

# Your Community

The official newsletter of the R.M. of East St. Paul

April 2023

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## 55-plus gals, are you ready to go Cycling With Sarah?

Sarah Gravelle-Mackenzie isn't your typical cyclist.

At 68-years-old, she's a bit of an anomaly. And she's trying to change that.

"We all sort of remember when we started riding when we were kids, the freedom and the joy and the independence. And then when life gets going and you have your kids and you're working full time, I rode, but nothing seriously," Gravelle-Mackenzie says.

"It's when I retired six years ago, and I bought myself a cruiser bike and I thought 'this will be my retirement bike'."

It didn't take her long to realize her retirement was about more than a cruise.

"I got out there and I started riding, and within a year I got another bike, I got more of a fitness sport bike," she laughed.

"Because I was riding much further and I was out much longer."

Gravelle-Mackenzie is a Liv Canada Ambassador, and she's on a mission to get women over the age of 55 to discover, or re-discover, the joy of cycling.

Liv is the only women's cycling company and they have volunteer ambassadors to help promote the sport and get women of all ages into riding.



Gravelle-Mackenzie, left, and Rose McDonald, right, are excited to get riding with the Cycling With Sarah team. Gravelle-Mackenzie is organizing three group rides for women 55-plus this summer.

Gravelle-Mackenzie is organizing three group rides for women 55 and over this summer. The

Cycling With Sarah rides will be 45 minutes to an hour in length with five or six riders.

"We'll stop halfway, have a drink of water and we'll talk

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## Easter fun with the Easter Bunny!



East St. Paul council, left to right, Brian Imhoff, Brian Duval, Mayor Carla Devlin, Charles Posthumus and Orest Horechko welcomed community members to the RM's Easter Pancake Breakfast on April 1 at the Arena. The Easter Bunny had time to stop by too!



# RM's award-winning emergency plan ready at all times

As the Emergency Coordinator for the RM of East St. Paul for 25 years, Dennis Wiwcharyk has worked with his team on multiple occasions.

And while he says each emergency/disaster is a learning experience, nothing compares to the global Covid-19 pandemic.

"Generally, most emergencies or disasters, there's a finite time. As an example, last winter's record snowfall combined with the unprecedented amount of rain in the Spring kept us busy for a number of months." Wiwcharyk said.

"But the pandemic was a different story. That lasted basically from March 12, 2020 for almost two and a half years. We dealt with so many different aspects, from trying to weave our way through the different health regulations, keeping offices open, having to close facilities and keeping municipal employees safe and healthy."

As we all know all too well, it was a time in our lives like no other. And for Wiwcharyk and others in his position, it was extremely challenging.

"The biggest issue with the pandemic was there was no playbook. As this was new to everyone, we did not have anything to refer to, what worked, what did not work. We were doing the best we could with the constant changing information," he said.

"Not all decisions were popular, but our mandate and focus was to keep everybody as safe and healthy as possible."

As things have somewhat returned to normal, and his job goes back to being prepared for the emergencies that could impact the municipality, such as river and overland flooding, weather events like tornados or blizzards, chemical spills and power outages, to name just a few.

As the Coordinator, Wiw-



East St. Paul Emergency Coordinator Dennis Wiwcharyk.

charyk is required to have a municipal emergency plan in place.

"The job is to ensure the municipality has an emergency plan that they utilize in the event of a major emergency or disaster. The plan is basically a manual of what is required of the municipality set out by Province," he said.

"It's not a step-by-step direction, but it gives an overview of the requirements, what powers the municipality has, what powers they can institute in an emergency or disaster."

The plan includes prevention and mitigation efforts which Wiwcharyk recommends before council for their approval.

If a local state of emergency is declared, the municipality has

a broad range of powers it can utilize to ensure the safety of its residents.

It could mean entering onto people's properties, expending necessary financial resources or the extreme possibility of the necessity of residents being evacuated.

Wiwcharyk chairs the emergency committee that includes the CAO, municipal managers, the Mayor, member of council and volunteers.

"The coordinator is basically a resource for each municipal department," he said.

"I'll use Operations Department as an example. If they need sandbags, it's my job to find the source or supplier to meet the need."

The Emergency Coordinator position is mandated by the Province and every municipality must have one. Wiwcharyk said that in addition to regular Committee meetings, the committee must conduct an annual table top exercise. This exercise involves a mock training disaster scenario and details how they would handle it.

