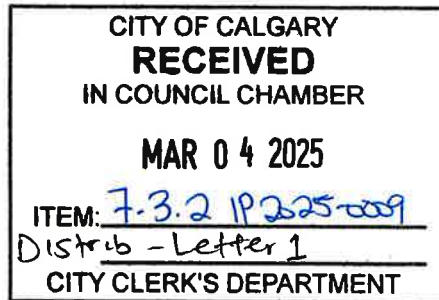


February 27, 2025



Laura-Marie Berg and
 Jean Lacroix
 1607-21A St. NW
 Calgary, Alberta
 T2N 2M7

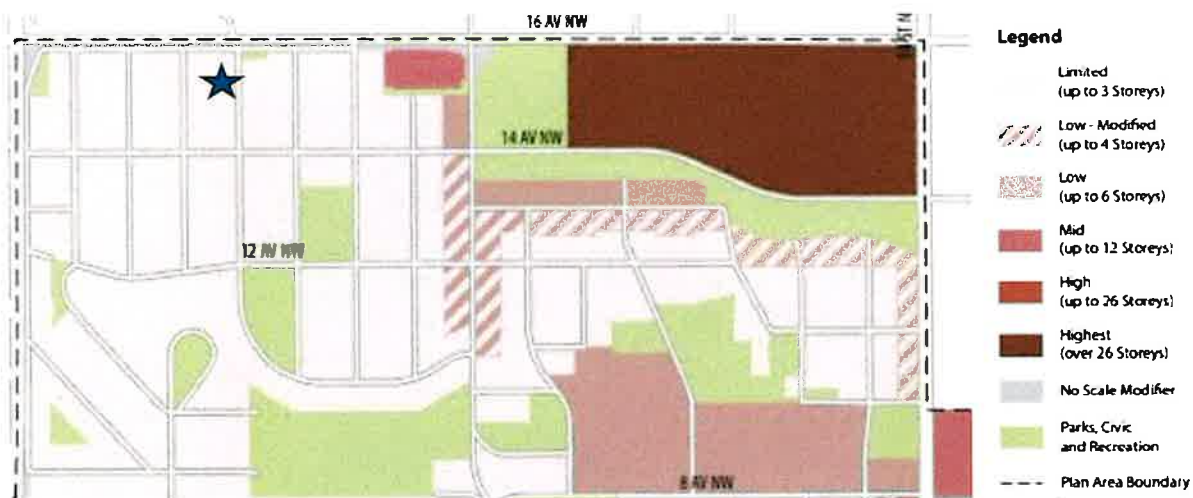
The City of Calgary Mayor and
 Councillors for Wards 1 to 14,

Via Email – themayor@calgary.ca, ward07@calgary.ca, ward01@calgary.ca, ward02@calgary.ca,
ward03@calgary.ca, ward04@calgary.ca, ward05@calgary.ca, ward06@calgary.ca,
ward08@calgary.ca, ward09@calgary.ca, ward10@calgary.ca, ward11@calgary.ca,
ward12@calgary.ca, ward13@calgary.ca, ward14@calgary.ca

Re: City of Calgary Council Hearing – March 4, 2024 – Riley Local Area Plan

I am writing on behalf of my husband and I to request that City Council reject the proposed Riley Local Area Plan (“**Current Riley LAP**”) that was put forward by City administration and revert to the plan that was presented to City Council on October 16, 2024, and distributed to the local communities in May, 2024 (the “**May 2024 Riley LAP**”). We understand that our local Community Association has put forward a similar proposal, with two other suggested amendments to address the concerns of elderly and disabled people in the Renaissance Building, and that new duplexes be built so they are adjoined to better fit into the existing community. We support these two additional amendments being incorporated.

The May 2024 Riley LAP was the result of over two years of community consultation and is set out in the map below. The location of our home is denoted by a blue star. In this submission, we will refer to the area north of 14th Avenue NW (and west of 19 Street NW) as “**North Briar Hill**”.

