

SUBMISSION – PAM LUCENKIW

ITEM 16 - REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED NOVEMBER 14, 2023 - HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND

Sent: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 11:50:28 AM

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Delegation information

Committee: Council

Committee - council: Opposed to the recommendations

Committee - other: N/A

Agenda item (number and title): Item 15. Housing Accelerator Fund

Service inquiry: Register as a Delegation, Submit Comments in writing

Participation preference: Via Zoom

Comments in writing: November 23, 2023 Council Regular Meeting Agenda Item 15. Housing Accelerator Fund

Pam Lucenkiw, OURS-Winnipeg

I am presenting today for information to the motion.

The Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) will bring revenue to the city and increase much needed housing availability to meet a range of needs. It will happen gradually we are told with new homes built here and there.

We agree fully that infill and densification are necessary for a growing city. We also know that development is the largest factor contributing to the loss of trees and nature that provide beauty, livability and ecosystem services. Major concerns for the greenspace and tree canopy, river corridors and natural areas are not addressed. They are a land use and their consideration must be a companion to this plan.

Winnipeggers care deeply about their trees, greenspace and natural areas.

The Housing Accelerator Fund will set high density development in motion before planning goals and protection tools are in place for needed green assets.

It is promising that city initiatives are emerging but few are at the point of completion to help today to protect river and natural corridors from overdevelopment and healthy trees from being removed from private land, where accelerated housing development will occur.

The Urban Forestry Strategy, Master Greenspace and Natural Corridors Plan are not final.

A motion was made this week to look into a tree bylaw, a very positive step. City Council voted again this year to leave the Development Agreement Parameters at 8% --an inadequate way to protect greenspace.

Winnipeg's actions are weak in connecting climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits to greenspace. Winnipeg does not have extensive river corridor parks such as Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Ottawa have. Halifax has a green network. Toronto and Montreal are extending and adding to their water side parkland and corridors.

St. James Ward Heat Map PP shows how the city plans for greenery and where it is placed makes a difference to the effects of climate change.

Slide 2 The St. James Ward Heat map shows a variety of land uses and related summer high temperatures and the cooling effect of the tree canopy. The hottest area in the top left of the map is a trucking company in an industrial zone. Industrial areas are not required to set aside greenspace. The areas of dense development and smaller tree canopies have higher temperatures. The residential area across from Assiniboine Park is light green. It has wider streets with tree canopies. Assiniboine Park is cool and green.

The Sturgeon Creek and Assiniboine River are cool corridors that provide refuge for people and wildlife. There are rail and road bridges on the Sturgeon Creek between the developed and undeveloped area of the ward.

Slide 3 The large greenspace in the top left of the map is a planned new development called Airport Area West. Most of the forested areas and greener areas will become low density development. Perhaps it could be revisited to provide denser development and more parks and natural areas.

Slide 4 The rail bridge over Sturgeon Creek is not wide enough to allow a connecting green corridor to the Airport Area West development.

This newer railway bridge was a step up from the previous culvert. We will live with decisions of the past for a long time.

A quick environmental scan showed Canadian cities and regions with plans, toolkits and strategies to protect pervious surfaces and tree canopy cover related to stormwater management, health of waterways and protecting biodiversity. They include bylaws both public and private, zoning, permits, penalties, incentives, density bonuses, larger setbacks to allow for greenery.

Much of our river corridor land is destined for development. The HAF will support further densification of the river properties with city-wide zoning converted to multi family, supported with funding incentives and public hearings not allowed.

The most desirable locations for development -the most profitable lots- are the river lots; lots backing onto parks, and the vacant lots in the mature neighbourhoods that could become green parks and corridors. The price of potential neighbourhood green lots is further out of range for parkland as they are priced to accommodate multiple \$600,000 homes on a single lot.

Winnipeg has a below average amount of greenspace compared to other Canadian cities, and yet the City hopes to attract newcomers.

