Agenda - Executive Policy Committee – September 13, 2006

REPORTS

Item No. 1 River East Trail Development - Land Dedication Reserve
File EP-2

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 18, 2006, the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee recommended to the Executive Policy Committee:

1. That funding to assist with the cost of developing 2.4 kilometres of trail south of Douglas Avenue from Henderson Highway to Raleigh Street, in the amount of $10,000.00, be allocated from the East Kildonan-Transcona Land Dedication Reserve Fund.

2. That the criteria of the Council Policy for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund be waived for any expenditures which do not qualify.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On September 5, 2006, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development referred the recommendation from the East Kildonan–Transcona Community Committee, pertaining to the proposed amendment to the Leave and License Agreement, to the Administration for review and report back.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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1. That funding to assist with the cost of developing 2.4 kilometres of trail south of Douglas Avenue from Henderson Highway to Raleigh Street, in the amount of $10,000.00, be allocated from the East Kildonan-Transcona Land Dedication Reserve Fund.

2. That the criteria of the Council Policy for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund be waived for any expenditures which do not qualify.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing,

and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee.

Further on July 18, 2006, the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee referred the request from the River East Multi Use Trail Project Committee, River East Neighbourhood Network (RENN) to amend the Leave and License Agreement for use of a portion of the public right-of-way located east of Henderson Highway, south of Douglas Avenue, to allow development of the River East Trail, to the to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development.

Also on July 18, 2006, the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee considered a communication dated July 18, 2006, from Frank Penner, River East Multi-Use Trail Project Committee, with respect to the development of the River East Trail.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On May 22, 2002, Council adopted Clause 4 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development dated May 2, 2002 and approved a Leave and License in favour of Millennium Gardens to use a portion of the public right-of-way located east of Henderson Highway, south of Douglas Avenue.

River East Trail Development: Douglas Ave. Corridor – Trans Canada Trail

An initiative of the River East Neighbourhood Network (RENN)

Submitted to the City of Winnipeg East Kildonan Transcona Community Committee – June 30, 2006



(Photo of a group of people walking along the Douglas Ave. Trans Canada Trail, May 24,2006)

Introduction

Multi-use trail development in the community of River East will play a vital role in supporting the city of Winnipeg's largest community area (approximately 93,000 people according to the 2001 Census) to further promote and implement active and healthy lifestyles. The River East Multi-use Trail Committee is excited over the prospect of further developing and promoting resident usage of the Trans Canada Trail along an area of land that is in the heart of a vibrant neighbourhood, and which has the capacity to serve as a focal point for pedestrian transportation.

The goal of the River East Multi-use Trail Project is to implement suitable trail surfacing on the Trans Canada Trail located slightly to the south of Douglas Ave; beginning at Henderson Hwy., continuing East to Raleigh St.(also known as the Douglas Ave. Corridor). In addition to the primary goal of implementing surfacing amenities to further enhance accessibility to all residents to utilize the Trans Canada Trail in our community, an encompassing objective of the project is to further promote and increase resident awareness of the existence of the Trans Canada Trail in our community.

The River East Trail Committee wants to pursue the implementation of a basic level of surfacing that will promote and ensure safe usage among residents throughout the year. The project will complete **2.4** km of Trans Canada Trail with enhanced surfacing materials, directional and promotional signage. Of the 85 km of TCT in the City of Winnipeg, 7.8 km falls within the River East community; including, 2.8 km – on City streets, 2.8 km – Bunn's Creek, and the proposed 2.2 km – Douglas Ave Corridor location.

The River East Multi-use Trail Committee is coordinating the project, and is a sub-committee of the River East Neighbourhood Network (RENN). The River East Neighborhood Network "is a network of residents, businesses and agencies working together to enhance the lives of residents of the River East community by linking community stakeholders within the community together."

The formal enhancement of the Trans Canada Trail along the Douglas Ave. Corridor is important for a number of reasons. Most notably; the Trail is situated in an area of the community that is easily accessible, is adjacent to the Millennium Gardens, is in close proximity to Bunn's Creek, and is in very close proximity to the numerous schools (four elementary, two Junior High, one High School), and the Donwood Manor Personal Care Home (the proposed Trail surfacing will be suitable for persons in a wheel chairs).

This report will illustrate the rationale for focusing on the current Trans Canada Trail location, as well as the potential future City of Winnipeg Streets and Operation planning issues, most notably, the extension of the Chief Peguis Trail that may affect the future of the Trans Canada Trail on the proposed location. Additionally, this report will point out the community mobilization that has resulted and the resident interest that justifies the need. It is our expectation that upon surfacing implementation, the trail will serve as a link and connectivity point for residents wanting to gain access to additional pedestrian/cycling trail routes in the geographic vicinity.

