

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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HTFC Planning & Design has prepared the Kilcona Park Strategic Renewal and Action Plan in association with Prairie Architects Inc., MMM Group Ltd., and MNP. The purpose of this study is to assess the existing conditions and uses in the park in the context of changing demographics, emerging recreational patterns, and new models to finance and operate public amenities, creating a renewal plan that is coherent, fiscally responsible, and appropriate. The study is intended to guide the City in implementing park renewal while providing for its current users, potential users, and future generations.

Process and Community Engagement

The Kilcona Park Strategic Renewal and Action Plan was derived from community input, design team research and experience, and direction from the steering committee and City officials. Input was received from approximately 75 stakeholder groups, neighbours, resident associations and potential user groups. Nearly 300 responses were received from the broader community who contributed by completing on-line surveys and comment forms available through the project website. Two Open House events were held for stakeholders and the greater community to review the plan and gain feedback. Overall the public demonstrated genuine interest, strongly endorsing many of the renewal strategies and park features presented.

Vision and Implementation Strategies

This process affirmed a clear vision for the park, which translated into an action plan identifying five strategies to meet immediate requirements and more adaptable long-term objectives.

1. Start by investing in those things that need fixing to meet safety and accessibility requirements, and that need attention now to avoid larger costs later;
2. Investigate a governance model as Park partnerships evolve, that allows access to private funds, provides a single point of contact for public, and establishes a dynamic presence in the park to manage programs and facilities. Begin with an Advisory Committee of park user group leasees;
3. Actively seek other sources of revenue and partnerships to help offset capital and operating costs;
4. Work persistently at park enhancements in partnership with users, responding to needs and opportunities as they emerge over time, focusing on better links, better services for existing users, and better distribution of amenities;



Figure 0.0
Harbourview Recreation Complex

5. Construct and operate the park in a manner that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable, and accommodates experimentation, new partnerships and innovation.

Renewal Plan

The renewal plan builds on synergies between uses and capitalizes on a few significant opportunities to solve multiple problems with single initiatives. It seeks to improve service for existing users, eliminate underutilized recreational facilities, and it establishes new programs and uses only if they are deemed sustainable, compatible, and appropriate to Winnipeg's changing demographics. The renewal plan is envisioned as a six-year program with an additional year dedicated to further planning and detailed design.



Figure 0.1
Trail connections

The plan is intended to give priority and advance actions needed to address time-sensitive issues. The specific features include:

- reshaping and enclosing the off leash dog park (without changing its size);
- addition of an internal access road north of the landfill;
- improvements to existing and new multi-use trails;
- improvements to existing parking lots and new parking pods along perimeter roads;
- expansion of the lake system and re-use of fill for landfill improvements;
- relocation of some activities to reduce conflicts and improve access;
- additional plantings and amenities such as washroom upgrades and picnic spots to enhance passive uses;
- better signage and trail connections;
- downsizing and repairing the Harbourview complex, and redesign of the docking facilities;
- refreshing park identity through name change and re-branding.

Other priority projects include actions that refresh and enhance existing uses, and introduce appropriate and sustainable new uses. The intention through this phase is to remain flexible and be able to react to emerging opportunities from proponents, partners, and funding agencies. Specific features include:

- shoreline restoration;
- additional athletic fields;
- renovations to Maintenance Building to create public multipurpose space;
- additional parking;
- summer and winter terrain park for bicycles, snowboards;
- further enhancement of picnic areas;
- active transportation corridor through park;
- additional seasonal washrooms in remote areas;



Figure 0.2
Picnic shelters

- internal wayfinding system;
- wetland boardwalks and shelter;
- sustainable demonstration projects which could be explored include: onsite wastewater treatment at Harbourview, methane lamps, geothermal upgrades to Maintenance Building and/or Harbourview;
- pedestrian and bike connections on Lagimodiere and Springfield Road.

