

January 27, 2025

Dear City Council,

It has now come to light that the City is destroying our homes to “*fulfill contractual obligations*”. To set fair compensation, the Tribunal will need to understand the timing and other details of the City’s secret obligations to destroy our homes. As the former Mayor publicly acknowledged these obligations, it appears they were in place prior to his departure from office in 2021.

In 2023, the expropriation of our homes was subject to a public inquiry. The Province appointed an independent expert, an Inquiry Officer, to review all relevant information. It appears the City failed to disclose to the Inquiry Officer – and to River Run families – that the City had already contracted with a developer to destroy our homes. This omission deprived both the families and the Inquiry Officer of critical context, undermining the integrity of the Provincial inquiry process.

For years, the City has maintained that it “*is not required to, and will not, compensate the River Run unit owners as if their units were expropriated.*” This position, taken in the face of contractual commitments to demolish our homes, was disingenuous from the outset. When the City started publicly depicting our homes destroyed, in 2020, we called out the City’s refusal to discuss expropriation compensation as not in good faith and identified that “*such positional manoeuvring will only create animosity, skepticism, and will undoubtedly cost the City more in the long run.*”

Five years later, the City’s ongoing refusal to discuss fair compensation remains unethical, unlawful, and financially reckless. The cost of replacement properties continues to rise, damages continue to accrue, and evidence of this government’s dishonest, cruel conduct continues to grow. Council can decide whether the City will continue to bully us, to try to avoid paying fair compensation or, instead, someone from the City will finally discuss fair compensation.

Our only goal is to minimize how much this government reduces our quality of life. To date, the City has not produced any credible analysis regarding fair compensation. In the absence of the City providing such information, in May 2024, we provided analysis to inform a conversation on fair compensation. The City refused to discuss the information we provided and continues to refuse to discuss fair compensation. If the City starts to act reasonably, an agreement regarding fair compensation could likely be reached before time, effort and expense is incurred on a Tribunal process which, if needed, will inevitably confirm the City has not yet compensated us fairly.

The City’s conduct towards River Run families cannot be explained as just incompetence because such conduct is so consistently designed to cause us harm. If City leadership wants to continue to cower behind closed doors and instruct its legal and other teams to pretend the City’s conduct towards River Run families is something other than disgusting, that’s your choice. But the longer fair compensation is deferred, the higher it will be, at greater cost to taxpayers. Isn’t five years of intentionally causing harm by avoiding a conversation long enough?

- River Run Families Committee (Joel, Tom and Patrick)