

March 17, 2025

RE: OCP, Ginter's and Urban Forests

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding Ginter's Field and the potential impacts the Official Community Plan (OCP) may have on our community. As you know, part of what makes our community so special are the forests and the access we have to these natural spaces. The more we encroach upon these areas, the more we risk losing what makes our community unique. It is my sincerest hope that Mayor and Council members can 'zoom out' and see the bigger picture and longer-term impacts if we were to lose and/or drastically change such special and important places.

I am not "anti-development," but I believe there are smarter and more thoughtful ways to approach growth. It's disheartening to see ongoing development that feels out of touch with the financial realities of most residents and disconnected from the current state of the world. I recall attending a community engagement forum at Westwood Elementary School over 20 years ago, discussing a community plan. Now, all these years later, we are still grappling with many of the same issues—how to protect and preserve urban forests in the OCP, particularly areas like Ginter's Green and Moore's Meadow, and how to make Prince George more walkable and accessible for everyone. I understand that the OCP is a living document, designed to evolve, but when will we reach a point where we can take a collective sigh of relief, knowing that certain areas are truly protected for future generations?

I understand many of my points reflect the concerns brought forward by the Ginter's Forever Group. I was happy to see that the roads through Ginter's, including the Foothills extension to 22nd, were removed from the OCP. However, I am still concerned of how Ginter's Green is protected in the plan and how Mayor and Council will protect Ginter's. I have borrowed from the Ginter's Forever group. Specifically, in regard to the following points:

1. Designation of the Massey to Ferry Right-of-Way

The Future Land Use Schedule currently retains the grey right-of-way from Massey to Ferry, rather than designating it as a park. We request that this area be officially designated as parkland in the Future Land Use Schedule, and that a plan be put in place to rezone the necessary properties to P1 (Public Use).

2. Removal of Properties 015 070 531 and 015 069 815 from the Urban Containment Boundary

The properties for sale—015 070 531 and 015 069 815—are central to the Ginter's Green Forever initiative. We strongly believe these properties should be removed from the Urban Containment Boundary. While these lands are privately owned, they are an integral part of the Ginter's Green area. The terrain consists of steep slopes, excessive seepage, and runoff most of the year, making it unsuitable for urban development. Development here poses substantial risks, including potential erosion and damage, which we have seen in other BC communities where similar developments have led to catastrophic consequences, such as landslides and fatalities. Additionally, Ginter's Green was established after a home was

literally swept off its foundation, which underscores the inherent risks of development in this area.

If these properties remain within the Urban Containment Boundary, Ginter's Green will always be at risk for future development. Since the properties are currently designated as Rural Resource in the Future Land Use Schedule, it seems like a reasonable request to remove them from the Urban Containment Boundary to ensure their long-term preservation.

3. Long-Term Vision for Ginter's Green

To secure a lasting vision for the area, it is important that the current Mayor and Council Members commit to preserving Ginter's. Many community members are asking, "Haven't we protected it yet?" With the removal of the roads, the rezoning of the right-of-way, and the removal of the aforementioned properties from the Urban Containment Boundary, we could confidently say, "Yes, Ginter's is protected." This would be a tremendous legacy for the future of Prince George.

Thank you for considering my letter. I am hopeful that you will listen to the public and their concerns, and that we can ensure the protection of these natural spaces. What makes Prince George unique and special is worth preserving, and I hope that, at tonight's meeting, these voices will be heard and genuinely considered.

Sincerely,

Kristi Francis, Concerned Citizen
1705 3rd Ave