From: Matt Gemmel
Sent: Tuesday, December 28, 2004 6:33 PM
To: MYO-Mayor; Angus, John; Benham, Donald; Clement, Bill; De Smedt, Peter; Eadie, Jae; Gerbasi, Jenny; Lazerenko, Harry; Lubosch, Mark; Magnifico, Franco; O'Shaughnessy, Mike; Pagtakhan, Mike; Smith, Harvey; Steeves, Gord; Thomas, Lillian; Wyatt, Russ
Subject: citizen opposition to Waverly West

Honorable Councillors:

I want to inform you of my concern for and opposition to the proposed Waverly West subdivision. A life long resident of Winnipeg in my early twenties, I have a love for the city which raised me as well as a desire to create a life for myself in a vibrant and healthy community. I truely believe that Winnipeg has aspects of, and certainly the possibility to become that vibrant and healthy community. However, I strongly feel that a focus of suburban development -- especially such a large project as Waverly West -- will inevitably prevent Winnipeg from becomming a vibrant and/or healthy place to live.

With strong evidence from urban centers from all over the world, we can see how urban sprawl negatively effects cities. Such a specific focus on suburban development will: further economically and racially segregate Winnipeg; greatly increase auto-depedance while diminishing the effectiveness of a transit system; increase the cost of civic infrastucture, while reducing the quality and availablity of the existing civic services; and increase the social and economic hardships of the inner city and other traditionally low-income neighborhoods by further encouraging residence and commercial activity at the fringe of the city.

It is becomming obvious that Winnipeg is at a crossroads concerning land-use. With the recent success of various urban renewal projects in the city center, the whole city is benefiting from a safer, more active downtown. A desicion to amend Plan Winnipeg 2020 to give the green light to Waverley West -- which essentially commits the city to a very narrow focus on strictly suburban development for the next few decades -- completely contradicts and effectively negates the governments efforts to improve low-income neighborhoods and the inner city.

Policy 3A-02i of Plan Winnipeg 2020 states that the focus of civic development is: "to promote compact urban form in support of sustainability by approving new residential subdivisions only where there is a resonable relasionship between the supply of land and the projected demand and when a full range of municipal infrastructure can be provided in an environmentally-sound, economical, and timely manner." Waverly West is anything but a promotion of "compact urban form". Regardless of any promises from developers of ecological sustainability, Waverley West is a blatent perpetuation of urban sprawl and it's associated ills. The City of Winnipeg Residential Land Supply Study released this past October, shows that there is ample availability of land for residential use, even if one accepts the (ridiculously) optomistic population growth projections from the Conference Board of Canada. Therfore, the path that thoughtful, "compact", "sustainable" development must take is one of "in-fill" development and development that makes use of land within the existing boundries of Winnipeg.

The only benefits of Waverly West seem to be for Ladco, the provincial government and other private buisnesses involved. In the December 19th article in the Winnipeg Free Press entitled "Lots to argue about", the Proponents of Waverley West attempt to propigate the idea that without Waverly West, Winnipeg is not "growing". However, boosting (essentially subsidizing) very specific aspects of the economy is not growth; increasing the physical size of the city is not necessarily growth. I scincerly asks the elected representitives of Winnipegers to realize that the way to encourage real "growth" in Winniepg; the way to attract more residents to Winnipeg, is to strengthen our existing infrastucture, increasing density and consequently encouraging a network of tight-knit, vibrant, healthy communities which the city can afford to service. When voting to amend Plan Winnipeg 2020, please consider the needs of all Winnipegers and the effects Waverley West will have on the whole city for the next century; not the demands of developers and private industry.

Thank you for your time. Sincerly,

Matthew B.M Gemmel
Winnipeg