Winnipeg

THE CITY OF WINNIPEG ● VILLE DE WINNIPEG

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT ● SERVICES COMMUNAUTAIRES

CITY NATURALIST'S OFFICE - BUREAU DU NATURALISTE MUNICIPAL

NATURALIST SERVICES BRANCH / SERVICES DE CONSERVATION DE LA NATURE

February 10th, 2005

The City of Winnipeg is pleased to support the Friends of the Harte Trail in the Van Roon Heritage Garden Project. The City Naturalist's Office intends to provide in-kind technical and office support for the duration of this project. The initial start-up costs required for this project are estimated at $4000 which includes costs for planting bed preparation and weed suppression.

Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me directly at (204)986-2036.

Yours truly,

Cheryl Heming

Cheryl Heming
City Naturalist

Embrace the Spirit • Vivez l'esprit

5006 Roblin Blvd. · Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 0G7 · Fax(204)986-7236



Friends of the Harte Trail
779 Municipal Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3R 1J5
Tel: 897-5991

February 13, 2005

Dear Councillor Clement,

Following our telephone conversation of February 2 regarding the proposed Van Roon Heritage Garden, I am including more detail on the project. Attached you will find a brief outline of our plans and objectives.

The Van Roon's have been approached and are extremely pleased that their names will be attached to a garden that promotes and educates the importance of this area's natural plant species, in particular the prairie grasses.

The Friends of the Harte Trail also plan to develop the garden with pathways, benches through the City's Bench Donation Program, and a plaque pertaining to the Van Roon's contributions to Charleswood. There will also be a Trans Canada Trailhead sign at this location.

At present, the Friends have applied to the Winnipeg Foundation for $11,500.00 to complete the re-surfacing of the trail from Glenbush to the Perimeter Highway. The re-surfacing and improvement of access points has been our main priority, but at this point, we also wish to begin the garden project. Already, a number of garden centres specializing in native species have voiced support and a willingness to donate plant materials once the land is ready.

The Friends of the Harte Trail are requesting your support to remove the existing vegetation, amend the soil, and do two years of weed suppression. This will be done under the guidance of the City Naturalist and the City's Naturalist Services Office. The cost of this has been estimated to be $4,000.00. Once this start-up work is complete we

are confidant that the garden can be completed through donations of material, volunteer efforts, and seeking out other funding sources as we have done in the past.

Thank you for inviting us to submit this request. We truly appreciate your on-going support for the Harte Trail.

Yours sincerely,



Hilary Hanson
Past President, Friends of the Harte Trail

THE VAN ROON HERITAGE GARDEN PROJECT

Location:

The Van Roon Heritage Garden will be located in the community of Charleswood between Charleswood Road and the Perimeter Highway, adjacent to a section of the Trans Canada Trail known locally as the Harte Trail.

Site Description:

In 2002, the Assiniboia Community Committee approved the donation/acquisition of the subject 3787 m^2 parcel of land, which is now property of the City of Winnipeg and has been rezoned as Parkland (PR-1). It was proposed that the site be developed into a garden of native prairie plant species by the Friends of the Harte Trail with support from the City of Winnipeg's, Naturalist Services Branch. Currently, the site is undeveloped and is comprised primarily of non-native species such *Bromis inermis* (Smooth Brome Grass) and other weedy plants.

Organization Description:

Contact: Hilary Hanson (Past President) 897-5991
Natalie Swayze (Administrative Support) 986-7234

The Friends of the Harte Trail are a non-profit community group based in Winnipeg, Manitoba that have accepted stewardship of a section of the Trans-Canada Trail within the City of Winnipeg called the Harte Trail. The City of Winnipeg has recognized this trail as an important natural area and wildlife corridor and designated as parkland for passive recreational activities. Working closely with the City of Winnipeg's, Naturalist Services Branch, the Friends of the Harte Trail are committed to providing and enhancing awareness and year round recreation opportunities along the Trail, without compromising the integrity of this natural area and valuable wildlife habitat.

Project Overview:

The Friends of the Harte Trail are requesting funding to develop and maintain this site as a garden of native prairie plant species. The site will be named after Verna and Len Van Roon, long-time, well known residents of Charleswood, who have made significant contributions to the community. The garden itself will be comprised of exclusively native tree, shrub, wildflower and grass species and will be developed and maintained by the Friends of the Harte Trail with support from the City of Winnipeg's, Naturalist Services Branch. This project will help to promote the conservation of our natural and historical heritage and provide visitors with a sense of what was once the natural landscape of this area. The Garden will create opportunities for visitors to discover the natural vegetative species that once flourished throughout the Red River Valley while providing local wildlife with additional native habitat.

This project is unique because it will involve the restoration and protection of a significant and endangered natural habitat – the Tall Grass Prairie. Prior to European settlement, tall grass prairie covered one million square kilometers in central North America. Today, tall grass prairie is all but gone. In Manitoba, less than 1% of the original tall grass prairie remains and Tall Grass Prairie is one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada. The Van Roon Heritage Garden will become one of the few remaining fragments of this once vast ecosystem, and will create a potential for new educational opportunities and interpretive experiences.

Project Objectives:

The Objectives of this project are:

1. Developing and maintaining the area as a native prairie garden:
   - Cleaning-up (i.e. remove garbage) and restore degraded areas to native vegetation
   - Increasing species diversity on the site through eradication of invasive plants and subsequent planting of native plant species.
2. Broadening community knowledge and awareness of the importance of restoring and protecting wildlife habitat:
   - Providing an education and awareness program about native prairie species
   - Providing opportunities for community involvement
3. Providing safe access to the area for all visitors including a multi-use trail system through the garden as a spur route from the Trans Canada Trail