

APPENDIX I CONCEPT PLAN SESSION NOTES

SPRUCE GROVE: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN
CONCEPT PLAN SESSION
MAY 31, 2006

CENTRAL THEMES

Growing Gateway

- Spruce Grove has no clear edges or boundaries
- Primary routes for entry do not offer any indication of arrival
- Need for clearly defined gateway features (i.e. signage and other defining features)

Open Space for all Existing and Future Residents

- Open space systems should be inclusive of all members of the communities
- A balance between special interest groups and remaining balance of community
- Need to plan for future demographics and growth

Defining a Core

- No clear downtown core exists
- No central gathering place
- No mainstreet, as found in adjacent communities
- Not conducive to pedestrian activity
- Poorly linked to surrounding community

Improving Pedestrian Access

- Problematic or non-existent pedestrian access throughout community
- Predominately related to road crossings
- Need for tunnels or pedestrian overpasses to improve connectivity

Green Space Identity & Branding

- The boundaries and names of green spaces (including the prominent Heritage Grove Park) were often not identified incorrectly - other names, like Central Park (a green space with connections to Heritage Grove Park) and Participark (former name for Heritage Grove Park), were often used. This could indicate a need for more branding, signage, and a more clear delineation of boundaries and destination.

Emphasize Sport and Recreation

- Sports activities and related facilities are of great importance
- Representatives of various sports associations indicate a deficit of facilities for level of demand
- Existing facilities require improved maintenance and investment
- Need for regional facilities, but associated lights and noise might require a separation from conflicting land uses

Other

- Opportunities to integrate cultural and social activities into open spaces, beyond recreation and sport
- Need for beautification and art installations to better represent history and/or identity of particular green spaces
- Important landmarks: Log Cabin, Tri-Leisure Center, Heritage Grove Park, Grain Elevator

NOTES FROM SESSION ONE: MAY 31, 2006: 2:00 – 4:00 pm

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM THIS SESSION?

- Understand what the plan actually is
- Ensure all stakeholders are aware of the plan, as it impacts many actors
- Understanding how the plan might intersect with the Municipal Development Plan, which is currently being developed; help develop some ideas for MDP
- Expand notions of open space beyond recreation to include gathering places, forum for events and related activities
- Ensure a wide-scope of consideration for this planning activity
- Bring a youth focus to open space planning
- Offer some perspective on implementation and financial realities
- Consideration of emergency and safety implications of new open space; water amenities and issue of mosquitoes
- Bridge issues of City growth with open space and amenity

WHAT DOES OPEN SPACE MEAN TO YOU?

- Active/passive parks
- Places where my family and I can enjoy and play in the outdoors
- Natural environment: forest, water bodies
- Man-made open space: manicured green areas and amenity spaces
- Trails; places to sit; picnic spot
- Anything not private and fenced-in or have a roofed-in
- In terms of social and cultural value, open space (natural untouched environment) is very important to preserve
- Value of unpaved space
- Relationship to agricultural space
- Open space needs to have a relationship to some type of social activity, not just a raw blank slate; needs to create opportunities; multi-use
- Integration; safely move through and throughout community; connectivity
- Environmental protection
- Whole community interests are represented in open space; open space needs to serve multiple interests; build buy-in; everyone cares; reflect demographics
- Open space intersects with infrastructure and costs are associated
- It is essential!
- Facilities or infrastructure of any scale that are open to the public formally or informally
- Recognize the value of informal open space
- Plays a role with quality of life
- Educational opportunity
- Environmental stewardship

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE GENERAL CHALLENGES?

- Stony Plain; need a stronger link
- Annexation of Pioneer Road (looks to the east)
- Need for sense of arrival when coming over overpass (arrival from the east)
- South lands are problematic because the highway (16?) severs access for pedestrians
- Shame to loose agricultural lands remaining, and the grain elevator in particular
- “Nobody knows where Spruce Grove is – it just happens!”; we have no downtown; there is no central gathering place
- Need to look at the north/Parkland County (north of highway, which highway?); need for entryway; storm water management facilities potential for open
- Eastern entry feature; 128 acres of tree grove; 5 owners, mix of ER & MR; should policy be geared to address these important specific sites
- Important to identify capital for acquisition, but do we not need to draw a line around what open space we want?
- What? and, then, How?

