

ECO-JOURNAL

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September/October 1998

REFLECTIONS ON THE 1998 ORGANIC FARM TOUR

by Anne Lindsey

"Next time you take a bite of food, pause for a moment and think about where that food came from". That was a suggestion from David Neufeld at a post-breakfast gathering during the Organic Producers Association of Manitoba's Organic Farm Tour. And what a profound suggestion it is. How far did that food travel to reach your plate? Who grew it? What methods were used to grow it, to process it? What was the condition of the soil it grew in? Who benefitted from your purchase?

It's humbling to realize just how far removed we often are from the source of our sustenance and growth, and how little (as non-producers) we really know about food production. The Organic Farm Tour was a perfect opportunity to "touch base" and learn about how good food is produced right here in our own backyard. It was also a great chance to make new friends of all ages, and to eat some marvelous home-cooked organic meals - no doubts about where that food came from!

The first stop, at Peter and Mary Toews Country Lane Milling and farm near Winkler took longer than expected as everyone wanted a chance to purchase some freshly ground flours. Samples of Mary's excellent home baking, made with those flours, no doubt provided an incentive. Peter says he began farming organically for health reasons - it was clear to him and his family that industrial farming methods especially chemical applications, were taking their toll.

A leisurely drive into the rolling hills around Morden brought us to Prickly Pear Hollow - the farm of Bryan and Cheryl Reimer. There we feasted, then climbed into pickups to visit the pastured

livestock and fields of healthy looking grains. Bryan admits he's learning as he goes, having grown up on a non-organic farm, and modestly claims more luck than expertise for his successes. Here, as at all the farms, I enjoyed the "organic farming talk" as the farmers on the tour compared notes about methods and strategies to control weeds, build soil and produce a robust crop. And, as vegetable gardeners ourselves, Steve and I engaged in some of

that comfortable exchange of information tidbits about varieties, yields and companion plants while wandering around the fine kitchen and herb gardens that we visited.

An afternoon of travel through beautiful Southwest Manitoba brought us to the Turtle Mountain area - one of the loveliest corners of the province - and Larry and Susan Black's farm. Here we were treated to fine hospitality and a truly informative tour as Larry and Susan shared with us some of their knowledge of organic farming gained from three generations in the Turtle Mountain area. One of

the biggest problems for organic farmers here is weed control (wild mustard especially). The Black's have experimented with a number of strategies for weed control, and have had considerable success. (Although the employment of young people to walk the fields hand picking might not have been one of the best!). In response to a question about weeds becoming resistant to chemical controls, Larry responded that he'd never met a weed that could resist his cultivator! A highlight for some was a visit to long-cultivated land which had never been subjected to chemical treatment, unfortunately a rarity in Manitoba.

The tour ended for us with a visit to David Neufeld and Magdalene Andres' home near Boissevain. Here we saw the straw bale house, the extensive garden and greenhouse, and gained insight into how people can live more lightly on the land.

We drove back to the city in a driving rainstorm, with our five year old sleeping soundly after what was for him a busy and exciting weekend. We reflected on what a good experience this had been for us, a real highlight of the summer. We learned a great deal, and for both of us, our commitment to seeing organic agriculture succeed in this province was strengthened. What it requires more



Four inquisitive calves give us the once-over at the Reimers' farm. photo by Anne Lindsey

WE ASKED THE CANDIDATES ...

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COMPLIMENTARY

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ELECT THE ENVIRONMENT?

by Anne Lindsey

Welcome to the Fall edition of *Eco-Journal*. A municipal election approaches, and at the time of this writing (mid-September) there's hardly been a whiff of debate about environmental issues, at least in the City of Winnipeg. An upcoming mayoral candidates' debate on "Quality of Life" might get close, as will some questions that will no doubt emerge at the Winnipeg Real Estate Board's mayoral forum at the Walker Theatre on Oct. 14.

The same lack of electoral debate on the environment is true, apparently, in most rural areas of the province. According to Jerome Mauws, the Executive Director of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, when there is a rare battle for election in an RM or small town, its more likely to be over economic development: a candidate may focus on bringing more business to the area. Environmental issues are seldom a large factor, though he notes that hog barns might be key in certain specific cases this time

around. Incidentally, Mauws says that low voter turnout for municipal elections is as much a problem in rural Manitoba as it is in the capital city. Evidently a large chunk of the population doesn't put much truck in local government, and there's something interesting in that. To get right to the heart of the environment in Winnipeg, *Eco-Journal* decided to go directly to the Winnipeg mayoral candidates with 8 questions on pressing urban environmental issues. The questions emerge from the analysis provided by our writers in several stories in this Journal. We hope that urban readers will take the questions with them to public meetings with their local candidates for Council, to test their environmental savvy and commitment, and to let the community know that the environment is still a key concern for many of us. And we'd encourage our rural readers to raise environmental questions in their own municipalities. Let's get on the agenda! Happy reading. **ECO**

LETTER FROM AFAR

The following is excerpted from a letter sent by Eco-Journal readers on the island of Cyprus, responding to our mention of Canadian nuclear reactor sales to Turkey.

Dear Friends, We are writing to ask for your help in the following matters:

Ontario Hydro and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited are planning to supply to Turkey CANDU Reactors, which are to be installed at Akuyu in the south coast of Asia Minor (Turkey) just opposite the north coast of Cyprus at a distance of around 150 miles from our island.

These plans have caused us, and other neighbouring countries in the Mediterranean, great anxiety, for in case of an accident at the nuclear power stations (as in Chernobyl in 1986 and elsewhere) the environmental consequences and the health hazards for the populations in the area will

be tremendous. It has to be noted that the area where the reactors are to be installed is an earthquake-stricken area, something which increases the dangers of accidents. Just a few weeks ago an earthquake occurred at Akuyu, with a large number of victims and material losses.

We wonder if you can in any way use your influence and prestige in deterring the above companies to proceed to the supply of CANDU reactors to Turkey.

Needless to say that the population of Cyprus and people and environmental organizations in Turkey itself (realizing what the dangers are for their own safety and health) have reacted and are reacting to the Turkish plans...

Yours sincerely, Y.D. Potamitis, President, Environmental Committee of Limassol.

ECO

1998-1999 Eco-Network Steering Committee

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WHAT'S HAPPENING...

OCTOBER 15-18 - NOBODY'S FOOL: BUT EVERYBODY'S LAUGHING. A clowning conference on humour and health at the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain, Winnipeg. For more information call Clownwise Inc. at 779-9600.

OCTOBER 17 - SAVE OUR SEINE ANNUAL RIVER BANK CLEANUP at 10 am (Rain date is Sunday October 18 at 1 pm). Head to the east bank of the Seine River at the end of Giroux Street north of Marion. Please dress for the weather, bring work gloves and boots, a shovel and pack a lunch. For further information call 233-0294.