If there was funding and a strong commitment to protection and enhancement for the river corridors, tree canopy, and access to greenspace as part of the infill/rezoning fund, it would go a long way to alleviating residents' concerns with development. The cumulative treatment of our river corridors and natural areas over time has not instilled confidence.

We need smart density that does not sacrifice green space and reduce the urban forest. The infill density must be well designed to complement existing neighborhoods.

The United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration for Urban Areas declares "Restoring urban ecosystems requires awareness and commitment from both citizens and decision makers. Green spaces need to be placed at the heart of urban planning." The full text is at the end of this presentation and worth the read.

References

Edmonton Wildlife passages and engineering design guidelines prepared by Stantec Engineering 2010
https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.edmonton.ca%2Fpublic-files%2Fassets%2Fdocument%3Fpath%3DWPEDG_FINAL_Aug_2010.pdf&data=05%7C01%7CJRidge%40winnipeg.ca%7C59c63e9cede04800677e08dbeb83e126%7C405abd592f4e4fabb403dc6c591db30c%7C0%7C0%7C638362723863452055%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=I%2BQbAwTx%2Fq%2FR%2B%2Bt0zF4Pqr0JNl9pKQ7hH%2BTzc6nAePY%3D&reserved=0

Metro Vancouver Tree Regulations Toolkit 2019

<https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmetrovanvancouver.org%2Fservices%2Fregional-planning%2Fdocuments%2Fmetro-vancouver-tree-regulations-toolkit-with-appendices-2021-05.pdf&data=05%7C01%7CJRidge%40winnipeg.ca%7C59c63e9cede04800677e08dbeb83e126%7C405abd592f4e4fabb403dc6c591db30c%7C0%7C0%7C638362723863452055%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=86KCD03CauChYK7QLzrMrsFfBEJWzCoeDI5AkVmN0LA%3D&reserved=0>

Require setbacks from riparian areas and ESA in zoning bylaws and development permits Protect natural areas and sensitive ecosystems on title and place maintenance or restoration requirements and restrict actions that could damage the protected features.

United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration for Urban Areas .

<https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.decadeonrestoration.org%2Ftypes-ecosystem-restoration%2Furban-areas&data=05%7C01%7CJRidge%40winnipeg.ca%7C59c63e9cede04800677e08dbeb83e126%7C405abd592f4e4fabb403dc6c591db30c%7C0%7C0%7C638362723863452055%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=609jQ2s2eklcfKr8uZVzF1eT2BjGcDmpT921xxBiTMU%3D&reserved=0>

Urban areas occupy less than 1 per cent of the Earth's land surface but house more than half of its people. Despite their steel and concrete, crowds and traffic, cities and towns are still ecosystems whose condition profoundly marks the quality of our lives. Functioning urban ecosystems help clean our air and water, cool urban heat islands, and support our well-being by shielding us from hazards and providing opportunities for rest and play. They can also host a surprising amount of biodiversity.

Urban ecosystems represent a radical transformation of the natural areas they have replaced and are often highly degraded. Poor planning seals soils and leaves little space for vegetation amid the houses, roads and factories. Waste and emissions from industry, traffic and homes pollutes waterways, soils and the air. Unchecked urban sprawl gobbles up more and more natural habitat and fertile farmland. Restoring urban ecosystems requires awareness and commitment from both citizens and decision makers. Green spaces need to be placed at the heart of urban planning. Civic groups and municipal authorities can clean up waterways, plant trees and create urban woodland and other wildlife habitat in parks, schools and other public spaces. Permeable sidewalks and urban wetlands can protect against flooding and pollution. Contaminated industrial areas can be rehabilitated and turned into urban nature reserves and places for recreation and relaxation.

