

On behalf of the Varsity View Community Association we would like to object to rezoning for a highrise at College and Clarence for the following reasons:

The approval process was inadequate.

The Planning Department only circulated notice of the rezoning request to houses within 75 meters of the proposed development. In reality, a Highrise affects residents throughout the entire neighborhood and individual notices should have been sent to all these Taxpayers.

The notices themselves and the presentation at the Community meeting did not adequately describe all the ways in which this development would affect the neighborhood. Specifically, there was no mention in the notice to Taxpayers or in the presentation that the building requires a smaller setback than allowed under current zoning. According to City Planners this was intentional. However, it means that the Community did not get a chance to appreciate and comment on this aspect of the development.

Both the Developer and the Planning Department agree that advice was given about the construction of this building. However, the Planning Department lacks mechanisms to provide transparency regarding the number, timing, and content of their meetings with the developers. There is no mechanism to separate advice about the framing of the proposal from evaluation of the proposal. A situation where advice and evaluation are carried out by the same people and may lead to bias.

The Community was not given Access to Supporting Studies

Although traffic studies were conducted by the developer, the Community was not given access to their contents. It was only after considerable questioning that the Planning Department realized that the Traffic Study could not make a prediction about the affect of the proposed Highrise on the length of a journey from Varsity View to the Downtown (See emails lines 536 to 541 and Note 1). There are likely other inadequacies and relevant facts in the study that should be made public, these include the potential for less congestion if the building was built on the west side of the river.

No Formal Drainage Study was Undertaken

At the Community meeting several residents expressed concern about back up of storm sewers in the Varsity View neighborhood. The builders indicated that the high rise would trap storm water on the roof and gradually introduce it to storm sewers. However, the problem of surface water drainage was not addressed, this includes the flow of water from newly paved laneways and driveways. At the present time, water landing on the undeveloped site drains into the ground along with water from neighboring houses that drain water in this general direction. When the surface is paved, runoff will be much faster and will add to the burden on the storm sewers. The planning department gives inconsistent explanations as to why this might not be a problem. One is that as flow through storm sewers is towards the river, upstream properties would not be affected (emails lines 330 to 331). However, the Community Association believes that if additional water downstream fills the sewer then upstream water will drain more slowly and will back up more.

### The Building's Height is not Consistent with Current or Proposed Height Restrictions

The land is currently zoned for 3 and 4 storey construction. At the Come and Grow public consultation in 2018, images suggested that 2-6 storey buildings would be built along College, (Note 2, emails lines 282 to 298). The proposed development does not respect either guideline.

### The Proposed Setback Limits Future Road Improvements

Under current zoning, the setback from College is 6 m. The proposal calls for a front setback of 2.1 m. This was deemed a minor detail by City Planning so was not specifically highlighted in either the notices to the Community or in the Developer's talk (emails lines 140 to 153). The City Planning Department justifies this as being a minor detail and promoting a sense of 'pedestrian comfort' (emails lines 195 to 197). However, the Community feels that broad open walk spaces promote a sense of comfort (think of Paris). Public Health studies show that crime is reduced by the presence of a tree canopy (Note 3). Good tree cover is more likely with greater setbacks. We are also concerned that BRT plans call for a widening of College to accommodate a bus lane. At present, this is proposed to occur by taking land on the North (University) side. Some of this land is University owned. As approval has not yet been given by the University it would seem appropriate to hold off on reduced setbacks until this is sorted out.

The proposed building will stand for a hundred years. Again, future road improvements may call for road widening and expropriation of land for this purpose. If this building is built with reduced setbacks it will stop all road widening opportunities on the North side. The Community believes it would be more appropriate to maintain the current 6 m. setback in case it is needed for future road, pedestrian, or cycle improvements.

### A Highrise will Contribute to Crime, Social Isolation and Increased Taxation in Future Years

Public Health studies show that population density, and particularly Highrises, contribute to crime (Note3). The planning department acknowledges that zoning and density increase the risk of crime but believes it is beyond their scope to use this information to plan for crime reduction (emails lines 307 to 313). The Community believes that planning should take crime reduction into account for both safety and taxation (increased policing cost reasons).

