

Submission – Jodie Borle

Expropriation and Rezoning of Lemay Forest (Item 1 - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – Notice of Motion)

Submitted: Wed, 03/26/2025 - 11:01

Delegation information

Committee you want to address
Council

Agenda item you want to address (number and title)
Item No. 1 Expropriation and Rezoning of Lemay Forest

Support or oppose recommendations
I support the recommendations

Submit comments in writing
Comments

I am writing to express my strong support for the expropriation of Lemay Forest in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This area holds profound cultural, historical, and ecological significance that warrants immediate action to ensure its preservation.

Lemay Forest is home to the Asile Ritchot Cemetery, the final resting place for numerous infants and young children who died between 1904 and 1948. The cemetery is associated with the Asile Ritchot orphanage, a home for unwed mothers run by the Sisters of Misericordia during that period. Preserving this site is essential to honor and respect these individuals and their families.

Additionally, Lemay Forest has been a site for Indigenous ceremonial practices, including sweat lodge ceremonies, for over 30 years. Protecting this land aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 71-75, which emphasize the importance of safeguarding Indigenous burial sites and sacred spaces.

From an environmental perspective, Lemay Forest is a vital urban green space that supports biodiversity and provides essential ecosystem services. The area is known to be inhabited by species such as the pileated woodpecker, which is protected under the federal Migratory Birds Convention Act. Recent unauthorized tree cutting in the forest has raised concerns about compliance with federal species protection laws.

Given these factors, I urge the City of Winnipeg to proceed with the expropriation of Lemay Forest to protect its cultural heritage, uphold Indigenous rights, and preserve its ecological integrity. Establishing this area as a public park or protected space would demonstrate a commitment to reconciliation, environmental stewardship, and the well-being of future generations.

Thank you for considering this urgent matter.

Public engagement (optional)

I consent to being contacted to participate in potential public engagement related to this matter.
No