



File photo by Mikaela MacKenzie / Winnipeg Free Press

Coun. Ross Eadie (Mynarski) said one of his priorities for the new year is to improve the Selkirk Avenue BIZ environment.



File photo by Sydney Hildebrandt

Coun. Vivian Santos (Point Douglas) speaks at a ground-breaking event in September to welcome the redevelopment of Bluebird and Lismore parks in Brooklands, which she will continue to focus on in 2021.

Area councillors set priorities for 2021

Agendas prioritize improvements to outdoor spaces

BY SYDNEY HILDEBRANDT
STAFF REPORTER

MYNARSKI **OLD KILDONAN** **POINT DOUGLAS**

A new year brings a renewed agenda from area city councillors, in addition to the continuation of ongoing projects and initiatives.

Coun. Ross Eadie (Mynarski) outlined in an email to *The Times* the priorities he holds for his ward in 2021, which include improving parks, open spaces, and active transportation trails, as well as addressing “issues related to changing the small business environment around the North End.”

The City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Police Service are eyeing the Old Exhibition Grounds, located near McPhillips Street and Selkirk Avenue, for the construction of a new North District police station, which will ultimately reduce the outdoor recreation space in the area, Eadie said.

But, upcoming improvements to spaces in Lord Selkirk Park will hopefully compensate for that loss. The councillor added that there is growing demand for an off-leash dog park; however, that will require extensive consultation with the City.

In terms of active transportation, upgrades to the North Winnipeg Parkway west of

the Red River will see some improvements between Michaëlle Jean Park and St. John’s Park.

As the president of the Selkirk Avenue Business Improvement Zone, Eadie said there are a number of issues local businesses are facing which must be resolved. The councillor said he plans to work with businesses, community groups and the city to educate on and address the “serious litter problem which makes (the area) look like a place to not shop for services and products.”

Additionally, Selkirk Avenue BIZ will focus on improving its online and social media presence to enhance its marketing and promotion capability, working on safety provisions, and encouraging developers to invest in new buildings or empty lots.

Further northwest in the Old Kildonan ward, Coun. Devi Sharma is working to meet the growing demands of an ever-changing and expanding community.

“Northwest Winnipeg is one of the fastest-growing areas in our city. When planning these new communities my attention has been on making sure adequate green space and good pedestrian connectivity is in place so residents can enjoy where they live,” Sharma told *The Times* in an email.

The councillor said she will continue to work with Neighbourhood Watch groups and community patrols to target safety issues such as traffic speeding.

With the upcoming release of the new Transit Master Plan, Sharma said, “increasing frequency on current routes and getting bus service into new neighbourhoods is important as Old Kildonan grows.”



Supplied photo

Coun. Devi Sharma (Old Kildonan) said a priority for her ward in 2021 is working with community groups to improve safety.

Additionally, she is collaborating with the City on plans for a new library, which is currently in the programming design phase.

Last year, Sharma worked with area residents on a petition to ban large medical cannabis grow-ops from residential neighbourhoods. The City is expected to present a report this spring regarding the legal options for regulating these grow-ops.

And lastly, the Old Kildonan councillor looks forward to the completion of a few

ongoing projects, such as a rubberized track at Garden City Collegiate, an active-living green space at Arthur E. Wright Community School, and the installation of new turf at Garden City Community Centre’s indoor soccerplex.

In the coming year, Coun. Vivian Santos (Point Douglas) will prioritize the creation of vibrant public spaces, she said in an email to *The Times*. This includes replacing under-utilized buildings and vacant lots.

A number of parks will receive improvements, as well. A sod-turning event was held last September for Blue Bird and Lismore parks in Brooklands; upcoming upgrades include a community skating rink, a fire pit with boulder seating, picnic tables and benches, pathways, and vegetation.

Alderman John O’Hare Park along Logan Avenue will receive a general facelift including interpretation plaques commemorating the park’s namesake. Meanwhile, the design phase and community engagement will continue for Kamagata Maru Park in Inkster Gardens.

As the chair of the Winnipeg Committee for Safety, Santos said, it’s her intention to improve safety and health in the city.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all, and will continue to have lasting impacts. It is my goal to work with community partners ... to reduce the social inequities through policy (and) collaboration to develop better community support networks.”