

Assiniboine Park Conservatory Closing Permanently in April

For immediate release: Winnipeg, January 12, 2018 – Today, the Assiniboine Park Conservancy (APC) announced that the Conservatory located in Assiniboine Park will permanently close in April 2018. The last day the building will be open to the public is Monday April 2, 2018. The closure of this building is the necessary next step in the journey of bringing Canada's Diversity Gardens to life – the third and final major phase of APC's redevelopment of Assiniboine Park and Assiniboine Park Zoo.

With the construction of Canada's Diversity Gardens well underway in the southeast corner of Assiniboine Park, the short-term plan for the Conservatory site will be for construction of the support facilities and green houses, the long-term plan is to convert it to a green space for public use. APC has committed to recycling at least 80% of the building materials such as concrete, metals, and wood. While the majority of plants and trees inside the facility cannot be transplanted, APC is currently reviewing options related to the propagation of some existing plants within the Conservatory.

Originally built in 1914 and modernized and expanded in 1968, the Conservatory is now past its viable life span as a horticultural attraction and operational facility. A number of feasibility assessments conducted since 2002 have concluded that the Conservatory is at the end of its useful life and it is not practical to attempt to maintain the building for the future.

"The Conservatory has been a favourite gathering place for Manitobans for over a century and we recognize the significance of this loss for some members of our community," said Bruce Keats, Chief Operations Officer at Assiniboine Park Conservancy. "Realistically, it's only a matter of time before a major building failure is experienced which would likely force us to close the building immediately. This is our opportunity to properly close the Conservatory before that happens and give it the farewell it deserves as we make way for Canada's Diversity Gardens."

After the building closes on April 2, the decommissioning process will begin, followed by the demolition of the facility in late spring, making way for the construction of necessary support green houses for Canada's Diversity Gardens. Fencing will be erected during the demolition process in order to protect as much outdoor space as possible including the landscaping, trees, and some of the gardens that surround the Conservatory.

Farewell Celebration

APC is inviting the community to share written, photographic, and video memories of their time at the Conservatory over the years. Submissions will be accepted until March 2 following which a select number will be compiled into a commemorative slideshow. An open-house style, week-long community celebration will take place at the Conservatory from March 27 to April 2.

Complimentary coffee and tea will be served from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily during the slideshow with APC staff and volunteers on site to talk with visitors and share respective memories.

Submissions can be sent via the following methods:

Email: communityengagement@assiniboinepark.ca

Social: Post your photograph, video or written memory using the hashtag #conservatoryfarewell and tag @assiniboineparkzoo

Mail: Assiniboine Park Conservancy

c/o Conservatory Celebration

55 Pavilion Crescent

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For more information and interview requests, please contact:

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