OCTOBER 18 - POTLUCK SUPPER sponsored by the North End Sponsorship Team (NEST) at 5:30 at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1456 Arlington Street at Manitoba Avenue. Tickets are adults \$5/children \$2. There will be speakers, former refugees sponsored by NEST and musical entertainment. Call Elisabeth at 667-5546 for further information.

OCTOBER 20 - FORT WHYTE CENTRE VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION from 6:30 - 9 pm in the Fort Whyte Centre Main Theatre at 1961 McCreary Road. Join Michelle Eldridge, FWC Volunteer Coordinator & Jack Larcombe for the full orientation and a discussion of the variety of volunteer roles available. Call Michelle to register at 989-8368.

OCTOBER 21 - SEVEN OAKS WELLNESS CENTRE shows the film "Exposure: Environmental Links to Breast Cancer" with a discussion to follow, with Anne Lindsey. 7 - 9pm, free, but call 632-3900 to pre-register.

NOVEMBER 6-8 - CANADIAN PEACE ALLIANCE CONFERENCE at Crossways Community Centre. Call 586-7824 for more information.

NOVEMBER 8 - POTLUCK BRUNCH sponsored by NEST at 12:30 pm at Christ Lutheran Church, 815 Inkster Blvd. Admission by donation. Call 667-5546 for more information.

NOVEMBER 5 - DR. MICHELE BRILL-EDWARDS will be speaking on the Health Protection Branch at a public event at Mondragon. Call CHO!CES at 944-9408 for more details.

NOVEMBER 7 - MANITOBA ECO-NETWORK Awards Evening featuring entertainment and pot-luck desserts. Call the office at 947-6511 for details.

NOVEMBER 10 - A PUBLIC FORUM ON MAI AND THE ENVIRONMENT with Dr. David Suzuki at 7:30 pm in the Provencher Room at the Fort Garry Hotel. Wine and cheese to follow.

NOVEMBER 12 - ALTERNATIVE MAI HEARINGS in Room 254 of the Legislature from 9 am to 10 pm. Panelists will include Buzz Hargrove, Carol Shields, Marilyn Buffalo and Warren Allmand. Call 944-9408 for more details from CHO!CES.

NOVEMBER 14 - MAI WORKSHOPS for high school students at the Bulman Centre, University of Winnipeg. More details from CHO!CES.

NOVEMBER 15 - PEACEFUL PLAY FESTIVAL at Robert A. Steen Community Centre from 11 am to 4 pm. Call Project Peacemakers at 775-8178 to learn more.

ORGANIC CRAFT

continued from page 1 ...

than anything is support from the "eaters" of the community, most of whom live in this large urban centre and whose power to bring about change in agricultural practices is enormous - if only they realized it!

In conclusion, I am truly impressed by the knowledge and "craft" that goes into organic farming. All the farmers we met have developed their sense of "listening" to the earth they work with, hearing its lessons and building a thoughtful and sensitive connection to the land. Gerry Dube put it well at a recent meeting: "to be a farmer, you probably have to be an artist". How true, and how crucial it is that this craft be preserved and nurtured.

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ATTENTION SURFERS!

Manitoba Eco-Network's new web page is up and running thanks to the talent and volunteer commitment of Brian Proctor. You'll find it at: www.web.net/men

We are in the process of making links to our member groups with web pages, and with our sister networks and other organizations across Canada. (Even internationally!)

AN ENORMOUS THANK-YOU TO BRIAN FOR THIS IMPORTANT PIECE OF WORK!

OOPS!

In the article "Are Teenaged Girls Poised to Save the World" in the last Eco-Journal, we mistakenly stated that 9% of Americans are vegan. This should have read "vegetarian", of course. Our apologies to Howard Lyman.

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LAND USE IN THE CAPITAL REGION

by Valinda Morris, Provincial Council of Women

"Urban Sprawl in the Winnipeg Region: Who Plays? Who Pays?" was the subject of a Provincial party leaders' debate before the 1995 election. Then, Winnipeg mayoralty candidates: Susan Thompson, Terry Duguid and Peter Kaufmann debated the same topic prior to the 1995 municipal election. The publication of the Capital Region Sustainable Development Strategy in 1996, the 1997 flood and the recent controversy over the proposed Headingley servicing agreements have kept land use in the public eye. This October it is once again a municipal campaign issue.

What is urban sprawl?

It is defined as a land use pattern characterized by low density and/or uneven physical development occurring at the fringe of the urbanized area as well as disinvestment and abandonment of older urbanized areas (1).

The increase in rural residential subdivision activity is visible as one travels through the commuting belt around the city.

Winnipeg City Council has noted the trend of two-parent families (often both parents working) leaving the City and paying property taxes to another municipality. The trend means that an older, less affluent population is left behind to cope with the issues of the inner city and older suburban neighbourhoods. At the same time, some rural residents outside the City have had to organize to preserve prime agricultural land and the countryside from encroaching urban-style development.

Why is urban sprawl a problem?

First and foremost it is wasteful of resources. Further, it is unsustainable over the longer term. At present, the conflicting missions of two provincial departments tends to promote urban/rural competition. Rural Development (note the title) is to facilitate improvement in the economic, social and environmental well-being of rural Manitoba communities, while Urban Affairs (which covers only Winnipeg) is responsible for establishing a legislative, financial, planning and policy framework which supports the sustainable development of the City of Winnipeg within Manitoba's Capital Region and effectively meets the needs of Winnipeg's citizens (2).

Then, traditionally, the Province has paid and still does pay half of the water and sewer infrastructure costs and all of the provincial road costs in rural areas. Such supports to peripheral development troubles Winnipeg, Selkirk, Stonewall and the eight other urban municipalities in Manitoba's Urban Centres Peripheral Development Group. The Group is asking the Province for an even playing field when it comes to subsidies for infrastructure and services. It is also pressing for more consistent application of Manitoba's Provincial Land Use Policies, which are based on sustainable development principles and guidelines and which support the urban/rural distinction (3).

