

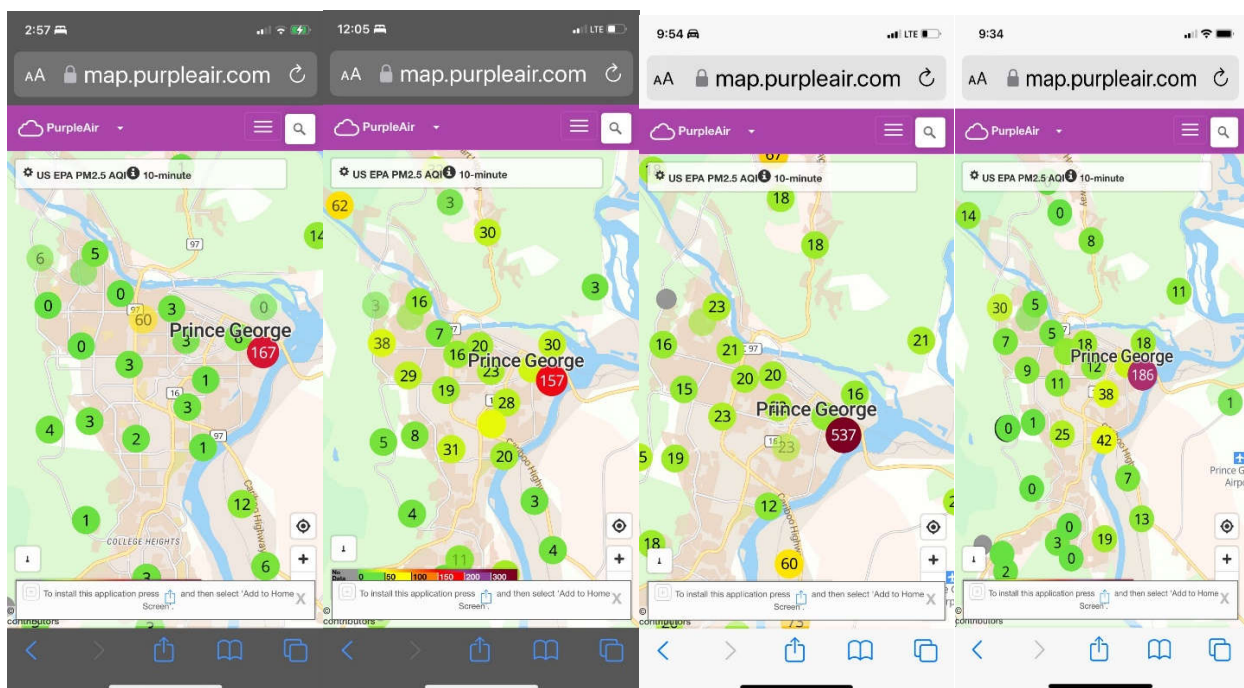
April 15, 2024

Dear City Staff, Mayor and Council members,

I just wanted to email you all to say thank you for hearing the issues that we, the Millar Addition neighborhood, are facing, and for the open discussion that took place at the recent April 8, 2024 Council meeting. We appreciate the fact that the citizens of the Millar Addition are being heard and we are hopeful that action can be taken soon to address the following primary issues related to the Lower Patricia Encampment's effects on our neighborhood:

### **1. Wood smoke and other toxic air pollution in the Millar Addition resulting from burning in the Lower Patricia Encampment**

This is the primary issue for me, my family, and for all of the neighbors I have spoken with in our neighborhood. The health effects resulting from the open burning that is taking place in the encampment will have a long lasting effect on our neighborhood residents. The health effects of PM2.5 are well documented and formed the basis of the City of Prince George's Community Wood Smoke Reduction Program (CWSRP) in 2008. Dr. Marie Hay (medical doctor) has also clearly outlined the negative effects of PM2.5 on health in her many letters to the Mayor and Council. Our neighborhood Purple Air monitor on Upper Patricia Boulevard (installed by Peter Jackson at UNBC in 2018) has never seen the sustained or peak levels of PM2.5 air pollution as it has since the Lower Patricia encampment came to existence - ask the residents who have lived here for over 20 years and look at the Purple Air monitor data regularly, and live with this air pollution daily. It is not uncommon for the PM2.5 levels in the Millar Addition to exceed the worst days of the wildfires experienced last summer, while all the other air monitors in the PG bowl read fractions of what the Upper Patricia monitor reads. How can our families be expected to live in this?



