of a series of natural areas, trails, parks, historical and or cultural attractions, linked together by forested or native prairie buffer strips, working together to protect and enhance the quality of the river and the riparian area: to provide a place where people can preserve and enjoy the beauty, culture and heritage of the Red River corridor from the land and from the water.*

More specifically, goals for the development of the greenway would include: contributing to the biodiversity in the Red River Valley; maintaining/enhancing riverbank stability; enhancing Red River water quality; assisting in the mitigation of flood damage; attracting Manitobans and tourists to the area; and enhancing economic development opportunities. Each of these goals contributes to the provincial objective of sustainable development and translates into benefits that Manitoba and the Red River corridor will accrue with the establishment of the greenway.

The establishment of the greenway will need to be guided by a set of principles to ensure consistency in form and process. Paramount to the success of the initiative are such principles as the need for a common vision; incremental development and building on success; use of grassroots organizations to champion the initiative in their respective areas; provision of central assistance such as overall planning, training and assisting local organizations with accessing funds; designing the greenway components to fit the attitudes and geography of the area; and working to change the culture regarding riparian management, are.

Developers of the greenway will face both opportunities and challenges. Over the nearly 250 km of river, many locations currently qualify as a greenway, a component of a greenway, or can be transformed easily into a greenway, for example historic or cultural sites, parks, museums, and bike or hiking trails. These facilities can be incorporated into a greenway. Challenges include the fact that much of the river property in southern Manitoba is privately owned and attitudes about participating in the program will vary along the river. It will be important to offer effective incentives to land owners to elicit their cooperation. A number of government and non-government agencies offer programs consistent with what is required for greenway development. Other incentives may need to be developed.

A summary of the recommendations follows. For more detailed explanation, see Sections 9 and 10 of the report.

1. That the Province of Manitoba initiate and facilitate a step wise, multi-year program for the establishment of a greenway along the Red River, with the vision and goals as set out above.
2. That Manitoba designate and appropriately resource a specific central agency (such as Rivers West) as the greenway authority to coordinate overall greenway planning and development along the Red River.
3. That the greenway initiative be established as a series of local initiatives undertaken incrementally and in partnership with local governments, a local greenway planning committee, a provincially designated greenway authority, conservation agencies federal and provincial government departments and other organizations as available.
4. That Manitoba intentionally protect its publicly owned lands along the river – either through conservation agreements or the Protected Areas Initiative.
5. That the greenway be viewed as an integrated system of diverse but linked pods or components, to be developed individually but consistent with an overall plan.

6. That Manitoba begin formal greenway development planning in four target areas, building on existing capability:
  - 6.1 Emerson/Pembina ND – ecological, land based historical, recreational, international.
  - 6.2 Ste. Agathe to St. Adolphe – ecological, land/water based historical and educational.
  - 6.3 Larter’s to Lockport – land based recreation trail along the paved shoulder on River Road just north of Winnipeg is a cultural/heritage greenway.
  - 6.4 Selkirk to Lake Winnipeg – water based recreational, environmental education, wildlife viewing.
8. That community docks be developed as priorities in the four target areas, designed in accordance with the recommendations in the Rivers West June 2003 report: River Access Assessment by Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram and Scatliff Miller Murray.
9. That Rivers West, in cooperation with the Province of Manitoba, continue to aggressively pursue the Canadian Heritage River designation for the Red River.
10. That, where possible, Manitoba and the Federal Government augment or adapt programs under their control to support the development of the Red River greenway. For example, the Protected Areas Initiative, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC), Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives could examine their program areas to determine if and how an additional emphasis could be placed on the Red River valley.
11. That sound science and planning principles be utilized for the development of each greenway pod. Each pod should be designed for its immediate location and, to the degree possible, conform to the opportunities inherent in the neighbouring areas or existing neighbouring greenway components.
12. That each completed greenway component be celebrated with a public opening ceremony and the initiation of each new component announced.
13. That First Nations be included from the early stages of the overall planning, with direct involvement of First Nations with reserves/traditional use areas in proximity to proposed greenway components. The greenway pods should be used to showcase Aboriginal culture and history along the river.
14. That the program partner with the City of Winnipeg trail and waterfront initiatives to ensure compatible goals and program linkages.

15. That the Federal Government undertake to chart the Red River south of Winnipeg for navigation purposes.
16. That the Province begin negotiations with the Federal Government to enter into a cost-sharing agreement to support and fund the development of the greenway.
17. That the Province ensure the provision of effective signage from land and water for all greenway components.
18. That the Province encourage the MRTA to focus as a priority on the Red River greenway area for the provision of financial and expert assistance to local organizations in the development of trails along greenway.
19. That Manitoba Conservation, with other appropriate federal and provincial departments, work with landowners along the Red to address the damage the increasing deer population is doing to riparian vegetation along the banks.
20. That Manitoba Hydro amend the Forest Enhancement Program to accommodate the planting of trees along the Red River as a part of the greenway initiative.
21. That the Province continue to promote the Red River and its attractions under the current Rivers West Brand “Routes on the Red”.
22. That the Province continue to work with Greenway on the Red to develop the greenway in Manitoba as a part of the international greenway.

As a summary recommendation for the immediate term, there should be three concurrent planning tracks: a) hard track - technical design work, mapping, costing; b) soft track - work with corridor municipalities, districts and landowners to develop committees, promote the greenway, develop networks of relevant individuals and agencies; and c) site specific - detailed work within the priority areas to access capital, build partnerships, undertake studies and preliminary design. The tracks need to be coordinated and complimentary. The results of the tracks can be integrated as corridor plan.

More specifically, it is recommended that the designated agency (suggest Rivers West) be appropriately resourced and undertake to:

1. Request Governments (Federal and Provincial) endorsement for the initiative and acknowledgement of the priority of the Red River corridor

area for existing programs and for the use of Provincial Crown lands purchased after the flood.

2. Meet with the councils of the municipalities and communities, MRTA, conservation and planning districts in the priority areas to:
  - identify locations for greenway development;
  - discuss incorporation of greenway compatible plans into their existing and future development plans (see Riel Community);
  - discuss the respective federal, provincial and municipal roles;
  - encourage and offer assistance in the formation of local greenway planning committees; and
  - discuss the types of incentive and assistance that may be required to encourage participation, the current programs and changes that may be required to those programs.
3. Prepare a guidebook for the “Planning and Development of a Riparian Greenway in Manitoba” for the use of local greenway planning committees.
4. Contract or undertake baseline mapping for the Red River (2km beyond river centre), to include publicly owned lands, topographical features, communities, roads, trails, cultural/historical/ recreational attractions and areas of ecological interest.
5. As a part of the mapping process survey the river with a view to locating camp/picnic sites every 20km or so for the use of canoe/kayakers.
6. Develop a communications plan for the greenway initiative; to include the design of the message to be communicated, the target audience(s) and the method of communicating.
7. As a part of the communications plan, in the priority areas, meet with landowners through regional meetings, open houses and individual meetings (led by local organizations supported by central agency) to:
  - discuss the vision and the nature and form of the proposed greenway
  - encourage and determine their willingness to participate and the nature of their participation
  - discuss most appropriate vehicle for participation
  - discuss incentive/assistance programs available and others that may be required, and
8. Encourage Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Water Stewardship, Conservation Districts Authority, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation and other relevant agencies to sponsor workshops in concert with local greenway planning

committees and interested landowners, First Nation and municipal officials and other interested parties. The workshops would provide information on the proposed greenway, determine levels of participation and discuss the existing and needed programs to assist in its establishment.

9. Utilizing information from the workshops, research, develop and propose new incentive programs to encourage the participation of landowners in the development of the greenway.
10. Target as priorities in the Rivers West water access program (dock program), docks in the following communities:
  - Emerson
  - Morris
  - Ste. Agathe
  - St. Adolphe
  - Selkirk (has a dock, but requires upgrade to a marina)
11. Undertake or commission the following studies:
  - areas suitable for camping and river access for canoe/kayak routes in the target areas;
  - biodiversity study to identify existing plants, animals and habitats, and prioritize riparian and prairie revegetation requirements
  - critical bank stabilization activities required;
  - signage requirements for the priority areas – from land and water
  - study to determine overall and component cost estimates, financial assistance possibilities, possible cost sharing agreements, innovative assistance programs such as green credits, etc.
11. Begin the process for the development of a greenway master plan for the length of the river to include components, costs, and maps.
12. Organize a greenway conference to bring the stakeholders together to learn about greenway development experiences and foster the creation of partnerships for the development of the greenway.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the spring of 2004, Manitoba Premier Gary Doer met with the Governors of North and South Dakota, and Minnesota to discuss the potential for the establishment of a greenway along the entire length of the Red River, from its headwaters at Lake Traverse in the U.S. to Lake Winnipeg, in Manitoba. They agreed to make the concept a priority and to cooperate in making it happen. Two organizations, Rivers West – Red River Corridor Association Inc. (Rivers West) in Manitoba and Greenway on the Red in the U.S., were to lead the initiative in their respective jurisdictions. Since that time, Rivers West has been developing a strategy for establishing a greenway from the international border at Emerson to Lake Winnipeg. This report is the result of that endeavour and it sets out a proposed strategy to undertake the Manitoba portion of the international greenway.

## **2. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

In March 2004, Rivers West contracted with RAS Consulting to undertake the development of a strategy for the establishment of a greenway along the Red River from the Canada/US border to Lake Winnipeg. Much of the process undertaken by RAS Consulting consisted of researching the nature and development of greenways and meeting with the stakeholders and potential stakeholders to determine the challenges and opportunities inherent in such a significant undertaking. Meetings were held with Mayors and Reeves, conservation organizations, government departments, (see Appendix A) focus groups of landowners north and south of the City and an Advisory Committee (see Appendix B) established to guide this process. This report and the recommendations contained herein are largely the result of fruitful discussions with the many interested and cooperative people who live and work in or provide services to the area. (See Appendix C for the outcomes of meetings.)

With respect to the international aspect of the greenway, Rivers West has continued to liaise with Greenway on the Red to ensure that the Manitoba efforts are consistent with the overall goals of the Red River Greenway. At the time of writing of this report, a status report for the Premier and the Governors is being prepared. Also, one of the first greenway components being recommended for the Manitoba portion of the greenway is an international pod straddling the Canada/US border between Emerson and Pembina.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

Slowly winding its way from the northern United States into Canada and continuing north to feed Lake Winnipeg, the 10<sup>th</sup> largest lake in the world, the Red, at first blush seems a rather innocuous river. Its lazy meandering belies its latent rage and impressive history. This typical prairie river has virtually defined

the history of the area. As a main transportation route, it dictated the early settlement pattern, bringing groups of pioneers north from the Dakotas and other groups of settlers south from their long and dangerous passage over the length of the treacherous Lake Winnipeg, all to carve out a livelihood along the river's path. The distribution of land centred along the river, with the allocation of parcels fronting the river for transportation purposes, a practice that has had major impacts on planning and development to this day.