Another accelerator of urban sprawl is the Manitoba Water Ser-

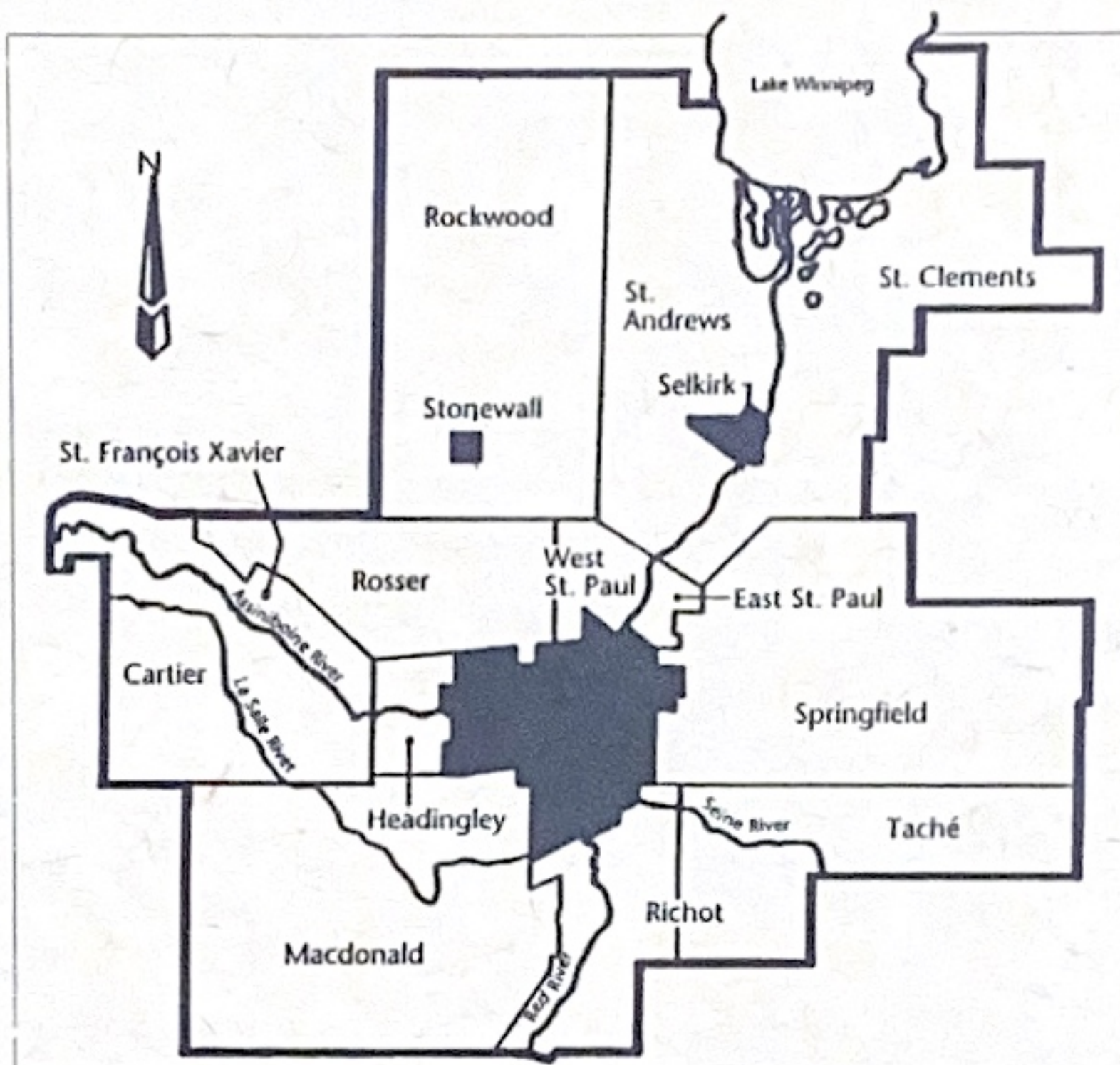
ices Board, a section under Manitoba Rural Development, which provides piped water to outlying areas.

Encouraging Winnipeggers to relocate

The R. M. of Macdonald was the first rural municipality in the Region, starting in 1989, to receive technical and financial assistance from the Province and the federal Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration for a regional municipal piped water system.

According to a 1995 evaluation of the regional water system in Macdonald, the principal land-use change was to encourage Winnipeggers to move to the R.M. where the availability of treated, piped water allowed them to enjoy urban amenities in a rural setting, on relatively cheap land within only a short commuting distance of Winnipeg (4).

In February, 1998, on a tie vote, Winnipeg City Council declined to sell its water to the rural municipalities to the west without a complete, overall plan for water services in the Capital Region. The Province immediately proceeded to co-fund a regional municipal piped water system in the R.M.'s of



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The application of herbicides and insecticides to farm land is a cause of death for many prairie birds and mammals.

You can help protect wildlife and habitat in Manitoba by supporting local organic farms.

What kind of world do you want? We invite you to help create an environment where pesticides are not used. We hope to see you soon.

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- Organic means Superior Flavour

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FOR YOUR HEALTH, FOR THE PLANET.**

Headingley, Cartier, St. Francois-Xavier and Portage. The source of the water is the Assiniboine River.

Another problem is the tendency to bend or not to consistently enforce existing Provincial Land Use Policies, development plans and zoning by-laws. There are no evaluations of planning or sustainable development audits to measure compliance in the Capital Region.

What should Winnipeg voters expect of their mayoral candidates in regard to land use in the Capital Region?

A - A clearly articulated vision of how the City of Winnipeg will thrive within a strong Capital Region.

B - A demonstrated, thorough knowledge and understanding of the philosophies, politics and economics of the Province and the municipalities in regard to the Capital Region.

C - A resolve to ensure Winnipeg's active participation in:

- Capital Region Committee
- Capital Region Review Panel
- Urban Centres Peripheral Development Group
- Consultation on Sustainable Development Implementation
- Manitoba Round Table on the Environment and the Economy
- Union of Manitoba Municipalities
- Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities
- Association of Rural Municipalities (Winnipeg Region).

D - Consistent support and recognition of Plan Winnipeg's policies so as to avoid urban sprawl within the City's boundaries and coordination with the planning intentions of neighbouring municipalities.

E - A pledge to open and transparent government and public education and participation.

Winnipeg's new Mayor will need to move quickly to win the consensus of Council and to devise soundly coordinated political and administrative representation on all levels to achieve these five objectives. Past experience has shown that Capital Region issues and sustainable development have taken a back seat to the pressing day-to-day business of City Hall.

Elected politicians, especially the new Mayor, will do constituents of Winnipeg and the rest of the Capital Region a real service if they pledge to become publically accountable for improving Winnipeg's role in the Capital Region.

References:

(1) Easley, Gail, "Staying Inside the Lines: Urban Growth Boundaries". American Planning Association Advisory Service, Chicago, 1992.

(2) Manitoba Rural Development and Manitoba Urban Affairs 1998-1999 Departmental Expenditure Estimates.

(3) "The Urban Centres Peripheral Development: Submission to Premier G. Filmon, November 1996". Councillor Ken E. Friesen, City of Steinbach.

(4) Haque, C. Emdad & Winder, Gordon, "Impact Assessment of Rural Water Systems: An Evaluation of Regional Water Services in Rhineland and Macdonald". The Rural Development Institute, Brandon University, 1995.

ECO

OUR QUESTIONS:

1. *Revisions are currently underway to the City of Winnipeg Act. Do you feel that there should be public participation in this process? If so, how would you propose to include public participation?*

Kaufmann: Yes. I would support comprehensive public involvement similar to approaches utilized in developing the Waste Minimization Strategy and TransPlan 2010. In addition to widespread media communication, effective public participation was achieved through methods including: a large public opinion survey, community workshops, open houses, and meaningful citizen input through an advisory committee process.

Morrison: Revisions will be made with full public participation. The public will be welcome in opinion surveys, open house forums; and advised and encouraged to participate in public presentations, survey via the internet, the newspapers and by telephone.

Murray: I believe in a community planning process as demonstrated in the West Broadway and Fort Rouge neighbourhoods. This approach should be used citywide.

