

Peter Pagliocchini: Rutland Residents Association President

March 13, 2022

Open Letter to Mayor and Council

City of Kelowna

Re: **Unbridled Growth in Rutland through the use of Variances and Council's Discretion**

Dear Mayor and Council,

These must be heady times at City Hall overseeing the fastest growing community in Canada, coupled with building permits surpassing the 1 billion dollar mark in 2021.

Our City Planning department and Council are faced with enormous pressure by the powerful local Builders Association, as well as out of province developers, to have their projects expedited. Unfortunately, **Council regularly circumvents our OCP to accommodate both big and small development through variances and council's discretion.**

The damage of this rush to develop leaves many neighbourhoods in our Rutland community frustrated and angry. At our Association meetings we are hearing complaints that there is little to no consultations with the neighbourhood residents that are being affected by these multi-faceted developments. In many cases, residents are told one thing about the form and shape of the developments, only to find that the end result barely reflects what was originally promised. Neptune Road development was approved for private sales of units and then became rentals without residents knowing. This is a direct result of Council's concessions granted to developers after the build starts. On Taylor Road developers were able to reduce adequate parking thanks to a variance which forced vehicles to be parked on this narrow street. Unfortunately, this strategy is community wide and not unique to Rutland.

Speaking broadly, Kelowna provides developers with low **Development Cost Charges (DCC)**. In a comparison of similar sized cities **Kelowna is near the bottom of the list**. Our city is behind Abbotsford, Langley, Surrey and Richmond, and is tied with Chilliwack. **Only** Vernon and Nanaimo have lower DCC rates than Kelowna. Our sister community of **West Kelowna** has recently made a steep increase to their DCC. The rationale was articulated by Allen Fillon, Director of Community engineering who stated, **"The less we are collecting from developers means more that the tax payers are subsidizing."** Following deliberation, West Kelowna Council increased charges by a hefty 40%. West Kelowna is to be applauded for their courage in placing the onus on developers to pay their fair share as Mr. Fillon points out.

To remedy the financial imbalance between Developers and the Public, our Association calls on Council to:

--Substantially raise DCC charges for Developers, so they have the majority of financial share for enhancing developments, including sidewalks, proper lighting, widening roads to accommodate the increase in traffic and the like. This should also include set asides for green space which encompasses their developments.

-Keep close adherence to our OCP and honour the community input sessions that provided the basis for the final 2040 plan. Variances should be the last resort, not the common position.

We remind Council that our community is sought after, and as such, Council can lay out the terms to developers. This will make Kelowna a citizen friendly community through controlled growth which would allow for proper infra structure to be put in place.

Regards: Peter Pagliocchini Rutland Residents Association President

