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*By Email*

Technical Review Co-ordination Unit  
Department of Municipal and Northern Relations  
600 – 800 Portage Avenue,  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4

Dear Sir/Madam:

**Re: Harbour Colony (TRC-120)**  
**Proposed Development of a Poultry Operation**  
**The Rural Municipality of Gimli – Written Submission**  
**Our File No. 741-246**

We have been retained by the Rural Municipality of Gimli (the “**Municipality**”) in order to provide submissions in response to the Technical Review Committee (“**TRC**”) process respecting the proposed poultry operation and associated development (the “**Poultry Proposal**”) by the Harbour Colony (the “**Colony**”).

The Municipality recognizes the importance of agricultural development within the region and supports responsible livestock growth that is carried out in a manner consistent with provincial requirements and with due regard for local environmental, infrastructure, and land use considerations. The Municipality’s participation in this process is intended to raise technical points for clarification or consideration, and ensure that the Municipality’s interests are appropriately addressed.

### **Overview of the Proposal**

Based on the materials submitted to the TRC, the Proposal involves the development of new poultry facilities at the Harbour Colony site, including layer, pullet, and broiler barns, together with the associated colony infrastructure. The livestock component is proposed at a scale of approximately 764 animal units (comprised of approximately 60,000 broilers, 40,000 layers, and 40,000 pullets).

The Municipality understands that this Proposal forms part of the broader Harbour Colony development on the site, which includes residential and communal facilities, along with a domestic wastewater treatment lagoon. The Municipality further understands that the wastewater treatment system is currently subject to review under *The Environment Act*, C.C.S.M. c. E125, including a forthcoming hearing before the Clean Environment Commission that is scheduled for April 2026.

The Municipality has reviewed the Site Assessment Form and the supporting technical materials filed in support of the Poultry Proposal. The comments that follow identify specific technical and local matters that, in the Municipality's view, should be addressed as part of the TRC's review.

### **Technical Matters Requiring Clarification**

The following questions, comments, and concerns reflect the Municipality's review of the submitted materials, informed in part by technical input, and are intended to identify matters where additional clarification or confirmation is necessary.

#### **4.1 Groundwater Supply and Peak Demand**

The Municipality notes that the Poultry Proposal contemplates a combined water demand associated with both the proposed poultry operation (approximately 764 animal units) and the existing and planned Harbour Colony population. Based on the materials filed, the projected average daily water demand is approximately 52,000 litres per day.

The Municipality further notes that the Wells Table identifies a number of domestic wells in the surrounding area, including active residential wells in relative proximity to the site. In light of the scale of the proposed livestock operation and the integrated nature of the colony development, the Municipality seeks confirmation that the existing groundwater supply is sufficient to meet anticipated peak operational demand without adverse impact to neighbouring wells.

In particular, the Municipality requests clarification respecting:

- whether the projected demand reflects peak usage conditions for both livestock and colony domestic use;
- whether the proponent has assessed potential interference effects on nearby domestic wells; and
- whether the water supply assumptions reflect the full anticipated build-out of the Harbour Colony development.

#### **4.2 Consistency of Population and Wastewater Assumptions**

The Municipality notes that the materials filed in support of the Poultry Proposal reference a colony population of approximately **150** persons for the purpose of estimating domestic

water demand associated with the site. The Municipality further notes that the Environment Act Proposal for the Harbour Colony wastewater treatment system contemplates a design population of up to **250** persons at full build-out. The design population of 250 persons represents approximately a **67% increase** over the 150-person assumption used in the Poultry Proposal.

Given the magnitude of this variance and the integrated nature of the Harbour Colony development, the Municipality seeks confirmation that the various infrastructure planning assumptions, including domestic water demand, wastewater generation, and lagoon sizing, have been assessed on a consistent and full build-out basis. The Municipality is concerned that the servicing analysis does not accurately reflect the anticipated full build-out conditions.

#### 4.3 Lagoon Capacity and Operational Margin

The Municipality acknowledges that the Harbour Colony wastewater treatment lagoon is currently subject to review under *The Environment Act*, C.C.S.M. c. E125, including a forthcoming hearing before the Clean Environment Commission. The Municipality does not seek to duplicate that process.

However, based on its review of the Environment Act Proposal, the Municipality notes that the projected hydraulic loading of the lagoon appears to approach the stated design capacity at full build-out. In light of the integrated nature of the Harbour Colony development, the Municipality seeks confirmation that the wastewater treatment system maintains an appropriate operational margin to accommodate normal variability in flows, infiltration and inflow, and population fluctuations.