Rule: Yes. Every issue concerning Winnipeggers must be voted in an open democracy. Through voting processes, people will be able to participate in political issues.

2. *As mayor, how would seek to ensure that the costs associated with suburban and ex-urban development are fairly allocated?*

Kaufmann: We must appreciate the long-term costs of suburban and ex-urban development at the expense of Winnipeg's Core. However, we cannot control where people want to live by trying to tax them for using City roads, or not sharing some of our services (eg. water, waste management) with neighbours outside the City. Winnipeg, and our entire Capital Region will be better off if we work together.

As Mayor, I will focus on making Winnipeg the best place to live and do business by offering complete services at the lowest possible cost. My top priority is to apply this strategy toward Core revitalization. I will continue Mayor Thompson's efforts toward greater municipal partnership in applying the Capital Region Sustainable Development Strategy, and I look forward to the findings and recommendations from Kevin Kavanagh and his panel on how we might do things better together. This will include addressing the sensitive issues related to equitable allocation of suburban and ex-urban development costs.

Morrison: To help ensure fairness to all and allow the freedom of choice for where citizens want to locate and given our current financial position I feel that some of the higher infrastructure costs should be recouped as a service levy.

Murray: End public subsidy of peripheral development and continue the neighbourhood renewal initiatives so successfully implemented in the Fort Rouge ward.

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URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

We asked the Mayoral Candidates to provide responses to eight questions on environment and sustainability. At the time the survey was sent out, 6 candidates were listed at City Hall. Of these, 4 sent responses:

Peter Kaufmann, Nelson P. Morrison, Glen Murray and Carlos Rule. Their answers are recorded in alphabetical order. A big thank-you to these 4 candidates for taking the time to respond to our questions.

WASTE-FREE IN WINNIPEG?

by Jan Westlund and John Sinclair, Resource Conservation Manitoba

The latest buzzword in North American solid waste circles is 'zero waste'. It means rethinking design concepts, production practices, consumption patterns and discard techniques to more closely emulate nature's cyclical efficiency. It's the new frontier now that some communities across North America have met their previously touted 50% waste reduction goal and see no reason to toss in the towel right there.

While recycling has been described as a grassroots movement which industry and government belatedly embraced, a zero waste goal initially requires the thoughtful, active participation of all sectors of society. Work in waste reduction over the past two decades has made obvious the desirability and possibility of zero waste. It's a vision set out by voices as disparate as Paul Hawken of 'The Natural Step' fame and the thoughtful members of the Sierra Club International.

Its varied components include:

- moving up the waste stream to consumers, advertisers, manufacturers and product designers, to the 'front end' of the system to eliminate waste and reduce resource use;
- pursuing waste prevention, reuse, repair, recycling and composting on a local level and banning materials and products that don't allow for those activities;
- focusing on renewable resources and doing more with less;
- defining economic success as delivering more services with fewer energy and material resources;
- including the full costs of environmental degradation and social fragmentation in the price of products and services, and providing factual information to consumers so they can really make knowledgeable choices in a "free market";
- reversing channels of distribution to repair, resell and reuse durable products made of fewer material types, designed also for recyclability when they outlive their usefulness;
- eliminating subsidies for virgin materials, extraction and harvesting.

Clearly, industry will need to take an aggressive role to realize this vision of a waste free future; while federal and provincial governments will have to be convinced of the wisdom of participating.

At the local level, one might ask if the City of Winnipeg, ever cautious in adopting the waste minimization programs, will be able to match the pace in a societal march toward zero waste.

Surprising, as it may seem, with

political will the answer could be a qualified 'maybe'.

In July of 1996 City of Winnipeg Councillors adopted a comprehensive waste minimization strategy which took almost a year and over \$100,000 to create. Developed by the City's Waste Minimization Advisory Committee with substantial citizen input and research guidance from REIC Consultants from Ontario, the strategy is incrementally designed to significantly reduce municipal waste to landfill. It recommended building on existing programs to maximize public buy-in while:

- expanding recycling programs to include multifamily dwellings while increasing participation;
- facilitating comprehensive backyard composting initiatives;
- expanding leaf and yard waste collection;
- hiring a coordinator to develop community reuse opportunities;
- implementing material bans at landfill once alternatives are in place;
- introducing lift limits as a user pay approach to garbage collection once comprehensive alternatives exist;
- researching and implementing some type of comprehensive system for the Industrial/Institutional/Commercial sectors.

Obviously these commonsense components alone won't result in zero waste but they will entrench community-wide approaches while nurturing attitudes which will prepare us for the changes ahead.



"Assiniboine was very helpful when it came time for us to expand. We couldn't have done it without them."

Think about where you bank.

As a natural foods co-operative, Harvest Collective has its roots in a food buying club started in a community club basement nearly two decades ago. Today, Harvest provides consumers with high-quality organic foods in a community atmosphere out of two different neighbourhood stores.

At Assiniboine, we invest in home-grown ideas like Harvest to help our community prosper and grow.

What does your bank do with its profits?

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Banking the way it should be.

An integrated Waste Minimization Strategy IS on the books at City Hall. This is the good news... and one of the City's best kept secrets. The bad news, however, is that the Strategy has stalled like so many frigid Winnipeg cars on a minus forty morning.

Over the last couple of years, City of Winnipeg Councillors have neglected investment in new programs which would eventually return savings as predicted in the Strategy. Over the same period, they've systematically reduced the budget and programs for waste minimization which existed prior to its development.

Most recently, an already bare-bones budget for the promotion of the City's recycling program was cut in half even while there exists some concern over uneven program participation rates. Current decision makers apparently fail to understand that a fundamental, comprehensive approach to solid waste is just the first necessary step in the drive to eliminate other wasteful practices while we explore the challenges to becoming full stewards of our urban environment.

With foresight uncharacteristic at City Hall, WMAC developed its Waste Minimization Strategy to include the creation of a tool to use in evaluating all other proposed programs in the waste minimization field.

Phase 1 of the Waste Minimization Strategy is a clearly defined, iterative process by which the public, politicians, bureaucrats and knowledgeable experts can review all new proposals. It circulates ideas, and opinions which allow all sectors of affected society to have a say in decision making. This insightful process strategy has effectively been buried at City Hall for the past two years.

Like other innovative and progressive strategies they've adopted, (Plan Winnipeg springs immediately to mind), Councillors appear to have thought that accepting recommendations would be all that was necessary to appease the public. As futile as putting a picture of apple pie in your lunch bag, adopting a waste minimization strategy and then refusing to implement does not fill any real need but simply guarantees frustration.

Effective political leadership could take us prudently into the next millennium and position us to move into the zero waste era by dusting off the Waste Minimization Strategy for a start. It would be revealing to know which incumbent candidates recall the Waste Minimization Strategy and the degree to which each is committed to its goal of substantial waste reduction through integrated programs. Do any of the candidates have ideas that go beyond solid waste programs to ensure our ecological sustainability?