Throughout its history, the Red has regularly overflowed its low banks, periodically inundating the prairie with floodwaters, creating a huge lake that has swallowed up homes and livelihoods. The Red has contributed to the tenacious nature of the Manitoba settlers who, after each flood, have begun afresh and rebuilt their lives. The tenacity continues today, as inhabitants of the Red River valley pursue their lives with a vigour that hides an underlying preoccupation with the annual potential for a devastating flood. Even today, flood prevention and damage mitigation claim a considerable allotment of financial and human resources as efforts continue to contain and control the temperamental river during its peak season.

However, the Red also provides opportunity for enjoyment. The river bottom forest has provided habitat for a vast assortment of wildlife. Anglers confidently expect a good catch at their favourite spots along the river; in the winter warmed by the fire in their wooden shack perched over the hole that guides their line to the hungry fish below. Under clear blue sky, snowmobilers blaze trails in the blinding snow and purists cross country ski or enjoy skating on the frozen river, navigating manicured paths dotted with potted trees. In summer, boating enthusiasts cruise the river to dine at The Forks or experience the historic locks at Lockport. Rowers glide their shells through still waters and morning mist. Tourists and partiers dine and sip drinks, dance or enjoy the sights as their stately riverboat cuts through the water, replicating the travel of days gone by.

But the real potential of the Red River as a central attribute of Manitoba remains unrealized. For the most part, regular opportunities to partake of river-based activity, even to enjoy its beauty from up close, are limited to a fortunate few. Much of the river is surrounded by private property and access to the river by boaters and canoeists is limited. Along the river, there are few usable access points for launching boats or canoes, and even fewer docks. The river has no navigation markings south of Winnipeg, making boating activities risky.

Years of flooding, continual use of the river for sewage disposal, extirpation of much of the riparian forest and the application of agricultural and residential fertilizers and pesticides have all taken their toll on the river. The banks continue to erode and are littered with fallen trees and debris; the water quality is poor and is adversely impacting the quality of Lake Winnipeg.

Only a long term and concerted effort will bring the river to its potential as a healthy contributor to Lake Winnipeg and a valuable public resource to be enjoyed by all Manitobans and visitors to this province. With proper planning and management, the Red River can become an attractive destination, a showcase for the history and culture of southern Manitoba, a model of good riparian and flood plain management and a desirable recreation area.

Recognizing the problems associated with the river, and spurred on by the severity of the 1997 flood, the government has placed renewed emphasis on the management of the river. The current floodway is being expanded to better protect property within the City of Winnipeg. Ring dykes and other mechanisms have been developed to mitigate the effect of flooding south of the city. Governments have developed programs to provide assistance and resources to landowners prepared to make efforts to protect the river from the effects of their commercial pursuits. Organizations like Rivers West have been given the specific mandate of making the Red River a destination.

Rivers West – Red River Corridor Association Inc., is a not for profit corporation with a mandate to develop the Red River corridor as a destination. One of its goals is to develop a greenway along Manitoba's Red River. In order to meet this goal, Rivers West has completed a number of studies that contribute to the development of the greenway. An access study that identifies opportunities for increasing access to the Red River primarily in southern Manitoba has been completed. In addition, more detailed design and planning studies have been undertaken for access projects at St. Adolphe and Ste. Agathe. There is now a design plan for the portion of the Trans Canada Trail at Lower Fort Garry and Rivers West is working to identify funding sources to establish the trail.

Rivers West has completed a study of the trails within the Winnipeg Capital Region that examines issues of connectivity with other trails and the Trans Canada Trail and infrastructure to support trail development. Rivers West is also developing an interpretive trail (the Forgotten Forests trail) at Fort Dufferin that will connect the Trans Canada Trail with the trail at Fort Dufferin historic site. When completed, the trail at Emerson will extend over several kilometers through some of the last remaining river bottom forest, through a historically and culturally significant area, to the Canada/US border.

Rivers West is currently working with the departments of Conservation; Water Stewardship; Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; Culture, Heritage and Tourism; Intergovernmental Affairs and other stakeholders to develop a strategy for a greenway along the Red River. The strategy will identify existing resources to support the development of a greenway; what is needed, opportunities for development. Rivers West is actively promoting the Red River corridor as a destination under the brand "Routes on the Red" and, together with tourism operators and attractions, is developing marketable and marketing products and

marketing packages. Together with Manitoba Conservation, Rivers West has been actively pursuing the designation of the Red River as a Canadian Heritage River.

Other organizations, such as The Red River Basin Commission (RRBC), have been active in this area for some time. The RRBC has been working internationally and with municipalities on projects, such as the Ste. Agathe Red River Floods Interpretive Center, that will enhance the area. Municipalities have been working to develop their riverbanks and showcase their historical and cultural relationship with the river.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

##### **Greenway**

Although the idea of a “greenway” often conjures up images of paved bike paths and hiking trails, this is often a misconception. A “greenway” is simply a linear open space, along a natural corridor such as a river. In truth, depending on their purpose and objectives, greenways can take on a number of characteristics, including pedestrian or bike paths, interpretive trails, ecological reserves, parks, campgrounds or picnic areas or strips of land with native cover linking a combination of these features. A greenway may be a mix of private and public lands with or without public access. For the purposes of this discussion, it is important to recognize that there are several basic types of greenways. The development of various types of greenways will have applicability in the Red River valley.

- **Recreational** greenways generally feature paths or trails of various kinds, often of relatively long distances, based on natural corridors such as rivers and streams, abandoned rail beds, and other public rights-of-ways. Trails and routes often have scenic quality as they pass through diverse and visually significant landscapes. Some of the most successful recreational greenways and green spaces occur where networks of trails link with water-based recreational sites and areas.
- **Ecological** greenways are significant natural corridors and open spaces, usually along rivers and streams and ridgelines that provide for wildlife migration and biodiversity, riparian habitat, act as a buffer strip, etc.
- **Cultural and historic** greenways are places or trails with historic heritage and cultural values to attract tourists and to provide educational, scenic, recreational, and economic benefit. They are usually along a road or highway, the most representative of them making an effort to provide pedestrian access along the route or at least places to alight from the car. They can also provide high quality housing environments at the edges of greenway (green space) for permanent and seasonal housing; accommodate water resources and flood

prevention and sensitively located alternative infrastructure for communing (e.g. bike paths within urban areas, recycling of waste and storm water).

Unlike most greenways, the Red River Greenway is aiming at a stretch of river over 200km long. It must therefore be varied in its nature, and over its course include a mix of all three types of greenways. Ultimately it might be a series of greenway pods, developed incrementally and linked together along the river by buffer strips of river bottom or planted forest or prairie cover. In that regard, the greenway along the Red River may be best thought of as an integrated system of discrete components linked by the river and by narrow linear riparian strips with forest or prairie cover that act as buffers to protect the river from chemical runoff, to retard bank slumping and to provide renewed habitat for wildlife indigenous to the area. (Appendices A&B)

### **Riparian Area**

Riparian areas are ecosystems that occur along watercourses or waterbodies. They are distinctly different from the surrounding lands because of unique soil and vegetation characteristics that are strongly influenced by free or unbound water in the soil. Riparian ecosystems occupy the transitional area between the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Typical examples would include floodplains, streambanks, and lakeshores. *USDA NRCS*

## **5. VISION, GOALS AND BENEFITS**

As noted above, greenways are established with a vision, purpose and goals that translate into benefits. In the case of the Red River Greenway, a recommended vision, objectives and benefits are described below:

### **5.1 Vision**

*A contiguous greenway consisting of a series of natural areas, trails, parks, and historic or cultural attractions linked together by treed or native prairie buffer strips, all working together to protect and enhance the quality of the river and the riparian area, and to provide a place where people can preserve and enjoy the beauty, culture and history of the Red River corridor from the land and from the water.*

### **5.2 Goals and Benefits**

#### **5.2.1 To increase the biodiversity of the Red River corridor.**

Settlement history along the Red River has resulted in land ownership patterns that provide private property ownership to the water's edge, to the high water mark, or to the middle of the riverbed. Owners have had the right to manage the riparian area as they see fit. Due to the productive nature of the land, and an economy increasingly centred on agricultural production, many owners have chosen to till and fertilize property to as close to the water as possible. As well, some residential owners currently landscape to the water's edge.

Early transportation included riverboat traffic on the Red. Fueled by timber, these boats share responsibility for the deforestation of the river bottom forest along the Red. These practices have contributed to the clearing of trees and undergrowth and consequently in a loss of habitat for indigenous wildlife. The loss of the large shade trees also impacts the fish as they lose the shade that keeps the water cool. *Protecting or restoring the riparian vegetation will provide improved habitat for wildlife and fish and facilitate sustained biodiversity in the area.*

### **5.2.2 To maintain and/or improve riverbank stability.**

The nature of the Red River is that the banks are clay based, and inevitably erode over time. In fact, the banks of the Red are constantly moving at a perceptible rate. Although the erosion will not be curtailed, it may be slowed slightly by a healthy system of roots from vegetation in the riparian area along the river. *Protecting or restoring native riparian vegetation along the riverbanks will assist in maintaining riverbank stability.*

### **5.2.3 To improve the water quality of the Red River.**

The Red River winds its way along many kilometres of agricultural land, through the Dakotas and Minnesota, and then through Manitoba. Because of the productive nature of the land, many farmers have made efforts to achieve maximum production from their property. They have cleared and tilled their land as close as possible to the water's edge. The land is seeded and fertilizer and pesticides are applied. The nutrients contained in these fertilizers and the contaminants contained in the pesticides leach or run off into the river adding to its nutrient load and decreasing its quality for industrial, recreational and other uses. The river ultimately flows into Lake Winnipeg, which is becoming increasingly eutrophic due to the excessive nutrient load from a combination of municipal and industrial waste, private sewage systems, and agricultural and residential runoff. *Consistent with the province's nutrient management program, the creation of buffer strips and the restoration of the natural riparian vegetation as part of that buffer strip, will trap the nutrients and prevent their entry to the river reducing the nutrient burden on the river and contributing to the goal of enhanced water quality.*

### **5.2.4 To mitigate the damage caused by flooding**

The propensity of the Red River to flooding will not change. Developments along the banks of the Red are, therefore, at risk of semi-regular inundation. There currently exist a number of restrictions, such as elevation requirements, that place restrictions or conditions on developments along the river. *Ensuring developments along the river, including greenway infrastructure, are flood-proof, protected from the flood, or easily restored will minimize the disruption of regular flooding.* (The Assiniboine River walkway is a good example of a development that can withstand regular covering by flood waters.)

