

Your Worship and Council Members:

My name is Jeanne Kimber. I have lived in Highland Park since 1985 and am the current President of the Community Association. I have been involved in Guidebook engagement the past 1 ½ - 2 years

As stated in my letter to Council, our Community supports the Guidebook. It has been developed in tandem with the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan. These two documents have been developed through a reciprocal and iterative process over the past several years.

The Guidebook sets out a framework for the creation of future local area plans. It establishes categories and category modifiers that can be applied and described throughout the city in a consistent manner. The framework is comprehensible – clearly differentiating broad conceptual categories that are already familiar to us, such as residential, commercial or industrial areas.

The Guidebook only applies to an area when a new local area plan is being developed. It does not change any existing zoning, contrary to what some recent media would have us believe.

I understand the anxiety that somehow the Guidebook sets the stage for precipitous and unwanted change in a community. But change is very much market driven. Highland Park, with its 1950's housing stock of bungalows is a prime market for redevelopment opportunities. Demolishing my small post-war bungalow and building a modern semi-detached is more economically viable than it would be in communities where the selling price of a house far exceeds the market value of my home. And to be honest, the redevelopment of Highland Park staves off the general deterioration that was starting to occur some 20 or so years ago. Our community has been reinvigorated with new young families moving in, which also helps keep the public school open.

To reject the Guidebook is to toss out the window the past few years of time and effort expended by local volunteer residents, community associations, and members of the business community who all provided input to the city staff. The Guidebook is not absolutely perfect – we understand that. There will be improvements made over time. We do want to see a clearly defined refresh cycle, and we agree with others that the Land Use Bylaw needs to be reviewed, revised and tied to the Guidebook's Urban Form Categories. I also believe that communities need to have some flexibility about which land uses might be tied to which Urban Form Categories when they are developing their own new Local Area Plan. This would help alleviate some of the current anxiety over the Guidebook, and what is perceived as a threat to existing community character. For instance, Councillor Gondek's proposed amendment re: single detached housing might help provide this flexibility and the surety that many residents are seeking.

To reject the Guidebook because it is not absolutely perfect is to also reject the NHCLAP which has been developed in conjunction with the Guidebook. Highland Park does not have an up-to-date ARP or LAP. Redevelopment has been happening on an ad hoc parcel by parcel basis. Our only development criteria has been the Land Use Bylaw – not even the Infill Development Guidelines have been applicable to Highland Park. Over the past year I have even been using the draft LAP as a guide when reviewing local development applications. Like the Guidebook, the LAP is not perfect. A letter from Dan Evans, a resident of Crescent Hts, which is in your agenda package, made some useful suggestions for improvements, including a specified timeframe for updating the LAP. That is a recommendation that we strongly endorse.

A few years ago Council directed that an LAP be created for Highland Park. It was also directed that our LAP be a constituent part of the NHC LAP. We need the foundational Guidebook to make our draft local area plan a reality. If the Guidebook is not approved or is delayed for an indefinite period of time, then what happens to Highland Park and its need for a local area plan?

I would very much like to thank the city planning team involved with the Guidebook for the respect and courtesy they extended to all who participated in the Guidebook's evolution.

Thank you for your consideration.

And also my thanks to Councillor Sutherland for acknowledging my comments at PUD last month.