How important does each believe it is to entrench a clear consumer expectation for all citizens?

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OUR QUESTIONS:

1. *What would be your first steps in implementing the Waste Minimization Strategy that currently exists at City Hall?*

Kaufmann: My first step in implementing the strategy would be to encourage preparation of a full economic analysis of waste minimization elements recommended by WMAC. Once there is clarity regarding the strategy's most cost effective elements, my next steps would likely include support of: Increased efforts to locate firm markets and/or uses of diverted waste products; Information/support for improved residential waste minimization (ie. composting); expansion of curbside collection to include multi-family dwellings; Improved management and expansion of leaf and yard waste collection efforts; and industry and municipal partnerships to improve total waste minimization within the entire Capital Region.

Morrison: First we would advertise and inform the public of the Waste Minimization Strategy. We would inform the people of the program and its impact on citizens, the environment, and the potential cost savings. Second, we invite more public participation on continuing development and implementation of the programs. Third we congratulate the citizens, the project team and all others involved for their efforts in recycling and note the resources saved and the positive impacts of the program.

Murray: Fund it and commit to an implementation schedule over four years.

Rule: What is already there must be dealt with. Use operational methods that are effective.

2. *Once comprehensive reuse, recycling and composting programs are in place to give citizens alternatives to sending waste to landfill, what type of user fee waste collection program would you favour?*

Kaufmann: I favour the "Bag Tag" program option outlined within WMAC's Waste Minimization Strategy. A full economic analysis of the recommended strategy elements would assist in determining how much residential property taxes could be reduced with the elimination of unlimited waste collection by the City. The Bag Tag approach appears both efficient and flexible, with many options for tag distribution and cost allocation to residents designed to cover city program costs...

Morrison: I favour a user fee waste collection program that reflects the cost of the service provided.

Murray: Recycling should be paid for by tipping fees and product/energy consumption taxes.

Rule: I want to see that waste must be converted to energy heat for factory and industrial use. We should have no more landfill.

ECO

NEW PUBLICATION AVAILABLE FROM THE ECO-NETWORK

Wondering how you as an eater can support organic growers in Manitoba? Here's the answer: get yourself a copy of our newest publication, *A Consumer Guide to Certified Organic Food in Manitoba*. This is an information-packed booklet about organics, why it is important to eat organic, AND even better - a directory of all the certified organic producers in the province, as well as a listing of



retail establishments which sell certified organic foods. The booklet was produced with a grant from the Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation, and was written by Lynn Switzer and Anne Lindsey. Stephen Jackson's lively illustrations grace its pages. It's available at the Eco-Network, OPAM, Mondragon, Harvest Collective and Neechi Foods for only \$3.

PESTICIDE REDUCTION: A NEW APPROACH FOR CITY HALL

by Ian Greaves, Campaign for Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg

To some, a weed-free and lush green lawn is a high status symbol, but it comes at a high cost. A whole industry of toxic pesticides has grown up to help the homeowner, or the municipality, achieve "perfect turf" by killing off weeds and insects. Indeed this past summer, homeowners, lawn care companies and the City of Winnipeg unleashed an arsenal of varied chemicals across our City for exactly this purpose. Lawn chemical use is on the increase, despite growing evidence of its detrimental effects on human health and the environment.

Public education on the dangers of pesticides, and on reasonable and available alternatives is essential. Another route being pursued by the Campaign for Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg (CPR! Winnipeg) is the promotion of a pesticide reduction by-law for the City of Winnipeg.

There is nothing novel in this approach. Pesticide reduction bylaws exist in many municipalities across North America, and take a variety of forms. CPR! Winnipeg has extensively researched bylaws from other jurisdictions and has drafted one which will fit the City of Winnipeg. The draft bylaw has been distributed to all the candidates for council and mayor in the forthcoming Winnipeg election, along with background information in support of the bylaw's provisions. The group hopes to begin an education process for the new mayor and council, which will eventually culminate in a new way of dealing with "pest control" in the City.

The draft bylaw as proposed by CPR! essentially prohibits the

blanket application of pesticides as it now exists. Anyone wishing to apply pesticides on a lawn, golf course, or anywhere out of doors, will have to submit to a permit application process, and pay a fee. Essentially, the idea is to make pesticide application a much more serious process, which it should be, given the impacts of this activity. Furthermore, a confidential pesticide hypersensitivity registry is called for, in which anyone with health problems exacerbated by pesticides can register, so as to be notified by the City when any pesticide application, private or otherwise, is imminent in their vicinity. Certain areas, such as the grounds of day care centres, libraries, senior citizens residences, and hospitals, are to be permanently exempted from pesticides.

The draft bylaw also calls on the City to implement "Integrated Pest Management" in all its operations. IPM is a strategy meant to minimize pesticide use by relying on natural methods of pest control, and understanding the life cycle and ecology of insects and weeds. It emphasizes education and a participatory approach on the part of civic employees. According to IPM, pesticides belong on the fringes of pest management.

There are currently some fine examples of IPM in place in various cities in Canada. For example, the city of Waterloo is leading the pack with a "Plant Health Care Program, Innovative Turf Management". Over the several years since it was first implemented, this program has been an environmental and fiscal success story which has attracted interest across the continent. The Plant Health