1. River East Neighbourhood Network (RENN)

The River East Neighbourhood Network is a non-profit, legally incorporated entity. The Network is comprised of residents, school administrators, and social service providers. There is no cost to become a member, and all activities are undertaken on a volunteer basis. There is no paid staff.

The activities of the Network over the past six years have focused primarily on community organizing and advocating. Therefore, the annual operating budget has been minimal. With the exception of periodic Community Connection computer grants to support the Network's website, there is little or no annual funds provided to the Network. Most recently, the Network initiated a new Sub-committee to focus on active living – "Communities in motion" which has received a $3,000.00 grant from the Provincial Government Healthy Living – in motion department to initiate activities related to active living.

The purpose of the RENN River East Multi-use Trail Committee is to:

- To create a healthy and vibrant community that will encourage people to participate in regular physical activity.
- To create a safer community be encouraging residents to walk, cycle, run, in groups throughout the various neighbourhoods.

The Committee Plan of Action includes:

- To develop a walking path that will ultimately connect the entire River East/ East St. Paul community, and portions of the Transcona Trail.
- To facilitate resident participation in the design and implementation of the trail.
- To hold community consultation meetings to ensure the community is included in the design process.
- To ultimately link the various trails that are currently being designed throughout other parts of the city and surrounding municipalities.

2. Community Consultation

On April 25, 2006 a community consultation meeting was held with residents who live in close proximity to the Trans Canada Trail route. Approximately 3000 households were notified through mail-out flyers informing them of the meeting. 41 residents attended the meeting, including local MLA for the area; Harry Schellenberg. The meeting provided residents the opportunity to learn about the existence of the Trans Canada Trail. In addition, the meeting provided the venue for residents to voice any concerns, and provide insight and support to the initiative. The result was a number of residents agreeing to be a part of the formal planning process and Trail Committee.

The committee is comprised of residents and service providers, each of whom are committed to the notion that trail development in our community is a not only a valuable addition, but a needed part of our community infrastructure. The committee is a working model of a needed mix between residents and service providers.

3. Project Description

- **Chief Peguis Trail Proposed Development**

The City of Winnipeg is proposing to construct the Chief Peguis Trail roadway extension from Henderson Highway east to Lagimodiere Boulevard. This will effect some existing; some under development and some proposed recreational trails and facilities.

The River East Walking Trails Committee recognizes this future expansion will directly affect the Trans Canada Trail route and the proposed amenities and surfacing materials we are seeking financial assistance for. Specifically, the proposed expansion will be located effectively on the Trans Canada Trail. However, rather than viewing this as a barrier, the River East Walking Trail Committee sees this as an opportunity to develop trails in the present, with the hope the Trail can be maintained and included in the design when the proposed vehicular roadway extension is implemented.

Our Committee has met, and will continue to meet and collaborate with the City of Winnipeg Planning Property and Development Division, and Parks and Open Space and Naturalist Division to discuss the roadway extension, it's impact on the Trail, and accommodations in the future to replace the current Trail development in the event this is required. Discussions are also underway regarding other issues related to Trail development.

- **Connectivity access to the Millennium Gardens, Bunn's Creek Environmental Stewardship, East St. Paul Municipality pathway expansion, Kildonan Golf Course pathway expansion.**

The further development of the River East Trail will provide direct and indirect connectivity points to each of the above initiatives. Specifically, the Millennium Gardens is a hugely popular volunteer-driven community gardens project that involves hundreds of gardeners. Subsequently, this results in thousands of people visiting the gardens each year. Moreover, over the past couple of years, the volunteers at the Gardens have worked to implement additional amenities such as benches, games area, and gazebo to further attract people to the site. By developing the River East Trail, which is adjacent to the Gardens, this will serve to further enhance the notion of that the community can be truly connected to one another.

The Bunn's Creek Environmental Stewardship initiative is situated in close proximity to the River East Trail location. Because the Trail will travel along the right-of-way, and past the local streets that lead to the Creek, this can serve as a valuable connectivity point.

With respect to the Kildonan Golf Course Pathway and East St. Paul initiative, again, because of the close proximity to each, it is anticipated that the Trail initiative will provide linkage in the future.

- **Project Description details**

Proposed Location

As noted previously, the Trail has already been designated as part of the Trans Canada Trail. Located on the right-of- way the City of Winnipeg owned land between Douglas and Donwood Ave., the trail is flanked by residential homes to the South, and Douglas Ave. to the north. The ***River East Walking Trail committee is proposing to surface a 2.4 KM, and 6 ft wide trail with crushed limestone surface (3/4 down)***. This surfacing and trail width will further allow the varied use that the trail has provided to the local residents over the past couple of years.