Snapshots of Upper Patricia Purple Air Monitor data (we have hundreds more like this) showing Air Quality Index. See next page for legend.

## Purple Air Monitor AQI (Air Quality Index) color coded Index

Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

The above index indicates that the Millar Addition neighborhood regularly experiences Red/Purple/Maroon health effects (AQI 151 and higher) as a result of the burning and fires in the Lower Patricia encampment. It can be seen from the above snapshots and hundreds of others, that while the bowl and other areas of Prince George on in the green AQI zone, the Millar Addition is consistently in the Red and above zone. This is not the result of industrial or other pollution, or else other monitors would be reading the same or similar levels.

It is well researched and documented that PM2.5 air pollution affects children, the elderly and those with underlying health problems the worst.

In light of this, it is important to note that in addition to neighborhood families and citizens, the Millar Addition is also home to:

- Sacred Heart Elementary school (children aged 5-12)
- Sacred Heart daycare/afterschool care (children aged 3-8)
- Le Cercle des Canadiens Francais de Prince George – Le Coin des Petits pre-kindergarten preschool program (children aged 3-5)
- Le Cercle des Canadiens Francais de Prince George – seniors and retirees services and workshops
- New Lheidli T'enneh Childcare Center – (75 children ages toddler and up)
- YMCA daycare 2-3 blocks west of the encampment

Clean air in Canada is a basic right and our neighborhood demands something be done immediately to stop this known source of dirty air from blanketing our neighborhood, our families, and everyone who breathes in the Millar Addition and the bowl area below it.

The photos below are typical of what we see on a daily/weekly basis resulting from either regular burning or structure fires in the Lower Patricia encampment.



Taken from City Hall 5<sup>th</sup> Floor – March 26, 2024 – notice smoke hanging over Millar Addition



Lower Patricia encampment – March 27, 2024 – open burning smoke, typical



Lower Patricia encampment – April 10, 2024 – looks like this often in the mornings



## **2. Wildfire risk to the Millar Addition resulting from burning in the Lower Patricia Encampment**

There have been numerous structure fires in the Lower Patricia encampment, both small and large, which not only lead to toxic air pollution in the PG Bowl and the Millar Addition neighborhood but also cause significant wildfire risk. The sloped embankment above the Lower Patricia encampment is forested and covered in dry brush. The large structure fire on March 28/24 caused the plume of black smoke to carry hot debris and sparks/embers up the embankment, across Upper Patricia Blvd, and onto cedar trees, yards and houses nearby.

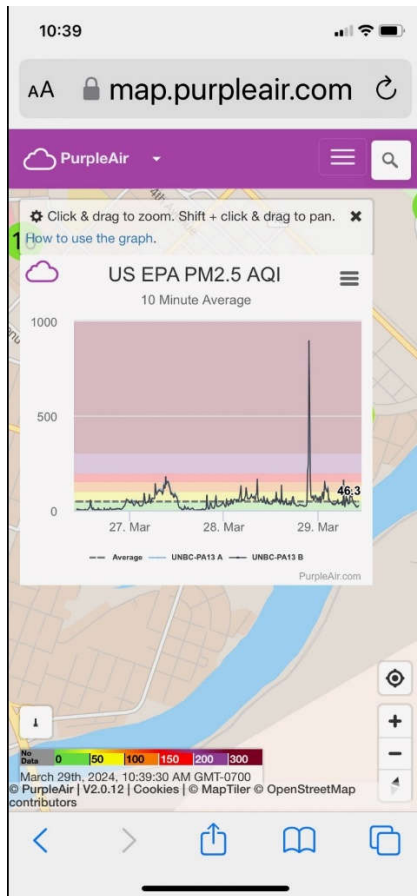


Structure fire – March 28, 2024 – Upper Patricia, embers landed on nearby houses/yards/trees



