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Letters to the Editor by A. Shtern, Green Coalition

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Indoor farming?

As one of the participants at the CPTAQ hearings on the CP intermodal project I read the following statement from Columbia University Professor Dickson Despommier describing his concept of vertical indoor farming: "Imagine a city as a black hole where all matter is sucked in and disappears - nothing is produced and everything is consumed."

We as a society must ask ourselves what we really want and how we wish to build our communities. I appreciate that many have settled in the Suroit because they want to escape from the clutches of the cityscape and live in a more human setting and rural like environment. Yet the very fact of doing so increases the chances that the country like aspects will disappear over time. Highway 30, the CPR and Canadian Tire projects will hasten and enable this process and will push the vital issue of local food production and sustenance to the fore. They will spur more unsustainable commercial and residential development until not one farm or nursery is left. Vertical farming in high-rise structures may be the only practical solution.

The question remains why we have to remake the environment so completely. Can we not enjoy, breathe and experience what little remains of our natural and semi-natural surroundings? Does everything have to be so removed from nature and be so artificial, mechanical and synthetic?

Avrom Shtern

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