### **5.2.5 To increase the number of Manitobans and visitors to the cultural, historical, recreational and ecological attractions along the Red River**

The length of the route, over 200 km, will provide opportunity for water or land-based day trips or more lengthy excursions. Campsites and canoe launches will need to be an integral part of the planning. Historical/cultural sites such as Fort Dufferin, the Ste. Agathe Red River Floods Interpretive Center, Mennonite Landing, the St. Norbert Cultural and Heritage Centre, St. Norbert Provincial Park, Trappist Monastery Provincial Park, The Forks, Lower Fort Garry, River Road, Kenosewun, Lockport locks or natural areas of ecological interest such as Netley Marsh provide a varied and interesting foundation upon which to build a comprehensive greenway along the Red River. Land based activities can link with the Trans Canada Trail or take advantage of scenic routes such as River Road. *Designing land or water based routes around existing historical/cultural sites or existing scenic roads or trails will showcase Manitoba history and culture while providing rewarding recreational opportunities.*

### **5.2.6 To enhance economic development opportunities for communities along the river**

The proposed greenway supports the philosophy of sustainable development adopted by the Manitoba Government. Although greenway objectives are largely related to environmental protection, the meeting of those objectives lends itself to the achievement of economic benefits. If there is an interest in the river for boating or as a canoe/kayak route, or in land-based activities such as cycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, cross country skiing, etc. services will be needed to serve the interests. There will be opportunity for a variety of infrastructure to support tourism, such as bed and breakfasts, outfitters, guides and nature interpreters. *Properly conceived, developed and marketed, the greenway can become an integral part of a sustainable Manitoba tourism industry.*

## **6. PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The establishment of a greenway along the Red, especially one that necessarily will progress incrementally, requires a set of principles to guide its planning and development. Adherence to a common set of principles will help to ensure a consistent purpose, philosophy and quality throughout the length of the overall greenway.

### **6.1 Multiple use greenway – link components**

The proposed greenway is an unusual one in that it is envisioned to run the whole length of the Red River in Manitoba. Along its course the river travels through many municipalities, small communities, the City of Winnipeg and Selkirk, agricultural lands, residential and undeveloped areas. *Given the length of the corridor, in excess of 200 km, the greenway should achieve a number of the objectives; protecting and enhancing the environment through habitat and*

*water quality protection, showcasing the culture and history of the area, and providing land and water based recreational opportunities.* In this regard the greenway will be an integrated system, a blend of land uses sharing a common focus – the Red River.

### **6.2 Clear vision.**

*It is important to cast a clear vision that will provide a tangible and exciting look at the future.* One hundred years ago, Winnipeg City Council decided to hold and develop land on which now sits Assiniboine Park. That vision has benefited the people of Manitoba beyond measure. A similar vision needs to be articulated for the Red River Greenway, perhaps utilizing the success of Assiniboine Park as a motivator. As noted above, a possible vision is:

*A contiguous greenway consisting of a series of natural areas, trails, parks, and historic or cultural attractions linked together by treed or native prairie buffer strips, all working together to protect and enhance the quality of the river and the riparian area, and to provide a place where people can preserve and enjoy the beauty, culture and history of the Red River corridor from the land and from the water.*

### **6.3 Build on success**

Due to factors such as the length of the Red River corridor in Manitoba; the variation in suitability for greenway components; the number of municipalities and private landowners along the way, each in various stages of development and with varying perspectives about the greenway, it will need to be developed in stages. It would be impossible to address the variety of issues along the river concurrently. A number of local grass roots organizations will be required to undertake the task. It would be highly unlikely that the establishment and progress of the local organizations would be concurrent. Thus an incremental approach is necessary to undertake the development of a greenway of this magnitude. There are areas along the Red (e.g. River Road) that are currently conducive to greenway development, or, in fact already comprise basic greenway attributes that can be enhanced and used as a greenway. *The greenway will begin in areas where success is likely and as momentum builds, move to the more difficult areas.*

### **6.4 Utilize existing amenities**

The Red River corridor has a rich history and culture and many of the reminders of past times have been maintained or restored for public enjoyment. There are also a number of parks and public lands along the river that could be used as well. *The development of the greenway will utilize existing amenities to the extent possible.*

### **6.5 Change riparian cultural perspective**

In order to eventually develop a greenway along the entire length of the Red, there will need to be solid public support, especially from the landowners

along the river. It will be important to develop a culture consistent with proper riparian management. *A combination of public education, support programs, public recognition of those that have made a significant contribution to the greenway, and celebration of successes along the river may help to create a culture of riverbank conservation.* Another way to accomplish such a cultural shift is to cause, through the public celebration of success, a competitive spirit, that will motivate communities and landowners to stretch their imaginations and capacities as they develop ways to enhance their riparian areas. *Efforts will be made towards developing a competitive spirit among government authorities and landowners with respect to the care and innovation used to protect and enhance riparian areas along the Red.*

### **6.6 Grass roots movement – local champions**

The success of an initiative is often determined by the ownership of the program by the local population. Grass roots movements are often effective at accomplishing local improvements. As well, government has neither the human or financial resources to unilaterally develop a greenway along the length of the river. *It will take a public/private partnership to accomplish the task. The role of government (or arms length agency) will aim at overall planning and coordination, assisting with direct funding through new or existing programs, providing expertise and training, assisting with promotion and marketing, and facilitating synergy between areas and organizations.*

### **6.7 Build partnerships**

Currently, there are many organizations, governments and agencies that have an interest in the conservation of riparian areas. Federal, provincial, First Nations and municipal governments, conservation and planning districts and agencies, local interest groups and others have an interest in protecting the river and its riparian area, and enhancing opportunities for proper management of the river and riparian area. Many of these organizations currently have programs that can be accessed for assisting in this initiative. *The proposed greenway will reflect the many programs available in pursuit of this common goal. A coordinating organization will facilitate the formation of formal or informal partnerships that would target the development of a Red River Greenway*

### **6.8 Design to comfort level – respect/address access/liability concerns, etc.**

Along the river, there are various landowner opportunities for participation in the establishment of a greenway. Crown or municipal lands can provide opportunities for recreational use, such as trails, parks and campgrounds. Private landowners are likely to have concerns regarding public access and may wish to participate with conditions that address their concerns, or a caveat that public access to their lands is restricted. Other lands may have restricted access to protect sensitive ecological areas. *The development of the greenway will respect and reflect landowner concerns.*

## 7. DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The development of the greenway will be a long term incremental process. Strategically, it will be important to move along two tracks: taking advantage of current opportunities; and planning how to address more challenging greenway components. Among the opportunities are lands that are or can be readily available, existing sites and communities that are interested and ready to become involved. Challenges include the need to discuss the greenway concept and potential participation with property owners along the length of the Red River in Manitoba; addressing private landowner issues of privacy and liability; costs associated with development of river access, trails, riparian habitat restoration, and compensation for lands out of productivity; and acquiring resources for training and supporting community groups, and operating a central coordinating agency. More specifically, issues to be considered include the following.

### 7.1 Property

- The Province of Manitoba currently owns property along the Red River that could be made available for the establishment of the greenway. This Crown land, depending on its characteristics and sensitivity could be protected for greenway development through the Protected Areas Initiative to preserve natural habitat or for greenway components with public access, such as interpretative trails, recreational trails, campgrounds, rest stops, etc. Other lands owned by the Province could be used to exchange flood prone lands for higher ground (land transfers) to provide producers with more secure property, or could be leased with the proceeds going into the greenway infrastructure or land acquisition programs.
- After the 1997 flood, the Province purchased property along the Red River south of the City of Winnipeg. At the time of writing of this report, detailed information about the land purchased and its locations is unavailable. It is expected that the land will be mapped shortly and that it is available for this project, whether to be used directly for the greenway, or for land transfers, leasing, etc. The individual properties will be assessed and depending on their characteristics their use will be determined.
- Much of the river property is in the hands of private owners. This poses significant challenge as there will be differing perspectives on the use of private property for a greenway.
  - Many of the objectives of the greenway can be achieved without the need to provide public access to property. Landowners can covenant – through such mechanisms as conservation agreements – to preserve the river bottom forest, restrict development, plant trees or other cover, and/or curtail tilling and chemical applications within a specified

distance from the riverbank. These practices would enhance the riverbank aesthetically and structurally, assist in the protection of the water quality and restore wildlife habitat. These buffer strips of riparian lands would be chemical and livestock free zones and would ultimately become a land-based link between the other components of the greenway.

- Based on the discussions held with a small sampling of landowners along the Red, it is anticipated that participation in the program will not be difficult to achieve, if the use of the land is passive. However, the provision of public access to private land (especially that land used for residential purposes) raises issues of liability, loss of privacy, fear of vandalism, etc. that will need to be addressed
  - **Liability** – As society becomes more and more litigious, liability issues loom proportionately more important. *The Occupiers' Liability Act should be reviewed to ensure it protects the participating landowners from non-negligent liability as a result of greenway related activities on their property.*
  - **Privacy** – many of the properties along the Red include residences, either as the primary use of the land, or in conjunction with a farm. Opening the property to access to the public for trails or camping would infringe on the privacy and enjoyment of the landowner.
  - **Vandalism** – Access to property brings with it the threat of property crimes. *It will be important to ensure there are controls put in place to minimize the possibility of vandalism and theft.*
- Landowners also noted concerns related to a passive use of their property, although these issues seem to be more readily resolved through government programming:
  - **Lost productivity** – In order to participate in the greenway program, participating landowners will need to protect their riparian areas – which could include converting cultivated land to a riparian buffer strip. This may mean leaving a buffer of at least 100 feet from the river with no tilling or application of chemicals. It may also mean planting natural riparian vegetation to try to maintain some stability in the soil in the riverbanks and retard the speed of their slumping. *Incentives such as a combination of the Riparian Tax Credit program, Forest Enhancement Program, Farm Environmental Planning program, and conservation agreements, or other programs that can be developed, should increase landowners' motivation to participate in the greenway initiative.*

- **Increase in weeds/predators** - Leaving property in a natural state adjacent to cropland can result in a proliferation of weeds in the planted fields. As the protected land becomes effective habitat, there can also be a significant increase in wildlife, some of which may not be desirable for a farm operation. *Programs will need to be developed to assist landowners with controlling the increase of pests arising from the change in land-use.*
- Many residential properties along the river proudly display careful landscaping to the water's edge. These manicured lawns require regular application of fertilizer to maintain the deep green colour of the grass. It may be difficult to execute a paradigm shift in the choice of landscape design such that waterways are protected from the very practices that are now so admired. *Residential landscaping is a long term issue likely best addressed over time as the culture shifts towards sound river bank management practices becomes trendy. At some point legislation may be required to support needed change.*

