

I'd like to add a perspective on the value of park and green space in our communities. Specifically, I'd like to make a case for the expansion of a green space in the former Aubrey bus loop. In light of all of the potential development proposals I would like to see the city maintain ownership and control of the land with the intention of using this property to expand the existing playground/park area, and to preserve the area as a land bank under city control for possible future infrastructure changes.

I'm sure that everyone can appreciate that the existence and usage of parks and green spaces offers significant positive social and environmental outcomes. An acquaintance of mine shared stories with me about growing up in the west end on Maryland in the 1970s and regularly playing pickup scrimmage football at the Aubrey Park with his childhood friends. I have to appreciate how these experiences contributed to his life-long love of sport, which he has so generously passed on to so many others in his career and involvement in organized sports.

The Aubrey park area has a long standing history of providing space for active living, and it is this very

thing that we need to highlight and continue to make available to people across the community and city.

In today's busy urban landscape, publicly accessible park space has immeasurable social and environmental value. I live near to the area and I can testify that this little piece of green space, that is the former Aubrey bus loop, is well used by many people. Significant numbers of families, children and groups, all utilize this space.

Despite the change to the Aubrey bus loop and the former Wolseley #10 bus route, people continue to come to the park to spend quality time. It is a valuable and special outdoor space for the Wolseley community and beyond. Families who may not have access to a backyard space rely on this space for their children's recreation and exercise. If the area that is the former Aubrey loop was to be developed into a designated green space, this would further benefit the community by providing a natural extension to the existing park and play structure.

The development of the green space will also respect and enhance the natural environment of the Wolseley

Community. Wolseley's distinct canopy of elms and other tree varieties provides a habitat for a vast array of wildlife, including many species of migratory birds, some endangered. A dedicated green space would not compromise the habitat of these animals who are spotted regularly at the surrounding playground and former bus loop.

In our present-day climate challenge, green spaces act as buffers to human made climate change. A dedicated green space would create space to cultivate a variety of plants including those that are indigenous to Manitoba, plant life that would have a positive impact in the urban ecology. A dedicated green space could effectively combine areas for human recreation and activity alongside protecting the flora and fauna for which the Wolseley community has always been a refuge.

In respect to the final decision on land designation and usage I believe we need to take a moment and remember the original intent and the planing that put this park here in the first place. We should reflect on the many people who have made use of the park over multiple generations. As well, we should consider the

many species of plants and animals that live in our urban environment that require a healthy urban ecosystem.

It is the outdoor environment that makes the Wolseley district a valuable natural resource for the city, and I believe it is our responsibility to take this opportunity to recognize this special characteristic and to preserve and enhance the park space for the present and the future.

Robert Thorsteinson
Wolseley resident.