In particular, the Municipality requests confirmation that the lagoon system, as ultimately licensed and constructed, will provide sufficient capacity and operational resilience to serve the Harbour Colony development at full anticipated build-out.

#### 4.4 Surface Drainage and Intermittent Natural Drain

The Municipality notes that the Project Site Plan identifies the presence of an intermittent natural drain in proximity to the proposed poultry facilities. The Municipality further notes that the Environment Act Proposal contemplates the alteration of a small Class 3 wetland area within the broader colony development.

In light of these site characteristics, the Municipality seeks confirmation that surface drainage patterns, spring runoff conditions, and related site grading have been appropriately considered in the design and operation of the proposed facilities and associated manure handling activities. The Municipality is particularly interested in confirming that runoff from barn areas, manure handling locations, and field storage activities will be managed in a manner that minimizes the risk of nutrient transport to adjacent drainage features, including the intermittent drain identified on the site plan.

#### 4.5 Manure Management and Field Conditions

The Municipality has reviewed the manure management materials filed in support of the Poultry Proposal, including the designated spread field information and soil test data. The Municipality notes that several of the identified spread fields include drainage features, wetlands, or other characteristics that may influence field accessibility and nutrient management under certain seasonal conditions. The Municipality therefore seeks confirmation that the agricultural capability of the proposed spread lands, including any lands with wetness limitations, has been appropriately considered in the manure management planning.

In particular, the Municipality requests clarification respecting:

- whether any of the proposed spread fields are classified within agricultural capability subclasses associated with significant wetness limitations (including Classes 4W, 5W, or 6W), and how nutrient application will be managed on any such lands;
- what contingency measures are proposed in the event that weather or field conditions prevent incorporation of manure within the prescribed timeframe;
- whether baseline soil phosphorus levels across the designated fields have been fully accounted for in establishing application rates; and
- how temporary field storage of dry poultry manure will be managed to minimize the risk of runoff during snowmelt or high precipitation events.

The Municipality further seeks confirmation that appropriate setbacks, buffers, and operational practices will be maintained between spread areas and adjacent drains, ditches, and water features in accordance with provincial requirements and good agricultural practice.

#### 4.6 Municipal Road and Haul Considerations

The Municipality notes that manure generated from the proposed poultry operation will be transported to designated spread fields located in the surrounding region, including lands accessed via municipal road networks. The Municipality further notes that poultry litter is a dry material that may generate dust and that hauling activity may be concentrated during peak seasonal spreading periods.

In light of the above, the Municipality requests confirmation that anticipated hauling volumes, routing, and seasonal timing have been reviewed with affected municipalities and that appropriate operational measures will be implemented to manage potential impacts to local roads and adjacent land uses. Such measures may include, where appropriate, dust suppression practices, appropriate load securement, and coordination of hauling activities during peak periods.

#### 4.8 Additional Technical Considerations

The Municipality has also considered additional technical input respecting the Poultry Proposal and offers the following observations for the TRC's consideration.

The Municipality notes the importance of ensuring that nutrient management planning reflects site-specific conditions, including local topography, proximity to surface drainage features, and the cumulative nutrient profile of the Harbour Colony development at full build-out. In this regard, the Municipality requests confirmation that the proponent has appropriately considered phosphorus transport risk in addition to soil test levels when developing the manure management plan.

The Municipality further notes that manure hauling associated with the proposed poultry operation may involve the use of municipal roads within the region during peak spreading periods. The Municipality requests confirmation that anticipated hauling volumes and operational practices have been reviewed with affected municipalities to ensure that traffic, dust, and road use considerations are appropriately managed.

Finally, the Municipality requests confirmation that the proponent will continue to operate the facility in compliance with all applicable provincial requirements respecting manure handling, land application, and environmental protection, and that appropriate adaptive management measures will be implemented should site conditions or operational circumstances materially change.

For the assistance of the reviewing authority, the Municipality has appended a list of specific follow-up questions arising from its review of the materials filed in support of the Proposal. Those follow-up questions are set out at **Appendix A**. Written responses are requested in order to clarify the evident gaps and ensure that the servicing and planning assumptions underlying the Proposal are properly substantiated.

#### 5. Relationship to the Environment Act Process

Given the integrated nature of the Harbour Colony development and the reliance of the proposed livestock operation on the supporting wastewater and servicing infrastructure, the Municipality considers it appropriate that the TRC be satisfied that the various components of the development are proceeding on a coordinated and compatible basis.

Accordingly, the Municipality's position as set out in this submission is advanced on the understanding that the wastewater treatment system will obtain all required approvals under *The Environment Act* and will be constructed and operated in accordance with any conditions imposed through that process.

