

Memo

To: Thompson Planning District
Cc: Randy Patrick, Board Secretary
From: Gary Ceppetelli, Director of Planning and Community Development
Date: January 10, 2011
Re: Citizen's Coalition Pamphlet

The City and Planning District was made aware that a pamphlet was circulated to restaurants and businesses, expressing concerns about the UCN development on January 6, 2011.

Administration has developed a response to the questions raised.

Pamphlet

The City wants to rezone the land to allow MHRC to build 200 student and family housing units in this area?

- MHRC and UCN are not proposing to build all 200 dwelling units on the TRCC site. UCN's long-term plan is for 200 dwelling units in Thompson.

Why won't MHRC consider more efficient student housing instead of the first 24 family townhouses?

- MHRC is proposing student housing that is consistent with their proposals in Brandon and The Pas. MHRC believes that this is the best model to address the need for student family housing.

What will it cost taxpayers?

- City will see new property tax revenues with the campus and student housing development (approximately \$225 K per year – only 50% of the municipal portion; SDML would receive 100% or twice as much as the City)
- City contributed: land as an in-kind contribution to the project (\$7 M); tax relief program (\$6.675 M); and capital infrastructure (\$1.2 M)
- Ring road (from zoo access to east of tennis courts) \$250 K
- Parking lot (east of BCC and north of CA Nesbitt Arena) \$350 K
- Traffic Studies (City portion) \$35 K
- Wildlife parking lot (not committed) \$30 K
- Zoo sewer connection (not committed) \$35 K
- Ring road (eastern leg) (not committed) \$450 K
- Traffic lights/intersection improvements or two intersection improvements (not committed) \$500 K
- Polaris Buildings – remains with Manitoba
- Snow removal – no increase anticipated
- Bus Service – no increase anticipated
- Increased sewer and water costs – no increase anticipated

What are the costs of relocating existing facilities?

- City will be compensated by Manitoba for the cost of moving the ball diamonds when necessary
- Wildlife Association will be compensated by Manitoba if Manitoba decides to relocate building
- No plans to relocate the Zoo

Where will Nickel Days and the King Miner Contest go?

- Nickel Days committee is confirming options for their 2011 event following discussions with the City and USW.

How will parking and traffic be affected?

- The development agreement identifies the need for 2 studies: one as a base line and one after UCN has been completed
- These studies will determine if there is a problem and what, if anything, will be needed

Will people's lives be at risk?

- The Fire department does not foresee problems. They are currently analyzing the plans in order to develop a plan of action when needed. Buildings will be built to Manitoba Building and Fire Codes.

How will Vale's announcement affect future housing?

- Speculative at this point.

UCN Family Housing Development Questions

Unknown Costs to taxpayers

- Q1** The City of Thompson entered into a development agreement with Manitoba on October 4, 2010. The development agreement establishes the terms and conditions of development on the TRCC site, including financial considerations. The City will realize new revenues as this development will expand their tax base.
- Q2** The City of Thompson has only committed to the northern portion of the ring road
- \$250 K – Thompson Zoo access to eastern limit of tennis courts (northern portion)
 - \$450 K – Tennis courts to Thompson Drive (not committed)
- Q3** The development agreement has provisions that will address the relocation of the baseball diamonds and the Wildlife Association. The Thompson Zoo is not affected.
- Q4** There is no impact on volunteer groups.
- Q5** Manitoba has contracted with Neegin Burnside for the civil engineering component of the project.
- Q6** The need for traffic lights, if necessary, will be determined by the second traffic study.
- Q7** Manitoba has contracted with Neegin Burnside for the civil engineering component of the project.
- Q8** UCN will be responsible for snow removal for the campus and student housing. City snow removal costs are not affected.
- Q9** The Nickel Days committee is aware that the site will not be available and are currently planning the event at a different location. The Winterfest committee will have to address the impact that the development has on their event.
- Q10** The Polaris buildings will remain under the ownership of Manitoba as per the development agreement. The City only has an option to acquire the buildings.