Every fourth year they are required to do a full-scale exercise.

"In a full-scale exercise we deploy resources. Our last full-scale exercise was done in conjunction with the River East Transcona School Division," he said.

A total of 238 students were evacuated from Robert Andrews School and bused to the RM's evacuation centre at Eastview Community Church.

"We evacuated the school including all students and staff, placed them on buses and transported them to our evacuation centre."

The exercise went well accomplishing the objective of the exercise. As a learning experience, it revealed what went well and identified where improvements were needed.

"The learning aspect is huge. For example, we were very successful in getting all the students and staff bused to our evacuation centre in a timely manner," he said.

"One of the goals of the exercise was to register the staff and students. We quickly learned after registering only one school bus that this would require more resources than anticipated."

A date for the next full-scale exercise is in the Fall of 2023.

The RM's plan is award-winning – in 2016 East St. Paul was recognized by the Province with a Manitoba Community Emergency Preparedness Award and Wiwcharyk was presented with the Emergency Coordinator of the Year Award in 2011.

## Cycling

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about cycling," she says.

"We'll have that social piece, which is so good for our mental health."

Gravelle-Mackenzie says at 60, her doctor told her that her blood pressure and her cholesterol were creeping up. When she kicked her cycling up a notch, that all went away.

"It's been a huge improvement," she says.

"The health improvement, the weight loss, muscle gain, it's been phenomenal."

Gravelle-Mackenzie moved to East St. Paul in 2022 and two of the rides will be in the municipality and one in Transcona. All will have a starting point where the women can meet and get their bikes out of their vehicles before heading out. The rides will be on paths.

"I belong to the East St. Paul 55+ Centre and a lot of the

women are saying they're interested in trying it," she says.

"It's quite exciting."

She's also planning a generational ride in East St. Paul on June 10.

"Liv Canada really promotes that cycling is a lifelong sport, so I'm going to do a three generation ride, children, their mothers and their grandmothers."

Gravelle-Mackenzie hadn't originally planned to rally the senior population for group rides, but when she tried to join existing groups, she was surprised to realize there wasn't a place for her.

"I've tried to hook up with existing women's cycling groups and it's all very young, fit, fast women. The message I received was, 'maybe not fast enough', didn't have quite the right bike', all of that. It was quite discouraging," she says.

"I just thought there's got to be a way."

She was right. A cycling friend, Emily Payne, also a Liv Canada Ambassador, encouraged her to apply and become one as well. Gravelle-Mackenzie proposed to start the senior women's group cycling and Liv Canada loved it.

"They knew my big passion was to promote cycling for women 55-plus," she says.

"Because there just isn't anything out there."

Gravelle-Mackenzie will lead the group, and Rose McDonald has signed on to be the sweep, riding at the back of the pack, ensuring everyone is safe and no one gets left behind.

A launch event will take place on May 10 at 1pm at Bikes & Beyond on Henderson Highway. Mechanics will be on site and the riders can bring their bikes in to be checked over to make sure they're good for the upcoming rides. Liv Canada and Bikes & Beyond are partnering/

supporting the rides, which are sanctioned by the Manitoba Cycling Association.

Gravelle-Mackenzie is hoping women will come out and have fun. Cycling, she says, is perfect for seniors because it's easy on the joints. And if they want to take it to the next level, this is the perfect place to start. She started with short rides and kept pushing it.

"I went from riding 10 km, then I got to 20, then it went to 40, then 60 and I'm like, 'oh, I'm dreaming big, maybe I'll get to 80 for my dad's birthday,'" she says.

"Then one day I was out and it was like, 'I'm gonna keep going, I'm gonna do it...and it did, I did 20 more. It was so inspiring for myself."

If you'd like to join the group you can contact Gravelle-Mackenzie at [cyclingwithsarah@gmail.com](mailto:cyclingwithsarah@gmail.com). You can also follow her on Instagram @cycling-withsarah.



# Province announces funding to protect water resources

Mayor Carla Devlin welcomed the Provincial Minister of Environment and Climate along with other stewards of Manitoba's waterways to East St. Paul's Highland Park April 17 for several important announcements.

"Earth Day is just around the corner and I'm pleased to welcome the Province of Manitoba, the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, Manitoba Association of Watersheds and the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region to East St. Paul to announce initiatives that will protect precious water resources," Devlin said.