Structure fire – March 28, 2024 – Upper Patricia smoke blanketing neighborhood to the park

Below is the Upper Patricia Purple Air monitor PM2.5 summary from the March 28, 2024 structure fire – note that it peaks at around 900 on the Air Quality Index! For reference, the worst wildfire days last year were around 200-250.



The above photos of the March 28/24 encampment structure fire taken on Upper Patricia Blvd are by no means the only major fire that has occurred as a result of burning in the Lower Patricia encampment. I question what would happen if this fire took place during August or September of a drought year? The risk from burning in the encampment leading to encampment structure fires leading to Millar Addition neighborhood fires is real and could be catastrophic.

Proactive neighborhood wildfire protection is being encouraged by all levels of government to prevent the escalation of fires -- why is this scenario being treated so differently when it is a much higher known risk? Our neighborhood expects change to avoid what we fear is a high risk fire hazard.

### **3. Increased crime in the Millar Addition coinciding with arrival of Lower Patricia Encampment**

If you talk to almost any citizen of the Millar Addition, they can recount instances of how increased crime (since the Lower Patricia encampment came into existence) has affected them. We are experiencing the typical vandalism and theft that many other areas are also experiencing, but our neighborhood is also experiencing much more frightening experiences ranging from our children riding bikes and being chased down neighborhood trails because they were being threatened with their bikes being stolen, to naked, drug-high individuals chasing a lady neighbor, requiring another neighbor to come to her defence, to neighbors entering their outbuildings to find blood, gore, needles and other drug paraphernalia left behind, to residents being pepper sprayed by encampment residents.....the list is long and supported by police files. As a resident of the Millar Addition for over 20 years, I, and other neighbors, can attest that we never had to deal with any of these terrible experiences prior to the arrival of the Lower Patricia encampment. Our citizens expect to be able to live without the constant fear of these types of crimes.

### **4. Temporary BC Housing modular housing project - 3rd and London**

No person should have to live in the conditions currently being experienced in the Lower Patricia encampment - the trash, filth, human excrement, rats, mice, violence etc etc. There is no maximum security prison in all of North America I doubt, that would ask anyone to live in these conditions, and yet somehow the Province of BC expects this to be okay in Prince George.



March 26, 2024 picture of small portion of the encampment living conditions

I, and all of the neighbors that I have spoken to, feel that the proposed temporary BC Housing project (with electric heat and no fires) is a positive step, **BUT ONLY IF** it coincides with the closing, clearing and fencing off of the existing Lower Patricia encampment so that it can no longer be used for tents, structures, occupancy, burning etc. If the encampment is allowed to remain, this BC Housing Project would simply become an extension of the encampment, and all of the above concerns of the neighborhood, as well as the abhorrent living conditions for the encampment residents, would remain. The Millar Addition residents that I have spoken to **STRONGLY** oppose the granting of the temporary use permit by the City of Prince George to BC Housing **UNLESS** it is legally tied to the closing of the encampment for good.

The encampment is not a place any human should have to live. The City of Prince George, the Province of BC and BC Housing can do better, and they need to do better. With over 200 new housing units coming online by this summer, we expect that the 35 encampment residents (as per latest RCMP update I believe) be found proper suitable housing, with proper heating, water, food and services. Clean up and close the Lower Patricia encampment so that nobody has to live like that again, or experience the effects of it.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. The Millar Addition neighborhood is looking forward to discussing the above concerns with the City of Prince George, the Province of BC and BC Housing at a date in the very near future.

Yours truly,

**\*redacted**

Eduard Hausot  
Millar Addition resident, 20+ years