Surfacing

Following discussions as a committee, and in consulting with local residents, it is the consensus that crushed limestone (3/4 down) will suffice as a suitable surface. This surfacing material will enable the various users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, and young children in strollers, and persons using walking aids or in wheel chairs, to access the trail comfortably. As well, it is also recognized that the use of crushed limestone is also the most cost conscious surfacing material.

Design and Crossover Points

The length of the trail will be 2.4 km. The trail will be located approximately 10 meters away from the rear property lines of homes along Donwood Ave, and approximately 30 meters from Douglas Ave. The trail will have slight curves, and due to the some ground compressions, and the need for proper drainage, the Trail will have to be built up at various points, with the inclusion of at least one culvert. At Rothesay the trail will swing south for a short distance to cross Rothesay at the existing paved lane in order to avoid access -limiting curbs and possible traffic hazards.

4. Project Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the River East Walking Trails is to create a greater community awareness of Trans Canada Trail and other trail developments in the River East community, to create accessible trail routes for all persons regardless of their age or mobility limitations, and to provide outdoor incentives for all persons to become more physically active.

Goals:

Safety - To create a safe route for all forms of non-vehicular transportation. With the absence of a suitable walkway on Douglas Ave., there is actually no sidewalk on either side of Douglas Ave., and a result the safety of pedestrians is seriously compromised. The Trans Canada Trail location is situated in a locale that is open, is not subject to obscured view caused by trees, and therefore provides an increased sense of safety and security.

Health Promotion – The benefits that can be achieved from participating in physical activities such as walking and cycling are universally recognized. With the inclusion of safe and attractive multi-use trail, this serves as a further incentive for all persons to take advantage of trail amenities. The proposed location is in the middle of a vibrant neighbourhood that is home to a large cross-section of populations. This includes a significant number of active older adults, families with small children, and personal care home residents. Each of these populations can benefit from the opportunity to utilize a safe and suitable outdoor walking trail.

Community Development – Community development strengthens the bonds between people. The project will enable residents from the community to take an active and leadership role in the development of outdoor trails that will bring people together for a greater good. In the immediate geographic vicinity there are numerous schools, and churches that the Committee will seek to work with in the future, to both encourage use, as well as to further develop trail connectivity points.

Heritage and Culture – The proposed location is located on land that once served as the homestead for many families during the formation of Manitoba as a newly formed province. Knowing this is important as it can lend itself to active learning about the history of the community.

5. Need for Project, Significance to the River East community

o Population demographics

The geographic area that encompasses the River East Trans Canada Trail includes two neighbourhood clusters – Rossmere A and River East. Combined, these two neighborhoods have a total population of approximately 22,000 (13,415 Rossmere A and 8,820 River East, according to the City of Winnipeg 2001 Census Data).

In addition, particular demographics for these two neighbourhood clusters indicate higher than City of Winnipeg average of older adults age 55+. Pointing this out is important, as with increasing importance of health promotion and the high number of older persons still living independently in the community, the existence of Trails will undoubtedly serve to assist in maintaining the health and well being of this population.

In the immediate geographic area of the Trail there are four elementary schools (Donwood, John Pritchard, Maple Leaf, Princess Margaret,); two Junior High Schools (Chief Peguis, John Pritchard); and one High School (River East collegiate) each of which is within a one kilometer radius. As these concentrations of schools indicate, there is a significant child and youth population that will also benefit from trail development.

o What does Trail development have to do with health?

Although it is a capitol building process requiring materials, engineering and city landscaping expertise, it is the opinion of the River East Trail Committee that trail development is also closely connected with health promotion. In the Ottawa Charter, health promotion is defined as "the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health".

Trail development can be considered one key strategy for health promotion and community building in the River East community. Trail development in the River East community is very much considered a health promotion process whereby the residents will gradually increase the amount of control and power they have over issues that are affecting their health and well being, which in this case is the community desire for trail development in close proximity to where they live and play.

River East Trail Committee Members

Sigrun Bailey – Resident
Kristine Hayward - Resident
John Kubi – Resident, and Treasurer, River East Neigbhourhood Network
Sonja Lundstrom –Seniors Health Resource Team – Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Sandy McKenzie - Resident
Frank Penner – Resident
Erica Seales - Resident
Vince Sansregret – Chair Person, River East Neighbourhood Network
Dana Strappazon – Community Development Worker, City of Winnipeg
Ida Toews – Resident

Consultant - Janice Lukes, Winnipeg Trails Association