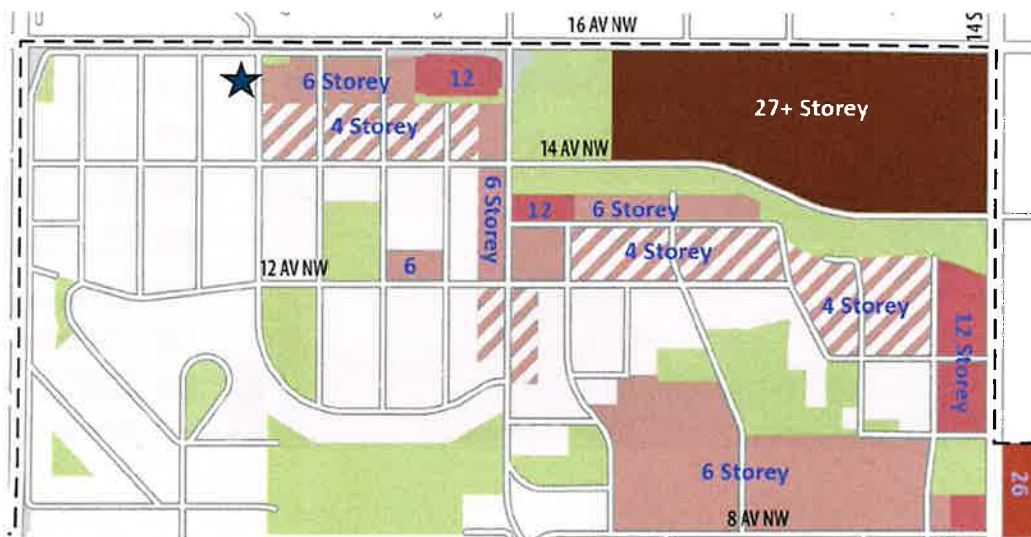


The May 2024 Riley LAP allowed developments up to three storeys in our immediate area of North Briar Hill. We were not concerned about those proposed changes because we are in favour of balanced density increases in our vicinity. We understood that as our part of the community in North Briar Hill is redeveloped, the three storey dwellings might consist of duplexes with secondary suites, and some row housing.

At the Council meeting on October 16, 2024, however, we understand that City administration was instructed to revise the May 2024 Riley LAP to further increase density, notwithstanding the extensive consultation that had occurred, and the fact that City administration believed that the May 2024 Riley LAP represented a balanced approach. City administration was provided until the end of the first quarter of 2025 to present a new proposal to the Infrastructure and Planning Committee (“**IPC**”), which could have allowed for further community engagement regarding suggested revisions. Instead the Current Riley LAP was drafted in less than two months, more than four months ahead of the deadline, with no further consultation with local residents. There were notification sessions, however these were scheduled immediately prior to Christmas between December 10 and 18, with only two online sessions offered in the evenings.

The invitations for these notification sessions did not give any indication of the massive changes that were made to the May 2024 Riley LAP, and had no link to maps which would illustrate the changes. Because the notification sessions occurred largely during the workdays, and were immediately prior to Christmas, we were not able to attend due to other commitments. We also assumed (incorrectly) that after two years of consultation, any further changes to the May 2024 Riley LAP would be relatively minor.

On January 4, 2025, after seeing a draft article for a community newsletter, we were shocked to learn that the Current Riley LAP incorporated drastic increases in both the density and the extent of our community that will be affected by this density. We now face the prospect of having six storey apartment buildings directly across the street from us. Below is a map of the Current Riley LAP, again with the location of our home denoted by a blue star.



We learned from our community association that the IPC meeting to consider these changes was being held on January 8, 2025. It is important to note that we needed to learn this from our community association, because no agenda was posted for the January 8, 2025 IPC meeting, and the City of Calgary website noted that the IPC meeting was to occur on Wednesday, January 10 (a screenshot taken on January 9 of the City of Calgary website is attached at **Appendix A** to this submission).

We wrote directly to the mayor and all councillors regarding this issue, because by the time we learned the extent of changes in the Current Riley LAP, the deadline for submitting documents for the January 8, 2025 IPC meeting had already passed.

We were not the only members of the community who were completely unaware of what had transpired in December. On January 7, 2025, I knocked on 60 doors north of 14th Avenue, between 20A Street and 22nd Street, where four storey and six storey buildings are proposed in the Current Riley LAP. About a third (over 20) people answered their doors, and only one person (who had also seen the draft community newsletter article) was aware of the massive changes that had recently been proposed in North Briar Hill.

We have two key concerns regarding the Current Riley LAP – the huge contrast between four and six storey buildings across the street from bungalows, and the complete lack of consultation and very poor notification for this massive proposed change to North Briar Hill.

Contrast Between Bungalows and Six Storey Buildings

Beginning with the first concern, the north side of 14th Avenue in Briar Hill consists largely of renovated and well-kept bungalows. A recent picture of our bungalow (brown house with red door) is set out below. The picture to the right is our view across the street, where the Current Riley LAP contemplates apartment buildings up to six stories high.



Our home (west side of 21A)



Planned area for 6 storey buildings across street

We intend to continue to live in our home through retirement – another 20 to 30 years. Our next-door neighbours have a young family and purchased their bungalow with the intent that it be their forever home. The young couple living next to our neighbours purchased their bungalow a few years

ago, also with the intent of living there long-term. Some of the bungalows in Briar Hill (particularly south of 14th Avenue) have been torn down, with large estate homes built in their place. It has been more common in North Briar Hill to see young families buying these more affordable bungalows and fixing them up to live there long-term. It must also be noted that in these bungalows the mature tree canopy is also maintained.

We emphasize again that we are not against increased density in our area and, with the recent changes to zoning, we expect bungalows to be replaced with multifamily structures up to three storeys – we welcome such a change. But the contrast between bungalows and a six-storey building across the street is too much. Even the City's own documents recognize that such sudden contrast is inappropriate, as noted below.