## 7.2 Length of Greenway

- Another challenge to the establishment of the greenway along the Red is the sheer length of the greenway. The almost 250 km of river makes this initiative an extremely ambitious undertaking. Along the route are varied land ownership schemes, land-uses and environmental sensitivities. Careful planning will be required to ensure the relevance and compatibility of each greenway component to its host area. It is important to note that *mapping of the corridor and all its components is critical to the success of the greenway.* Initially, base mapping of the corridor will suffice, however, as the planning for the individual components of the greenway are undertaken, detailed maps will be required. Some mapping was undertaken by *Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram* shortly after the 1997 flood (Appendix D). As well, a prototype base map was recently prepared showing the stretch of river flowing through the RM of Ritchot. These maps will provide a beginning; however much more mapping is required early in the greenway development process. *Maps will need to include topographical information, existing historical/cultural sites, water access points, land ownership and use information. The maps should be GPS so that exact locations and distances can be readily plotted and stored in a GIS system. These maps can form the basis for future tourist amenities and attractions along the route.*

## 7.3 Existing Greenway components

- Over the almost 250 km of river, there are currently many locations that either qualify as a greenway or component of a greenway, or can be transformed easily into greenway. Many communities have historic or cultural sites, museums, parks, camping facilities and bike or hiking trails. Some have connections to the Trans Canada Trail. These facilities can be

incorporated into a greenway. Communities have parks or campgrounds that could be used by canoeists, and some roads have paved shoulders that can be used as bike routes. *Advantage should be taken of existing amenities such that they can be incorporated into the greenway system. A preliminary step will be to plot these and other existing features on Red River base maps.*

Some greenway compatible sites and amenities that currently exist include (but are not limited to):

- Fort Dufferin campground and Historic Site
- Emerson trail system – Forgotten Forests trail at Fort Dufferin
- Trans Canada Trail – (including the Crow Wing Trail and Emerson trail)
- St. Jean Park
- Ste. Agathe Red River Floods Interpretative Centre
- Mennonite Landing
- St. Adolphe Park
- St. Norbert Arts and Cultural Centre
- St Norbert Provincial Park
- Trappist Monastery Provincial Park
- City of Winnipeg
- Kings Park
- St Vital Park
- The Forks
- Riverwalk
- Waterfront Drive
- St Boniface waterfront
- Fort Gibraltar
- Kildonan Park
- River Road and River Road Provincial Park
- St Andrews on the Red
- Captain Kennedy House
- Kenosewun Centre in Lockport Provincial Park
- Lockport locks and dam
- Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site
- St Peter Dynevor Church
- Selkirk Park, waterfront
- Netley Creek/Marsh

*Successful establishment of a greenway along the Red will build on existing attractions.*

#### **7.4 Red River south of Winnipeg is not mapped for navigation**

- The river is the only constant factor connecting the greenway from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg and the opportunities that flow from it. Over time, the river could be re-established as a recreational transportation

route. However, navigation of the river south of Winnipeg is tricky, and currently known only to local inhabitants that are familiar with their stretch of river. For the greenway to be successful, it will need to be charted for navigation purposes. *The Federal Government should undertake its responsibility for river navigation by charting the Red River south of Winnipeg to the Canada/US Border. In order to expedite this activity, Manitoba should immediately petition the federal government to have the river south of Winnipeg mapped and marked for navigation.*

### **7.5 Most trail development away from river**

- The Trans Canada Trail is being developed across the province as a series of 17 trail sections including the Crow Wing (south of Winnipeg) and the Red River North (north of Winnipeg) trails in Manitoba. For the most part, however, the trails have been established away from the river. *The planning of the greenway should link to the TCT at strategic locations to encourage trail users to visit greenway attractions or camping facilities. The individual sections of the Trans Canada Trail, such as the Crow Wing Trail, should have clear signage to guide users to the greenway and to greenway attractions.*

### **7.6 Need for central coordinating services**

- Small town residents are notoriously over committed in volunteer initiatives. Without effective support, resources and encouragement it may be difficult to attract enough capable people at the various locations to plan and develop the greenway in their area. *Government, or an arms length organization, must be prepared to provide overall planning and coordination, training and support services to maximize the effectiveness of the work undertaken at the local level. A central agency such as Rivers West should be commissioned and resourced to undertake this role.*

## **8. BUILDING SUPPORT**

*For the Greenway initiative to be successful, it will need a solid commitment at the federal, provincial and local level, and financial commitments from the federal and provincial governments. Grass roots organizations will need to be established to focus - or existing organizations will need to refocus - on this initiative. Municipal governments will need to encourage and assist the organizations. The provincial government, through a designated agency such as Rivers West, will need to provide overall planning and coordination services. The designated agency will need to provide training in grant and proposal writing, contracting, and project management. It will need to provide a window into the currently available government funding programs and expertise, and it will need to encourage the development of other government programs needed to adequately support greenway development along the Red River. The success of the greenway project will depend on the availability of appropriate financial and*

logistical support. The federal government will need to continue to provide incentives for good farm management, undertake navigation responsibilities by charting the Red and provide cost shared support and resources for the program overall.

It should be noted that this is a quality of life issue for municipalities. It is often difficult to fund these types of initiatives because with the limited municipal financial base, much of their capital is necessarily dedicated to infrastructure projects such as water, waste management and road maintenance and improvements. These priorities leave little money for quality of life initiatives, especially under the current cost sharing formulae which require 1/3 share from the municipalities. Adherence to this formula for the establishment of the greenway will likely not result in the participation required.

Cooperative landowners are critical to the success of this initiative. Much of the land along the Red River is privately owned, and much of that to the water's edge. Although preliminary discussions with a sampling of landowners were positive, achieving cooperation from all landowners along the Red will be a nearly impossible task, certainly in the short term. Developing the greenway incrementally will allow slow but steady progress and will be more conducive to the development of a culture as a part of the initiative.

Successful implementation of the greenway strategy will require a cooperative effort. Currently there are numerous agencies and programs that are directed at compatible goals, although some of the programs will need to be adapted to provide an effective tool in the establishment of the Red River Greenway. Programs vary in their target user. Some are directed at individuals, others at not for profit organizations or municipalities. Greenway planners and participants will need to understand and be able to access the appropriate support agencies and programs at the appropriate time, and know how best to utilize the programs and organizations synergistically. These programs and others that could be developed will need to provide incentive enough to encourage landowners, municipalities and local committees to participate in this initiative. Clearly, a central agency that would navigate through the maze of government and non-government agencies and programs would be of great benefit to all the participants. A partial inventory of current and proposed programs and existing relevant organizations that could impact this initiative follows:

### **Existing programs/agencies**

#### **8.1 Riparian Tax Credit (Manitoba Water Stewardship/Finance)**

- This program is designed to encourage farm operators to upgrade their management of river and stream banks and it recognizes those who have already done so. Good riparian management practices include; elimination of tillage, limitation of grazing and watering by livestock, and

maintenance of various types of cover, especially deep-rooted shrubs and trees but also including hay to control erosion.

Benefits (to a maximum of \$70.00 per riparian acre, spread over five years) are available to farmers and livestock producers who make a five year commitment to protect a strip along a waterway on agricultural land.

*Government should look at the development of similar programs that would provide incentive for the non-farm property owners to participate in the greenway program. These properties may be considerably smaller than the average farm property and would receive little or no incentive from the current program.*

## **8.2 Liability indemnity**

- Landowners contemplating participating in the program through the dedication of their land, especially if the land-use will include public access to the property, will be concerned with possible liability claims in the event of an accident causing injury. Although the Occupier's Liability Act applies in these circumstances, there is some question as to whether it provides adequate protection in the case of greenway trail activities. *The Occupier's Liability Act should be reviewed to ensure the protection provided participating landowners is sufficient. For example, the duty of care could be relaxed on designated greenway property and made equivalent to that required in the case of trespass. In the meantime, consideration could be given to the inclusion of an indemnification clause in agreements respecting the provision and use of land to the initiative.* The Province may need to give consideration to the acquisition of insurance capability to ensure coverage on the greenway.

## **8.3 Environmental Farm Planning**

- Canada, through the PFRA, in partnership with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, will contribute towards the completion of agri-environmental farm plans on either an individual or multi-farm basis so as to increase farmer environmental awareness, assess risks and benefits from agricultural operations, mitigate environmental risks and realize environmental benefits from agricultural operations.

Canada will also provide a contribution to an environmental incentive program in Manitoba to accelerate the adoption of environmentally beneficial actions and practices by farmers. Eligibility under the program will be conditional on a farmer completing an agri-environmental farm plan or an equivalent agri-environmental plan (and actions that meet nationally-accepted criteria for environmentally-beneficial management practices will be eligible for funding support).

#### **8.4 Access to trees, native cover, materials**

- One of the components of the greenway will be the regeneration of trees, shrubs or native riparian cover along the banks of the river. It may be necessary to provide the plants to achieve the goal. For example, Manitoba Hydro's Forest Enhancement Program is a practical approach for Manitoba Hydro to recognize the loss of forest cover that results from the construction of transmission lines, substations, generating stations and gas operations. Its purpose is to enhance and sustain the forest environment of the communities and regions of Manitoba by funding tree planting, forest education and innovative forest projects. The Program seeks to involve the public in making Manitoba's natural and community forest environment more attractive, diverse, widespread and productive. Manitobans are encouraged to participate in the Program by submitting project proposals that will benefit the people of their community, their region, or the province as a whole during the present and future.

Three types of projects are eligible for the program:

- **Tree planting projects** that endeavour to establish healthy, long-term forests or community tree stands. Project proposals can request support for obtaining tree stock, planting of trees, protection of planted trees, and one subsequent year of maintenance following planting. Tree stock, which may vary from seedlings to larger nursery stock, must be of high quality and hardy to the area in which it is planted.
- **Forest education projects** that improve school children's or the public's appreciation and understanding of the nature, role and importance of trees, forests and sustainable forest management in communities, agricultural areas and forest covered areas of Manitoba. Support may be provided for preparation and delivery of information, communication, instructional and interpretative materials and activities.
- **Innovative forest projects** that enhance the long-term sustainability and productivity of Manitoba's forest environment. Support will be considered for research, demonstration and development activities related to forest ecosystems, forest management, forest protection and urban forestry.

Currently the program is not available to individual landowners, however, where the land is being administered by a not-for-profit corporation, for instance, the land can be deemed eligible. The program will be under review in the near future, providing an opportunity to have adaptations made to address the needs of a greenway along the Red.

### **8.5 The Protected Areas Initiative (PAI)**

- Led by Manitoba Conservation, this program contributes to long-term sustainable development by assembling a network of core protected areas designed to conserve ecosystems and maintain biodiversity across the province. The PAI has been successful in increasing the protected lands in Manitoba from 0.6% of the province in 1990 to about 8.4% today. Protected areas consist of land, freshwater, or marine areas and are legally protected from oil, petroleum, natural gas or hydro-electric development, logging, mining, and other activities that may significantly and adversely affect habitat. Manitoba's network of protected areas are made up of a collection of different land designations including national parks, provincial parks and park reserves, ecological reserves, wildlife management areas, provincial forests and private lands.