### The Affect of this Highrise on Future growth is Unknown.

All the studies around the current proposal are concerned with the affect of this one extra Highrise on the current situation. The studies do not account for the combined affects of this Highrise and buildings that have currently been approved in principal but not yet built. Specifically, further infill is expected in Varsity View as houses are torn down and replaced with two houses, sometimes with accompanying garage suites. Also, College Quarter is approved but a substantial amount of housing remains to be built. The Community Association has asked for clarity on whether current water supply can meet all these needs (emails lines 757 to 777) and has not received a reply from the City. Similarly, there is no assurance that storm water drainage will be adequate for all these needs. The Community suggests that non-conforming project are rejected and that a development plan that takes a holistic look at crime, water supply, water drainage and traffic flow is devised.

## The Affect on Community Development

### Density

Varsity View has a high building density, 15.4 units per hectare compared with a city wide average of 11 units/ hectare. Varsity View continues to grow as older buildings are replaced with duplexes, lots are subdivide and garage suites added. This growth is planned. In addition, Varsity View is renovating and replacing old housing stock. This investment requires certainty about the future shape of the neighborhood. It also requires certainty that the existing water and storm sewage capacities will be adequate for future development. All these items are achieved through planning and conforming development. Planned growth is much more likely to be of long term benefit to the City because it allows a holistic approach to crime reduction and the availability of utilities and social services.

## **NOTE 1: TRAFFIC FLOW CALCULATIONS**

The traffic flow calculations submitted by the developer indicate that the proposed highrise would have a negligible affect on the delay at the intersection of College and Clarence. It is implied that this means there will be little affect on traffic flow.


Intersection delay is not a meaningful measure of additional congestion. If you think about queuing at a busy supermarket, the number of people in the store does not affect the time that it takes for one person to go through the checkout. However, the time that it will take you to reach the checkout is directly influenced by the number of people in the store because it influences the length of the queue.

When College is busy, e.g. during rush hour. Additional vehicles from the Highrise will not affect the time it takes one vehicle to cross the intersection. A finding confirmed by the developer's traffic survey. The City's planners confirm that the traffic survey does not address the issue of travel time. It is thus meaningless to the Residents of Saskatoon who are interested in the affects of the Highrise on travel time. I calculater, the additional vehicles from the development will increase the length of the queue and may add up to 30 seconds to travel time each way See attached emails lines 465 to 535.


Note 2: Likely height of new buildings along Corridors as presented at Come and Gro, 2018.

CORRIDOR PLANNING PROGRAM

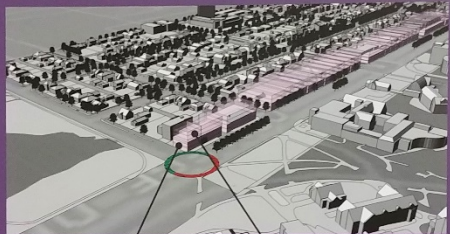
# College Dr & Cumberland Ave



**EXISTING CONDITION**



**POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY**



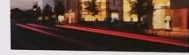




**Growth Plan to Half a Million:**

- up to 15% of future population growth along corridors
- between 11,000 and 22,000 new dwelling units along corridors

**LOWER GROWTH TARGET (2-4 STOREYS)**

**HIGHER GROWTH TARGET (4-6 STOREYS)**

**CURRENT ZONING MAXIMUM (FLOOR AREA)**



College Dr – looking west @ Cumberland Ave

City of Saskatoon  
saskatoon.ca/engage

Plan for **GROWTH**

Note 3. Abstract from “Neighborhood Interventions to Reduce Violence.” By Kondo MC, Andreyeva E, South EC, MacDonald JM, Branas CC. Annual Review of Public Health. 2018 Apr 1;39:253-271.

doi: 10.1146/annurev-publhealth-040617-014600. Epub 2018 Jan 12.

Violence is a widespread problem that affects the physical, mental, and social health of individuals and communities. Violence comes with an immense economic cost to its victims and society at large. Although violence interventions have traditionally targeted individuals, changes to the built environment in places where violence occurs show promise as practical, sustainable, and high-impact preventive measures. This review examines studies that use quasi-experimental or experimental designs to compare violence outcomes for treatment and control groups before and after a change is implemented in the built environment. The most consistent evidence exists in the realm of housing and blight remediation of buildings and land. High poverty, population turnover, population density, and low social cohesion increase the risk of violence. High density public housing is considered the most significant urban planning disaster of the 20th Century. Demolition of high density public housing reduces violent crime on a City wide basis. Some evidence suggests that reducing alcohol availability, improving street connectivity, and providing green housing environments can reduce violent crimes. Finally, studies suggest that neither transit changes nor school openings affect community violence.