- Q11** The proponent would be responsible. Thompson Unlimited is working with various stakeholders to identify issues and discuss alternative sites if needed.
- Q12** Improvements (base preparation) to River Road would be required to bring the road up to standards for continuous use.
- Q13** Parents would be responsible for any transportation costs. In all likelihood, children would either walk or take the bus.
- Q14** Traffic studies are to be commissioned by Manitoba. Infrastructure impact was conducted by Neegin Burnside.
- Q15** The proposed development will be staged to minimize impact on stakeholders during construction.

Housing Phase One

- Q1** MHRC is proposing student housing that is consistent with their proposals in Brandon and The Pas. MHRC believes that this is the best model to address the need for student family housing
- Q2** MHRC indicates that basements will provide for much needed space and the opportunity to add additional bedrooms if needed.
- Q3** No, the zoning by-law amendment will address this issue.
- Q4** No, the Fire department does not foresee problems. They are currently analyzing the plans in order to develop a plan of action when needed.
- Q5** The evacuation procedures for the area will be coordinated by the Fire Department. No differences are anticipated.
- Q6** A lift station at that location is required due to the existing elevation of land.

Future Housing Phase

- Q1** MHRC and UCN are not proposing to build all 200 dwelling units on the TRCC site. UCN's long-term plan is for 200 dwelling units in Thompson.
- Q2** MHRC is proposing student housing that is consistent with their proposals in Brandon and The Pas. MHRC believes that this is the best model to address the need for student family housing.
- Q3** The proposed traffic study will determine the impact of this development. Necessary measures, if any, would be identified.
- Q4** The student housing project is not isolated from the community. It is a component of the overall development of UCN.
- Q5** The student housing project will be managed by UCN. UCN has established rules, regulations and procedures to ensure the eligibility of the students occupying the dwelling units.
- Q6** The majority of the students will live in the community. They will commute to the campus in a variety of ways – transit, vehicles, biking, walking.

Traffic and Congestion

- Q1** Proposed traffic studies will determine the impact of this development on the TRCC site and surrounding area. Necessary measures, if any, would be identified.

- Q2 Proposed traffic studies will determine the impact of this development on the TRCC site and surrounding area. Necessary measures, if any, would be identified.
- Q3 The proposed traffic study will determine the impact of this development. Necessary measures, if any, would be identified. The City and UCN will also enter into a shared services agreement to address parking as per the development agreement
- Q4 Depending on the need for parking, snow removal may be necessary.

Safety

- Q1 The safety and security implications of only one access are the same as they currently exist.
- Q2 The risk is the same as all other residential areas built near a "dangerous" river.
- Q3 They would evacuate to the TRCC.
- Q4 Manitoba conducted a study that identified the soil as "impacted" not contaminated. This was due to the existence of slag, a material that was widely used throughout the development of Thompson.
- Q5 No, the Fire department does not foresee problems. They are currently analyzing the plans in order to develop a plan of action when needed.

Proposed Wolf Park

- Q1 The City has not approved the establishment of a Wolf Park at the Thompson Zoo. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was developed to indicate that if a Wolf Park was to be approved, it would have to coexist with the UCN development. Spirit Way Inc. has not signed the MOU to date.
- Q2 The proposed lift station will have little, if any, impact on the Thompson Zoo.
- Q3 The proposed lift station will have little, if any, impact on the Thompson Zoo.

Conflict of Interest

- Q1 Conflict of interest is an issue that is dealt with by individual members of council.
- Q2 This is speculative at this point.

Vale's Recent Announcement

- Q1 Whether there will be a surplus of housing or not is unknown at this point.
- Q2 Future grant-in-lieu payments are unknown at this point.
- Q3 This is speculative at this point.
- Q4 The Sustainable Community Plan provides guidelines to ensure the orderly growth and development of the community.



Gary Ceppetelli
Dir. Planning and Community Development

CONCERNED CITIZEN'S COALITION SUPPORT UCN CAMPUS, BUT WANT OUR REC CENTRE SAVED!

The City of Thompson sold the Recreation Centre grounds to the Province of Manitoba for \$1 so that University College of the North (UCN) campus can be built. On January 10, 2011 the City wants to rezone the land from "Parks and Recreation" to "Public Institution" to allow Manitoba Housing & Renewal Corporation (MHRC) to build up to 200 student and family housing units in this area. The Rec Centre would become a new housing subdivision with the Province of Manitoba as the absent landlord. **After rezoning, housing development will take over our Rec Centre grounds!**

Although the majority of Thompsonites support a new UCN campus, the City needs to address MANY concerns raised by residents and taxpayers BEFORE they proceed. This is too rushed!

