-----Original Message-----
From: [mailto:]
Sent: Monday, January 03, 2005 10:36 PM
To: MYO-Mayor
Subject: Comment

Sent: Monday, January 03, 2005 10:36:12 PM
URL: http://www.winnipeg.ca/interhom/council/
First name: Kim
Last name: Tyson
Address:
City: Winnipeg
Province: Manitoba
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Phone number:
Email Address:
Message:
I do not support the amendment of Plan Winnipeg to allow the Waverley West suburban development to proceed. The meeting on January 4th to amend the plan raises the question of the validity of Plan Winnipeg, the democratic process, and civic responsibility in rushing to develop farmlands and habitat around Winnipeg as fast as possible.

The land area in question, and others like it, is not merely vacant land, but is some of the richest farmland in the province. Neither is the bush or other natural habitat merely vacant land, but is vital wildlife habitat, offering some respite to wildlife under constant seige by human sprawl.

Preserving and protecting farmland and wildlife habitats in the city become overwhelmed by the relentless battering we receive about progress and the absolute need for unlimited economic growth, and the subsequent "need" for unlimited suburban development. The notion of unlimited economic growth, and corresponding urban and suburban growth, is dangerous and threatening to a sustainable, long-term future. And there is something disturbingly wrong at the roots of our civic values and policies if we, as a society, do not value and support local farmers to sustain themselves and their land, and to protect wildlife habitat.

Since moving to Winnipeg in 1983, I have witnessed incredible sprawling development, particularly in the south end of Winnipeg where I live. Winnipeg and Manitoba have quite stable populations. Winnipeg is not a fast-growing metropolis, but it surely is a fast-spreading one. In my experience, we are already "over-housed", "over-malled" and "over-vehicled".

There is nothing aesthetically pleasing or healthy about more roads (we can't repair or maintain our current roads), copy-cat monster suburban homes in isolated areas with little or no sidewalks, big box developments, increased traffic congestion, increased emission and noise pollution, and destruction of nature and farmland. The direction Winnipeg is going only exacerbates these problems. None of these features add to an aesthetically beautiful place, nor do they support more healthful ways of living. Winnipeg is sorely lacking in a city-wide network of safe bicycle paths and more pedestrian walkways away from heavy traffic areas, for example. Even if Waverley West is designed to be more people friendly, it will still be adding to suburban sprawl, being much farther removed from the centre of the city and other existing suburban areas.

If the amendment to proceed with Waverley West is passed, it will not remedy the much larger problem of development in the capital region. Nor will it enhance Winnipeg. I predict that the next Waverley West will not be far behind...and another development to follow that...and so on. Is there an end in sight? How much is enough?

Sincerely,

Kim Tyson
St. Vital