



# MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION

300 - 150 Henry Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0J7

Phone: (204) 586-8474 Fax: (204) 947-1816 Website: [www.mmf.mb.ca](http://www.mmf.mb.ca)

**David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.**  
*President*

January 20, 2025

\*\*\*VIA E-MAIL\*\*\*

Mazyar Yahyapour  
Tochal Development Group Inc.  
8 Riverbend Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB  
R2M2N6

Dear Mr. Yahyapour,

I am writing to advise you of the continued concerns held by the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) - National Government of the Red River Metis -with regard to your proposed project and the significant potential to negatively impact the cultural heritage of the Red River Metis and more specifically, the existence and location of burials on the Lemay Forest property.

Your proposed development plans clearly show that the footprint of building 2 overlays the cemetery. The Asile Ritchot Cemetery, located in the northwest corner of the development property, holds significant historical and cultural importance to the Red River Metis. Although there are reports that the cemetery was deconsecrated and the graves moved in the mid-late 1900s, our experts have advised that it is highly unlikely that all children buried in common graves were located and removed. Research shows that relocation of graves in such circumstances tends to focus on staff members from the institution, not the victims, meaning that, in this case, the common mass graves of infants were not likely to have been moved after the cemetery was deconsecrated.

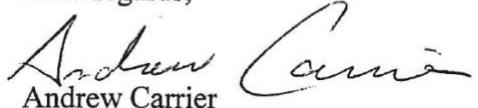
While the affidavit evidence filed by your legal team suggests that the MMF has been engaged by your firm, I want to be clear. Emails and phone calls are not meaningful engagement. Similarly, developing an environmental protection program and a heritage resources impact assessment that ignores the impacts of the project on the rights, claims and interests of the Red River Metis, our cultural heritage and our ancestors without a single connection to the MMF, is unacceptable. The MMF is fortunate to have the benefit of the skills and expertise of technical experts in these fields and I am respectfully requesting that you direct your team to contact the MMF and begin the discussions that are long overdue.

In addition, I am asking for Tochal Development Group Inc. to grant permission to the MMF to access the property and to conduct appropriate investigation of the property so we may determine the exact location and existence of these sites and handle them properly. As you are aware, previous archaeological assessments indicated "historic refuse" present in shovel tests. All Metis cultural heritage resources are from the historic era, so it is possible that these materials could be connected both to the Aisle Richot institution but also earlier use and occupation of the area by

Red River Metis citizens. Until such time as this refuse can be adequately catalogued and assessed by experts in Metis material culture, no further ground disturbance should take place. The significant possibility that your project would result in building on top of the potential remains of hundreds of Indigenous children is horrific and unethical. I am respectfully reminding you that all means should be used to protect and ensure no burials are disturbed in the process of development.

St. Norbert is home to one of our most active Locals and the project area is the site for a variety of ceremonial and traditional practices. Protecting this area is very important to the Red River Metis, other Indigenous Nations and all Manitobans. Please have your team connect with Marci Riel, Senior Director of Energy Infrastructure and Resource Management by telephone at 204 619 1228 or via email to [marci.riel@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:marci.riel@mmf.mb.ca) so that we can begin the necessary discussions and work together to find an acceptable resolution.

Kind regards,



Andrew Carrier

Vice President, Winnipeg Region  
MMF, National Government of the Red River Métis