• DO YOU WANT A HOUSING SUBDIVISION TO REPLACE REC CENTRE GROUNDS?

Why won't MHRC consider more efficient student housing instead of the first 24 family townhouse units (with basements and courtyard) which take up a large amount of valuable land on the Rec Centre grounds? This will devalue the Wildlife Association building/shooting range and may jeopardize the zoo. Other and better student housing options have not been considered.

• WHERE IS THE BUSINESS PLAN THAT SHOWS ALL THE UNKNOWN COSTS FOR TAXPAYERS?

What will it cost taxpayers for - proposed Ring Road, traffic study, new traffic lights, continuous snow removal, the City's operating costs for 10 years for the Polaris/UCN buildings, increased water and sewer load capability on old infrastructure, additional bus service, etc., etc.

• WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL COSTS TO THE TAXPAYERS...

of altering, moving, or closing existing facilities that the community has enjoyed for decades - ball diamonds, Wildlife Association building, Thompson Zoo? And how will they survive?

• WHERE WILL OUR NICKEL DAYS AND KING MINER CONTEST GO?

What are the additional costs to the taxpayer for relocating these Thompson events?
Will these long standing events run by volunteers survive?

• HOW WILL TRAFFIC & PARKING AFFECT THOMPSON DRIVE AND WESTWOOD AREA?

1000s of people will daily use the campus, collegiate, arenas, multi-purpose facility, curling rink, zoo, wildlife building, plus up to 200 housing units. Where are traffic & engineering studies BEFORE construction begins?

• WILL PEOPLE'S LIVES BE AT RISK?

With only ONE main entrance/exit point for the Rec Centre, arenas, campus, AND housing, how will 1000s of people exit or fire trucks access the site, if there is a fire or a violent incident (and add a big snowfall!)?

• HOW WILL VALE'S ANNOUNCEMENT FOR 2015 IMPACT FUTURE HOUSING?

Will Thompson have excess housing? Will the City's tax base be smaller?

City Council should NOT rezone the Rec Centre for family housing until many questions have been addressed and the public is fully informed. The UCN campus can still proceed.

Phone your Mayor & Councillors at 677 7910: MAYOR JOHNSTON, PENNY BYER, BRAD EVENSON, DENNIS FENSKE, CHARLENE LAFRENIERE, STELLA LOCKER, JUDY KOLADA, LUKE ROBINSON, ERIN STEWART.