Several future opportunities for Kilcona Park development were identified that may occur with the right partnerships. These opportunities include:

- an Active Recreation Complex with the appropriate development to further support and enhance the renewed Harbourview facility and programming;
- park-friendly commercial development along Lagimodiere Blvd. that can offer even more services to park users;
- changes to the City of Winnipeg Golf Services that may see the golf course land redeveloped or returned to parkland space



Figure 0.3
Park signage

Capital Costs

The capital budget estimates project an investment of approximately \$30 million over a six year project span with an additional year of planning. It is acknowledged that the sequence for each capital project may shift as new priorities arise.

However, considering the modest level of investment over the past three decades, we recommend that the City sufficiently resource Kilcona Park at this time to build momentum and to ensure the plan takes on a life after completion. This will require a rigorous combination of staffing, financial commitment and attention.

Revenue Sources

Potential revenue sources to help offset public investment include commercial development on leased park land, conference rentals of the upgraded Harbourview complex, third party development of recreational facilities (eg. field house), and financial and in-kind contributions from user groups. The City's Assessment Department suggested that the 16,700 square metres of developable land identified along the Lagimodiere frontage if serviced has a potential sale value of approximately \$1.5 to \$1.7 million, or if leased would return \$16,700 to \$33,400 in rental income if left unserviced. Lack of servicing limits the viability of development throughout the park. Depending on the occupancy rate for the conference facilities, it is anticipated that Harbourview could generate up to \$54,500 (30%) annually.

Governance

Kilcona Park would benefit from standardizing and securing formal lease agreements with all organizations who have a stewardship role on an exclusive use of the park in the initial phase of redevelopment. Those user group lessees would be invited to sit on a newly formed advisory committee that would meet regularly to discuss issues and opportunities and refine the strategies to operate the park and implement improvements. This will require management from City administration who will be responsible to protect the interests of the many park users not otherwise represented on the advisory committee. As the park renewal evolves, the City should explore in detail alternative governance models that will allow the park to access diverse funding sources, provide a single point of contact for the public, and establish a dynamic presence in the park to help manage programs and facilities.

Identity

One of the unanimous findings from the stakeholder workshops was the desire to create a clear, contemporary, and unifying identity for Kilcona Park and Harbourview Recreational Complex. It is suggested that a single name be selected for both parts of the site. A single name will make it easier to remember and provide an opportunity to promote that change is underway. It is recognized that re-naming parks carries a greater burden of process than the initial naming, thus any new name should carefully consider continuity, community identity and tradition. This could be achieved by shortening the name to **Kilcona Park**, with other locations identified as The Trails of Kilcona Park, The Harbour of Kilcona Park, etc. However the park identity encompasses more than the name. The process of crafting a unique identity for the park should be based on a place that is natural, sustainable, active, partnership-driven, with unique recreational features and iconic waterways and architecture as based on the workshop participant's input. A new identity will help guide the design of new features on the site. The refreshed park identity should be reinforced through consistent signage, materials, furnishings and structures.

Sustainability

Kilcona Park and Harbourview are pioneering reclamation projects that serve as a great platform to demonstrate the City's commitment sustainable open space development and management. The plan recommends a number of measures to bolster the sustainable message that include: alternate mowing practices and xeriscaping; adaptive reuse of existing buildings and building material; composting toilets; geothermal energy retrofits for the existing public building; methane capture and re-use; photovoltaics and wind energy; constructed wetlands for grey and blackwater treatment; signage and environmental education programming

Additional Study

Some features of the renewal plan will require the commission of additional study. Allowances for these have been included in the capital budget estimate. It is possible that some of this further analysis may be achieved through various City departments. The additional planning includes:

- Detailed site design services;
- Revegetation strategy for the landfill cells;
- Traffic studies for each of the proposed active transportation connections;
- Engineering study (geotechnical) to determine the feasibility of the internal access parkway;
- Detailed architectural services for building renovation and renewal;
- Creative branding study to refresh park identity;
- Detailed governance study is recommended after the six year renewal period;
- Business plans for the Lagimodiere Boulevard frontage development and Harbourview operations.

Unequivocally, it can be said that many people care about the park and are willing to play a role in its renewal. Many existing and new partners have expressed interest in the park renewal during the process of this study. This interest should continue to be fostered with ongoing communication with stakeholders as the plan moves toward implementation.