

# New Y parking lot will ease congestion

By Wanda McConnell  
Herald Editor

**K**imberly Avenue YM-YWCA patrons soon will no longer get most of their exercise just walking from their car to the building.

A new parking lot coming later this spring means people won't have to park blocks away. It also means fewer cars will be parking on streets around the Y and Miles Macdonell Collegiate.

The 60-car lot is to be built by the Y on River East School Division property. It will be located between the high school and the Y and will front on Kimberly. It will be used by students dur-

ing the day, and by Y patrons evenings and weekends.

"People are parking everywhere right now and they're driving around trying to find a space. That can be frustrating and we want coming to the Y to be a pleasant experience," says general manager Jeff Marshall.

Parking around the facility has always been a problem. However, it's gotten worse in the last three years since membership at the Y shot from 1,000 to 4,000. "And it's still growing," Marshall adds.

To address the issue, the Y approached the River East School Division and offered to build and maintain the

parking lot on the division's property in exchange for using the lot evenings and weekends.

As well, the Y offered to construct an outdoor basketball court and a second tennis court and tennis hitting wall on the school yard.

Marshall estimates the Y is investing about \$70,000 in the total project.

The school board approved the deal last October and since then, the Y has been working through zoning matters with the city. Marshall says the Y should have the all-clear from the city in the next few days to proceed with construction.

A gravel base will be put down early this spring and

the lot will be used that way until the ground thaws. Then, says Marshall, construction will start on the final asphalt parking lot.

A new wooden fence will also be built along Kimberly Avenue. Access to the parking lot will be from the Y property.

Miles Mac principal Garry Bowles says the new parking lot will be a win-win situation. It helps the Y, the school and the neighbourhood.

Students will no longer have to park on residential streets, which not only was a bother to property owners but also problematic for students.

The city had imposed a two-hour parking limit on streets. It had also hired "a most efficient and dedicated

commissionaire" to enforce it, says Bowles.

Consequently, students were always getting parking tickets or leaving class to move their cars.

"Now everybody wins. The community has more free space on the street in front of their homes and our kids get low-cost parking," the principal said.

Bowles says one glitch was what to do about a ball diamond that neighbouring Melrose Park Community Centre used for children's baseball. It was located where the new parking lot is to go and will be moved to Neil Campbell School.

The school didn't use the space for anything but shot-put practice.

## Proceed with caution

**M**anitoba Conservation is advising the public of unsafe ice conditions on the Red River Floodway and provincial drainage ditches.

People are advised to be careful when operating snowmobiles and other vehicles on waterways. Snow cover has produced an insulating effect, resulting in thinner than usual ice in many regions.

Department officials say people using the Floodway and other slopes for sliding, snowboarding and cross-country skiing should use caution to avoid injury.

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