

Dear Council,

Please preserve Lemay Forest. All of us, especially future generations, need access to undeveloped nature.

We need more natural spaces in and around our city. These spaces do not need to be manicured parks with planted and cut lawns, flower gardens and pruned trees. Simple gravel trails through a bit of the natural area is enough. It's actual nature we need - to see where the endangered pileated woodpecker nests, to see the trails and tracks the deer, the beaver and the foxes leave, to hear the bird calls and smell the fresh leaves of spring. Spaces where we can breathe and see undergrowth and berries and trees grow and be home to all creatures.

Aside from the above important argument for a healthier city and population, the Lemay Forest is the location of the abandoned Asile Cemetery of unmarked graves. Anecdotal stories suggest unmarked graves also exist outside the formal boundaries of the Asile Cemetery. The whole forest should remain intact out of respect for the graves, and because of The Cemeteries Act in Manitoba, as well as operating in the spirit of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Also, in the spirit of the TRC Calls to Action, the Lemay Forest has been used by First Nations and Metis people for ceremony for over 30 years. The forest should be preserved and ceremony must be allowed to continue.

The City of Winnipeg, the province of Manitoba and the federal government have all formally signed on to international goals for preserving biodiversity. We're required to protect 30 per cent of the lands and waters by 2030. Protecting Lemay Forest is part of our international commitment.

For many, many reasons, including multiple rejections of the Developers' plans, the Lemay Forest must be protected and preserved for people and biodiversity.

Sincerely,

Angela Chotka Clark