Imagine: You're five years old, your mother has taken you on a walk to the library down the street. This is your normal. Something you've been doing since you were a baby. You look forward to going every Monday after daycare. You're familiar with the librarians. You know where all your favourite books are, and at the time your favourite DVD "Sharpay's fabulous adventure." (Of course.) Then once you were in grade 2 your entire class would walk there every week. You were always so excited to go there with the class because you knew where everything was and could almost "show off". Although you being the very shy child you were, didn't.

Now imagine you're almost 15 years old and find out that the library that you grew up with is attempting to be moved to a dark corner in the Garden City mall, where it will have no windows, and in my opinion will most likely feel more like a bookstore rather than a community library.

Hello everyone, my name is Katelyn Panchoo and I am a grade 9 student at the Seven Oaks Met School, and I am here today to speak on behalf of the students in the seven oaks community.

The West Kildonan Library has always given me a sense of community, if we were to put it in the Garden City shopping center I believe that it would lose that sense. Not only in the mall but the original space is going to be sold to private developers meaning it would not remain a community space at all. From my understanding the library could be turned into whatever they see fit.

If you have ever been walking by the library, you will often see people sitting outside using the wifi, if we were to move it into the mall, how would that work? There would be no benches outside for people to sit on and enjoy a book, no greenery, and like I mentioned before NO WINDOWS. The only way to enter the library in the mall would be to go through the mall. The library is going to be moved somewhere that'll be a 30 minute walk instead of the 5 that it is for me and everyone that lives near the current library right now. And that is me who is young and abled bodied, what about the senior

citizens and young So the main way of transport people that live near the current library will have to take is car. The library right now has a bus stop located very close and is an easy ride if you are bussing there from further away. The buses in my personal opinion at the Garden City mall can be very confusing and even dangerous at times.

Circling back to the school's and the library, the library is in a location where ESOMS, Victory, Belmont, Forest Park, Garden City Collegiate, The Met school, and even more are in walking distance. The library is in a residential area, where it is completely safe for young students to be walking with their class, but again if we were to move it, how would these schools walk there? It would be nearly impossible. The Garden City mall is not connected to the community sidewalks for pedestrians or cyclists. Not to mention the fact that a pedestrian was killed in the Garden City parking lot in 2019, trying to cross on foot.

The proposed deal is totaled at $6.5M of taxpayer funds, being paid to a private developer (RioCan), to lease for 10 years, meaning the city would never own the library, also meaning that we could be left without a library completely.

The library right now is fully accessible, with a ramp and recently a new elevator installed. This site has plenty of parking, is easy to walk to and good for cyclists. Not to say that this building does not need renovations though, The West Kildonan library is nearly 60 years old, of course it is going to need renovations, and maybe be expanded but that is with every historical building in Winnipeg. An example that comes to mind is the St John's library. They did a beautiful job renovating and expanding that building and did not put them in a dark corner of the mall. Renovations to the West Kildonan Library would be much cheaper than spending $6.5M on moving our beautiful library into the mall.

The West Kildonan area is a mix of neighbourhoods and incomes. We are an older community and many people choose this neighbourhood for the amenities like our local library. There are some members in our community who can not afford to constantly bus or get to Garden City mall if it is moved there. Why should the West Kildonan area have to settle for a a dark corner in the mall when, River Heights just received a huge beautiful brand new library. Why isn't West Kildonan given the same opportunities as the more South areas of the city?

I may not need my mother to take me to the library every Monday after daycare anymore, since I can walk by myself, but I always look forward to seeing the next generation of parents taking their kids to the library. The library is somewhere that you can find familiar faces and always feel a sense of community. The library is also a safe place for students to go during their lunch break, or a place to study after school. The library is a place for young children, high school students, senior citizens, and everyone in between to come and enjoy a book while also being warmed with a sense of community around them.

I would like to ask all of you to join me in this fight to save the West Kildonan library, by doing any of the following actions:

Contacting any of the city council members on the list I have with me. Signing the petition, and coming to the council meeting on May 18th at 9:30 am and then the following meeting on the 26th also at 9:30 am, if you are able to.

The library is an anchor in the community, and it It would be a devastating loss to me, to the schools, to the entire community. Thank you.