File:

Public engagement preference: Yes

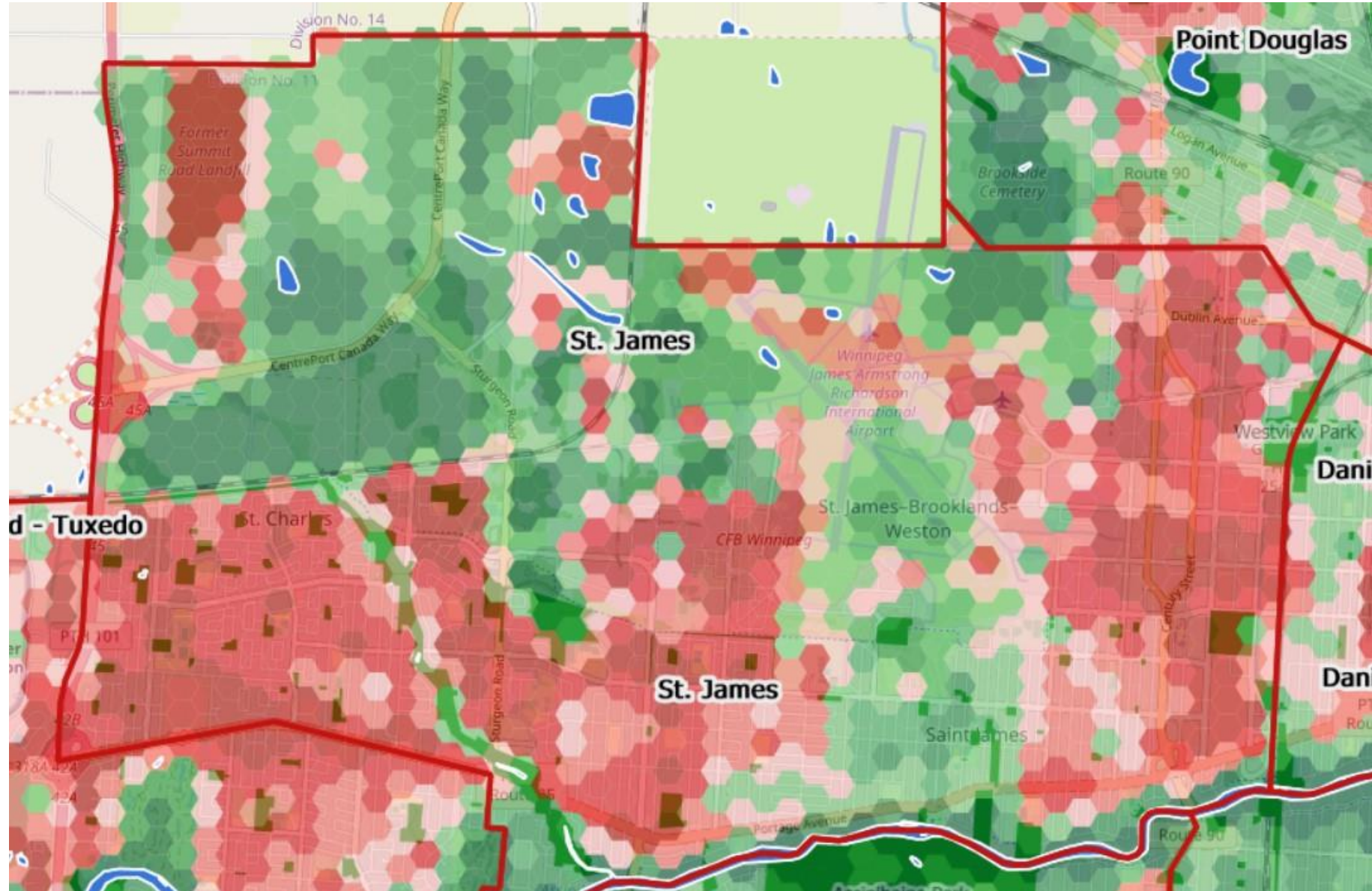
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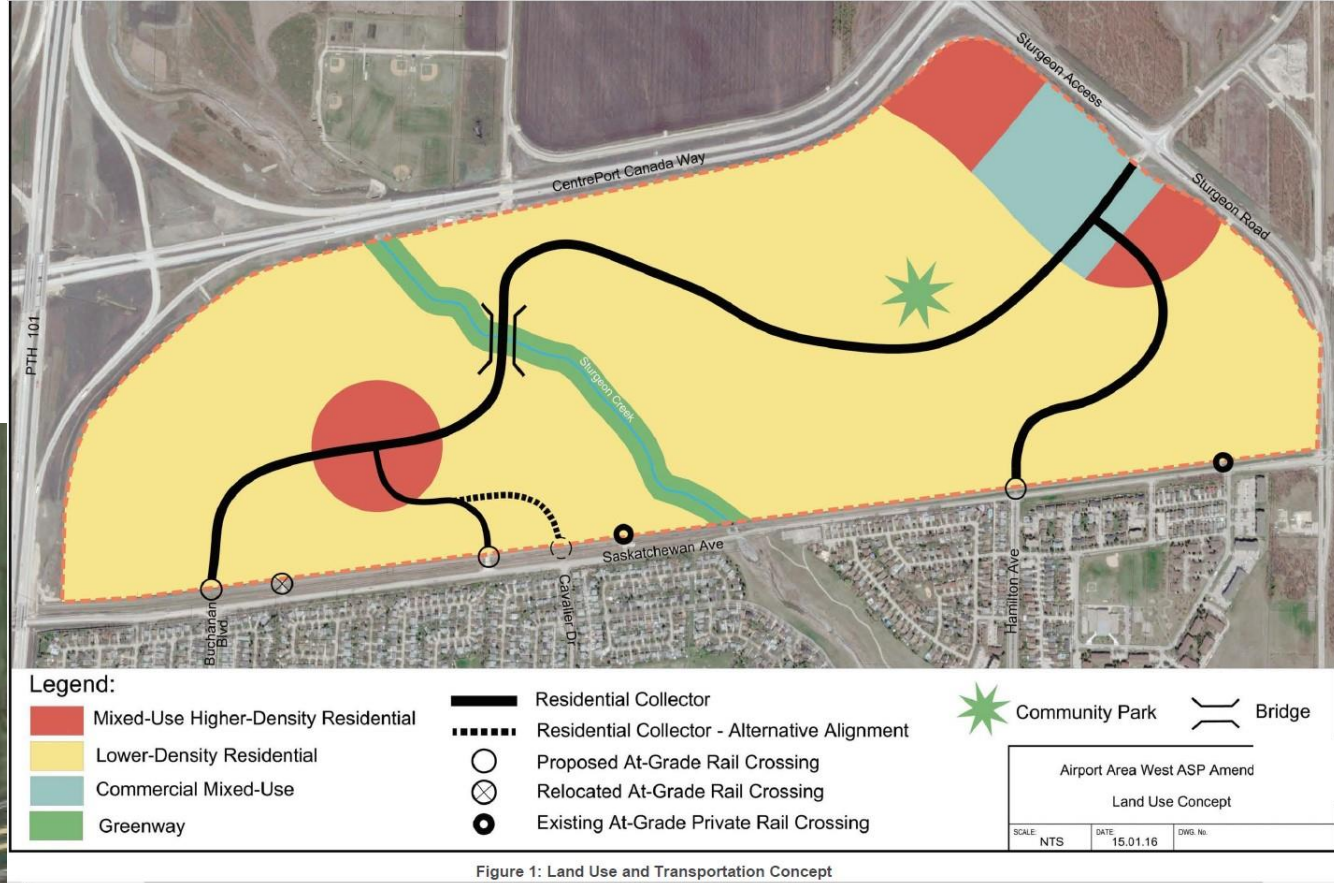
