

# BIGLAKE

NEIGHBOURHOOD ONE

Big Lake is a very special place. It is a regionally significant freshwater wetland ecosystem and is globally recognized as an Important Bird Area. Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park has been created to ensure that future generations have protected access to the lake.

The importance and ecological sensitivity of the area inspired a unique minimal impact design to protect and celebrate this beautiful neighbourhood. Nature provided the theme and the designed landscaping respects the natural ecosystem and blends seamlessly with the existing environment.

You can enjoy natural landscaping in your new neighbourhood at these locations:

- Wetlands
- Greenways containing vegetated swale for storm water runoff and low impact trails
- Top of bank granular walking path
- Neighbourhood park overlooking Horseshoe Lake
- Utility corridors

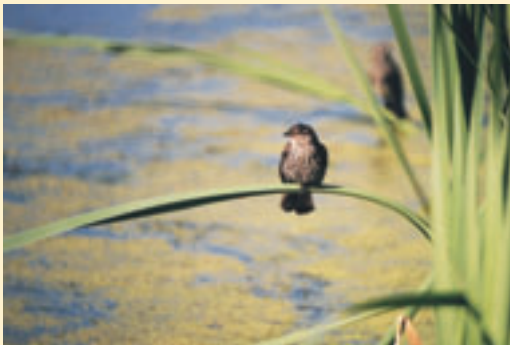


## Benefits of a Natural Landscape

# Benefits

### Improved Water Quality

In nature, much of our rainfall is absorbed into the ground to be used by plants or to recharge the groundwater. Water that isn't absorbed typically follows natural swales to a lake, river, or wetland. Moisture-loving native vegetation grows well in these swales and in wetlands, and the vegetation helps to cleanse the water as it passes through. When land is developed for urban uses, the amount of runoff increases, and because it generally travels over pavement or through underground pipes, the cleansing action of the swales and wetlands is lost. By recreating a landscape in this neighbourhood with constructed wetlands and vegetated swales for surface runoff, infiltration will be encouraged, the rate of runoff will be slowed, and the water will be cleansed as it travels towards its ultimate destination of Big Lake—the way that nature does it.



### Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife corridors help facilitate movement of animals between natural areas and can significantly increase their chance of survival in urban areas. In Big Lake Neighbourhood One, the creation of wildlife habitat and travel corridors is a very high priority. In particular, a new link between Horseshoe Lake and Big Lake will serve smaller animals such as rabbits, amphibians, and song birds. Even larger animals like white-tailed deer may use the corridor at dawn or dusk.



### Human Habitat

Many studies support the benefits of human exposure to the natural environment. In general, land that is suitable for native plants and animals is also healthy for people. The natural landscaping at Big Lake is designed to protect the natural ecosystem and to nurture the humans who live there. Over five kilometres of integrated trails will provide an opportunity for users to get closer to nature.



# Sustainability

## What Can I Do To Help?

# Help

### Improved Water Quality

- Collect rainwater in a rain barrel to use in your own yard and to help reduce runoff.
- Use natural pervious materials in your yard and limit the amount of pavement.
- Design your landscaping with hardy native plants that don't require extra watering in dry periods.
- Avoid over-fertilizing, which is the cause of algae blooms.
- Avoid using toxic substances that can wash into the storm water runoff system.



### Wildlife Habitat

- Plant bird-friendly trees and shrubs in your yard.
- Provide bird feeders and bird baths to encourage bird life year-round.
- Keep your dogs on leash and keep your cats indoors (especially during fledgling flight school time).
- Avoid getting too close to animals.

### Human Habitat

- Learn about and enjoy your surroundings while respecting the wildlife that shares your space.
- Experience nature through passive recreation, such as hiking, photography, and bird watching.
- Provide opportunities for your children to connect with nature and develop values that will encourage protection into the future.
- Visit the John Janzen Nature Centre, which is one of many excellent resources available.