Mayor Katz, City of Winnipeg Councillors and members of the Executive Policy Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share, on behalf of a community organization, the interests and ideas which could help and reinforce the Waverly West application before your committee.

It is as the president of the Old Saint-Boniface Residents' Association that I provide you with these points that we believe are pertinent to the proposed Waverley West Plan Winnipeg amendment.

Old St. Boniface is an important part of the City of Winnipeg. No one can deny that its places, sites and its cultural and commercial identity make a vital contribution to the City of Winnipeg. In spite of several recent successes, we, the residents of Old St. Boniface, are witnessing an alarming slowdown in the revitalization and development of our community. The deplorable state of residences in certain areas of Old St. Boniface is our greatest concern.

I will spare you all of the Statistics Canada information and will present instead some of the specific concerns regarding Old St. Boniface:

1. An aging and shrinking population
2. Below average household incomes
3. Poverty (1/3 of households live below the poverty line)
4. 39% of residences are in need of major and minor repairs
5. A higher proportion of apartments as opposed to multi-family residences
6. A lack of attractive, available and modern housing for young families
7. Empty lots, available pieces of land and the regrouping of old buildings either abandoned, under-utilized or simply deteriorated which represent many opportunities for the renewal and redevelopment of Old St. Boniface

Our biggest concern: an urgent need to take the situation in hand to turn around the deterioration of Old St. Boniface.

Mr. Mayor and members of the Executive Policy Committee, the Old St. Boniface Residents' Association does not oppose the proposed Waverley West Plan Winnipeg Amendment. Rather, we applaud equitable and sustained development as well as the development of older areas of the City of Winnipeg.

Here are several principal directives of sustained development which, we think, are worthy of your consideration and also respect the Residential Land Supply Study:

1. The City of Winnipeg must encourage and actively provide young families, professionals and seniors with the opportunity to live in the downtown and surrounding areas as opposed to outlying suburbs.

2. While development of the downtown and other surrounding areas at risk is required, development should also be allowed in Waverley West. If not, our area which is in need of renovation and renewal will continue to be neglected and will deteriorate further. In time, our community will become even more disadvantaged. We must assure there are better procedures and a more balanced approach to revitalization projects. For example, we believe that the definition of "neighbourhoods in decline" should include other criteria as mentioned for either the downtown and surrounding areas or the outlying suburban areas.
3. It would be desirable to develop an overall "urban residential" plan to address this issue and to ensure financial participation from the other two levels of government with respect to the offer and demand for housing in neighbourhoods and suburbs in decline.
4. Any offer must be of benefit to the City of Winnipeg, the developers and the entrepreneurs in order to assure a return on investment and also to ensure both urban and suburban redevelopment and renewal are considered.