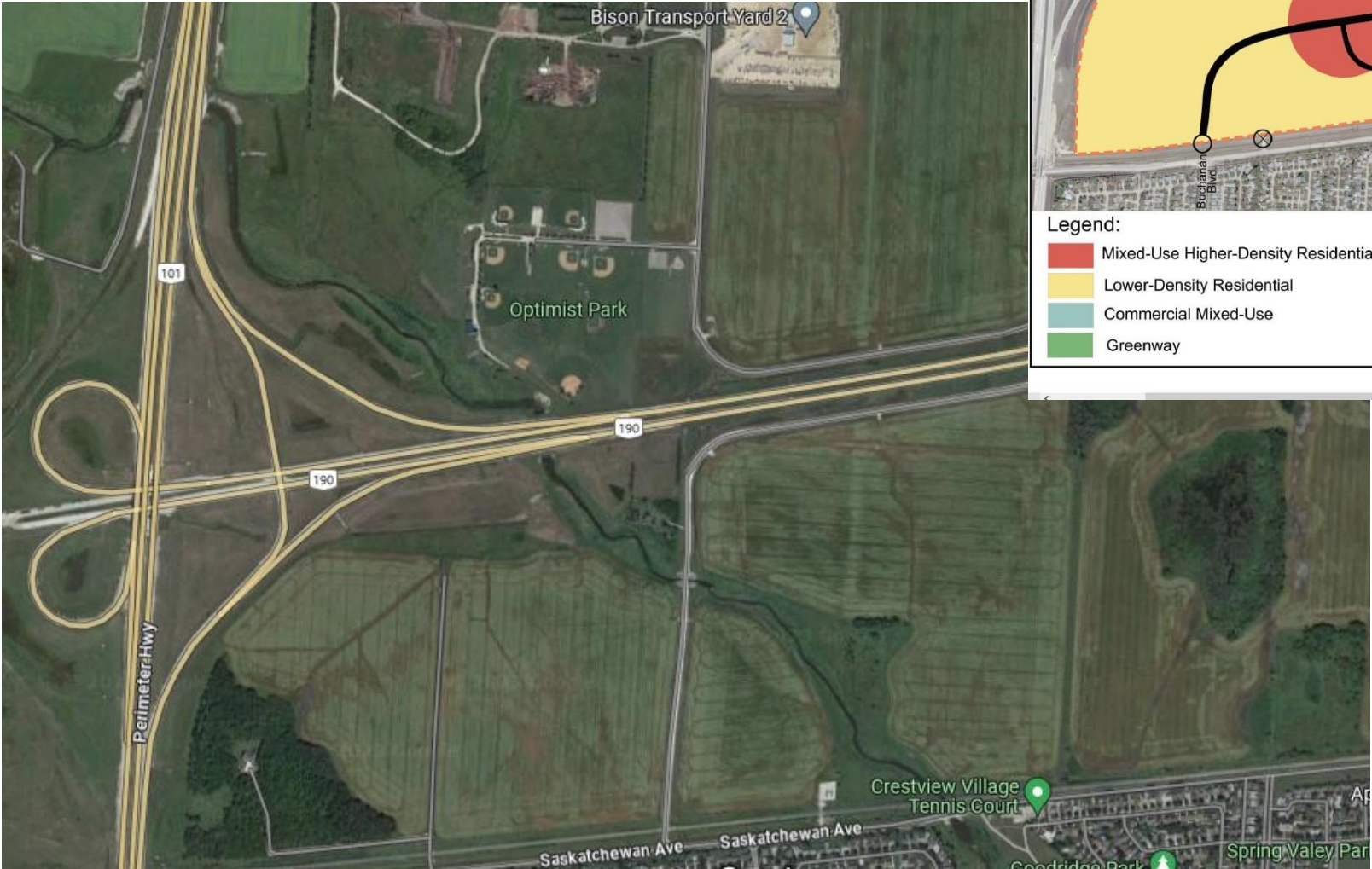
Pam Lucenkiw, OURS-Winnipeg
St. James Ward

Heat map of the St. James Ward (typical hot day in July 2017)

The heat map shows how the city plans for greenery and where it is placed makes a difference to the effects of climate change.



Airport Area West



Sturgeon Creek Greenway