### **8.6 Hometown Meeting Places**

- A program of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, this program supports projects that enhance community "main street" areas and public places. Projects may include developing/upgrading/ greening outdoor spaces and other outdoor public and non-profit facilities that are accessible to the general community. These may include outdoor spaces associated with parks, community gathering places, seniors and youth centres, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, schools, libraries, museums, public administration buildings and other similar facilities. This program is aimed at community, rather than individual initiatives and would be useful for community contributions to the greenway, such as parks and other open spaces in town centres.

### **8.7 Heritage Grants Program**

- This program of Manitoba Culture Heritage and Tourism, was developed to assist Manitobans in identifying, protecting and interpreting the province's human and natural heritage. Grants are available to non-profit organizations, incorporated community organizations, etc. for projects that fall into one of six categories, including exhibitions, which could be an integral component of some greenways. Local greenway planning committees could access funds to showcase local historical attractions or prepare exhibits of local history or culture.

### **8.8 Community Places Program**

- A program of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism, this program provides grants to non-profit organizations to undertake facility projects to provide long term wellness, recreational and social benefits for their community. Projects would include construction, purchase, upgrading or expansion of recreational facilities, museums, community parks, etc. Similar to the Heritage Grants Program, local greenway planning committees could utilize funds to develop, upgrade or expand greenway related recreational and other facilities.

### **8.9 Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation**

- Established as a Crown Corporation by the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act in 1986 to "Conserve, restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat", the MHHC conserves habitat by working in partnership with private landowners, farm organizations, corporations, conservation groups and government agencies. MHHC's vision is to ensure a cleaner, greener landscape that benefits all. MHHC focuses on the agricultural regions of Manitoba, to promote conservation practises that not only benefit wildlife habitat, but also help to sustain farm family income and productive use of land. MMHC focuses on private land and uses voluntary incentives to private landowners to maintain ecosystem health and biodiversity. MHHC works through three major program areas: North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP), Woodlot Management, and Riparian Stewardship. In order to effectively apply to the Red River Greenway, other than in an information providing capacity, the MHHC would need to acquire new resources to dedicate to the area. Current staff and resources are directed at priorities elsewhere.

### **8.10 Managing the Water's Edge**

- Managing the Water's Edge is a made in Manitoba approach to riparian management to promote the awareness and importance of riparian health. Over the past year and a half, a core group of individuals have received training in riparian management and in the basics of riparian health assessment. The training is modeled after the very successful Alberta Cows and Fish program. The Managing the Water's Edge group is a multi-agency approach including Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada-PFRA, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, Manitoba Cattle Producers Association, Critical Wildlife Habitat Program and a couple of conservation districts. This group works closely with the Riparian Health Council. The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation provides secretariat services and the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association chairs the Council.

### **8.11 Manitoba Riparian Health Council**

- The Manitoba Riparian Health Council emerged from a desire to increase producer involvement and improve coordination of cooperative efforts among agencies that develop riparian projects with landowners throughout Manitoba. The Council has developed a vision for cooperative programming that enhances riparian areas and surface water quality across agro-Manitoba in ways that also support landowner needs. Rather than a number of individual organizations working in isolation from each other, the Council has created a network of agencies collaborating together,

thereby improving the effectiveness of their initiatives. Through the Manitoba Riparian Health Council, the Manitoba Cattle Producer's Association (MCPA) is taking a leading role in maintaining a healthy environment and clean water. Improving habitat in riparian zones by managing livestock access not only helps to protect wildlife and plant species, but improves fish habitat, provides runoff and erosion control and improves the quality of surface waters. Helping landowners to develop improved grazing and water management systems on their pastures can also contribute to their bottom lines.

### **8.12 Sustainable Development Innovations Fund**

- This program provides funding for the development, implementation and promotion of environmental innovation and sustainable development projects delivered by local governments, industry, community and youth groups, Aboriginal organizations, and First Nation communities.

The SDIF provides grants (to a maximum of \$50,000) through several priority program areas. Proposed projects must address one or more priority area and achieve or demonstrate measurable progress toward achieving the fund's objectives. They must also be environmentally and ecologically sound, promote a sustainable approach, have clear environmental benefits and take into account benefits to the community and the economy. Projects should also demonstrate the involvement of youth where possible.

Priority areas include water, ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration, eco-tourism, environmental technology, sustainable community development and research. This program, although not directed towards individual landowners, should be available to help fund community or common aspects of the greenway. For example, the planting of vegetation on a buffer strip along the river bank, developing interpretative trails, etc. may qualify for such a grant, if under the auspices of a government department, municipality or local committee.

### **8.13 Red River Basin Commission**

- The mission of the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) is: To develop a Red River Basin integrated natural resources framework plan; to achieve commitment to implement the framework plan; and to work toward a unified voice for the Red River Basin. The RRBC has been active in the Red River Corridor on a national and international basis, and has initiated discussions with municipalities for the development of river or riparian based activities and facilities. The RRBC has initiated discussions that will be of great benefit to the establishment of the greenway along the Red. Five areas were earmarked for greenway related work: Towns of Emerson

and Morris, RMs of Montcalm and Ritchot, and the City of Winnipeg (especially St. Norbert). These discussions will provide a base from which to begin discussions in these communities. Work initiated by the RRBC can be used as a base to move forward in these and other communities. Emerson and Ritchot are consistent with the priorities suggested for the greenway. The work of the RRBC could accelerate the next priority areas of the process by providing a base upon which to build.

#### **8.14 Manitoba Recreational Trails Association**

- The mission of the MRTA is “to provide the support, knowledge, information, technology and resources necessary to promote the construction and use of recreational trails throughout Manitoba, thereby improving the economy, the environment and human well being.” In fulfillment of its mission the MRTA:
  - Provides funding to recognized trail associations for trail development
  - Provides trail building resources to trail associations
  - Promotes the Trans Canada Trail in Manitoba
  - Promotes other trails and trail use in Manitoba
  - The MRTA can provide expertise and resources to the development of trails along the greenway.

#### **8.15 City of Winnipeg**

- The City of Winnipeg has been active in the careful development of the river bank property, especially in the downtown area. The Forks walkways, the under-construction Waterfront Drive area, St. Boniface dock and walkway, the Assiniboine River walkway and the new Provencher Bridge are recent examples of the City’s focus on greenway opportunities. The Winnipeg Parkways System is a developing network of trails throughout the city. It is critical that the significant Winnipeg initiatives along the Red and Assiniboine Rivers be recognized and encouraged and that the city and provincial initiatives be compatible to provide greenway users with a continuous greenway experience along the Red.

### **8.16 Nature Conservancy of Canada**

- The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) works to protect Canada's most threatened natural habitats and the endangered species that call them home. NCC is Canada's only national charity dedicated to preserving ecologically significant areas through outright purchase, donations and conservation easements. The plan of action is partnership building and creative deal-making with any individual, corporation, community group, conservation group or government body that shares the passion. It should be noted that the NCC priority areas do not include the Red River valley at this time.

### **8.17 Conservation Districts**

- The provincial Conservation Districts program may have applicability in the Red River valley. A Conservation District (CD) is a group of neighbouring rural municipalities working in partnership with the Province of Manitoba to develop programs to effectively manage the natural resources of their area. Currently, there are 16 CDs in Manitoba covering over 60% of Agro-Manitoba. Individual district boundaries may vary, however they are usually based on the drainage basin or watershed of the major river in the area – there is none however that incorporates the Red River valley although there are three CDs that cover a small portions of the valley. The program acts as a conservation program broker, providing a structure that may be used to deliver other conservation and sustainable development related programs. Each program can be designed specifically to meet the needs of the individual district. With an administrative and delivery system already in place, programs can be implemented quickly. Member municipalities appoint councillors and ratepayers who, in turn, elect a Board to manage the affairs of the district.

### **Proposed programs**

#### **8.18 Compensation for lands taken out of production**

- Consideration could be given to compensation for lands taken out of production as a result of participation in a greenway. This could be accomplished through a land purchase, long term lease or transfer of private flood prone land for crown land that is set back from the river.

#### **8.19 U.S. CREP program**

A program similar to that described below would assist in encouraging participation of landowners in the greenway initiative.

- The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary land retirement program that helps agricultural producers protect environmentally sensitive land, decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat, and safeguard ground and surface water. Unique state and federal

partnerships allow farmers to receive incentive payments for installing specific conservation practices. Through the CREP, farmers can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on eligible land. CREP is a partnership among producers; tribal, state, and federal governments; and, in some cases, private groups. CREP is an offshoot of the country's largest private-lands environmental improvement program - the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Like CRP, CREP is administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). By combining CRP resources with state, tribal, and private programs, CREP provides farmers and ranchers with a sound financial package for conserving and enhancing the natural resources of farms. CREP addresses high-priority conservation issues of both local and national significance, such as impacts to water supplies, loss of critical habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife species, soil erosion, and reduced habitat for fish populations such as salmon. CREP is a community-based, results-oriented effort centered on local participation and leadership.

### **8.20 Participant recognition**

- A recognition program should be developed to recognize the property contribution to the greenway made by individual landowners. The recognition could take the form of a plaque presented to contributors at an annual banquet, signage along the greenway, articles in local newspapers, etc.

### **8.21 Special Status for Participating Property**

- An option suggested at a focus group was to provide lands offered to the initiative a status roughly equivalent to heritage properties. For example, a program could be put in place to exempt from taxes the purchase or rental of equipment or materials used for greenway development, or lands taken out of production or other use to accommodate the goals of the greenway. The beneficiaries of this program could include individuals or municipal governments.

### **8.22 Public education**

- The establishment of the greenway along the Red River will be a multi-year endeavour. Landowners will require a different perspective of riverside property, with respect to both its appearance and use. *A culture of riverbank and water quality protection needs to evolve over the next years and decades. The river and reasonable access to the river should be seen as a public resource to be used and enjoyed by all Manitobans. There should be regular access points along the river where people can launch canoes, kayaks, etc. to enjoy the beauty of this Manitoba waterway without infringing on the private property rights of riverside landowners.* To effect this substantive change, excitement and purpose will need to be generated throughout the area. The Greenway, like Assiniboine Park 100 years

before it, will require a vision that is shared and considered worthy of much effort. The development and ownership of that vision will necessitate a continuing information/ education campaign that sets out the vision and measures advancement towards its fulfillment by celebrating achievements and issuing challenges for further steps.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the Province of Manitoba initiate and facilitate a step wise, multi-year program for the establishment of a greenway along the Red River, with the following vision and objectives:

### **Vision**

*A contiguous greenway consisting of a series of natural areas, trails, parks, and historic or cultural attractions linked together by treed or native prairie buffer strips, all working together to protect and enhance the quality of the river and the riparian area, and to provide a place where people can preserve and enjoy the beauty, culture and history of the Red River corridor from the land and from the water.*

### **Goals**

- To increase the biodiversity of the Red River corridor.
- To maintain and/or improve riverbank stability.
- To improve the water quality of the Red River.
- To mitigate the damage caused by flooding..
- To increase the number of Manitobans and visitors to the cultural, historical, recreational and ecological attractions along the Red River.
- To enhance economic development opportunities for communities along the river.