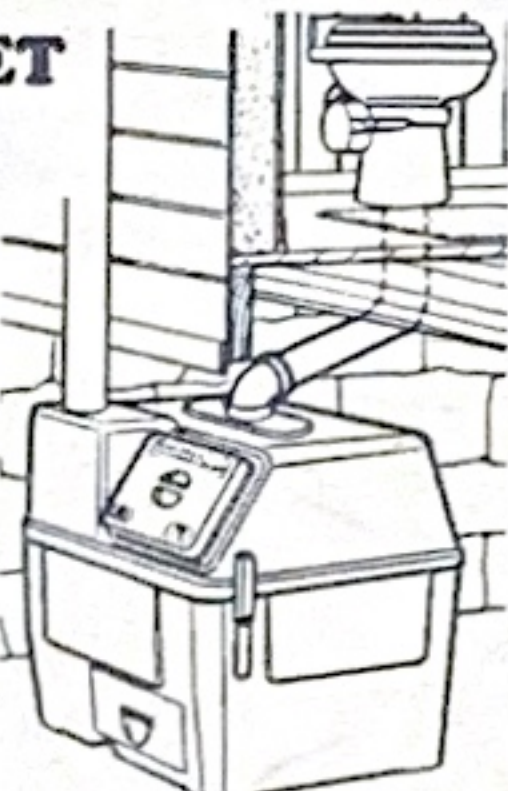
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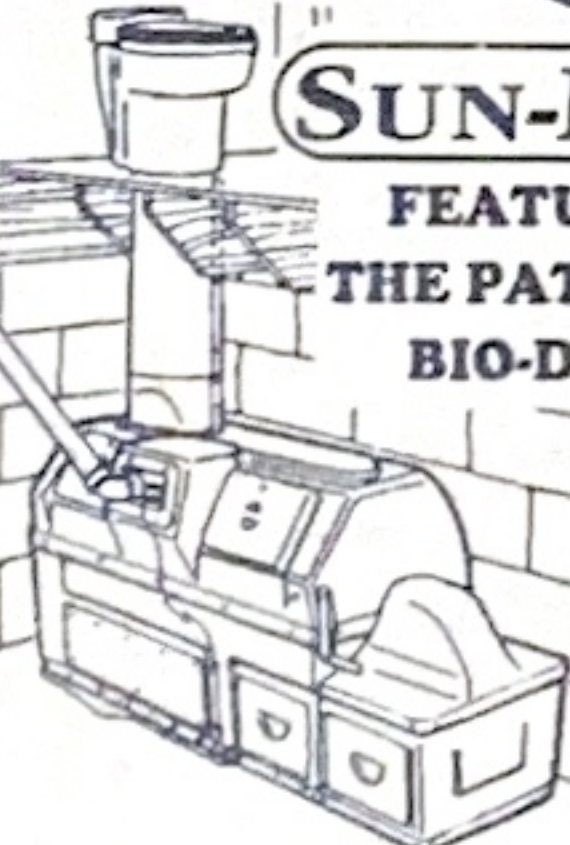
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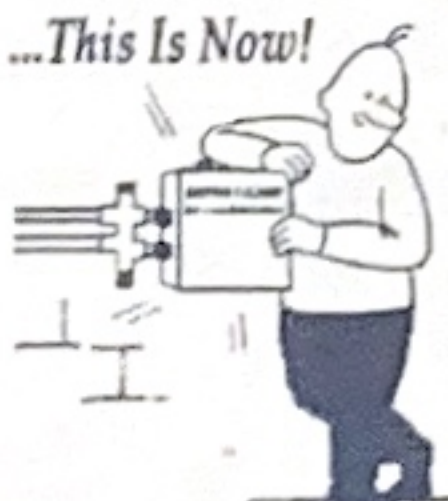


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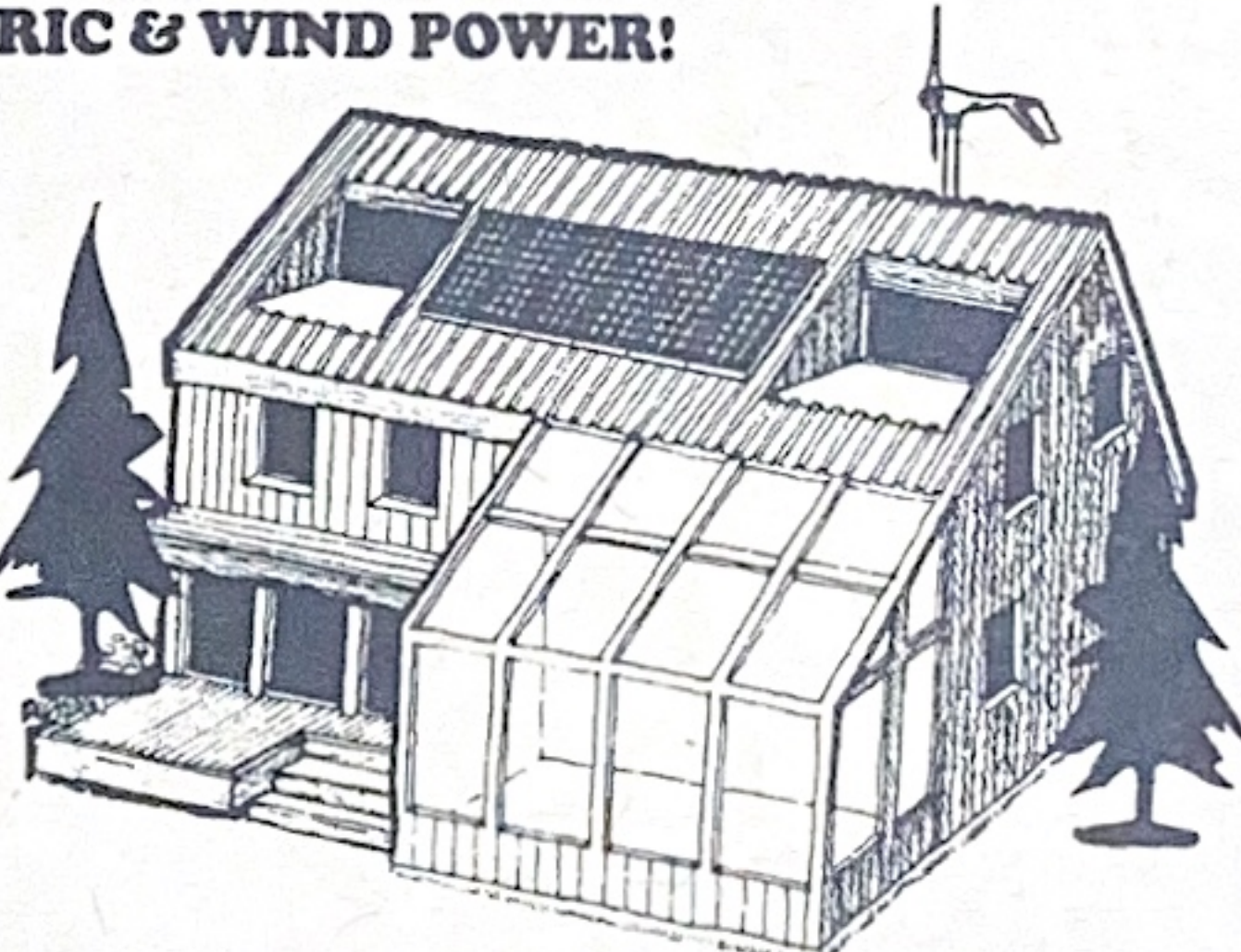
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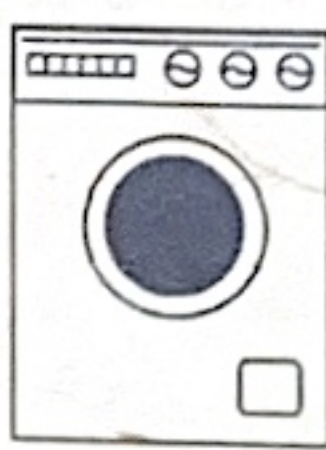
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Care Program has demonstrated unequivocally that environmental protection is compatible with sound fiscal management. It is based on an organic horticultural practice that encourages vigorous and healthy growth. The program has ten component parts: Monitoring (scheduling); Mowing; Fertilizing; Aerating; Top dressing; Overseeding; Irrigating; Dethatching; Alternatives; Education and Training (of the workforce).

The results have been dramatic: In 1979, the City of Waterloo used pesticides on 73% of its total green space. In 1996, only .06% was treated. The total green space acreage increased over the same period from 373 acres to 1137 acres. Cost per acre dropped from \$2,355 in 1991 to \$1,417 in 1997. Cost per household dropped from \$40 to \$33.

