

## Summary of the Holyrood Community Greenspace Project

The Holyrood Community Greenspace Project (HCGP) Committee is building community through the creation of an interactive, multigenerational park redevelopment project. While some communities have one playground at their community league and one at their school, this is our only park for the entire neighbourhood.

How can we better connect with our neighbours and look out for each other? Why are more kids obese and not playing outside? How do we encourage more people to walk? With an aging population, how can we help our seniors feel less lonely, isolated and age in place? How do we take our park back from illegal activities? What amenities can we add to allow people with reduced mobility enjoy the park and be part of community life? How can we improve both our quality of life and reduce our ecological footprint through urban design and collective action?

A small group of committed volunteers created a naturescape at the front of our elementary school as an experiment in community building. Support for this first demonstration project was outstanding. After experiencing the joy of a successful community project, we wanted to do more. We started looking at how we could transform our neighbourhood park into a vibrant community hub.

Next, we held a series of meetings, conducted surveys and held open houses to redesign our Greenspace. The committee grew from a handful of Holyrood School parents to a group of more than 50 volunteers, each with varying talents, skills and resources to contribute to the project. The City of Edmonton's Community Services Department drafted two plans based on this work. A volunteer landscape architect in our community enhanced these drawings. We recently received an Outstanding Project Team award from the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues for this work.

A key component of this plan is to build a new playground and create naturalized play spaces and gardens that encourage families, seniors, persons with disabilities and others to get outside and interact, garden or to simply sit and enjoy the common space. Native species will be used throughout the space. While many parks have spray decks, we want to have a modest water conserving feature that will allow kids to cool off. Innovative programming could animate the gardening work and special events.

We also anticipate that density will increase in our neighborhood as a developer intends to build in-fill housing units along 85 street to replace the Holyrood Gardens. We believe our project will create fertile ground for fruitful discussions on innovative urban design that includes affordable housing. NIMBYISM has defeated many such efforts in the past. The Greater Edmonton Housing Authority for Seniors intends to erect a 4-story affordable housing complex for seniors on the site of the existing Golden Homes. Thus, this park will receive many more users in the years ahead and will no longer be simply a community park.

## Milestones

- Holyrood School Demonstration site completed June 2006
- Community-wide Open Houses, consultations and paper surveys to develop the master plan completed Sept. 2006 – April 1, 2008
- Community history project initiated to document Holyrood's strong culture of helping one another and to recognize the achievements of local seniors who still live in the neighbourhood
- Community Approval in principal of draft concept drawing at Holyrood Community League AGM – April 30 2008 (Formal approvals to be sought at each phase once budgets are estimated)
- Master Plan Landscape Drawing Completed August 17 2008
- Open House Aug. 22, 2008 at Community Block Party
- Budget and Phases of Master Plan Defined – August 2008
- Specific playground survey completed Sept. 30 2008 (160+ surveys returned); playground equipment selected Feb. 5, 2009
- Funding Proposals to be submitted –March 2009
- Open House for final Playground site plan at Family Day event – February 16, 2009

Phase 1 –May 1 2009 – March 31, 2010 – concept drawings attached

Budget: \$80,000

- Mosaic Memory Bench – May/June 2009
- Create entry plaza near SEESA parking lot with seating wall, shrubs, paving stones, and community sign
- Repaint basketball court lines and lower 2 hoops
- Add 4 Wheelchair accessible games/picnic tables with plantings
- Widen existing sidewalk into park
- Research and design additional amenities for seniors and people with disabilities for Phase 2

Phase 2 – April 1 2010 - March 31, 2013 – concept drawing attached

Budget: \$350,000

- New Playground install May 2010
- Shade structure May 2010
- Community Garden demonstration site April – Sept 2010
- Pathways and Bike bumps and natural play features May 2010
- Plaza, walks and water feature
- Additional Plantings
- Community garden established
- Drainage/Holding tanks installed to capture rainwater
- Labyrinth/Quiet Garden at Northwest corner
- Create remaining entry nodes
- Ampitheatre
- Community Bench Project
- Youth amenities – to be indentified by youth lead design process

**Partners/Supporters**

Holyrood Community League - lead  
Holyrood Elementary School  
City of Edmonton  
South East Edmonton Seniors Association  
Holyrood After School Care  
Holyrood Extencicare  
Holyrood Community Group Home for persons with disabilities (run by the province)  
Greater Edmonton Foundation/Golden Homes Cottages (affordable housing for seniors)  
Holyrood Soccer Program  
Holyrood Cooperative Playschool  
Volunteer Architect and Landscape architect (residents)

In addition, researchers on aging in place and inclusive public spaces have approached us to collaborate on this project as the site has great demographics, layout and engaged and creative community support.

