December 7, 2021

Dear Mayor and Councillors

Save Our Seine Environment Inc. (SOS) was very pleased to learn that the City of Winnipeg's Budget for 2022 included funding to prepare a Master Greenspace and Natural Corridor Plan ($200,000 in 2022 and $500,000 in 2023). SOS strongly supports this budget measure, having advocated earlier this year to have such a plan included in the Winnipeg 2045 and Complete Communities.

Covid has opened our eyes to the tremendous importance of green spaces as crucial contributors to our physical and mental health. More than ever, it has become apparent that we need to keep our golf courses and other green spaces green to provide adequate areas for Winnipeggers to enjoy the outdoors close to their homes and not have to travel great distances to do so. We need to have all sizes of green spaces, from small to large. The Covid experience highlights that protecting the green spaces that currently exist is not enough, we need a strategy for enhancing and increasing the amount of green space in our city. Ensuring sufficient green space for current and future generation of Winnipeggers starts with having a Master Green Space and Natural Corridor Plan for Winnipeg, something other cities such as Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton and Ottawa have, but Winnipeg does not. We are laggards among major Canadian cities when it comes to planning, protecting and expanding our green spaces: we need to catch up.

We look forward to Council approval of funding for the Master Greenspace and Natural Corridor Plan and to participating in the development of this important Plan. Now is the time to get the ball moving on this crucial initiative that will play an important role in determining what Winnipeggers quality of life will be like in the foreseeable and long term future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Save Our Seine

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