9.2 That Manitoba designate and appropriately resource Rivers West as the “greenway authority” to coordinate overall greenway planning and development along the Red River in Manitoba, including assisting local organizations with planning, access to expertise, liaison with and developing synergies between appropriate organizations, accessing capital, training and marketing/promotions. The greenway authority should report to the Minister of a single line department such as Water Stewardship, the Minister of which will report to Government on the progress of the initiative.

Rivers West is uniquely positioned for this role for the following reasons:.

- It is a currently functioning not for profit, non governmental organization
- The public and landowners are often more comfortable dealing with a non government agency than they are with government

- The Rivers West board is representative of municipalities throughout the corridor.
- Part of mandate of Rivers West is greenway development and they have been working closely with Greenway on the Red in the US to develop an international greenway along the Red River from Lake Traverse to Lake Winnipeg
- Have formed partnerships with various government and non government agencies and can use these to implement the plan
- Able to secure funding from other levels of government to support initiatives

9.3 That the greenway initiative be established as a series of local initiatives in partnership with the local government, a local greenway planning committee, a provincially designated greenway authority, conservation and other organizations and the relevant provincial and federal government departments.

9.4 That an incremental approach be utilized to establish the greenway. During the establishment of the first four target areas, the greenway authority should work with municipal corporations, First Nations, and Planning/Conservation District to seek and exploit other opportunities along the river to develop the greenway. Developing the greenway as a series of semi-independent pods that can eventually be linked will allow for the gradual development of a culture that promotes the pride of the river and good riparian management.

9.5 That Manitoba intentionally protect its publicly owned lands along the river – either through conservation agreements or the Protected Areas Initiative. It is important that the province lead by example to encourage landowners to commit to this program.

9.6 That the greenway be viewed as an integrated system of diverse but linked pods or components, to be individually developed, but consistent with an overall plan. They should ultimately work together to form a cohesive “system” that protects the river and riparian environment and provides recreation and economic opportunities.

9.7 That Manitoba begin formal greenway development planning in four target areas, building on existing capability:

9.7.1 **Emerson MB/Pembina ND** – ecological, land based historical, recreational, international. The opportunity exists for an international initiative with hiking and cycling on trails including the Crow Wing and Forgotten Forest trails; canoeing/ kayaking on the river; Fort Dufferin historic site; Fort Dufferin campground; and showcasing historical Metis culture and role in the development of the area. This

location is an easy connection to the Heart of North America Trail – Rendezvous Region, a driving trail that spans the Pembina Valley and Turtle Mountains in Manitoba and North Dakota.

9.7.2 **Ste. Agathe to St. Adolphe** – ecological, land/water based historical and educational. Ste. Agathe houses the Red River Floods Interpretive Centre and campground and the potential for the development of a waterfront park. Along the route is the Mennonite Landing at Rat River and Red River. Closer to St. Adolphe are the park, Crow Wing Trail with a flood historic walking tour interpreting the impact of flooding in the area, historical sites, and the old Red River ferry and crossing.

9.7.3 **Larter's to Lockport** – land based recreation trail along the paved shoulder on River Road just north of Winnipeg is a cultural/heritage greenway. Prior to being promoted as a greenway, the route needs to be appropriately signed for direction, bike safety, sites of interest, and scenic lookouts and heritage interpretation requires enhancement. There are picnic sites at either end and several sites that make up River Road Provincial Park, with the historic Lockport lock and world class fishing at the north end. The route can be expanded to Lower Fort Garry and Selkirk by completion of the Red River North trail link at Lower Fort Garry.

9.7.4 **Selkirk to Lake Winnipeg** – water based recreational, environmental education, wildlife viewing. There is opportunity for wilderness tripping to Lake Winnipeg, through Netley Marsh, with interpretative signage, and camping or overnight rest areas, ending at 10<sup>th</sup> largest lake in the world. Signage and small camp sites are required. There is also opportunity to develop Netley Marsh as a watchable wildlife area. The purpose of that program is to enhance wildlife viewing at seven key sites for recreational purposes and to stimulate the use of these sites by partnering with the private sector to package experiences for visitors in the adventure travel and eco-tourism sectors.

9.8 That community docks be developed as priorities in these areas and in accordance with the recommendations in the Rivers West June 2003 report: River Access Assessment by Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram and Scatliff Miller Murray.

9.9 That Rivers West, in cooperation with the Province of Manitoba, continue to aggressively pursue the Canadian Heritage River designation for the Red River.

- 9.10 That, where possible, Manitoba and the Federal Government augment or adapt programs under their control to support the development of the Red River greenway. For example, MHHC, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives could examine their program areas to determine if and how an additional emphasis could be placed on the Red River valley. This could mean additional work in some cases, requiring the provision of additional resources.
- 9.11 That sound science and planning principles be utilized for the development of each greenway pod. Each pod should be designed for its immediate location and, to the degree possible, conform to the opportunities inherent in the neighbouring areas or existing neighbouring greenway components. That is, the planning for each pod should not only conform to the most suitable use based on the characteristics of its area, but also take into account the potential and possible characteristics for adjacent pods. This principle would extend also to contiguous areas such as the Manitoba Floodway. The greenway and the floodway expansion recreation opportunities should be planned intentionally as complementary facilities
- 9.12 That each completed greenway component be celebrated with a public opening ceremony and the initiation of each new component announced. This can be accomplished, in part, through an annual recognition program, on site signage and local newspaper, radio and TV advertisements.
- 9.13 That First Nations be included from the early stages of the overall planning, with direct involvement of First Nations with reserves/traditional use areas in proximity to proposed greenway components. The greenway pods should be used to showcase Aboriginal culture and history along the river – Metis settlement near Emerson, Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, The Forks, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and Pequis First Nations
- 9.14 That the program partner with the City of Winnipeg trail and waterfront initiatives to ensure compatible goals and program linkages.
- 9.15 That the Federal Government undertake to chart the Red River south of Winnipeg for navigation purposes. The Province should petition the Federal Government in this regard.
- 9.16 That the Province begin negotiations with the Federal Government to enter into a cost-sharing agreement to support and fund the development of the greenway. Aside from provincial interests of tourism, recreation, water quality and wildlife habitat, the greenway has implications for federal interests such as fish habitat, navigation, international relations,

climate change and emergency preparedness. There should also be a continuing federal interest in rural communities, through such federal departments as Western Diversification.

9.17 That the Province ensure the provision of effective signage from land and water for all greenway components. This should include signing the communities from the water as well as markers every 10 km. Innovative flood resistant or high (above the high water mark) signage will be required to prevent damage from regular flooding of the river

9.18 That the Province encourage the MRTA to focus as a priority on the Red River greenway area for the provision of financial and expert assistance to local organizations in the development of trails along greenway. This may require the provision of dedicated resources.

9.19 That Manitoba Conservation, with other appropriate federal and provincial departments, work with landowners along the Red to address the damage the increasing deer population is doing to riparian vegetation along the banks.

9.20 That Manitoba Hydro amend the Forest Enhancement Program as follows:

- Recognize an individual landowner as eligible on the conditions that:
  - the property is officially a part of a recognized initiative involving a number of properties in the area, such as a greenway;
  - The property owner commits to dedicate the property to the initiative for a minimum number of years; and
  - The suggested use of the property is entirely consistent with the goals of the initiative;
  - The goals of the initiative are consistent with the goals of the Forest Enhancement Program; or
- Recognize an individual landowner as eligible on the conditions that:
  - The property owner has entered into an agreement with a recognized organization whose goals and proposed use of the property are consistent with the goals of the Forest Enhancement Program

9.21 That the Province continue to promote the Red River and its attractions under the current Rivers West Brand “Routes on the Red” in order to encourage visitors and tourists to experience the history and culture, and take advantage of recreational opportunities of the Red River valley.

9.22 That the Province continue to work with Greenway on the Red to develop the greenway in Manitoba as a part of an international greenway.

## 10. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

As a summary recommendation for the immediate term, there should be three concurrent planning tracks: a) hard track - technical design work, mapping, costing, etc., b) soft track - work with corridor municipalities, districts, etc to develop committees, promote the greenway, develop networks, etc. and c) site specific - detailed work within the priority areas to access capital, build partnerships, undertake studies, do preliminary design, etc.. The tracks need to be coordinated and complimentary. The results of the tracks can be integrated as corridor plan.

More specifically, it is recommended that the designated agency (suggest Rivers West) be appropriately resourced and undertake to:

- 10.1 Request Government endorsement for the initiative and acknowledgement of the priority of the Red River corridor area for existing programs and for the use of Crown lands purchased after the flood – to be used:
  - Riparian lands for direct greenway development – a mix of ecological reserves, protected areas, parks, campsites, trails, and buffer strips, etc. depending on the features and location of the specific parcels;
  - Non-riparian lands, subject to buffer strips) for land transfers (exchange for riparian lands) or lease, with lease proceeds dedicated to the greenway development; and
  - Riparian lands for lease (subject to a buffer strip), with lease proceeds dedicated to the greenway development.
  
- 10.2 Meet with the Councils of the municipalities and communities, Conservation and Planning Districts in the priority areas to:
  - identify locations for greenway development;
  - discuss incorporation of greenway compatible plans into their existing and future development plans (see Riel Community);
  - discuss the respective federal, provincial and municipal roles;
  - encourage and offer assistance in the formation of local greenway planning committees; and
  - discuss the types of incentive and assistance that may be required to encourage participation, the current programs and changes that may be required to those programs.
  