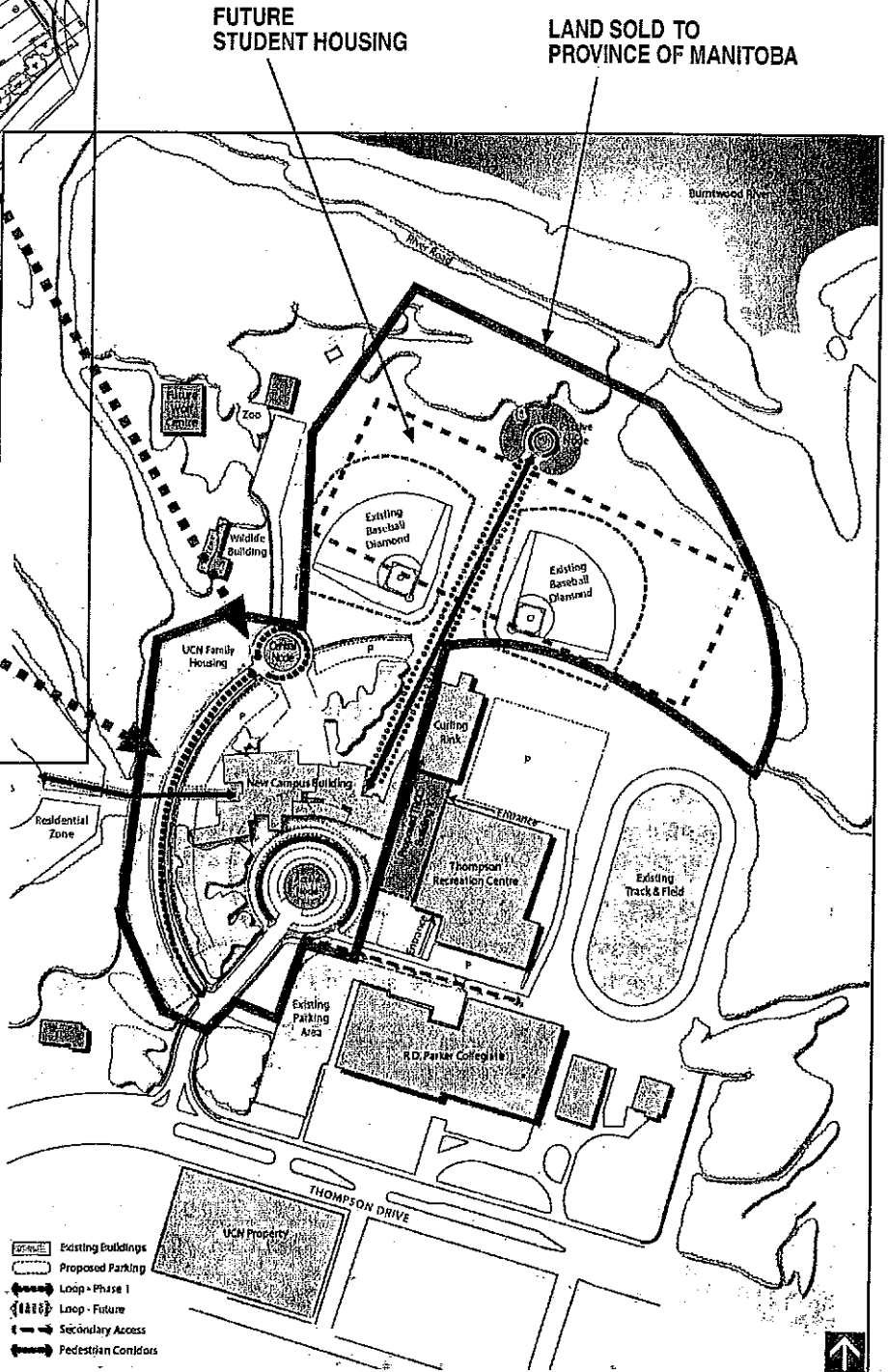
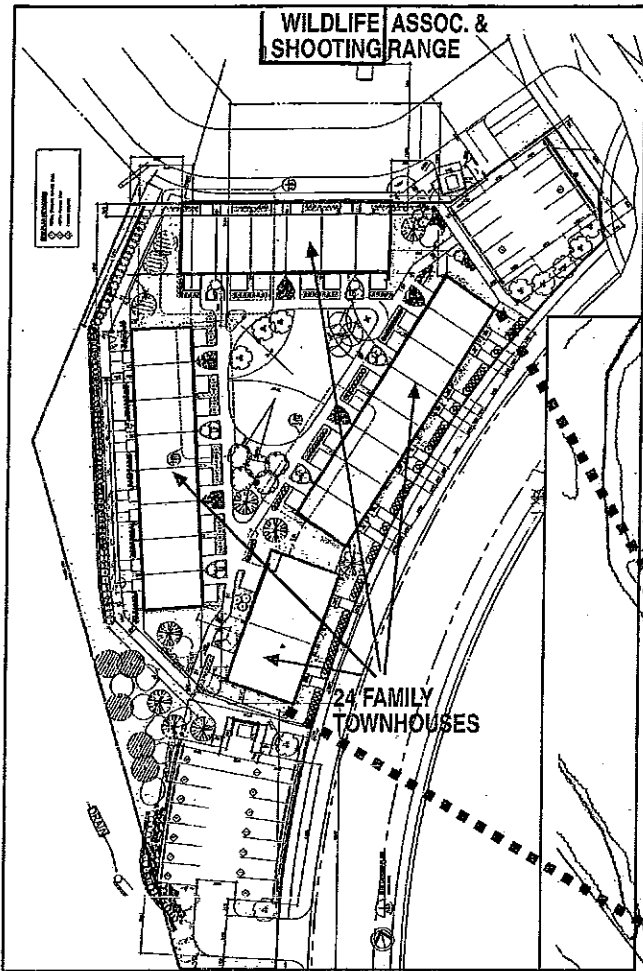
SAVE OUR REC CENTRE - 7 pm, JANUARY 10th at CITY HALL.

