**Bill Elliott**

**From:** "Bill Elliott" <
**To:** <
**Cc:** <
**Sent:** January 5, 2005 8:05 AM
**Subject:** Fw: Green Corridor points

---- Original Message ----

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 04, 2005 4:30 PM
**Subject:** FW: Green Corridor points

**From:** Bill Elliott
**Sent:** Monday, January 03, 2005 4:01 PM
**To:**
**Subject:** Green Corridor points

Mr. Mayor, Members of EPC:

- Thank you for the opportunity to share, as information, recent developments and long range planning @ Fort Whyte Centre, that I hope will positively influence land use planning decisions regarding the subject property and neighbouring communities. (Distributed for your reference are reproductions of this Green Corridor display board…and my apologies to the gallery...Perhaps at the next break we could move it to the common area for casual viewing.)

Since opening our doors to the public over two decades ago, growth in attendance and growth of the City made our recent Reaching New Horizon's expansion an ecological, physical, and economic imperative. Fours years and $4.5m later, Fort Whyte has quietly added new interpretive facilities and tripled its habitat base to 630 acres, stretching from Wilkes Avenue to McGillivray Blvd.…a vast and ecologically diverse parcel of urban greenspace, preserved forever. We didn't need to engage a consultant to determine its PDV…for the simple reason that it's priceless… a fact that will become increasingly evident to more and

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more Winnipeggers as the decades of urban growth roll by and surround it. Just a few years ago we had two moose spend their summer vacation bedding down in our forest and swimming in our lakes. This spring a family of coyotes denned in our north perimeter and can still be heard yipping and howling at dawn and dusk…this is Fort Whyte…this is your Winnipeg!

Just close your eyes (without falling asleep) and imagine traversing on foot, bicycle, horseback, or solar-powered shuttle, a countryside that offers quiet shady forests, breezy meadows, farmland bustling with community gardens, berry orchards, vineyards, beehives, bison,... a cattail marsh, secluded overnight cabins, tipi encampments, and 5 deep lakes that not only support a thriving year-round sport fishery, but also sailing, kayaking, canoeing, York boating, and even skating. Now imagine that countryside physically connected to a linear park or greenway near you. This is not fantasy…this is part of Fort Whyte's Green Corridor vision...Connecting Communities Through Nature... that began with our longstanding quest to connect to Assiniboine Forest & Park. And thanks to our TRAILBLAZING COUNCILLOR CLEMENT, that quest is headed south as well. Councillor Clement deserves much of the credit (or blame!) for my taking up your time today, as it was he who came 'knocking on Fort Whyte's backdoor' early last year. His interest and support has recently connected the community of Whyte Ridge to and through Fort Whyte via Winnipeg's newest, and without doubt, most diverse and beautiful trail. Early indications are,that we will be beating Whyte Ridge ~~the~~ residents off with a stick at closing time starting next spring.

Public response to this Green Corridor vision has convinced me that Fort Whyte Centre is strategically positioned to become the catalytic hub of a major recreational & **educational** corridor through southwest Winnipeg, extending

from Assiniboine Park to La Barriere Park. ( I stress "educational" cause we won't let you through Fort Whyte without your learning something along the way!)

**IF** the subject lands are approved for residential development, either now or in future, Fort Whyte strongly encourages The City and the respective Developers to seize both the momentum for community connectedness that is literally spreading throughout Winnipeg, **and** the on-the-ground experience and opportunities arising out of Fort Whyte's dynamic expansion, by adopting the following Green Corridor Principles for Sustainable Community Planning:

**1. LINEAR GREENSPACE & COMMUNITY LINKAGES** - Plan a linear park system out of public reserve lands in conjunction with land drainage strategies in order to better interconnect neighbourhoods and link them to attractions, like Fort Whyte. For example, in Waverley West the Green Corridor Plan calls for a multi-use path system alongside a canoeable waterway that doubles as a stormwater retention system. Think outside of the baseball diamond…there is no reason a linear design cannot accommodate baseball, boats, bicycles, and butterflies!

**2. SUSTAINABLE LAND ETHIC** - Plan landscapes that require minimal or preferably no fertilizer, pesticides, and overall maintenance. Vegetation selection would integrate native plants into riparian and upland zones to protect water quality and enhance biodiversity.

**3. PEDESTRIAN & WILDLIFE FRIENDLY ROADWAY CROSSINGS** - Plan roadway crossings that allow for future underpasses and overpasses at major vehicle routes. Design competitions could make these structures

destinations in and of themselves, and would speak volumes to Winnipeg's commitment to encourage safe, efficient, self-propelled commuting.

~~Also~~, Fort Whyte Centre's new boundaries are now finite, but its willingness and potential to encourage innovative and sustainable community development in Southwest Winnipeg is boundless. I was most encouraged to hear terms like "wetlands" and "linear parks" in the applicant presentations yesterday. Fort Whyte hopes it can do its part to hold the appropriate feet to the fire on those good intentions.

The twilight serenade of the coyote is there for the sharing.

Thank you for your attention.

Bill Elliott
President & CEO
Fort Whyte Centre
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email: