



Lake Bonavista Homeowners Association

March 4, 2026

Dear Mayor Farkas and City Councillors,

We are writing on behalf of the Lake Bonavista Homeowners Association (LBHA) and the Lake Bonaventure Residents Association (LBRA) regarding the City's blanket R-CG rezoning.

Our comments are organized into two sections:

- **General concerns with blanket rezoning** as a city-wide, one-size-fits-all planning approach; and
- **Lake Bonavista specific impacts**, including our request to restore R-C1 zoning for the 3,263 original lake entitled lots designed around a fixed-capacity recreational lake.

These concerns are not solely the position of the LBHA or the LBRA Board. They reflect recent, clear majority feedback from Lake Bonavista homeowners, including a community survey in which over 700 households participated and expressed significant concern regarding blanket rezoning and its impacts.

While we support thoughtful densification in Calgary, blanket rezoning is not the right tool. It should be repealed and replaced with a coordinated, evidence-based planning approach that aligns infrastructure capacity, housing outcomes, and the realities of established communities.

General Concerns with Blanket Rezoning

Blanket rezoning represents a one-size-fits-all policy applied across fundamentally different neighbourhoods without sufficient site-specific analysis.

Rezoning every R-C1 lot to R-CG shifts key planning decisions to developers and builders, who do not carry the same mandate to balance broader public interest and community considerations. It removes the City's ability to evaluate impacts on a case-by-case basis.



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This approach limits meaningful evaluation of:

- Emergency access and road design capacity
- Traffic flow and on-street parking impacts
- Utility and sewer system capacity
- Tree canopy preservation
- Neighbourhood safety and infrastructure strain

These are **infrastructure and safety considerations, not matters of preference**. Recent water main breaks raise legitimate concerns about whether existing infrastructure is sufficient to support increased density and highlight the vulnerability of aging infrastructure.

In the 2024 public hearing, nearly 70% of Calgarians spoke against blanket rezoning. In written submissions, opposition was even higher with 88% of 6,000+ submissions opposing the rezoning. When a policy generates this level of public opposition yet proceeds unchanged, it risks eroding trust between Council and residents.

Blanket rezoning has also **not demonstrated that it meaningfully improves affordability**. Without affordability requirements attached to redevelopment, upzoning can increase land values and speculation, making redevelopment more expensive rather than less. Calgary's housing challenges are driven by multiple complex factors — interest rates, construction costs, inflation, federal policy, and supply chain pressures — not zoning alone.

Residents are not opposed to growth. We are opposed to unplanned growth. We support:

- **Targeted** densification near transit corridors and commercial hubs
- **Purpose-built** affordable housing
- **Incentives** for gentle density where infrastructure capacity exists
- **Planning** approaches that reflect the unique constraints of each neighbourhood



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Repealing blanket rezoning would allow Council to adopt a smarter, more strategic approach that restores both planning integrity and public confidence.

Lake Bonavista Specific Impacts and Request to Restore R-C1

Lake Bonavista presents a clear example of why blanket policy does not work equally across all communities. Residents **chose their homes based on single-family zoning**, privacy, and stability. Blanket rezoning fundamentally alters those conditions.

Survey responses we collected from over 700 Lake Bonavista households in December 2025 showed overwhelming concern about:

- **Changes to the character** of the community
- **Loss of privacy** and sunlight from multi-unit builds overlooking yards and living spaces.
- **Increased noise and traffic**, especially on streets not designed for higher density.
- **Parking shortages**, already an issue in many cul-de-sacs and crescents.
- **Aging sewer and utility systems** that cannot absorb unplanned densification.
- **Sustainability and increased strain on Lake Bonavista and surrounding Park.** Designed for approximately 3,263 households, the park was not built to support significantly higher levels of use;

Lake Bonavista is home to **over 5,000 residential front doors**, ranging from condominiums to single-family homes, along with several commercial areas. It is a diverse community in terms of housing options. However, **3,263 of those properties were developed in the late 1960s as a master-planned lake community** centered around a private, man-made recreational lake.

Lake Bonavista holds the distinction of being the **first community in Canada built around a man-made recreational lake**. Excavation began in 1967, creating a one-of-a-kind, year-round, water-oriented suburban community. Its success became the



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prototype for later lake communities such as Sundance and McKenzie Lake. We remain a well maintained highly sought after neighbourhood 50years later due to the excellent planning, diversity of housing and balanced level of services. It is both historically significant and environmentally sensitive.

The community was designed around a **fixed-capacity recreational amenity**. The original planning **framework did not contemplate subdivision or densification** of these lake entitled lots.

The Lake:

- Is not expandable
- Operates within defined environmental, operational, and capacity constraints.
- Was not designed to sustain significantly increased levels of use

Increased usage directly impacts:

- Shoreline integrity
- Water quality
- Infrastructure strain
- Safety capacity
- Long-term asset sustainability
- Capital and Operating Costs

Exceeding the Lake's planned threshold creates **environmental, financial, and governance risks** that the community was never designed to absorb. Therefore, Lake Membership is capped at the current level, and new Memberships are not being issued to additional households created under R-CG development.

Developers who have purchased properties for R-CG development have assumed that additional Lake Memberships would automatically follow subdivision or redevelopment. In reality, no such entitlement exists. The Lake cannot sustain subdivision into an unlimited number of Memberships.



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As a result, we are facing:

- Significant additional volunteer hours to develop and implement new policies
- Strain on limited staff resources
- Legal expenses
- Potential litigation

This represents an **undue burden on a volunteer organization** attempting to uphold long-standing Membership limits and environmental stewardship responsibilities.

Lake Bonavista residents chose to live in a recreational lake community. Preserving the sustainability and integrity of that design should remain a priority. Density and choice are not mutually exclusive — but eliminating differentiation across communities removes meaningful choice for Calgarians.

Specifically, we ask that:

- The zoning of the 3,263 original lake entitled lots in Lake Bonavista be **restored to R-C1 zoning**; and
- This zoning remains in place in the foreseeable future to protect the environmental and structural integrity of the community.

The LBHA/LBRA is not opposed to density, growth, or new housing options. Calgary is a dynamic and growing city, and a healthy housing system requires a variety of housing forms, locations, and price points. What the **LBHA/LBRA supports is choice**. The **choice for people to live in higher-density communities**, and the **choice for others to live in established single-family communities** with reasonable certainty about their surroundings.

LBHA/LBRA believes Calgary can grow in a way that is inclusive, balanced, and respectful of existing communities. That growth is most successful when it is guided by planning, context, community engagement, and collaboration. Density works best when it is intentional and well considered—not a one-size-fits-all approach that leaves city growth to developer-driven interest.



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We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you, Administration, or Council to discuss how policy tools or clarifications could better acknowledge the unique constraints of lake communities and the friction currently arising between private governance structures and public zoning changes.

Sincerely,

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