

Southeast Plan Application SP-01-21 By-law No. 7302  
Southeast Brandon Secondary Plan

On behalf of the Brandon Age Friendly Committee of Council, we would like to thank you for allowing us this time to make a presentation in relation to the Southeast Brandon Secondary Plan By-law No. 7302.

As a brief backgrounder, Age Friendly Brandon stems from the Age-friendly Cities and Communities initiative launched by the World Health Organization in 2006 to promote social participation, health, and security for people of all ages. In 2007, the Government of Canada partnered with the provinces and territories to create a Pan-Canadian Age-friendly Communities Network, which the City of Brandon joined in 2008.

In 2012, a steering committee was formed consisting of city management and citizen representatives to complete a very methodical and comprehensive assessment examining the age-friendliness of the City and based on this report the Age Friendly Committee of Council was established in June 2013.

One of the guiding principles of this Committee is to build awareness toward age-friendly priorities and actions and to support age-friendly initiatives throughout the community. Collaboration with leaders in the community will facilitate the process of making Brandon a community committed to healthy aging.

The Age Friendly Committee is a valuable resource for the City of Brandon, and to that end, we have recently embarked on a series of meetings with City Managers and departments to strengthen our working relationship. We appreciate that age-friendly principles must be adopted on a city-wide basis, and in relation to planning and development we will have that opportunity with the commencement of the 2022 Development Plan review. In the interim, we must take the opportunity to contribute to work in progress, and that brings us here today.

We commend the work that has been completed over the past several years in relation to this Plan, however we are here today to provide an objection in relation to two specific areas:

- 1) Greenspace location and designated use; and
- 2) Documented commitment to age-friendly design concepts

Area #1 Greenspace location & designated use

In 2019 the Plan was presented at a community open house depicting greenspace in the following sizes and locations as per attached map.

## EXAMPLES OF RECREATIONAL SPACES

Here are some examples of spaces commonly seen in developing areas like the southeast area. Are any missing?



### OBJECTIVES

Parks, recreation and open spaces can accommodate passive and active recreational experiences. The hope is to provide a network of spaces for residents to access all areas of the community and the broader city.



 Playgrounds	Outdoor areas for children that can be either connected to a school or a public park, available for all the community to use.
 Trails & Paths	Paths used by pedestrians and cyclists that connect the different areas of the neighbourhood, and they can use as commuter paths to get to other parts of the city.
 Community Gardens	Pieces of land gardened collectively by a group of people. Community gardens are a great way to bring the community together while encouraging food security.
 Outdoor Basketball	Basketball and tennis play areas can be a good amenity, possibly attached to a community park, to encourage people of different age groups with differing interests.
 Picnic & BBQ Areas	These areas are usually within public parks, and can provide options for community and family gatherings involving meals, or for social events.
 Parks and Greenspaces	Parks can have any or all of the listed uses above. Variety is important in catering to diverse community needs.

The City Public Engagement Report for the 2019 Open House denotes the following feedback was received, in part:

- Need for more greenspaces, parks for children, and tennis courts
- Have greenspaces closer to schools
- Community gardens are desired in the area

Fast forward to 2020/2021 and we don't see any change in the representation of Leisure Greenspace on the Plan map. In addition, we've realized one of the lessons of Covid-19 has shown cities could become a lot more than they are right now, more livable, more sustainable, more resilient, and more equitable. Throughout the duration of the pandemic, various activities have grown in popularity, including gardening. The many benefits of garden spaces are well documented and community interest is evident by the many community gardens throughout the city.