Say "OK" to UCN Campus. Say "NO" to rezoning Rec Centre!

Say "OK" to UCN Campus. Say "NO" to Housing Subdivision!



SCHEDULE "T"
To the University College of the North Development Agreement



Smith Carter
SMITH CARTER ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS
500 Buffalo Place Winnipeg R3T 6B8 Canada 1-91-204-4726

UCN THOMPSON
Master Plan

SCALE
1:1000
DATE
September, 2010

40+ QUESTIONS ON THE UCN FAMILY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The City of Thompson has sold the Recreation Centre grounds to the Province of Manitoba for \$1 in order that University College of the North (UCN) campus can be built on site. The City is rezoning the land from "Parks and Recreation" to "Public Institution" to allow Manitoba Housing & Renewal Corporation (MHRC) to build up to 200 student and family housing units in this area. This will fundamentally change the Rec Centre forever, as the Province of Manitoba will be the absent landlord in the core of our community. After Rezoning, nothing can stop the Rec Centre becoming a Housing Subdivision. IS THIS WHAT CITIZENS WANT?

UCN campus construction is to start in 2011 and be completed in 2013. Although the majority of Thompsonites support a new campus, the City must address these concerns raised by residents and taxpayers...

UNKNOWN COSTS TO TAXPAYERS

- Where is the Business Plan for this development with net revenue projections, as it will affect taxpayers?
- What is the capital cost to complete the proposed Ring Road?
- What are the costs of moving, replacing, or closing existing facilities that the community has enjoyed for decades as MHRC takes over the land for housing - ball diamonds, Wildlife Association building, Thompson Zoo?
- How will volunteer groups be impacted who built these facilities over 50 years - baseball, curling, zoo, Wildlife Assoc, etc.?
- Will an engineering study been undertaken to determine if a huge increase in water and sewer needs for a campus and housing can be sustained with Thompson's 50 year old piping infrastructure?
- What is the cost to the City to install traffic lights at the Rec Centre entrance?
- Will a sewer lift station in the zoo create more pressure and flow and weaken the current piping along Thompson Drive?
- What will be the ongoing snow removal costs for the new parking lots around the campus and arenas?
- Where will Nickel Days, King Miner Contest and Winterfest go, and what will be the new operating costs?
- What is the cost over the next 10 years for operating and maintaining the 3 UCN/Polaris buildings on Princeton Drive that the City will own?
- If the ball diamonds are to be moved to the Norplex Pool area, who will pay for removal of Ford's snowmaking system and the economic loss of Ford's test track infrastructure?
- What is the cost to upgrade the Millennium Trail to serve as an exit road, if needed?
- Who will bear the cost to transport children, who live on site, to their elementary schools?
- Where are studies for - Traffic? Risk Assessment? Housing Subdivision impact? Infrastructure?
- How will attendance at baseball, zoo, Wildlife building be impacted during two years of construction?

HOUSING PHASE ONE

The first family student townhouse units (with basements, courtyard, and patios) are planned to be very close to the Wildlife Association building and would use a large amount of valuable ground space. Their proximity will jeopardize the Wildlife Building and shooting range, and impact the Zoo and proposed wolf park.

- Why are better student housing options not being considered instead of (24) townhouse style units that have much higher operating costs for snow removal from 48 doors, use of basements, courtyard maintenance, higher energy costs, security requirements, etc.
- Why does student housing need basements which increases the housing and maintenance costs?
- Will family townhouses be in a land use conflict with the shooting range and the zoo so close nearby?
- Are families at risk, if fire fighting has limited access to the back row of the townhouse units?
- How will people vacate if there is a fire at or near the housing and fire trucks block the exit route?
- Why is a sewer lift station and right-of-way planned to run through the zoo to service the townhouse basements? If housing was located closer to the Rec Centre entrance, this lift station would not be required at a great cost saving and less conflict for zoo animals.