#### 6. Conclusion

The Municipality appreciates the opportunity to participate in the TRC process respecting the Harbour Colony Poultry Proposal. Based on the information presently available, the Municipality respectfully requests that the TRC consider the clarifications and questions

outlined above and in Appendix A while assessing the Poultry Proposal. The Municipality further requests that the TRC consider whether the operational plans are appropriate for the scale and integrated nature of the Harbour Colony development.

Subject to the foregoing, the Municipality thanks the TRC for the opportunity to provide input and would be pleased to respond to any questions arising from this submission.

Yours truly,

**TAYLOR McCaffrey LLP**

Per: 

**Kevin T. Williams, K.C.**

KTW/jk

## **Appendix A**

**Q1.** What are the specific Agricultural Capability Ratings (CLI) for the designated spread fields? Are any classified as 4W, 5W, or 6W (poorly drained), which the Manitoba Nutrient Management Regulation typically restricts for nutrient application?

**Q2.** In the event of an unseasonable spring flood or a "one-in-fifty-year" rain event, what is the contingency plan if the fields are too saturated to incorporate manure within the required 48-hour window?

**Q3.** The proposal mentions removing a Class 3 wetland (0.12 acres). Class 3 wetlands (seasonal ponds) are highly effective at trapping phosphorus during the spring melt. How will the loss of this natural "nutrient sink" be offset to prevent an increase in the net phosphorus export to the nearby Willow Creek and/or Lake Winnipeg?

**Q4.** Poultry manure has a significantly higher concentration of phosphorus than other livestock waste. Has a Phosphorus Index (P-Index) been calculated for the specific topography of the Husavik Road site and the locations for land application of poultry manure? This would account for the risk of Phosphorous transport based on slope and proximity to surface water, rather than just soil test levels.

**Q5.** What are the current baseline Phosphorous soil test levels for the proposed application fields? If levels already exceed the limit, will the colony commit to a "Phosphorous-removal" application rate (matching crop uptake) rather than a nitrogen-based rate?

**Q6.** The application states manure will be "plowed in" within 48 hours. Is there a requirement for immediate incorporation (e.g., within 24 hours) during high-risk periods to prevent volatilization and surface runoff?

**Q7.** The plan involves "field storage" of dry manure. How will these temporary piles be protected from snowmelt runoff? Will they be placed on high ground with a minimum setback from Order 1 or 2 drains that lead directly to the lake?

**Q8.** Will the colony maintain permanent vegetative buffers (grass strips) between the spread fields and the road ditches or creeks? Research shows that permanent vegetation is significantly more effective at trapping phosphorus than the standard 3-meter setback required by law.

**Q9.** How does the nutrient load from the 140,000-bird poultry operation interact with the proposed wastewater lagoon and abattoir for the 250-person colony? What is the total combined nutrient output for the entire property at full build-out?

**Q10.** Will the proponent install downstream monitoring wells or surface water sampling stations at the edge of the property to verify that nitrogen and phosphorus are not leaching into the local aquifer or drainage network?

The Harbour Colony proposal (TRC 12-120) indicates that manure will be transported to fields in the Rural Municipality of Gimli (“**Gimli**”), including areas near the Gimli Airport, Husavik Road, and Siglavik, MB.

**Q11.** Has a formal traffic impact study been conducted for the transport of 140,000 birds' worth of poultry litter annually? How many tandem or semi-truck trips will occur on Gimli's municipal roads (like Seagram or Husavik Rd) during the fall spreading window?

**Q12.** Will the proponent enter into a Road Use Agreement with the Gimli to cover the cost of accelerated road degradation caused by heavy hauling, even though the farm's tax base is in Armstrong?

**Q13.** Poultry litter is a dry, dusty product. What is the operational plan for dust suppression on gravel roads in Gimli when hauling through residential or airport zones?

**Q14.** Since the land slopes toward Lake Winnipeg (through Gimli), any drainage improvements made on the Armstrong site (to protect the barns from flooding) will increase the volume and velocity of water entering Gimli's culverts. Will the proponent pay a Drainage Levy to Gimli to upgrade downstream culverts?

**Q15.** The operation will draw significant groundwater (140,000 birds + 250 residents). Has a hydrogeological study confirmed that this draw won't interfere with the water table of neighboring residential wells in Gimli?

**Q16.** If residents in Siglavik, MB or Miklavik, MB report odor or illegal spreading during a flood, the By-law Enforcement or environmental reporting burden often falls on the local municipality (i.e Gimli) . Will the colony fund an independent third-party monitoring program for water quality in Willow Creek to remove the cost burden from the Gimli?