

February 28th, 2024

Mayor and Council
City of Burnaby
% Legislative Services
4949 Canada Way, Burnaby V5G 1M2

VIA EMAIL: legislativeservices@burnaby.ca

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you on behalf of a newly formed group of residents in the Brentwood Park neighbourhood who are concerned about the future of our community. We call ourselves “**Save Brentwood Park**”. Through grassroots efforts over the past few weeks, we have begun organizing our community and have so far identified, in a very short time, dozens of households who share a common concern for several external threats to our treasured neighbourhood. In the immediate future, we are holding a Town hall meeting to gather additional feedback from our community. We expect the number of concerned households to swell further and comfortably expect the whole neighbourhood to be engaged. We will also be preparing a petition across Brentwood Park’s 700+ homes and other admirers of Brentwood Park to demonstrate our commitment to preserving our neighbourhood.

As you may know, Brentwood Park is unique and special among Burnaby subdivisions, on account of its urban design dating back to the early 1950’s. Brentwood Park has a rich history where generations of families have made this community their home, and neighbours know each other by name. The centrepiece is a park and elementary school and from that, concentric circles of streets radiate outwards that encourage residents to walk, jog, and cycle about the neighborhood. Churches, childcare facilities and nearby Beecher Creek Park round out the other noteworthy features of this closely knit community. The suffix “lawn” (example, Brentlawn, Midlawn, Highlawn, etc.) is common to almost all of the streets in Brentwood Park. Together, these features give Brentwood Park a unique identity and a distinctive character, creating a low-crime community that is exceptionally cohesive, active and neighbourly. Brentwood Park works incredibly well and we strongly believe that it is worth preserving and is worth a second look by our municipal government. It is a marvelous urban form which has been remarkably resilient in the context of all the forces of change currently at play in Burnaby.

The following two threats to our community have evoked a consistent level of dismay and concern among residents:

1. Shape’s expansionary plans for its The Amazing Brentwood (TAB) development
2. The provincial government’s Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Area regulations

On (1) above, we believe this to be the most pressing threat to Brentwood Park and it is under the immediate purview of Mayor and Council. Virtually all neighbours we have talked to were unaware of ongoing modifications to Shape’s TAB development. That said, we are now organized and laser-focused on staying on top of future developments. It is clearly a top priority of this citizen group, **Save Brentwood Park**, that its concerns be articulated within and outside of the City’s approval processes, and be shared with numerous stakeholders in the community,

including Shape and the City of Burnaby. The community at large will be privy to the efforts that the residents of Brentwood Park will be expending to protect our beloved neighbourhood.

Our primary concern about TAB's plans for more and higher towers:

The existing TAB towers have already cast much of Brentwood Park into shadows at certain times of day and blocked out precious sky-light, and Shape's revised plans with mega towers will significantly increase shadows and eliminate more visibility of the southern skies for even more residents:

- Shape is proposing an absurd wall of towers along TAB's northern border, which has the highest existing grade of the property and is immediately adjacent to Brentwood Park. As we understand it, heights for towers T9, T11, T12 and T13 are being increased from 25 stories to up to 60 stories (see plan below). This will have a significant impact on the livability of our neighbourhood by destroying our southern horizon and exposure to natural daylight. To understand what impact this will have on the residents of Brentwood Park, you only need to drive westbound on Lougheed Highway from Holdom Avenue, and look up at the commonly-cited wall of four Concord Brentwood towers located between Delta and Beta Avenue that leave no sliver of daylight between them - wretched urban canyons personified.



- The proposed new mega towers in the centre of the Shape property, as much as 70-80 stories high, are completely absurd and out of touch. This is not New York City nor Toronto even, and it is preposterous in the context of a suburban town centre in a major seismic zone. Not even in downtown Vancouver would ruining view corridors and casting shadows of that magnitude over its citizens ever be considered acceptable. Residential towers of these heights are nearly impossible to find in the seismic zones to the south of us (e.g., Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles) - and for a very good reason.

The design concept for the original Brentwood Town Centre Master Plan (2012) is for the tallest towers to be at or near the Skytrain station, with a cascade of lower height buildings as one

moves away from the station and towards the residential homes of Brentwood Park north and east of the Shape property. Thus, any new towers should be lower than the three existing towers. The new plan now proposes the opposite, with skyscrapers in the centre of the property and along the north and east edges of the Shape property.

The residents of Brentwood Park have tolerated a decade of construction by Shape already, and the loss of horizon and natural skylight and emergence of shadows has not been welcomed, only tolerated. In contrast, we have also welcomed visits from our new condo tower neighbours on their many walks through our neighbourhood. It's only reinforced its unique qualities that we uphold elsewhere in this letter. **We've been good, patient, tolerant neighbours, but Shape's proposed amendment to the original Brentwood Town Centre Master Plan shows complete disregard for the wellness and welfare of present and future Brentwood Park residents.**

Consequently, we have the following asks of Burnaby's Mayor and Council:

- Please cease any further approvals related to the TAB development re-application until Council has actively taken into consideration the concerns of all Brentwood Park residents and other members of our delegation.
- Please assign to **Save Brentwood Park**, a City of Burnaby liaison who can provide us with all current and future applications from Shape in relation to TAB *in advance*, and keep us apprised of any and all upcoming hearings related specifically to THE AMAZING BRENTWOOD so our voice can be rightfully heard on a timely basis at each and every opportunity.

On (2) above, a separate letter will be forthcoming. There, we will be calling for TOD areas to be applied with nuance and sensitivity to existing great neighbourhoods that work (like Brentwood Park), and that allow for re-distribution of desired densities within a TOD area's outer ring. In other words, the City should have the latitude to compensate with greater density in one area of a TOD ring (e.g., Carter GM site or BOSA west of Willingdon) to offset reasonable exempted areas elsewhere within the ring (e.g., Brentwood Park neighbourhood). The current application of TOD areas is rudimentary, and completely casts disregard upon existing well-planned, cohesive neighbourhoods that are rich in history and unique in character, and add to the City's vibrance and landscape. One size does not fit all. Once this amazing neighbourhood is gone, the City will never be able to bring it back.

We strongly believe any changes to the Official Community Plan (OCP) should exempt the application of TOD density quotas to the Brentwood Park residential neighbourhood, with an acknowledgment that the extreme skyscraper density already envisioned in and around the Lougheed & Willingdon intersection will be more than sufficient for this TOD area especially given the finite capacities of the Skytrain system, infrastructure and community services. By all measures, the Brentwood Town Centre TOD area will be the most populous and dense of TOD areas in the Lower Mainland, save perhaps downtown Vancouver and Metrotown, even with Brentwood Park preserved. So everyone wins!

We would like the City of Burnaby to acknowledge the unique character of Brentwood Park and consider being a co-advocate for its preservation. Brentwood Park residents would welcome an opportunity for Mayor and Council to join us for a walkabout through our neighbourhood so that you can feel for yourself how special we believe our community is and to understand why Brentwood Park residents are so passionately willing to fight to preserve it.

Thank you for your kind consideration of these matters and we look forward to working with you to help preserve Brentwood Park as a cultural and civic asset, as *a beloved Burnaby neighbourhood that simply works*, and can co-exist with current housing and land use policy.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Pereira

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Email: Redacted as per FOIPPA Section 22

cc Janet Routledge, MLA, Burnaby North (Janet.Routledge.mla@leg.bc.ca)

cc Terry Beech, MP, Burnaby-Seymour (terry.beech@parl.gc.ca)