"We are here on the banks of the Red River – the soon to be much higher Red River – to make an important announcement about protecting our precious water resources – not just our rivers and lakes, but our wetlands and watersheds and many other conservation projects too."

The Manitoba government is advancing protection and support for water resources through a number of initiatives including enhancing the Lake Friendly Initiative and expanding watershed districts, Environment and Climate Minister Kevin Klein announced to kick off the week leading up to Earth Day on April 22.

"Water is a precious resource and we all need to work together to ensure we make every drop count," said Klein.

"We are making investments in initiatives that enhance protections for Lake Winnipeg and our watersheds, helping ensure the sustainable management of our valuable water resources, now and for future generations."



Left to right, Colleen Sklar, Dunnottar Mayor Rick Gamble, Minister Kevin Klein, CEO of Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation Stephen Carlyle, Gary Wasykowski and Mayor Carla Devlin.

The Manitoba government has invested \$75,000 to enhance the Lake Friendly Initiative and support the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region as it transitions the Lake Friendly Initiative from the South Basin Mayors and Reeves Inc. and continues critical efforts to protect the health of Lake Winnipeg.

"To protect our freshwater resources and help prepare for the impacts of a changing climate, we need to connect people to resources that educate and enable action," said Colleen Sklar, executive director, Winnipeg Metropolitan Region.

"The support from the Manitoba government will allow us to

build awareness, plan together and incorporate actions across the region to improve the health of lakes, rivers and streams."

In collaboration with municipal partners, the Manitoba government is again expanding its successful Watershed Districts Program to help enhance protections for Manitoba's waterways and help further the goals of the new water management strategy, including the improvement of co-ordinated water management and governance across watersheds, basins and aquifers.

The Manitoba government has enhanced core funding by \$265,000 to three watershed district expansions including:

- Northeast Red Watershed District to include the rural municipalities (RM) of St. Clements, Lac du Bonnet and Reynolds and expand the included area in the RMs of Brokenhead, Ste. Anne, Tache, and Springfield;
  - Pembina Valley Watershed District to include portions of the RM of Roland; and
  - Redboine Watershed District to include portions of the RMs of Roland and Macdonald.
- "Manitoba Association of Watersheds is grateful for the Manitoba government's continued support of the Watershed Districts Program," said Garry Wasykowski, board chair, Manitoba Association of Watersheds.
- "Through its continued investment in the program, we are pleased to welcome new municipal partners into the Northeast Red, Redboine and Pembina Valley watershed districts. We want to acknowledge and thank all of our municipal partners for their continued support of effective, collaborative and sustainable watershed management throughout Manitoba."
- Watershed districts are partnerships between the Manitoba government and local municipalities to protect, restore and manage water resources. Fourteen watershed districts are established under the authority of the Watershed Districts Act and are charged with developing and implementing programming to improve watershed health.
- Watershed district expansion supports the strategic objectives of Manitoba's new provincial water management strategy.

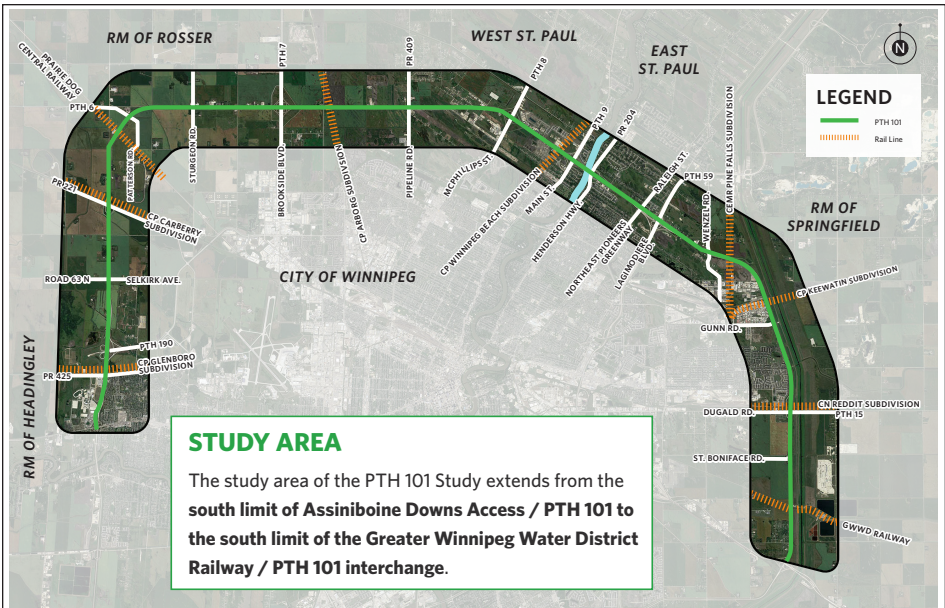
# ESP meets with Province on Perimeter design study

Members of East St. Paul Council met with the Province and WSP, the planning and engineering firm contracted to complete a North Perimeter Highway Design study, recently and gave input into reconstruction of the highway into a modern, six-lane freeway.

