OURS-Winnipeg Submission to Executive Policy Committee, December 10, 2021

Re: Budget 2022 Review

Item No. 4 OurWinnipeg 2045 Plan – Budget Referral

Item No. 5 Complete Communities Direction Strategy 2.0 – Budget Referral

OURS-Winnipeg supports the 2022 Winnipeg Budget allocation of $700,000 ($200,000 in 2022 and $500,000 in 2023) for the development of a Master Greenspace and Natural Corridor Plan. OURS-Winnipeg has advocated over the last couple of years to have a Master Greenspace and Natural Corridor Plan included in the Winnipeg 2045 and Complete Communities 2.0 planning documents.

We appreciate the engagement with Councillors and their interest and support in adding the "green" amendments to the city planning documents. The City of Winnipeg has approved a vision with greenspace at the heart of city planning.

The United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, 2021-2030 began on World Environment Day, June 5, 2021 and specifically included Urban Ecosystems and having greenspace at the heart of city planning. According to the United Nations, this means not only helping to restore ecosystems that have been degraded or destroyed, but also conserving ecosystems that are still intact.

It has become a necessity that cities must reconnect with their natural foundations to address climate, health and biodiversity crises. Winnipeg will have biodiversity plans and sustainability goals that consider the natural environment. (See amendments below.)

The Durban Commitment, Local Governments for Biodiversity was developed and founded as a commitment and model for local government and the communities they serve to protect and enhance biodiversity at the local level.

We look forward to Council approval of funding for the Master Greenspace and Natural Corridor Plan and to participate in the development of this important plan. Now is the time to move on this crucial initiative. The amendments when fully implemented will consider future sustainability of the environment, building resilience against the impacts of climate change and making decisions that consider the future well-being of citizens.

Pam Lucenkiw / Ron Mazur
Co-Chairs / OURS-Winnipeg

Amendments:
On June 24, 2021 Council approval of **OurWinnipeg By-law No. 120/2020** included a recommendation that Policy 2.20 be replaced with revised wording:

2.20 Leverage Green Infrastructure. Create a master greenspace and natural corridor plan by-law that enables conservation, management, restoration, and enhancement of the inherent valued and ecological functioning of parks, waterways, natural areas and systems year round, to support the environment, advance climate change adaption and mitigation, and increase quantity of such lands that can be accessed for recreation, social interaction, active living and connection of people and nature with nature, as population growth occurs.

Council also directed "that funding for the development for a Master Greenspace and Natural Corridor Plan By-law be referred to the 2022 budget process.

Council Approval of **By-law No. 119/2020**, the **Complete Communities Direction Strategy 2.0** included the following recommendations be added to the Parks and Recreation Chapter, namely:

4.8 a) Consideration of municipal golf courses as major nature preserves and greenspace

4.8 b) A Biodiversity Policy for Winnipeg that will detail, among other things, an ecological network that is interdependent, reciprocal, healthy, connected and integrated with the built environment and life on the land; one rooted in indigenous traditional knowledge of land, community, and ecology. This should include a requirement for an annual report to Council structured I line with the Durban Commitments Local Governments for Biodiversity

4.8 c) A Corridor Plan to protect, and enhance Winnipeg forests, green spaces, natural environment and natural area corridors including Winnipeg's connecting riverbank corridors

4.8 d) Tracking the status of greenspace and regular reporting to the public and Council