- 10.3 Prepare a guidebook for the “Planning and Development of a riparian Greenway in Manitoba” for the use of local greenway planning committees. Such a guidebook would include:
  - 10.3.1 the steps required for the development of a greenway, resources available, ideas regarding public consultation, fundraising,

- engineering and other studies, formation of partnerships, contacts for landscape design, etc., and
- 10.3.2 information on riparian vegetation regeneration and the benefits of improved riparian health. It could include the “how to’s” of a water sampling program so that improvements in water quality as a result of improvements in riparian health can be charted and measured.
  - 10.3.3 ideas for involving the educational system, youth clubs and others in various aspects of the planning, design, development and maintenance of the greenway, such as water sampling, bank cleanup, trail development and maintenance, etc.
- 10.4 Contract or undertake baseline mapping for the Red River (2km beyond river centre), to include publicly owned lands, topographical features, communities, roads, trails, cultural/historical/ recreational attractions and areas of ecological interest. This mapping project is extremely important and complex.
  - 10.5 As a part of the mapping process, the Province should survey the river with a view to locating camp/picnic sites every 20km or so for the use of canoe/kayakers – there is a need to find locations where the banks are suitable for disengaging from watercraft.
  - 10.6 Develop a communications plan for the greenway initiative; to include the design of the message to be communicated, the target audience(s) and the method of communicating. One aspect of the communications will relate to a general audience – the public; and the other will be directed to stakeholders. The former will include press releases, brochures, a quarterly newsletter, and current online information. The later would include more targeted action, such as contacting appropriate government departments, municipal and First Nation governments and conservation agencies and the Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority with notice that this initiative is underway and arranging meetings as required to ensure a coordinated approach and to solicit information and assistance for the local committees. In addition, the appropriate regions of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and Planning/Conservation Districts should be approached for opportunities to discuss the greenway and encourage further participation and incorporation of greenway plans into development plans.
  - 10.7 As a part of the communications plan, in the priority areas, meet with landowners through regional meetings, open houses and individual meetings (led by local organizations supported by central agency) to:
    - discuss the vision and the nature and form of the proposed greenway

- encourage and determine their willingness to participate and the nature of their participation
  - discuss most appropriate vehicle for participation – land lease, land transfer, land donation, purchase, conservation agreement, etc.
  - discuss incentive/assistance programs available and others that may be required, and
  - provide information about current programs from organizations such as MHHC, PFRA and others to encourage and inform landowner involvement.
- 10.8 Encourage PFRA, Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Water Stewardship, Conservation Districts Authority, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation and other relevant agencies to sponsor workshops in concert with local greenway planning committees and interested landowners, First Nation and municipal officials and other interested parties. The workshops would provide information on the proposed greenway, determine levels of participation and discuss the existing programs to assist in its establishment. Participants would be invited to discuss other incentive ideas that would assist in the greenway development. Currently, there are only a few programs available such as PFRA programs and Riparian Tax Credit that provide incentives for greenway development and riparian habitat restoration. It will be necessary to adapt other programs, such as MHHC to suit the unique characteristics of the Red River valley, pilot them with different groups and then implement them.
- 10.9 Utilizing information from the workshops, research, develop and propose new incentive programs to encourage the participation of landowners in the development of the greenway.
- 10.10 Target as priorities in the Rivers West water access program (dock program), docks in the following communities:
- Emerson
  - Morris
  - Ste. Agathe
  - St. Adolphe
  - Selkirk (has a dock, but needs upgrade to a marina)
- 10.11 Undertake or commission the following studies:
- areas suitable for camping and river access for canoe/kayak routes in the target areas;
  - biodiversity study to identify and prioritize riparian revegetation requirements
  - critical bank stabilization activities required;
  - signage requirements for the priority areas – from land and water

- study to determine overall and component cost estimates, financial assistance possibilities, possible cost sharing agreements, innovative assistance programs such as green credits, etc.
- 10.11 Begin the process for the development of a greenway master plan for the length of the river to include components, costs, and maps.
- 10.12 Organize a greenway conference to bring the stakeholders together to learn about greenway development experiences and foster the creation of partnerships for the development of the greenway.

## 11. RESOURCES

The establishment of a greenway over a course of nearly 250 km of river will be a very expensive undertaking. However, the initiative will be spread over many years and will be developed largely as a series of relatively autonomous pods linked to individual municipalities or districts. It is anticipated that much of the funding will be acquired through efforts aimed at the development of the individual pods. There will also be funding requirements for the provision of central support or activities that transcend the individual pods, such as base mapping, charting/marking the river for navigation purposes, training and promotions. It is likely that the source of resources for the greenway will ultimately come from a variety of sources, some of which have been outlined in the report. Other strategies for acquiring resources (or non financial inputs) might include such ideas as follow.

### **Note: Capital vs Operating Fund**

There will be an important distinction between the types of support required. The construction of the greenway, where it involves infrastructure such as trails, boat/canoe launches, camping facilities, interpretative signage, etc. is largely an up front capital cost. However there will also be a requirement for on going operation and maintenance costs. A plan to maintain the greenway will need to be built into the planning of every pod along the river. The greenway authority will need to develop a strategy for the maintenance of the common greenway facilities.

### **Endowment Fund**

Some organizations operate on the revenues generated by an endowment fund. Significant fundraising would be required initially to provide the necessary resources to generate continuing income, especially in today's low interest climate. The advantages of such a mechanism are a continuing and relatively predictable source of funds and independence in their management. The fund would require sophisticated accountability mechanisms and a credible approval authority. Establishment of the fund could be through contributions from individual levels of government, foundations, individual and corporate donors, etc. who have a desire to see the long term protection and enhanced use of the

Red River and its riparian area. This mechanism could be used in conjunction with other fund raising and assistance programs.

### **In-kind Service**

As important as cash contributions to this initiative will be the donation of in-kind service. The development of individual pods will involve action that will often require the use of specialized equipment, construction of flood damage resistant benches, provision of trees for planting, surveys, etc. There will be many opportunities for local/provincial business support through the provision of some of these services.

### **Demo Projects**

The greenway will provide a great opportunity for the development and testing/showcasing demonstration technology. For example, the touch points – rest/camping stops, lookout sites, access points, etc. will need lighting, benches and toilet facilities. This would be an opportunity to install light fixtures powered by wind or solar energy, and benches specially designed and made to withstand the pressures of a flood.

### **Sponsorships**

With the strategy to develop the greenway in discrete sections or pods, there is opportunity to develop sponsorship programs, either on a regional or local level. Equivalent to the “adopt-a-mile” highway programs, the greenway could provide opportunity for organizations to take responsibility for the construction or maintenance of specified portions of the greenway. Scout/guide troops could adopt sections with a commitment to keep them litter free. Others, such as service clubs could commit to maintenance programs to keep paths, signs and benches in repair.

### **Green Credits**

Canada is a supporter of the Climate Change Kyoto Accord. With the greenway emphasis on reforesting the riparian zone, there may be opportunity to help meet planting objectives of companies participating in green credit programs. Contact could be made with the Manitoba Government and Natural Resources Canada to determine the opportunities for this possibility.

### **Voluntary Membership**

Regular users or others interested in supporting the concept of a greenway could participate in a volunteer membership – “friends of the ----- greenway” and provide an annual donation to support maintenance of the greenway. These programs could be developed and administered at the local level. This program would be entirely good-will based, similar to the voluntary membership programs such as Prairie Public Television, where viewers are encouraged to become members, but there is no requirement to do so.

**Equivalent to snowmobile passes**

A program similar to the annual snowmobile pass fee could be set up, either for the local pod, or for the length of the developed greenway. This mechanism, however, could carry extensive administrative and enforcement responsibilities that would undermine its value.

## APPENDIX A

### **Results from meetings with Mayors/Reeves, Organizations, Departments**

Meetings were held with most of the mayors and reeves along the Red River to discuss the concept and the attitudes of their local government and the citizenry. As well, two focus groups were held to discuss the idea with landowners on the Red, both north and south of Winnipeg. They helped to identify challenges and opportunities.

Individual meetings were held with many of the agencies that have an interest in the concept or in conservation programs. Subsequently a meeting was held with many of these organizations and government departments to determine if there were synergies that could be brought to bear for the advantage of this initiative.

The general outcome of the meetings follows.

Mayors and reeves were generally very positive. They see the potential benefit of the greenway for their community and for the province. They were realistic regarding the need to offset costs and the hesitation of landowners related to access concerns. Many see it as an important but long term project. (West St. Paul was very concerned about the reaction of its residents who seem to desire a community away from outside access.)

Individual meetings with the conservation and recreation organizations were positive, but cautious. Currently, the Red River is not a priority area for many of these agencies. They are generally prepared to offer expertise in negotiating conservation agreements, etc. but would require funding for staff to do that extra work. PFRA is implementing programs that will assist the agricultural community with riparian area programs.

There was also a joint meeting of the various agencies/government departments that operate programs that are consistent with this work. The meeting was to identify synergies and opportunities from these programs to assist with the greenway development. There is a good fit between some of these programs as they can work in conjunction with one another.

There appear to be few outright gaps in the scope of coverage of the assistance programs. The main limiting factor is likely the need the proponent to have considerable capital and the lack of understanding about the various programs and their potential synergies. For example, while the PFRA programs are limited to farm operations, and the NCC and MHHC deal only in preservation and protection, not restoration, the SDIF is not restricted to farms and will address restoration projects. The few gaps that do appear to exist include:

- ❑ NCC and MHHC do not pursue small acreage conservation agreements. Many of the properties that could contribute to the Red River Greenway will be small properties or pieces of properties.
- ❑ Largely due to the expense, there is a shortage of programs related to erosion control/bank stability projects
- ❑ Bank cleanup programs – reports are that the waters edge is rife with fallen trees from flooded and slumping banks.

Focus group meetings were held in Morris and Selkirk. The participants were landowners with property along the river. They were overwhelmingly positive, but realistic about the challenges. The main concerns expressed related to physical characteristics of the area – fluctuating water levels, excessive deer population, chronic bank instability. The issue of landowner hesitancy is not considered to be insurmountable if there effective incentive programs.

Several government departments have participated on the advisory committee for the strategy development. Intergovernmental Affairs, Conservation, Agriculture, Water Stewardship and others have had input into the initiative through the committee or otherwise. The Federal Department of Agriculture (PFRA) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency have also been active in the discussions.

Organizations such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Red River Basin Commission, Manitoba Recreational Trails Association, and the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation have participated on the Advisory Committee and are supportive of the initiative. However in some cases their operational support may be limited. For example, the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corp and Nature Conservancy of Canada have compatible mandates, but funding is currently largely directed towards other areas of the province. In this and other cases, government priorities may need to be directed towards the Red River corridor, along with appropriate resources for the program to be of significant value to the initiative. In any case, the tools and expertise of the organizations may be available to provide assistance in the establishment of the greenway.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Advisory Committee**

Linda Morin – RM of Ritchot, chair  
Helios Hernandez – Ecological Reserves Program  
Yvonne Beaubien – Protected Areas Initiative  
Roger Schroeder – Water Stewardship  
Dan McNaughton – Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency  
Ingrid Kristjanson – MB Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives  
Ute Holweger – Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration  
Tim Sopuck – MB Habitat Heritage Corporation  
Dwayne Summach – MB Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives  
Les Allen – MB Agriculture  
Lorna Hendrickson – Rivers West  
Dick Stephens – Rivers West (Staff)  
Dave Wotton – MB Conservation  
Harold Taylor – Red River Basin Commission

## APPENDIX C

### Focus Group Meeting Notes

#### Comments received from Focus Group #1

##### Location:

Morris Manitoba

##### Participants:

Del Stevenson – Morris  
Curtis Evenson – Morris  
Jean Barnabé – Letellier  
Lorne Hamblin – Morris  
Ulysse Marion – St Jean  
Richard Sabourin – St Jean  
Wally Empson – Emerson  
Brian Remus – Emerson

##### Purpose:

To receive information from the participants respecting:

- Their opinions about the advisability of establishing a greenway along the Red
- Their ideas with respect to challenges and opportunities
- Their ideas regarding appropriate incentives and programs to facilitate the development of a greenway

##### Results:

The participants were unanimous in their concurrence with the idea of a greenway along the Red. But most saw it as a challenging undertaking, not because of attitudes of landowners, but other forces such as regular flooding, fluctuating flows, difficulty in maintaining trees due to a recent proliferation of deer and chronic bank instability. They felt that most landowners with the appropriate incentive programs would participate in some aspects of a greenway, even if they were concerned about access.

