



E3. Major Open Space

INTRODUCTION

The Major Open Space designation highlights large contiguous open space areas within the City (not including cemeteries) that currently have a “public function” and that provide an aesthetic, recreational and/or ecological significance to the City as a whole. The valued natural features and habitats these sites contain enable citizens to experience nature close to home, thus contributing to improved health, well-being and quality of life. Efforts to preserve and protect these areas align with the City's commitment to climate action by enhancing the connectivity of green spaces and parks throughout Winnipeg to support biodiversity and natural systems.

Because their scale and character can make Major Open Space lands attractive for development, this section strives to ensure a higher level of review underlies any pressures or intentions to transition these lands to another use. Any proposed changes to Major Open Spaces must consider potential impacts on adjacent land uses and the broader community.

Major Open Space has been divided into two designations, differentiated by public vs. private ownership:

- **Public Major Open Space**
- **Private Major Open Space**

Public Major Open Space

Public Major Open Space includes all City-owned municipal golf courses, regional parks and nature parks (as defined in the *Parks Strategy*) and other parks space with areas over 40 hectares (approx. 100 acres), within the city limits, that provide public use and enjoyment.

Private Major Open Space

Private Major Open Space includes areas over 40 hectares (approx. 100 acres) that are privately owned but serve a public function and provide important ecological functions and/or recreational opportunities to the community such as private golf courses and valued ecological lands. This designation should not be construed as implying these areas are free and open to the general public or that they shall be purchased by the City.



It should be noted that all City-owned parks and open space sites are also governed by policies in the Recreation, Parks and Open Space section of *Complete Communities 2.0*. The added designation as Major Open Space recognizes specific parks within the Urban Structure, highlighting them as significant land uses. The associated Major Open Space policies are most relevant if and when there is a proposal to convert any of the Major Open Space land to another use.

Managing Requests for Conversion of Major Open Space

The Major Public Open Space designation is intended to first and foremost prioritize retention of these significant parcels of land for continued public use and enjoyment. However, in the event that Council wishes to consider conversion of any of these lands to another use, in accordance with legislation in the City of Winnipeg Charter regarding the disposal of park land, the policies in this chapter set out a multistep process for how this would occur to ensure a formal review and analysis informs the process and provides for orderly planning and the protection of important recreational and ecological areas on the site. Proposals to repurpose a Major Open Space will also require the proponent to demonstrate that a robust public engagement process has occurred.

For **Public Major Open Space** the intent is to ensure park and ecological priorities are identified and valued lands set aside, protected, and retained for public benefit, in

a comprehensive and collaborative manner, before any of the lands can be considered for repurposing. Most important is they are not governed by any predetermined caps or limits, but instead by what is required to maintain productive and functional recreational, ecological and cultural areas and corridors. Maintaining access to natural areas, especially waterways, riverbank lands and their associated habitats, and connective corridors will figure prominently.

Private Major Open Spaces are privately owned and may be redeveloped in the future. If that happens, the intent is to preserve and protect the most valued areas for continued public use and enjoyment. If the landowner of one of these properties decides to convert the property to another use, the policies below outline a multi-step process for how this would occur.