Given the imperatives of sustainable development, which include environmental responsibility while living within the budget, the Waterloo program is well worth the attention of Winnipeg City Council. The newly elected council and mayor have a golden opportunity to do the right thing and work with nature instead of against it. A pesticide reduction bylaw will go a long way to improving the quality of life for all our citizens.

(Note: for the purpose of the bylaw, the term "pesticide" includes both insecticides and weedkillers)

ECO

Search the Green Lane for Environmental Information!



<http://www.mb.ec.gc.ca>

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- Ozone Depletion
- Wildlife
- Air Quality
- Flood Damage
- Habitat Protection
- Legislation/Policies
- Science & Research
- Water Legislation
- Water Monitoring
- Action 21
- Pollution Prevention
- Publications/Brochures
- Environmental Protection
- Environmental Assessment

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Canada

OUR QUESTIONS:

1. Are you concerned about the heavy use of herbicides in the City of Winnipeg? If so, what actions would you support as mayor to reduce chemical use by the City?

Kaufmann: Each summer, City weed control staff are inundated with telephone calls from Winnipeg residents concerned with excessive weed growth on hundreds of private and school yards, commercial land, and City properties. Private residents, lawn care companies, golf courses, City and other public staff all apply herbicides during the summer months for weed control. For the most part, and certainly with regard to City staff, herbicide application personnel are rigorously trained and certified in the efficient use of these chemicals, in terms of environmental safety and economic considerations.

I appreciate the potential environmental hazards which may occur due to excessive herbicide application (eg. water quality and biodiversity concerns). Certainly, I would be supportive of reducing the amount of herbicide used by the city of Winnipeg. I know that City weed control staff share this interest and are continually exploring new methods.

As Mayor, I would support a study to determine actual sources and pathways of pesticides used within Winnipeg. In the interim, I would also support any credible neighbourhood or community organization wishing to assume long-term volunteer weeding responsibility and/or other types of organic care for most any civic greenspace.

Morrison: I am concerned about the heavy use of herbicides and pesticides in the City of Winnipeg and the health and environmental impacts of using chemicals. We will reduce usage, research and develop effective methods of weed and pest control tailored for our local conditions...

Murray: I support non-toxic weed control and naturalized public spaces.

Rule: Yes, I am concerned about using heavy chemicals. If there are any alternatives to fight insects, then we will use it.

2. In the interests of the health of citizens, would you support the enactment of a pesticide reduction bylaw for the City of Winnipeg? (NOTE: At the time these questions were sent, the draft bylaw referred to in the above article had not yet been distributed).

Kaufmann: Yes, but only as a least desirable weed control effort following comprehensive research to determine actual sources and pathways of pesticides used within Winnipeg. I would like to see more positive and non-threatening approaches attempted before discussion of usage bans, strong regulation, or enforcement.

Morrison: I would support the enactment of pesticide reduction bylaw for the City of Winnipeg if no significant reduction in the use of pesticides occurs in 1999. We will test and evaluate alternative methods and encourage participation.

Murray: Yes. **Rule:** Yes.

ECO

Nominations are open for the Manitoba Eco-Network's Environmental Awards. These are made "in recognition of significant contributions to the awareness and protection of Manitoba's environment". There are 4 categories of award: individual female, individual male, group, and "special".

NOMINATE SOMEONE SPECIAL

Nominations should be made in writing to the Eco-Network Steering Committee and include a description of the accomplishments of the nominee and why they deserve to be recognized. Awards will be presented at a special evening of dessert and entertainment on Nov. 7. Nominations close on Oct. 23.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN TAKES WRONG ROAD

by Ken Klassen

Three decades ago, a proposal to build an extensive freeway system in Winnipeg sparked an intense public debate on transportation planning and priorities. Now, thirty years later, a similar debate is beginning to emerge over new transportation plan proposed for Winnipeg and the municipalities that surround it.

The WATS Legacy

In 1968, the Winnipeg Area Transportation Study (WATS) recommended that the City build a suburban beltway plus five other radial freeways. WATS admitted that its recommendations "would appear at first glance to provide facilities of a more substantial and costly nature than the Greater Winnipeg area needed or could afford". It was right.

Critics were able to demonstrate that growth forecasts used in WATS dramatically overstate the need for freeways. An economic assessment revealed that the freeways were a poor value, even when the inflated forecasts were used.

Common sense eventually prevailed and WATS died in 1973. The new Unicity Council decided to reject freeways in favour of a modest expansion of the arterial street system combined with increased emphasis on public transport.

Winnipeg's New Transportation Plan

In January 1998, a new transportation plan for the Winnipeg Capital Region was released. This plan, TransPlan 2010 - Moving Towards Solutions, recommends how more than \$1-billion in public funds should be spent to maintain and improve the transportation infrastructure in the Winnipeg region.

Winnipeg's last transportation plan was developed in 1980. TransPlan was undertaken to satisfy the City's official plan, Plan Winnipeg - Moving Towards 2010, that the City prepare a new comprehensive transportation plan. At the request of the Province, TransPlan's scope was expanded to serve the needs of not just the City of Winnipeg, but also the surrounding municipalities.

Expectations for Reform

The negative environmental and social consequences of excessive dependence on automobiles are well documented. Expectations were high that TransPlan would recommend a more balanced transportation system that made a serious commitment to alternatives such as transportation demand management, transit, cycling, walking, and incentives for a more compact urban form.

Organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Transportation Association of Canada, and the National Round Table on the Economy and the Environment have warned that urban transportation trends in Canada are unsustainable and that a major shift in priorities away from dependence on the automobile is required.

Hopes were further raised by newspaper ads for TransPlan's community workshops. They declared that "over one year of public consultation has told us that there must be a dramatic shift (their emphasis) in the urban transportation system in the Winnipeg region". The reality of the TransPlan final report proved to be much different.

Inconsistent with Plan Winnipeg

One of the most puzzling aspects of the final TransPlan report is its priorities - they conflict with Plan Winnipeg.

The most important document produced by the City is Plan Winnipeg. It requires all other documents, budgets, public works, programs, or other developments initiated or approved by the City to be consistent with the policies outlined in the plan. This includes TransPlan.

Plan Winnipeg's transportation priorities are clear:

- Priority 1 - Maintenance of existing infrastructure (including transit system)
- Priority 2 - Transit system improvements
- Priority 3 - Regional street system improvements

Despite Plan Winnipeg's requirements, TransPlan's recommendations make no provision to fund to maintenance of the existing transit system. In contrast, \$528,000,000 is proposed for road and bridge maintenance in Winnipeg and \$228,000,000 for maintenance in the surrounding municipalities.

To add insult to injury, TransPlan fails to recommend any major improvements to the transit system. It does however, go into considerable detail about spending \$274,000,000 for a major expansion of the regional street system. Much to the horror of sustainable transportation advocates, most of the proposed new road construction is for an inner ring road system to serve the suburbs and ex-urban communities growing outside of Winnipeg's boundaries.