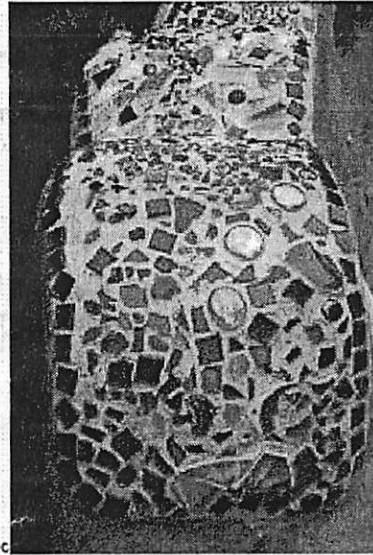
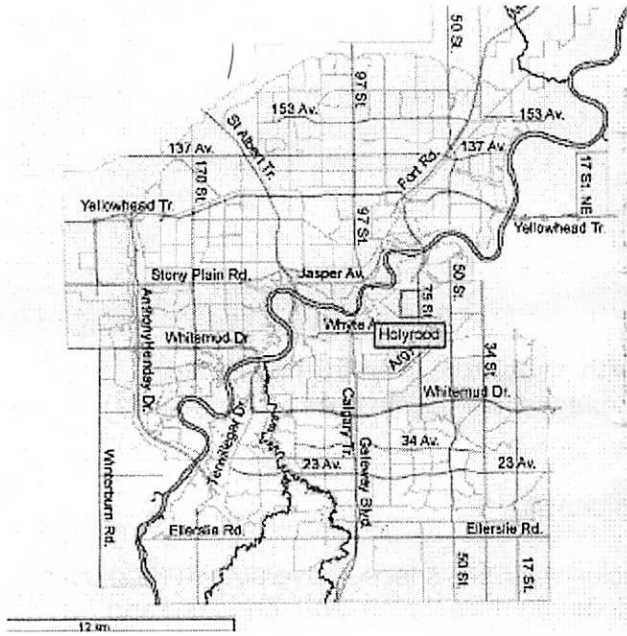
**Financial Resources**

We intend to apply to a number of funders including the Alberta Lottery Fund, Tree Canada Foundation, Evergreen, the Alberta Recycling Management Authority Service Clubs, businesses and private individuals. We also have a bank of volunteers who are committed to making in-kind contributions through their professional skills and/or labour.

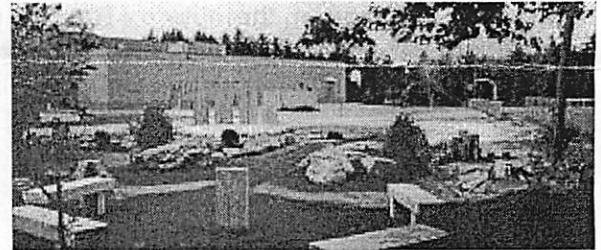
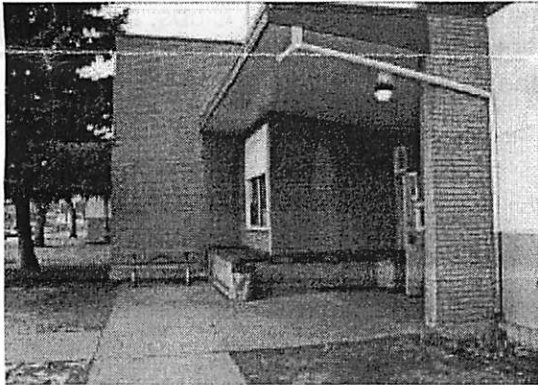
For more information, contact:

Shelley Sabo, Chair, Holyrood Community Greenspace Committee  
& Executive member of Holyrood Community League  
780.238.8293

April 20, 2009

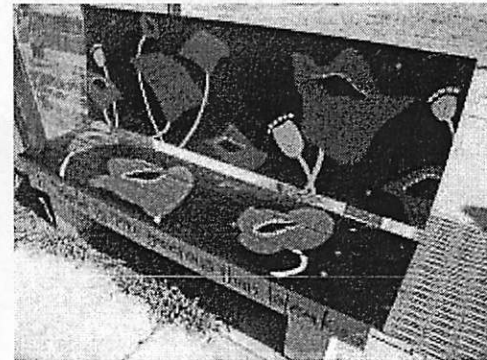
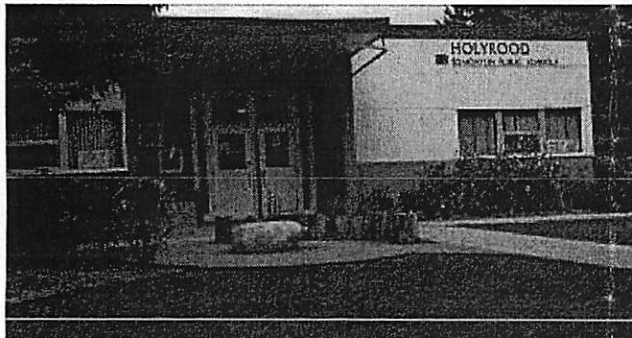


*Detail, mosaic bench,  
James Bay, Victoria BC*



*Example of naturalized play area  
Courtesy of the New Playground Company*

*Holyrood School before and after*



*Community art bench: "The world is more  
generous than bleak."*