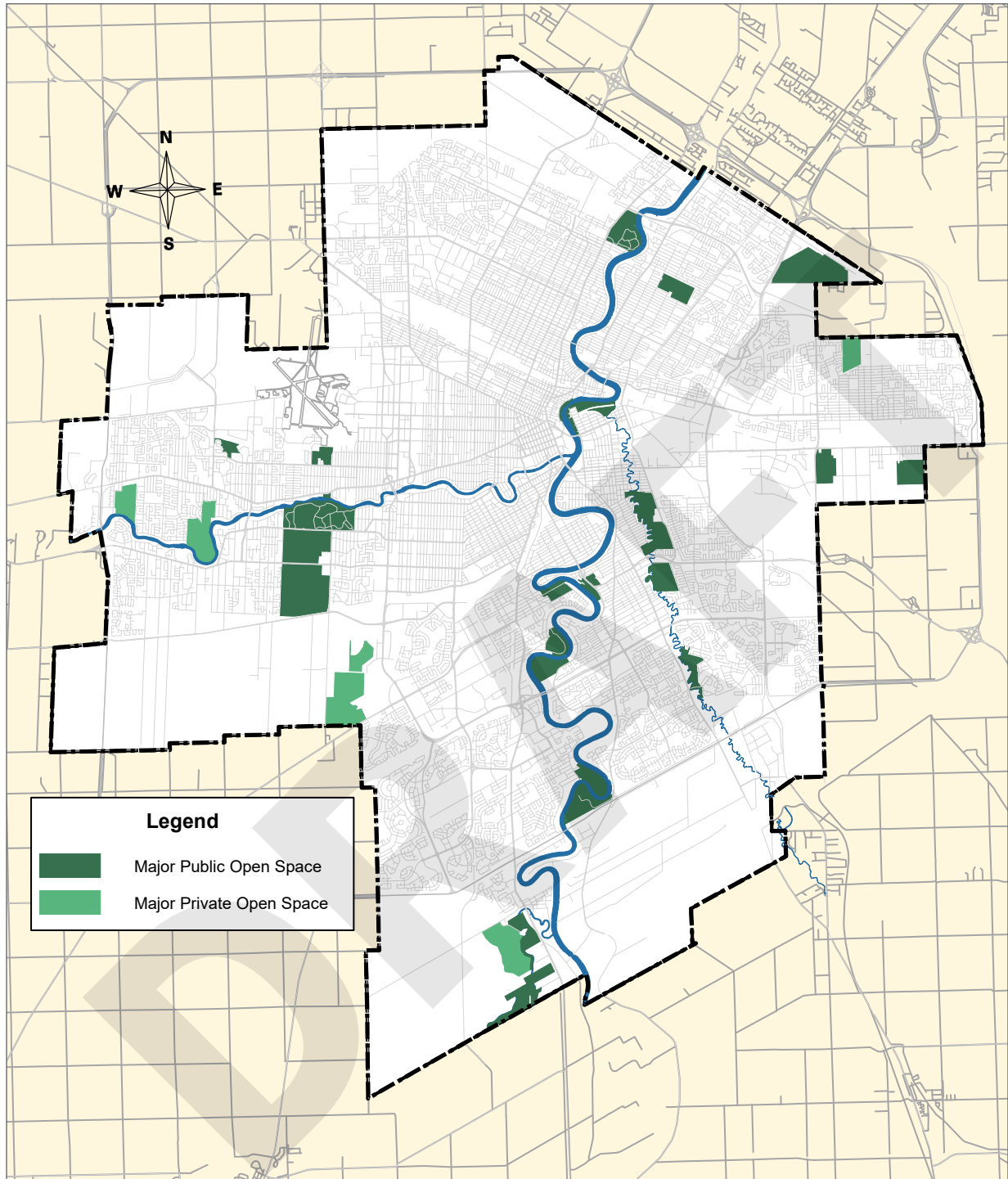
This section is supported by the following document:

- *Ecologically Significant Natural Lands Strategy and Policy*

This section is also supported by the development of additional implementation documents, including:

- *Parks Strategy*
- *Recreation Strategy*
- *Comprehensive Urban Forest Strategy*

MAP OF MAJOR OPEN SPACES



Map 14

VISION

The Major Open Space designation will identify distinctive areas of city-wide importance that have important natural features and habitat and provide for passive nature oriented activities as well as variety of active recreation areas.

Goal 1

1.0 Prioritize the preservation of Public Major Open Space.

Policies

Intent

- 1.1 Designate and retain lands identified as Public Major Open Space for recreational use and the preservation of natural features and habitats.

Goal 2

2.0 Ensure that proposals to redesignate Public Major Open Space are guided by a comprehensive review, are well planned, and preserve areas of ecological and recreational value.

Policies

Re-designating Public Major Open Space

- 2.1 Require a *Complete Communities 2.0* amendment to re-designate Public Major Open Space to another use.

Secondary plan

- 2.2 If re-designation of a Public Major Open Space occurs, require a secondary plan for the subject lands, as specified in policies 2.1 through 2.3 of this section.

Exceptions

- 2.3 Re-designating or repurposing areas that are comprised of less than one acre of Public Major Open Space may be processed without requiring a *Complete Communities 2.0* amendment, or necessitating a formal secondary plan process, but must be accompanied by a report containing all the requirements outlined in Policy 3.2 of this section.
 - 2.3.1 To prevent incremental re-designation of a Public Major Open Space, exceptions will only be permitted once every five years.