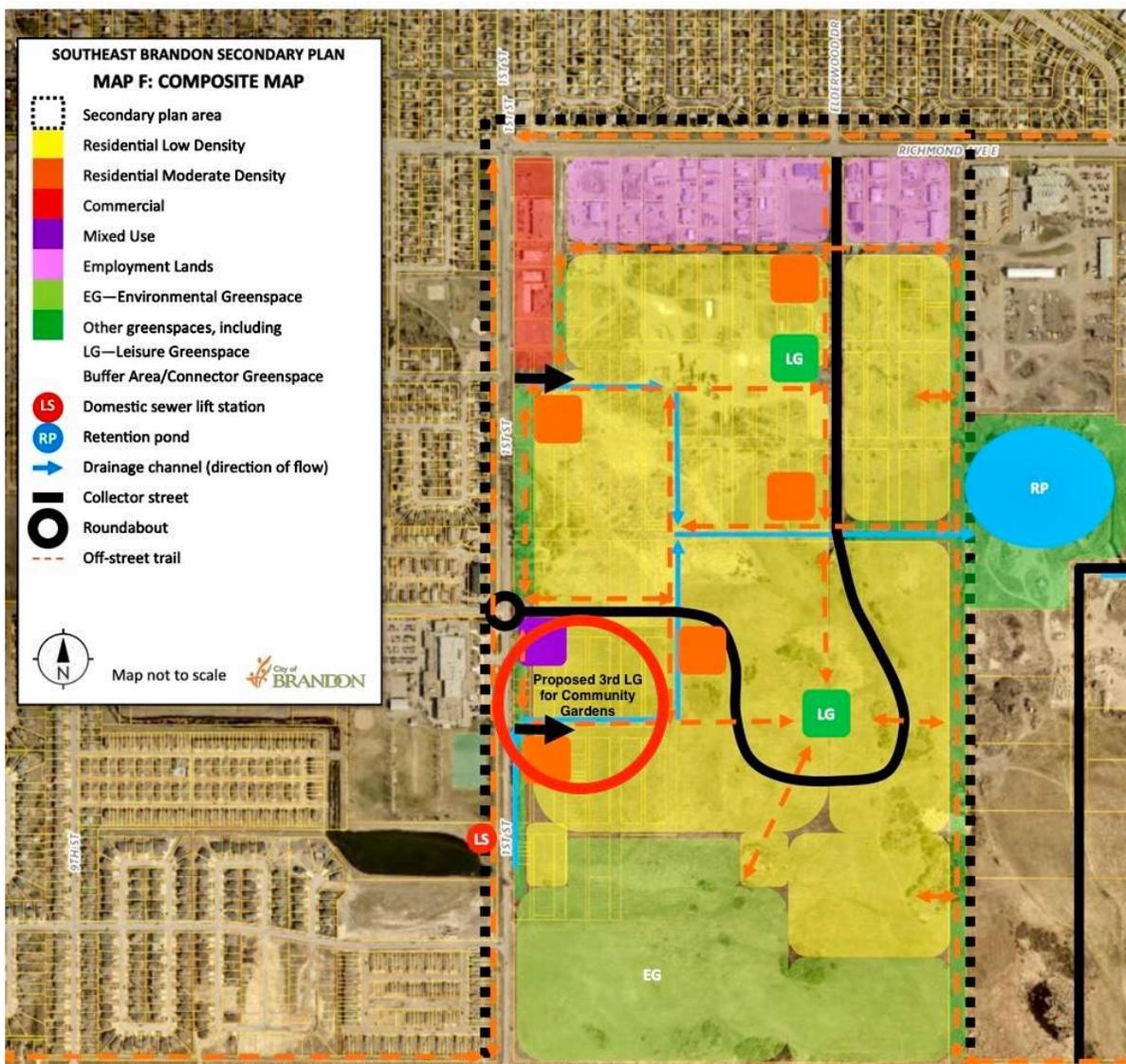
Social ties are important to the wellbeing of people in a community since they can bring positive health effects and community involvement. Community gardens allow for the creation of social ties and build a greater feeling of community. These connections help reduce crime, empower residents, and allow residents to feel safe in their neighborhoods.

Another essential feature of an age-friendly community is promoting intergenerational activities, bringing together people of varying ages, 0 to 100! We have a very unique opportunity available in the area of this Plan because of the close proximity to Crocus Plains Regional Secondary Highschool.

We are proposing the Plan include the designation of a community garden space and that this space be represented on the map within a leisure greenspace on the Plan. Instead of the two leisure greenspace areas that are currently depicted in the Plan, we are requesting a third site be designated in close proximity to 1st Street and adjacent to Crocus Plains high school. This could result in a reduction in size of the other two sites, or the redesignation of one site to this proposed location.

The reasons we are objecting to the location of the existing two leisure greenspace areas is that the current locations do not provide connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and due to the phasing of the development, and these greenspaces being located within phase two and three, development of these greenspaces may not take place for 10+ or 20+ years. The area recommended by Age Friendly Brandon is located within Phase 1 of the proposed development pattern.

The third greenspace dedicated to community gardens will be situated in an area of higher population density thereby creating a higher priority for the provision of community garden space.



In March 2021, Age Friendly Brandon had the opportunity to meet with Senior Planners to review the Southeast Secondary Plan.

We were advised via email dated May 27, 2021; the following changes were made to the Plan as result of our meeting and additional public consultation:

- a. We clarified Policy 2.1.9 to explicitly mention community gardens as examples of common amenity areas that should be developed within Residential Moderate Density sites, thereby increasing overall greenspace in the area by requiring additional greenspaces within private developments
- b. We clarified Policy 2.4.1.2 that the development and dedication of public greenspaces to the City will be in accordance with The Planning Act”

The actual wording of item 2.1.9 as provided on Page 8 of Schedule A states....

## 2.0 LAND USE

*This part of the Secondary Plan outlines the policies for specific land use designations and use types within the Secondary Plan area. The City will assess development applications and future implementation actions against the policies for the area that the land is located as identified in Schedule A. The land use policy vision reflects the existence of industrial uses along Richmond East and east of the Secondary Plan area, the presence of endangered flora within the southern portion of the Secondary Plan area, and the proximity of schools to the west of the Secondary Plan area.*

### 2.1 Residential

*2.1.9 In accordance with the City of Brandon Urban and Landscape Design Standards Manual, Residential Moderate density sites should incorporate, amongst other requirements, common amenity areas, pedestrian connections, and buffers from lower-density residential uses. Examples of common amenity areas include but are not limited to play structures and community gardens.*

**Our objection to item 2.1.9 is requesting stronger wording to denote the commitment to achieve specified development goals. Using community gardens simply as an example of a common amenity does not reflect that commitment.**

**Furthermore, semi-public greenspaces present many limiting factors due to the nature of ownership. The developer maintains ownership of the land and maintenance of most of the greenspace amenities, therefore is generally the design lead. Due to these reasons, a greater need arises to incorporate the community garden designation into the Plan and more specifically, the composite map, to better guide the development.**

To potentially mitigate damages that occurred to the recent tilling of the lady slipper lands, perhaps there is an opportunity to revisit plans and agreements which may open other opportunities not previously considered ie the designation of publicly owned and/or semi-public community garden greenspace.

