Dear Council members,

While the Lemay Forest expropriation motion is no longer necessary, I would like to thank Councillors Wyatt, Orlikow, Gilroy, Schreyer and Chambers for supporting the motion and for standing up for what is right and for upholding Council's commitments to protecting biodiversity, urban canopy and greenspace. Thank you, councilors, for standing up to protect our collective history and heritage, for Indigenous spiritual and cultural healing ceremonial land and for our future. Thank you for trying to do truth and reconciliation right.

Over an acre was senselessly clearcut in April and September 2024, December to January 2025 and again in April 2025, some of the desecrated trees I can't even wrap my arms around their trunks – old growth trees, senselessly knocked down. Old growth trees that offer much needed ecological services in this current climate crisis.

You must act now to avoid this type of disaster again. Later is too late for:

- A tree protection by-law on private property
- "Vegetation Removal" permits should not be issued until development applications are fully approved.
- Easement agreements should not be issued for land locked properties until development applications are fully approved.
- Better transparency on behalf of city staff for public participants to protect what precious natural areas we have left.

To quote Ariel Gordon:

"Based on the city's own Urban Forest Strategy, released in 2023, we know that the urban forest doesn't just provide pleasure and comfort to residents, it delivers real, quantifiable ecosystem services including:

Carbon storage and sequestration, avoiding surface runoff, reducing energy-related costs (specifically cooling on very hot days), pollution removal, and oxygen production.

The annual functional value of Winnipeg's urban forest is $53.68 million. They've also arrived at a compensatory value of the urban forest, which is to say, the estimated cost to replace each tree in Winnipeg's Urban Forest with a similarly-sized tree, is $3.31 billion.

Municipalities across the country now consider the urban forest infrastructure. What's more, it's the only piece of infrastructure in the city that doesn't depreciate. As trees age, they provide more services, not less!"

We must move forward together for a better way, starting today.

Cat