



Saving John Blumberg Golf Courses

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John Blumberg Park

- **John Blumberg consists of a Sportsplex that contains**
 - **soccer fields**
 - **a softball complex**
 - **two complementary golf courses**
- **I am going to concentrate on the golf courses**

Why was this Parkland Purchased?

- **1961 Metro took jurisdiction over public parks**
- **Metropolitan Winnipeg wanted to increase their Green Space**
- **By 1970 they doubled 1,000 acres of parkland, including golf courses, to over 2,000 acres**
- **John Blumberg was valuable higher ground**

Origin of the Park

- **Councillor Bernie Wolf, May 1965, stated:**
 - **“We want to get these park sites now, before the land is developed and before the price of it goes sky high. With this land held in reserve, the citizens of greater Winnipeg may feel assured that there will be sufficient park space to meet the needs of our increasing population.”**
- **City of Winnipeg Archives Metro Exhibit, 2020**

John Blumberg Name

- **The naming of the park John Blumberg recognizes a man who was**
 - **a long time member of City Council**
 - **first Vice-Chairman of Metro Council**
 - **a member of “countless other civic agencies”**
 - **City of Winnipeg Archives, letter Allan Bready, Information Officer, March 24, 1970**



John Blumberg Name

The name “John Blumberg” recognizes a man who was

- **member of City Council for 32 years**
- **the first Vice-Chairman of Metro Council**
- **a member of “countless other civic agencies”**

**City of Winnipeg Archives, letter Allan Bready,
Information Officer, March 24, 1970**

Historic Property

- **Property of Oliver and Mary Gowler who settled here from England**
- **Oliver came to work on the Hudson's Bay Company's new experimental farm at Red River in 1836**
- **when it failed the Gowlers moved out towards Headingley**

Gowler Farm

- **"They reconnoitered carefully, bought shrewdly, worked steadily, and prospered. They cleared and broke the first furloughs on the land now destined to be a magnificent community park"**
- **Oliver was touted to be one of "the most successful farmers in the area" according to *The Nor'Wester***

Origins of the Park

- **Metropolitan Council Minutes July 23rd 1964**
- **Motion unanimously carried to buy 280 acres in the Parish of Headingly**
- **Sum of \$1,000 per acre**
- **Bought from the Leveton-Chavin Estate**



**Abandoned
Buildings on
what is now
John
Blumberg
Golf Course**

**City of Winnipeg
Archives,
Metropolitan
Corporation of
Greater
Winnipeg,
Information
Officer, [before
1966]**

The Golf Course

- **According to the city's committee on Finance, 150 acres was to be set aside for an 18 hole golf course**
- **“the remainder for river bank property”**
- **According to Allan Bready, Information Officer for the Metro, March 24th, 1970, there were plans for a toboggan hill**

64/1125

From the Director of Finance,

File No. XR-9.

Advising that at its meeting held on March 23rd, 1964, the Committee on Finance concurred in the recommendation of the Committee on Parks and Protection that authority be given to negotiate for the purchase of 270 acres of land in the R.M. of Assiniboia up to \$1,000.00 per acre; 150 acres of which will be required for a new eighteen-hole golf course and the remainder for river bank property.

City of Winnipeg Archives, *Minutes of the Metropolitan Council, July 23rd, 1964*



**Golf House at John
Blumberg Golf
Course, 1969**

**City of Winnipeg Archives,
Metropolitan Corporation of
Greater Winnipeg (Man.).
Information Officer**

The Golf Courses

- **Opened June 12, 1969**
- **Designed by Canadian golf course architect C.E. “Robbie” Robinson**
- **It was intended to provide a golf course that could host major golf competitions**
- **They planted 3000 trees, evergreens and shrubs**

Blumberg Golf Courses

- **Normally open April 15 to October 31**
- **Two courses add up to 27 holes –**
 - **9 hole Gold Course which is a par 34 in 2739 total yards**
 - **18 hole Emerald Course is a par 71 in 6343 total yards**
- **For a long time it was neglected and golfers stayed away**

Natural Area

- **If the City cannot maintain all of John Blumberg's golf greens, an obvious solution is to convert one of the courses to a Natural Area**

Natural Recreation Space

- **We need more casual spaces for**
 - **hikers to get exercise**
 - **dog walkers for Fido exercise**
 - **large families to gather**
 - **picnicers to enjoy a meal**
 - **bird watchers to spot birds**
 - **children to offset their Nature Deficit**

Other Parks on Fringes of the City are Very Popular

- **Kilcona Park**
- **La Barriere Park (outside City limits)**
- **Little Mountain Park**
- **Beaudry Provincial Park**
- **Birds Hill Provincial Park**

Provides Needed Green Space

- **The pandemic has shown us that Winnipeg has a gross deficit of green space**
- **Winnipeg has only 6% green space or *7% including all of the golf courses* compared to 9% in other cities!**
- **John Blumberg contributes a significant amount to that overall green space**

Good for the Environment

- **Blumberg provides necessary habitat for birds and animals year round**
- **Retains storm water and run off and helps protect the waterway**
- **Provides valuable tree canopy for cooling**
- **Prairie Climate Centre says green spaces will be helpful for hotter days**
- **Helps offset the effects of global warming in general**

The Golf Courses

- **Golf courses provide one of the few recreational activities that can be done in a group during the Pandemic**
- **Now that it's being run by a private contractor, improvements are being made and the numbers of players are increasing**
- **Overall the number of golfers in the city is increasing**



**Photos of
John
Blumberg
Golf
course,
April 24,
2021**

**Photos by
Shelley
Sweeney**













A Vision for the Future

- **John Blumberg can become the shining star of the City's Parks Complex**
- **It should remain part of the city's parks**
- **The preservation of the property should be enshrined in a Green Master Plan**
- **Once sold these green spaces are gone forever**
- **The City should not allow any private sales or development of Major Open Spaces**



Vermeer Tree Mover in Operation, 1966,

**City of Winnipeg Archives,
Metropolitan Corporation of
Greater Winnipeg (Man.).
Information Officer**