As an interesting sidenote, in May 2021, the City of Winnipeg Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development held discussions to consider a policy to make the creation of community gardens mandatory in all new developments. Committee discussion grew from this and the City of Winnipeg plans to create a policy to ensure community gardens exist in every neighborhood. Perhaps the City of Brandon could take a page out of Winnipeg’s playbook.

## Area #2 Documented commitment to age-friendly design concepts

The City of Brandon has made a commitment to the continuing development of an age-friendly community through the establishment of the Age Friendly Committee of Council. As mentioned earlier, we acknowledge that age-friendly principles should be adopted on a city-wide basis and we will have an opportunity to work collaboratively with City Planners with the commencement of the 2022 Development Plan review. However, we understand this process does take significant time and we must take the opportunity to contribute to all work currently in progress and inject some of the age-friendly community principles into this Secondary Plan under review.

Some of the essential features of an age-friendly city include:

- Sidewalks are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.
- Sidewalks are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level.
- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.
- Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways.

*Page 15 of Schedule A states....*

### *3.2 Active Transportation Policies*

*3.2.7 All uses within the Secondary Plan area should provide convenient pedestrian access from developments to adjacent sidewalks and transit stops.*

*3.2.8 Pedestrian and cycling networks should be accessible for persons of all abilities.*

We would like to offer a story we previously shared with Seniors Planners regarding best laid plans don't necessary result in "convenient pedestrian access ..." and "... accessible for persons of all abilities" as noted above, as policies within this Plan.

The newer portion of the neighborhood directly west of the Secondary Plan was built over the past 10 years and construction continues as of today. Many people within the area walk on the streets instead of the sidewalks due to the slope of the sidewalks. In the months when ice is possible, maintaining balance on such sidewalks becomes very difficult. An individual that resides in the neighborhood that uses a wheelchair has also stated that negotiating the sidewalks is very challenging and generally must use the road instead. The sidewalks may be a benefit to enhance drainage but do not necessarily mean they are "convenient pedestrian access ..." and "... accessible for persons of all abilities."

**Our objection to these statements, 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 are that they are too vague and allow too much allowance of interpretation for the Developer. The City of Brandon, in collaboration with Developers, have the opportunity to resolve inequities among community residents. We request, at minimum, references throughout the Plan should be to "barrier free" access.**

Page 20 of Schedule A states ....

## 5.0 URBAN DESIGN

The Secondary Plan area will accommodate and is surrounded by different land uses, especially residential, commercial, and industrial, that may not be compatible with each other. High quality urban design is therefore important to make these uses more harmonious with each other and with the public realm, be it through landscaping, building or site design, or connectivity of public spaces and areas. The policies in this section are supplemental to the City of Brandon Urban and Landscape Design Standards Manual.

### 5.1 General Policies

5.1.1 Development should support a highly walkable, pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive, accessible community.

5.1.2 Public and semi-public spaces in public and private developments should be designed as accessible spaces in accordance with The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its associated regulations.

In accordance with definitions provided on Page 4 of Schedule A, our objection to item 5.1.1. and 5.1.2 is that the use of the word “should” is too passive and request the word “shall or will” be used to ensure compliance to Acts and regulations, as in The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

Page 4 of Schedule A states .....

## 1.5 Governing Provisions

### 1.5.1 The Planning Act

### 1.5.2 Brandon & Area Planning District Development Plan, 2013

### 1.5.3 Secondary Plans

### 1.5.4 City of Brandon Zoning By-law

### 1.5.5 Species at Risk Legislation

### 1.5.6 Other Plans and Policies

Other plans and policies referenced throughout the Secondary Plan provide both direction and support for implementation. These plans and policies include but are not limited to the

(a) City of Brandon Greenspace Master Plan

(b) City of Brandon Recreation and Community Facilities Master Plan

(c) Brandon Area Road Network Development Plan

(d) City of Brandon Water Conservation Plan

Our objection to item 1.5 through to 1.5.6 is to have The Accessibility for Manitobans Act listed as a governing provision to ensure adequate focus is brought to this Act and thereby to addressing some of the age-friendly principles presented. We believe this is an excellent interim approach prior to the adoption of an updated Development Plan and providing adequate understanding of expectations to any potential development within the Plan area.

Presented by:

Nancy McPherson, Co-Chair and Susan Boyachek, Board Member

Brandon Age Friendly Committee

June 16, 2021