The meeting was part of Phase 1 engagement that aims to inform the public of the purpose and scope of the study, review crossing locations and provide an opportunity for input and to ask question of the design team.

Meagan Boles, a Manager with WSP, says the purpose of the project is to develop a plan that will accommodate the future development of the north Perimeter Highway into a fully access-controlled, grade-separated freeway that can ultimately accommodate six lanes. A similar plan was developed for the South Perimeter that has resulted in the construction of the interchange at St. Mary's Road and the South Perimeter.

Boles says functional design study will take approximately two years to complete. A functional design study is an early phase of the design process in



which the road right-of-way and roadway layout are established based on projected travel patterns and demand. Functional designs are informed by both technical studies and public input and feedback throughout the process.

The area included in the study begins approximately at Assiniboine Downs in the RM of Headingly and continues north and around the Perimeter to the RM of Springfield.

The changes in design will allow motorists to travel the entire

length of the Perimeter Highway without stopping. The redesign is part of a \$4.1 billion, multi-year infrastructure strategy.

Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Doyle Piwniuk said almost \$280 million will be invested into the Perimeter Highway to elevate it to freeway standards and once complete safety will be improved by adding interchanges and overpasses at all roadways and railway crossings.

"The Manitoba government continues taking concrete action to improve the safe and free flow

of people and goods throughout this province," said Piwniuk.

"We continue to grow Manitoba as a transportation hub that provides industry better trade access to markets and supports investment in trade-based industries."

The Province began a Perimeter Safety Review in 2018 that looked at access points and intersections and risk of collisions along both the south and north Perimeter Highway.

Phase 1 public engagement focuses on group stakeholder meetings.

"We are currently in our initial phase of engagement, the purpose of which is to present the project, collect any feedback from stakeholders and the public," Boles says.

"We will be developing interchange and roadway design options and will present those to stakeholders and the public. We expect we will be presenting the options for feedback in the fall of 2023."

More information on the project can be found at [https://gov.mb.ca/mit/projects\\_management/index.html](https://gov.mb.ca/mit/projects_management/index.html)



## Councillor Corner

Ward 4 - Charles Posthumus

Spring has finally arrived! As the snow melts and the warmer weather arrives, we are all feeling the energy of longer warmer days and a renewed liveliness of the changing season. We are thankful that the flood risk is at a low to moderate level. The RM is prepared for any risk level and encourages all residents to keep up to date with information specific to East St. Paul on the eaststpaul.com.

Council has finalized the financial plan for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. We are excited to support a new splashpad which will be located at the arena with the hope of having it operational this summer. Further information regarding the budget can be located on our municipal website.

Our council has met with Provincial representatives regarding the North Perimeter (PTH) Highway Design Study. The intent of the meeting was to inform and review next steps that are to be taken in regard to the design and reconstruction of the North Perimeter Highway. All residents in East St. Paul received a card in the mail that has a link to the provincial website identifying the public engagement process. The engagement will consist of a project webpage and on-line surveys, group stakeholder meetings, use of EngageMB and in person public open houses in Phases 2 and 3 and Project newsletters. During our meeting with the provincial representatives, we continued the discussion regarding the noise study and next steps that the Province is expecting to take. We are hopeful that the Province is going to release more information this year.

Recycling in East St. Paul continues to be a priority. We have recently completed the construction of a new building at the Transfer Station(dump) which will be similar to the 4R depots in the City of Winnipeg. We hope to have this up and running this year. Manitoba Association of Recyclers has indicated that East St. Paul residents are one of the top RM's for recycling. Well done!

