



## 2. Introduction to the Report


### Links: The Consultation on Sustainable Development Implementation & The East Side Planning Initiative

The East Side Planning Initiative was born out of the Consultation on Sustainable Development Implementation (COSDI) that was undertaken between the fall of 1997 and the spring of 1999. The multi-stakeholder, consensus-based process produced a report that was adopted by the Government of Manitoba in October 2000. The report advocates an environmental and resource management decision process that is sustained by effective planning on a large area basis.

The COSDI report outlines the basic framework for such a planning process. The plan is to be broad in scope and fully formed within the principles of sustainable development. There should be a planning advisory committee largely made up of “a cross section of knowledgeable persons, primarily from the area concerned, to develop the plan,” and the committee should be supported, staffed and funded by the government. The committee should facilitate a broad consultation process to ensure opportunity for input from all interested parties. The COSDI report also made recommendations regarding openness and transparency, the need for relevant information to be readily available on a timely basis, the use of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), the development of protocols to guide consultation with Aboriginal peoples, and the development and use of capacity building mechanisms to enable meaningful public participation.

The East Side Planning Initiative (ESPI) is the first large area planning exercise since the adoption of the COSDI report. It is a complex area, requiring a complex process. It covers a large geographic area housing many diverse and disparate interests. Although its population is largely situated in 16 First Nations communities, each with its own aspirations, there is a significant interest in the area by other Manitobans. It represents to some an area of pristine beauty and ecological integrity and, to others, exciting economic





development potential. Some see an urgent need for road access to communities while others see that same access as a threat to the natural environment.

To address this mix of aspirations, and remain consistent with the COSDI philosophy, the ESPI has undertaken the task of involving local residents in the details of the planning for the future of their area. It has respected both science and traditional ecological knowledge. It has provided funding and staff to facilitate and support the process. It has actively reached beyond the communities for input into the process. It has established networks to make information accessible to all Manitobans. Just as importantly, it has taken on the responsibility of developing Protocols of Agreement to guide future consultations with First Nations and with the Métis Nation residents on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

There is much we can learn from this process. There have been successes and there have been failures. If attempted again, there are things that would be repeated and things that would be changed. But overall, the process has succeeded in bringing together many diverse interests that would otherwise not have merged at all. The realization of the vision of COSDI has been significantly advanced in the East Side Planning Initiative. Certainly there is more to do and more to learn. But, Manitoba will be forever enriched by this process, as a large and important area of our province becomes the focus of rational and careful management. Let this process be a model to build on and improve as Manitoba's regions consider their place in the future.

The report contains a list of appendices, some of which are appended to the main report. The remaining appendices identified in the report are located in all Manitoba Public Registry offices. In addition to this full report, an executive summary is available, providing a detailed synopsis of the report's contents. The executive summary and the full report will be available to the public in print, electronic and CD versions and will be posted on the website. Copies of all reference documents will be made available to the council offices of all east side communities and, as noted above, at all Manitoba registry offices. However, it is important to note that regardless of its current content and the format for distribution, *Promises to Keep* remains, first and foremost, a status report and, as such, the content and recommendations require further acceptance and validation by east side of Lake Winnipeg communities.