FUTURE HOUSING PHASE

- MHRC may eventually build up to 200 housing units in the Rec Centre area. When will a study be undertaken to determine the social, traffic, and environmental impact of such a high density housing development in Thompson's Recreation Centre?
- Why is MHRC copying a townhouse style used at the edge of town in The Pas and not offering better housing models (renovated apartments, towers, etc) that could be developed along Thompson Drive, thereby greatly reducing congestion at the Rec Centre?
- What would be the impact of a proposed housing subdivision for a 1000-1500 student campus added to the traffic congestion along Thompson Drive from a 1200 student collegiate, two arenas, and curling rink?
- What will be the social consequences of families and young children living in high density housing that will

- be isolated from the community and surrounded by 1000s of older students?
- How will student family housing be managed and enforced if people sign up for courses to be able to access new subsidized family housing and then did not attend classes?
- The proposed family townhouse units will only serve a small fraction of students on campus. Where will the 90% majority of students live, and how will they commute to the campus?

TRAFFIC & CONGESTION

- How will traffic and parking congestion affect this area when 1000s of people daily use the campus, collegiate, arenas, multi-purpose facility, curling rink, zoo, wildlife building, and student housing?
- What will be the impact of a huge increase in traffic at the Rec Centre with traffic from the Westwood area and the Collegiate every day during morning and lunch commute times?
- The current UCN campus uses 150 parking spots. Will there be enough parking now and in 10 years for the Rec Centre, campus, and housing units?
- How will snow piles in the parking lots affect and reduce parking?

SAFETY

- What are the safety and security implications of only ONE main access/exit point for the Rec Centre and campus for fire and emergency vehicles if there is a fire or a violent incident?
- What is the risk to build family housing near a dangerous river?
- Where will high school students evacuate during an emergency?
- The issue of contaminated soil (slag) has been identified as a deterrent to student housing. What are the broader health and environmental implications for Thompsonites?
- Are families at risk, if fire fighters have limited access to the back row of the townhouse units?

PROPOSED WOLF PARK

An attractive and high standard wolf park is a vital component of UCN's goal to become an internationally recognized *Wolf Centre of Excellence* and for Thompson to become the *Wolf Capital of Canada*. Such a plan will help diversify Thompson's economy with science, conservation, education, and tourism initiatives similar to what Churchill has done with polar bears.

- Zoo consultants have raised concerns about families living in high density housing adjacent to the Thompson Zoo and the proposed wolf park. Children who live and play nearby 24/7 may disturb or taunt the wolves and cause stress in some animals. Aggressive behaviour in wolves may even put zoo keepers at risk. Is high density housing with families living adjacent to a zoo a basic conflict of land use?
- How will a sewer lift station and sewer line right-of-way through the middle of the Zoo impact the animals or deter future Zoo development?
- Will the Province compensate the Zoo for unforeseen harmful effects in the future?

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Which Councillors were or are in a conflict or perceived conflict of interest with the UCN development?
- If a conflict of interest is later declared or judged, does that jeopardize the validity of the Development Agreement signed with the Province of Manitoba on October 4, 2010?

VALE'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT

- Will there be a surplus of housing in the next few years as Vale reduces its workforce?
- Will Vale's grant in lieu be reduced which will have an impact on the City's tax base?
- How will a decrease in residents and businesses impact the City's tax base and our ability to pay for all the Unknown Costs identified herein?
- How will this affect Thompson's 20 year sustainable plan?

CONCLUSION

Residents of Thompson and taxpayers support the UCN development, but many feel that City Council, the Province of Manitoba, and MHRC have not adequately addressed or balanced the needs of our community's Recreation Centre and the volunteer groups who developed these facilities over the past 50 years. These interests and those of taxpayers must be protected.

The UCN project must not be hurried to prevent permanent mistakes that would plague Thompson forever. Student housing CAN be developed without the loss of the community's recreation facilities.

The public must be totally engaged and is willing to help find the best solutions. Responsible community leaders must be transparent, accountable and address these concerns BEFORE any decisions on Rezoning the Rec Centre grounds.