
Subject: FW: Opposition to Urban Sprawl and Future Land Use Plans Surrounding Shane Lake

From: Meika Schreiner **Redacted**
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 6:06 PM
To: Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@princegeorge.ca>; cityclerk <cityclerk@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: Opposition to Urban Sprawl and Future Land Use Plans Surrounding Shane Lake

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Redacted

Good evening,

I hope this letter reaches those who genuinely care for the well-being of the citizens they serve.

I am writing to raise my concerns about the proposed urban sprawl and future land use plans surrounding Ginter's Green, Forests For the World, and Tyner Blvd. I respectfully urge that these plans be reconsidered and not pursued further.

This area holds immense value to the residents of Prince George, myself included. They hold benefits from emotional and mental health benefits to tourism and economic benefits from the way the area is being used currently. I often use the trails in this region to walk my dogs and find solace in nature. It offers a peaceful escape close to PG where one can enjoy the forest's sights, sounds, and fragrances. Its proximity makes it ideal for walks at any time of day and is a rare feature in any large city, why remove it? It could be the Stanley or Central Park of Prince George, yet this OCP amendment is trying to destroy that.

Historically, Prince George has been cherished for its plentiful green spaces, but these are gradually disappearing. Green spaces provide numerous benefits to our community. They foster mental well-being by offering a tranquil retreat from daily stresses, promoting physical activity, and connecting individuals with nature. They also have financial benefits, such as increasing property values, supporting local tourism, and reducing healthcare costs by encouraging healthier lifestyles. Furthermore, green spaces contribute to better air and water quality, which positively impacts public health. The continued push for urban sprawl threatens to erase these invaluable advantages.

Urban sprawl in Canada has significant consequences. It often leads to the loss of farmland, wetlands, and wildlife habitats, which are critical for biodiversity and environmental health. Sprawl also increases car dependency, contributing to higher greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution; PG struggles with air pollution as it stands currently. Additionally, the expansion of urban boundaries places a strain on municipal resources, as new infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and public services must be developed, often at a high cost, while we are barely meeting if not exceeding budgets currently. For example, studies have shown that low-density suburban developments can increase infrastructure costs by up to 30% compared to higher-density urban areas. These challenges highlight the need for sustainable and thoughtful urban planning.

While taxes rise, wages remain stagnant, leaving many of us struggling to manage inflation and tax burdens. Adding new developments will only increase these pressures. Our city's aging infrastructure is already under strain, with frequent water main breaks and significant maintenance challenges. City workers are stretched thin addressing these issues. It seems impractical to develop new neighborhoods in critical wildlife habitats when we are struggling to maintain the current infrastructure. The "raise taxes" approach is unsustainable.

Past city planning anticipated a population growth that has yet to materialize. With the decline of the forestry industry and the closure of mills, it is unclear who will occupy these proposed homes. While there is a growing call for more housing, particularly affordable housing, the focus should be on building in areas with existing infrastructure or creating more areas with multi-use developments, rather than constructing high-cost homes; this is not the need the city is demanding.

Additionally, the proposed area presents challenges such as steep terrain and significant water retention, which increase costs and pose stability risks. Building in flatter, more suitable areas with reliable infrastructure would be far more practical.

I urge the city to act thoughtfully and prioritize the well-being of its citizens. This area should remain green and accessible, supporting the physical and mental health of hundreds of residents who use it for recreation. The environmental and wildlife significance of this space must be respected and preserved over financial incentives. Green spaces are essential for fostering a healthy, sustainable, and prosperous community, and their protection should be a priority.

Please reconsider the urban sprawl plans and place the needs of the community above all else. Protecting our green spaces and avoiding additional tax burdens should be the priority.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this matter and i hope this amendment is rescinded.

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