There was a surprisingly (to the writer) regular reference to water related activities such as boating and fishing.

Reference to the floods was common, along with thoughts as to how to prevent the unfettered rising of the Red, such as retention areas strategically placed on the landscape, rather than have all water drained to the river. They could have the side benefits of water storage for dry years and preventing contaminants such as pesticides and fertilizers from reaching the river. The new lake in Transcona was cited as an example of what can be done.

Claiming the river is navigable except in low water times, there is concern that there are few usable access points. Fisheries and Oceans had built docks and access points years ago, but had since pulled out leaving the municipalities to fend for themselves. Most of these facilities are in disrepair or have gone altogether. There does appear to be a clear sense that there are great possibilities for the area. One of the participants referred to the Red River as a resource that should be used. Heads nodded thoughtfully around the room.

**Specific comments in response to the questions:**

1. *What is attractive about a greenway to you as a landowner and as a citizen of the Red River Valley? What is not attractive about the idea?*

- Great idea – consensus

**Note:** Because of consensual concurrence of the idea, conversation became less focused and included general comments, some problems and solutions:

- Bank stabilization is difficult.
- Over population of deer destroying vegetation – something needs to be done before any planting programs will work. (Need open season on bucks) Beaver are killing bigger and bigger trees. Many species don't survive the water – overabundance of burdock
- Navigation is possible, but need access to the river. Access points generally in poor shape and can't be used.
- More economic development, fishing, boating
- Multiple floods each year
  - o Should have water retention areas (lakes) which would also create recreational opportunities
- Local coffer dams to slow flow and retain water during low flows, especially for water intakes at Morris and Letellier
  - o Many small projects may be more doable than one large one encompassing the entire river
  - o Small stretches along the river may be preserved, restored or developed as the opportunities arise
- Moveable boat docks
- Involve MB Woodlot Association
- Harvest Elm trees before they die of Dutch Elm disease
- Need renewal of PFRA programs (pointed out that good programs were being developed by PFRA)

2. *What impact would a greenway have on the land's current use or on owners? What do you think about having some riverbank lands restored to native cover? Are you willing to have some of your land reverted along the Red River to native cover?*

- Difficult for some because of good quality of land
- OK on marginal land
- Need to have forage type that can be flooded (noted that many species do not survive the floods, some of those that do are undesirable)

- Concerns – privacy and vandalism are concerns if people are using the river or trails along the river
  - Water quality – education needed so that people understand the causes of degraded water quality and the benefits of improved water quality
3. *What would it take to make you more positive about the idea? Are compensation, recognition or incentive programs required for lands to be set aside? What kinds of programs would be effective?*
- Liability – no risk
  - Remove tax on land
  - Who will control weeds until natural vegetation is established?
  - Provide funds through extra charge on water bills
  - Maximize use of Crown Lands
  - Use of Conservation agreements
4. *What are the issues that have to be addressed in order to develop a greenway?*
- Access to river to make it usable under a wide range of conditions
  - Risk management
  - DFO pulled out after building docks – no maintenance capability
  - Large drainage area
    - o New areas drained in recent years
    - o Retention farther away, e.g. escarpment, Vita Marsh
5. *Do you support any sort of recreational use of the greenway like more access ramps for boating? Hiking/cycling trails in selected areas? A hiking trail along the entire river?*
- It was felt that the discussion of the other questions adequately addressed these questions. There was no resistance to the idea of a long greenway that encapsulated many different configurations. Although there will be privacy and liability issues, they do not appear insurmountable in all areas.

## **Comments received from Focus Group #2**

### **Location:**

Selkirk Manitoba  
June 15, 2004

### **Participants:**

Nellie Allen – East St. Paul  
Alfred Beck – East Selkirk  
Bev Fisher – East St. Paul  
Kurtiss Krasnesky – Lockport  
Darlene Swiderski – Selkirk  
David Bell – Selkirk  
Pat Ward – Selkirk  
Lorna Hendrickson – Rivers West  
Dick Stephens – Rivers West

### **Purpose:**

To receive information from the participants respecting:

- Their opinions about the advisability of establishing a greenway along the Red
- Their ideas with respect to challenges and opportunities
- Their ideas regarding appropriate incentives and programs to facilitate the development of a greenway

### **Results:**

The participants were unanimous in supporting the idea of a greenway along the Red but most saw it as a challenging, long term undertaking because of security concerns of landowners, and other forces such as the costs associated with addressing chronic bank instability. They felt that most landowners would eventually come on board as momentum builds and others around them were seen to participate. They saw the use of incentives as important, especially with respect to bank stabilization efforts that can be very expensive; e.g. cost sharing, tax incentives, etc.

The Mayor of Selkirk was particularly enthusiastic about opportunities for linkages with the City's plans for a redeveloped waterfront. He would like to see Selkirk as a destination and an expanded greenway would be consistent with that goal.

The group felt that River Road and a series of parks and boat launches already provide the beginnings of such a greenway. The key is to develop pods (areas of certain land-use types) that can be later linked together. Not all of the pods that are linked need to be contiguous with the river. This would allow for momentum to build. It would be

important to celebrate successes. It was also agreed that the most effective model would be to encourage the establishment of local groups supported, trained and funded by government. A government driven model would be resisted. Participation should not be mandatory.

There was support for the concept of a mixed style of greenway such that access would not be required for a contiguous path along the riverbank. Pods of different types of land use eventually joined together would be much easier to sell to the landowners as they would not need to give up control of their property.

**Specific comments in response to the questions:**

6. *What is attractive about a greenway to you as a landowner and as a citizen of the Red River Valley? What is not attractive about the idea?*

- There was consensual concurrence with the idea, ranging from open enthusiasm to endorsement but cautious optimism.

**Note:** Because of consensual concurrence of the idea, conversation became less focused and included general comments, some problems and solutions:

- East St. Paul and St. Clements have small lots which will make the concept more difficult in those areas.
- In West St. Paul there is a strip along the river that is owned by the RM. There may be liability concerns with its use for a greenway.
- The idea should be pursued. Assiniboine Park is a great example of implementing a vision such as this. It was also noted that Juba Park has become a beautiful and safe place to walk. The walkway/park has attracted people and the safety of the area has thus improved.
- It may take 50 years. Will it ever happen?
- There will need to be some tangible reason for people to buy into the idea, to address the “What’s in it for me?” - mentality, especially if they are being requested to provide public access, or spend money on riprap for bank stabilization.
- There needs to be consistent treatment of people. Currently there are many types of caveats on properties. The form of property ownership is inconsistent.
- Momentum was seen as important. As more people use it, more people will want to participate.
- “Native cover” is not always an attractive option. Natural flood bottom vegetation is not always desirable. Better to plant some trees and prairie grass.
- Development of the greenway was seen as an incremental process, like the Winnipeg Beach boardwalk.
- Sponsorship programs can be used effectively for this type of development.
- Incentives will be important for municipalities and community involvement.

- ❑ Selkirk already has components, but needs more infrastructure. It is consistent with their vision of becoming a destination - it would be good for tourism. They have thought about finger docks and a marina to capitalize on their potential.
- ❑ In East St. Paul there is a provincial park and some vacant properties that could form a base in that area. It could grow from there.
- ❑ There are plenty of areas along the river that can be developed for canoe stops/camping. (e.g. East St. Paul/Selkirk Park)
- ❑ It could (and should) be linked to the Trans Canada Trail.
- ❑ A good place to start would be a trail from Larter's to Lockport, as a spur of the Trans Canada Trail.
- ❑ West St. Paul started a walkway years ago. It could be built on.
- ❑ There could be economic potential from Netley Marsh.

7. *What impact would a greenway have on the land's current use or on owners? What do you think about having some riverbank lands restored to native cover? Are you willing to have some of your land reverted along the Red River to native cover?*

- ❑ This question was not asked directly because the tone of the discussion was that there would be due consideration to participating, given the right conditions. There was concern about access in some cases, but with the wide option of types of participation, some participation would be likely.
- ❑ One participant owns land beside the Selkirk Park and there is regularly spill over onto his property. Under certain conditions, that property might be made available for greenway use.

8. *What would it take to make you more positive about the idea? Are compensation, recognition or incentive programs required for lands to be set aside? What kinds of programs would be effective?*

- ❑ Must be a grass roots initiative, supported by government, not a government initiative
- ❑ Should be incentives for bank stabilization initiatives such as riprap, although it was recognized that riprap is not always the best for the environment as it can change the ecology of the area with the loss of vegetation.
- ❑ Should be tax incentives for walkways or putting the riparian area back in natural state.
- ❑ Establish a program of recognition whereby lands offered to the initiative would be provided a status roughly equivalent to heritage properties.

9. *What are the issues that have to be addressed in order to develop a greenway?*

- ❑ Privacy
- ❑ Liability
- ❑ Security

- ❑ Size of lots
- ❑ Address the exurban area where development is still occurring – where there is still opportunity
- ❑ Pick existing areas to build on, work with Councils
- ❑ Need a leader who will take on a project, then build on successes
- ❑ Maybe opportunities under the Planning Act – development plans
  - Talk to Don Pearson in Selkirk Planning Office
  - Use of Planning Districts?

10. *Do you support any sort of recreational use of the greenway like more access ramps for boating? Hiking/cycling trails in selected areas? A hiking trail along the entire river?*

- ❑ Not specifically addressed, as most of these questions were covered in the extensive comments related to Question #1

**Summary Points:**

The landowners along the Red that participated in the focus groups were enthusiastic about the possibility of the establishment of a greenway along the river and the benefits that would accrue from it. They were particularly interested as they understood that a greenway was not necessarily a strip of land used as a public walkway or bike path, and that it could comprise a number of different components in different locations, linked by the river and by narrow buffer strips. They expressed a willingness to participate in the initiative, but were less committal about the notion of providing access to their property for the more intrusive components of the greenway, such as parks, trails or campgrounds. Concerns about providing public access to their property included:

## **Attached Figures**

### **1. Hypothetical Stretch of River without Greenway**

### **2. Hypothetical Stretch of River with Greenway**

### **3. Base maps of Red River from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg 1997**

Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram

**Map 1 Emerson to St. Jean Baptiste**

**Map 2 St. Jean Baptiste to Ste. Agathe**

**Map 3 Ste. Agathe to Winnipeg**

**Map 4 Winnipeg**

**Map 5 Winnipeg to Selkirk**

**Map 6 Selkirk to Lake Winnipeg**