Goal 3

3.0 Ensure any redevelopment of Private Major Open Space is well planned and preserves natural features and habitats.

Policies

Secondary plan

3.1 Require the redevelopment of Private Major Open Space to be guided by a secondary plan.

Secondary plan contents

3.2 Require that a secondary plan shall be submitted in respect of Major Open Spaces that provides for the following information, where appropriate:

- a. A natural features and habitats inventory coupled with a preliminary natural area and tree preservation report, as outlined in Policy 3.3 of this section;
- b. A vision for the area;
- c. Anticipated population at full build-out;
- d. The alignment of the Primary Transit Network and the location of its stations, where applicable;
- e. Infrastructure alignment, including the arterial and collector road network, pedestrian and cycling routes, alignment of the transit feeder network, and water, wastewater, and land drainage facilities;
- f. Land use policies, including the location of specific designations;
- g. Existing provisions on-site and in adjacent neighbourhoods for parks and open space, highlighting any service provision gaps;
- h. Urban design principles;
- i. Building density, height, setback, and size ranges and the areas where they apply;
- j. External and internal mobility connections (e.g. streets, rear lanes, sidewalks, and cycle paths);
- k. Key gateways and streets with active edges;
- l. Transitions to adjacent areas and uses;
- m. Public realm improvements;
- n. Servicing requirements, including green infrastructure qualities such as landscaping features and storm water management;
- o. Identification of City-borne growth-enabling and growth-supportive infrastructure and their approximate costs;
- p. Phasing of development and anticipated subdivisions;
- q. Implementation strategy, including roles and responsibilities for implementation; and
- r. Other policies or context specific guidelines as deemed appropriate.

Natural area and tree preservation report

3.3 Require the preparation and submission of a natural area and tree protection report as a component of development applications in a Major Open Spaces which includes:

- a. Details of the existing native habitat and tree species, including location, size and condition;
- b. Details of any associated significant vegetation worthy of protection and preservation in accordance with the *Ecologically Significant Land Strategy and Policy* or *Comprehensive Urban Forestry Strategy*;
- c. Recommendations for natural area and tree protection or preservation;
- d. A description of tree preservation and protection measures (before, during and after construction) for all trees that are to be preserved on-site;
- e. Details of all natural area and/or trees proposed for removal;
- f. Details of tree pruning (crown and roots), as applicable;
- g. Appraised value of City-owned natural areas and trees affected by the application. This valuation will be conducted by the City of Winnipeg Naturalist Services and Urban Forestry Branch in accordance with their respective appraisal and removal guidelines; and
- h. A schedule for site inspection and status reporting to the City by qualified arborists throughout construction.

Protection of natural features and habitats

3.4 Require that any redevelopment recognize the diversity and connectivity of natural features and that long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural features and habitats should be protected, preserved, restored, and where possible, improved.

3.4.1 For Public Major Open Space lands, priority areas to be retained for public use and enjoyment will not be governed by any pre-determined limit but shall be retained as needed to fulfill the following requirements:

- a. To maintain productive and functional recreational, ecological, and cultural areas and corridors, preservation efforts should be focused towards natural features, especially waterways, riverbank lands and their associated habitats, as determined through the natural area and tree preservation report; and
- b. Additional parks and open spaces lands as necessary to:
 - i. Buffer the existing natural features;
 - ii. Provide access to and connectivity between natural areas;
 - iii. Further protect lands subject to flooding, erosion or bank instability;
 - iv. Facilitate pathway provision in flood-proof areas and on alignments that don't disturb natural vegetation or significant trees; and
 - v. Address any parkland, natural area, connection, or amenity provision gaps.

3.4.2 For Private Major Open Space areas:

- a. Protect valued natural features and habitats as determined through the natural area and tree preservation report, using tools identified in the *Ecologically Significant Natural Lands Strategy and Policy*;
- b. Preserve riverbanks, and areas that promote ecological and recreational linkages; and
- c. Ensure that additional park provisioning is in accordance with approved land dedication procedures.

Goal 4

4.0 Promote and encourage the protection and responsible management of trees in Major Open Spaces.

Policies

Tree protection

4.1 Develop policies to protect significant trees or groupings of trees within Major Open Spaces.

- 4.1.1 **(A)** Develop a tree protection bylaw for Major Open Spaces that identifies categories of trees to be designated for protection, specific protections to be provided to these trees, and penalties for non-compliance.