DOES YOUR POSITION PRESENT ANY CHALLENGES RELATED TO OPEN SPACE & WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- A need for engineering to work closer with community planning
- Need for partnerships within City; integrated approach
- Need to work with developers to better develop and manage potential/existing open space opportunities
- Utility facilities & storm water features can be better utilized
- MR crediting constraints / opportunities
- Active recreation is ever increasing by demand in number of participants and quality of spaces
- Need to address an active recreation space (soccer) serving both local and regional scales
- Need to think about the future active recreation needs; multi-purpose fields
- Operating and maintenance realities need to be adjoined any visioning or plan
- What is Spruce Grove?; What is going to be on the post card?; open space master plan to help create identity
- What things would be on postcards?
- Grain Elevator
- Log Cabin
- TLC (Tri-Leisure Centre)
- Central Park
- Walking through the forest
- Space design is no the big issue, but rather the activities of people; brush fires; infrastructure for bridges, etc. need be standard for emergency vehicles
- By-law officers, etc. need to adjust service delivery for different open space
- Associated costs for safety and fire prevention need to be considered

- Need to design for personal safety and create non-threatening environment
- Planning open space for particular users (youth in particular)
- Preserve Spruce Grove's character; sense of community and link to rural environment
- Importance of maintaining existing open spaces, rather than planning or stretching resources over new open spaces
- Don't allow open space planning to be high-jacked by special interest groups; plan for the whole community
- Need to anticipate future open space and future demographics

NOTES FROM SESSION TWO: MAY 31, 2006: 6:30 – 8:30 pm

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM THIS SESSION?

- Interest from the perspective of Minor Football & Baseball, Public Schools, and the Arts Council
- Progress related to outdoor fields, maintenance, growth
- Plans for existing and future facilities
- Amount of open space
- Demand on current facilities
- Future of space for public schools
- Beautification of open spaces
- Incorporating other elements into the Plan

WHAT DOES OPEN SPACE MEAN TO YOU?

- Trails system (best I have ever used); parks, recreational facilities
- Open space defines Spruce Grove
- Worry about the pressure of growth
- Open space is grass; soft space as opposed to hard space; overly designed and beautified when all you need is a grass space
- Sports facilities; trees; kids play spaces (play grounds); need for multi-user access to any facility; places for families to gather
- A place for a new born through to a 90 year old
- Henry Singer not a family-friendly facility; only major open space south of 16A; crime and isolated; lacking other amenities; only accessible by car
- MR associated with middle and high schools are not large enough; 10-15 acres middle and 20-25 acres high school need to be larger
- Need to match dollars with what can realistically be maintained; consolidate and focus resources to maintain quality fields, not multiple poor quality fields
- Schools are land locked; all clustering together; relationship to the associated open space
- More benches and garbage cans scattered throughout the trail and path systems

POSTCARD VISIONING:

- Heritage Grove Park (a number of people called it Central Park or ParticiPark, branding)
- City Hall
- Central Park during the winter; lights
- Kids playing sports; Olympic Medalist (female?); huge volunteer community associated with sports and related activities; outdoor sports
- TLC – Tri-leisure Centre

OTHER THOUGHTS AND IDEAS:

- marketing, associated tournaments, accommodation and related expenses revenue
- keep your kids busy they are out of trouble; great for families
- more pedestrian-friendly engagement with the roadways are needed (tunnels, bridges, sidewalks, landscaping, buffers, etc.)
- regional facilities are noisier and lights, conflict with adjacent uses, need for separation of uses
- incompatible open space (recreational) use with other uses; maybe better suited with industrial uses
- need to release planned school sites, as schools will not be proceeding at on any timeline, so it doesn't make sense
- land ownership, delinquent developers, open space in flux, transition, ownership of future urban reserve
- lack of walking downtown, identifiable core; doesn't matter to some, does matter to some; lacks soul; happy to use my car
- continue the trail system, fill in the gaps