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TransPlan's priorities are also at odds with trends in other Canadian cities. For example, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa/Carleton plans to spend 50% of its capital budget for transportation improvements on transit. Calgary is not far behind at 45%. Even Edmonton plans to spend 24% of its transportation improvement budget on transit. All three cities plan to expand their existing rapid transit systems.

Public Opinion Ignored

The TransPlan report perhaps could be forgiven for ignoring Plan Winnipeg and favouring roads over transit if this is what the public wants. This is not the case.

TransPlan claims that the community involvement process it used "was one of the most inclusive and widest ranging ever undertaken for a study of this nature in Canada". It found that "all participant groups agreed" that there was an immediate need to increase funding for infrastructure maintenance, transit system improvements, and incentives to reduce automobile dependence. In contrast, the groups agreed that the same or less funding should be spent to correct bottlenecks or expand the regional road system and that the need was not immediate.

An extensive public opinion survey conducted for TransPlan found that the number one thing Winnipeg residents would not like to see done to the transportation system is cutting or eliminating bus services. This answer was given roughly five times as often as the next most common response.

Winnipeggers also indicated by almost a 3 to 1 ratio that it was more important to develop a rapid transit system in Winnipeg than to develop more streets for automobiles. This is not surprising given that Winnipeg is one of the only major urban areas in Canada without some form of a rapid transit system.

The preferences expressed in the community consultation are clearly at odds with TransPlan's enormous bias to expand the regional street system instead of promoting alternatives that can relieve the need for expansion. Extensive detail is presented in the report about road costs, timing, and sources of funding. In contrast, less costly and more sustainable alternatives (i.e. transportation demand management, transit improvements, bike routes, incentives for more compact urban form, etc.) have no costing, schedule (except to delay consideration of the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor beyond 2010), or sources of funding.

The Climate Change Challenge

The transportation sector is the largest source (38%) of greenhouse gases in Manitoba according to Natural Resources Canada. Noticeably absent from TransPlan is a strategy to address this fundamental issue. The phrase "climate change" or "greenhouse gases" doesn't even appear in the report! This occurred despite the fact that the TransPlan report was finalized in the period leading up to the December 1997 United Nations Climate Change Convention in Kyoto.

The Transportation Association of Canada has concluded "any strategy to reduce GHG emissions from human activities in Canada must consider the transportation sector in general and urban transportation in particular". The public would appear likely to agree.

In November 1997, Environics released a poll of 27,000 people in 24 countries. In the Canadian sample, 61% said governments should act now to reduce human impact on the world's climate. A January

OUR QUESTIONS:

1. Do you feel that the recommendations in TransPlan 2010 are consistent with the policies set out in Plan Winnipeg?

Kaufmann: Yes. Plan Winnipeg established general direction for the City back in 1992, with TransPlan designed to undertake a comprehensive review of Winnipeg's future transportation requirements. Meaningful public consultation was a major product of the TransPlan process, with public direction guiding the work of the study team. Effective consultation occurred through a public opinion survey, community workshops, open houses, and via many other means. TransPlan 2010 provided one of the most inclusive community involvement processes undertaken in Canada for a study of this type. It is interesting to note this public input largely reinforced the importance of Plan Winnipeg's transportation priorities.

Morrison: I feel the recommendations in TransPlan 2010 are consistent with the policies set out in Plan Winnipeg. A most notable improvement occurred when the Province joined with the City to fund and broaden the study to include the entire Winnipeg region. The community involvement, regional focus, and cooperation between the two levels of government should be commended. The approach, the study and the recommendations have surpassed the original mandate.

Murray: No.

Rule: "This plan is very expensive. It should be approved by the taxpayer through the voting process".

2. Do you support the development of a Rapid Transit system for Winnipeg?

Kaufmann: Yes, "at some point in the future when the very high costs of Rapid Transit system installation warrant its investment"

Morrison: Yes

Murray: Yes

Rule: I like the idea, but the city is broke. This one especially would have to be approved by the taxpayer.

ECO

1998 Angus Reid poll found that 46% of Canadians thought that the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change was about right while 42% felt that it did not go far enough.

Conclusion

The Winnipeg region needs a new, more rational approach to transportation planning to respond to economic and environmental realities. Unfortunately, the TransPlan report fails to deliver. It caters to private automobile use at the expense of transit and other more affordable and sustainable alternatives. There is no plan to deal with fundamental issues like climate change or reducing costly ex-urban sprawl. This approach clearly violates not only Plan Winnipeg, but also the public feedback received during TransPlan's community consultation.

It now appears that the challenge of creating a more balanced transportation plan for Winnipeg and the rest of the Capital Region will ultimately be a political one.

Ken is a member of a coalition of individuals and organizations that is developing an alternative vision to TransPlan. For more information, contact Ken at 489-8103.

OCTOBER IS ENVIRONMENTAL ILLNESS MONTH

Environmental Illness (EI) is an acquired disorder characterized by symptoms which occur in response to low levels of a substance or substances that do not adversely affect most people.

Symptoms are varied and people may react very differently to the same substance. Some common symptoms are: headaches, bowel irritation, chronic fatigue, rashes, asthma, muscle pain, memory loss and mood swings.

Substances we take for granted, such as perfumes, gasoline, pesticides, chlorine and household cleaning products can trigger reactions. Several organ systems (digestive, respiratory, detoxification, etc.) can all be affected at the same time from one triggering substance. There are an estimated 4.5 million Canadians who have some degree of EI.

Last year, the Environmental Illness Society of Canada (EISC) initiated Environmental Illness Awareness Month; October, 1997 was the world's first EI Month. The Chemical Sensitivities Information Exchange Network Manitoba (CSIENM) supports the EISC in its efforts to educate the public about this preventable and treatable illness.



For information nationally contact:

The Environmental Illness Society of Canada.

Judith Spence: Toll free phone number; 1-877-362-1103

E-mail: eisc@cyberus.ca

Website <http://www.cyberus.ca/eisc>

For information locally contact:

The Chemical Sensitivities Information Exchange Network Manitoba.

Margaret Friesen: Phone: 261-8591

E-mail: friesen@mbnet.mb.ca

New Member Groups

Over the past while, a number of new groups have formed and/or joined the network. We'd like to take this opportunity to welcome them, and encourage readers to contact them and get involved.

- Citizens for Better Public Transit in Winnipeg 284-7727
- Chemical Sensitivities Information and Exchange Network 237-5947
- Campaign for Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg 889-6021
- Breast Cancer Action Manitoba 888-3810
- Manitoba's Future Forest Alliance 947-3081
- corporate-hog Awareness Coalition 269-3546
- Earth First! Manitoba 992-2319

The Manitoba Eco-Network, 2-70 Albert Street Winnipeg, MB R3B 1E7

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A supporting membership includes a subscription to **Eco-Journal** as well as notice of events and regular updates on issues and is open to any individual.



Group members are entitled to nominate representatives for a position on the Eco-Network Steering Committee. Group membership is open to any non-governmental, non-profit group which has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or environmental education.