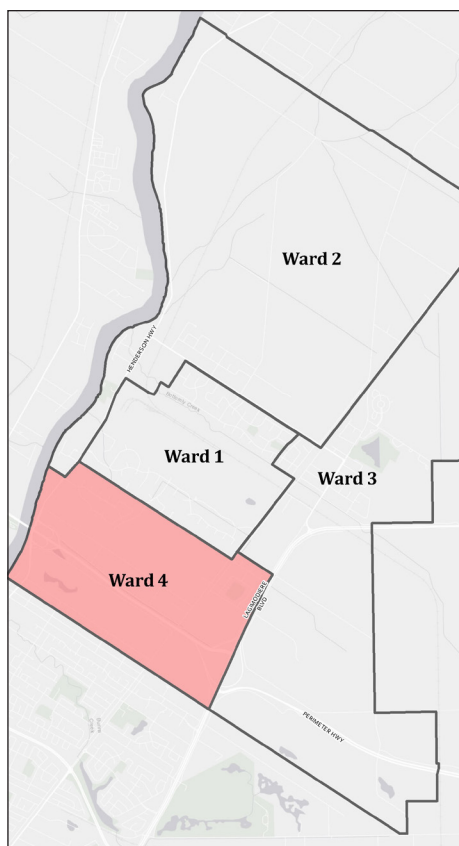
I continue to have the privilege of working as a Board member on the Red River Basin Commission and have been re-elected



as the Chair of the North Chapter. The Lidar program offered through the Red River Basin Commission will assist long term with the improvement of drainage in the RM. We are looking to have our staff trained and look forward to utilizing this information to improve our drainage systems in the RM.

I thank all residents who voted in the fall election. I look forward to serving you and will address those concerns raised during the election process. Should you wish to contact me I am available via email at charles.posthumus@eaststpaul.com or via telephone at 204-791-5595.

I wish all residents a wonderful spring and summer!



## ESP Fire Department Safety Tips

As part of the ongoing initiative regarding safety for our residents, your East St. Paul Fire Department would like to provide the following for your information.

### Hydrogen gas explosion potential

On rare occasions, hydrogen gas can accumulate in some household appliances that use hot water. One of these is a dishwasher. Hydrogen gas is explosive in nature and can be ignited by a spark or other source of ignition.

Small amounts of hydrogen gas may be created in your hot water tank when water interacts with some of the metals used in the tank. In most cases, the hydrogen dissipates when residential water is used. If however, the hot water tank is not used for extended periods of time, hydrogen gas may accumulate in your water system.

Many of our residents are fortunate enough to head to warmer climes during the winter months which means the hot water tank is not being used on a regular basis. As a result, there is a small potential for hydrogen gas to build up.

Many appliance manufacturers mention this hazard in manuals they provide under their warning sections. This hazard as well as advice on how to mitigate the problem is mentioned in wording such as:

"Under certain conditions, hydrogen gas may be produced in a hot water system that has not been used for two weeks or

more. Hydrogen gas is explosive. Before using a dishwasher that is connected to a hot water system that has been unused for two weeks or longer, turn on all hot water faucets and let the water flow from each for several minutes. This will release any accumulated hydrogen gas. As the gas is explosive, do not smoke or use an open flame during this time."

Residents are encouraged to check their appliance manuals for information regarding this and other safety warnings.

### Replace your batteries

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors should be tested on a weekly basis to ensure they are working properly. If your detectors are battery powered, you should replace the batteries every six months. An excellent guide you can use as a reminder to replace your batteries is when the clocks move forward in the spring and move back in the fall.

Hard wired detectors with battery back up are recommended for use in your residence. Detectors should be replaced every 10 years or sooner. Please check the manufacturers instructions and recommendations for further information.

If you have any questions or require any further fire safety information, email fire.department@eaststpaul.com and someone will get back to you.

Thank you and stay safe

**Your East St. Paul Fire Department**

## 7th annual ESP Farmers Market



**Opening Sunday, June 11 - September 24, 2023**

Sunday 10:00am - 2:00pm

302 Hoddinott Rd. East St. Paul

Check us out on Instagram @espfarmersmarket

Like us on Facebook East St Paul Recreation

## 2022 ESP Water System Annual Report available Online

East St. Paul's 2022 Water System Annual Report is now available online.

Please click [HERE](#) to view the report.

Hard copies are available at the East St. Paul Administration building located at Unit 1 - 3021 Birds Hill Road.



**Have a story idea? Email [donna.maxwell@eaststpaul.com](mailto:donna.maxwell@eaststpaul.com)**