Municipal Development Plan

"Intensification should be accommodated within existing communities in a sensitive manner." (sec. 2.2.5)

"Respect the existing character of low-density residential areas...Ensure an appropriate transition of development intensity, uses and built form between areas of higher and lower intensity...Ensure infill development complements the established character of the area and does not create dramatic contrasts in the physical development pattern" (sec. 2.3.2)

"Recognize the predominantly low-density residential nature of Developed Residential Areas and support retention of housing stock, or moderate intensification in a form and nature that respects the scale and character of the neighbourhood." (sec.3.5.1)

"Buildings should maximize front door access to the street." (sec. 3.5.2)

TOD Guidelines and Implementation Strategy

"TOD Guidelines – Work with local communities. Built form should complement the local context"

"These TOD Policy Guidelines will respect existing stable communities."

"Ensure that building massing and shadowing impacts are minimized."

"Sensitive interface adjacent to existing residential."

Guide for Local Area Planning

"A local area plan supports communities experiencing redevelopment by outlining... a future land use concept for where and how new development can be integrated into the neighbourhood over time in a way that respects and enhances the existing context of the area."

"At all scales, redevelopment should consider existing context, parcel layout, building massing, and landscaping to sensitively integrate in the community."

"Retain existing healthy public (and private) trees and landscaping on, or adjacent to, development sites."

Lack of Consultation

I was attentive to the two years of consultation that occurred with the May 2024 Riley LAP up until its presentation to City Council in October 2024. While I reviewed maps and was aware of concerns raised elsewhere in my community, until seeing the draft newsletter on January 4, 2025, I did not see anything in my immediate local area that concerned me. In fact, I was in favour of the gradually increased density that would come with the redevelopment of the North Briar Hill area.

When it comes to consultation, I am of the view that it is the people who are most affected by developments who should be consulted and heard. While I empathized with concerns raised elsewhere in the Briar Hill and Hounsfield Heights community, I did not feel it was my place to speak on behalf of others who would be affected by proposed developments in their immediate areas.

In short, when City administration reviewed the public comments they heard over the past two years in their technical review following the October 16, 2024 referral, they would not have seen any comments from me, and I very much doubt that they would have seen many comments from others in North Briar Hill. That is because prior to the Current Riley LAP, we were not directly and adversely affected.

Consultation matters – and I cannot say it better than our Court of Appeal did in *Thomas v. Edmonton (City)*, 2016 ABCA 57 (at para 40):

(The Court's) conclusion is also supported in light of the compelling public policy justifications for community consultation. Community consultations exist for a reason. Process matters. Why? Because a fair process is the basis for public confidence in the legitimacy of all democratic processes, including those related to the planning and development of land.

While *Thomas* was a case involving the Edmonton Subdivision Appeal Board, the Court's comments on the fundamental purpose of consultation applies to all entities – including and especially City Councils and administration – who are engaged in development and planning.

There was no consultation on the Current Riley Plan. On the contrary, looking at this from outside the black box, it appears that the intent was to push these drastic density increases through quickly with as little community engagement as possible. How else can you explain a process that:

- Releases significant changes just before Christmas, months before such changes are required to be brought to IPC;
- Schedules notification sessions during a one-week period just prior to Christmas;
- Provides invitations to those notification sessions with no link to the changed map, and no indication of the extent of recent changes;
- Schedules public comments to be due during Christmas holidays; and

- Sets a public IPC meeting with no attached agenda (which is necessary for registration) and the wrong date listed on the City website?

My concerns were not allayed by my attendance at the IPC meeting on January 8, 2025, where I saw representatives of developers stand up and praise the Current Riley LAP and confirm under questioning that they had been consulted about the recent changes.

I also watched Councillor Wyness, who we understand directed City administration to develop the recent changes, turn her chair partially away from the speaker's podium, lean back with her face towards the ceiling – seemingly feigning sleep or boredom - while a member of our community was speaking about their concerns. It was shocking to witness a councillor behaving in such a way in a City Council chamber. Whether deliberate or not, that behaviour sent a message – that she does not care about what people in this community have to say about planning matters that will have a massive effect on them.

How can we have any confidence in City administration, City Council, and the Current Riley LAP when “consultation” looks like that?

The Current Riley LAP feels like an invitation to developers to bulldoze much of North Briar Hill and Hounsfield Heights.

We ask that City Council revert to the May 2024 Riley LAP.

Sincerely,

Laura-Marie Berg & Jean Lacroix

Calgary City Council Deputy Mayor Roster

List view

Monthly view

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Other Events

Day	Date	Time	Meeting name	Description	Location	Meeting room
Monday	Jan. 1		<u>Holiday.</u>			
Wednesday	Jan. 10	9:30 a.m.	<u>Infrastructure and Planning Committee</u>	Includes public presentation.	<u>Municipal Building</u>	Council Chamber
Thursday	Jan. 11	1 p.m.	<u>Calgary Planning Commission</u>		<u>Municipal Building</u>	Council Chamber
Tuesday	Jan. 16	9:30 a.m.	<u>Council meeting - Public hearing</u>	Public Hearing Council Meeting	<u>Municipal Building</u>	Council Chamber
Wednesday	Jan. 17	10:30 a.m.	<u>Nominations Committee</u>	UPDATED - New meeting	<u>Historic City Hall</u>	Engineering Traditions Committee Room
Thursday	Jan. 18	9:30 a.m.	<u>Audit Committee</u>		<u>Historic City Hall</u>	Engineering Traditions Committee Room



Search

