

Public Information Meeting

Varsity Restrictive Covenant Committee

Varsity Community Centre

I have a
Restrictive
Covenant



I'm Helping my Neighbours!

JoAnne Atkins, Chair

June 18, 2025

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Restrictive
Covenant



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What is a Restrictive Covenant?

- **A restrictive covenant is a contract registered on the land title for a property that restricts its future use or redevelopment.**
- **The restrictive covenant has a lifespan of 75 years and is passed on to subsequent property owners.**
- **There are approximately 15 communities in Calgary that are in the process of implementing new restrictive covenants.**
- **Participation is voluntary.**

Why is Varsity Implementing Restrictive Covenants?



- **To preserve the distinct residential character of Varsity.**
- **To address planning decisions by the City which have put the things we value in Varsity at risk.**
- **To limit each property to one home (plus a secondary suite) & to prevent the subdivision of lots.**
- **To prohibit backyard suites and lodging houses.**

Why is Interest in Restrictive Covenants Growing?

- **In the 1950's and earlier, when there were no zoning bylaws controlling development, restrictive covenants were very common.**
- **There has been a dramatic shift in planning policies in Calgary over the past few years to increase density in established neighbourhoods with an expectation of reducing vehicle ownership.**
- **In 2024 all residential properties were rezoned R-CG which allows rowhouses (8 units per 50 ft. lot).**

Rowhouses have a very large building envelope that:

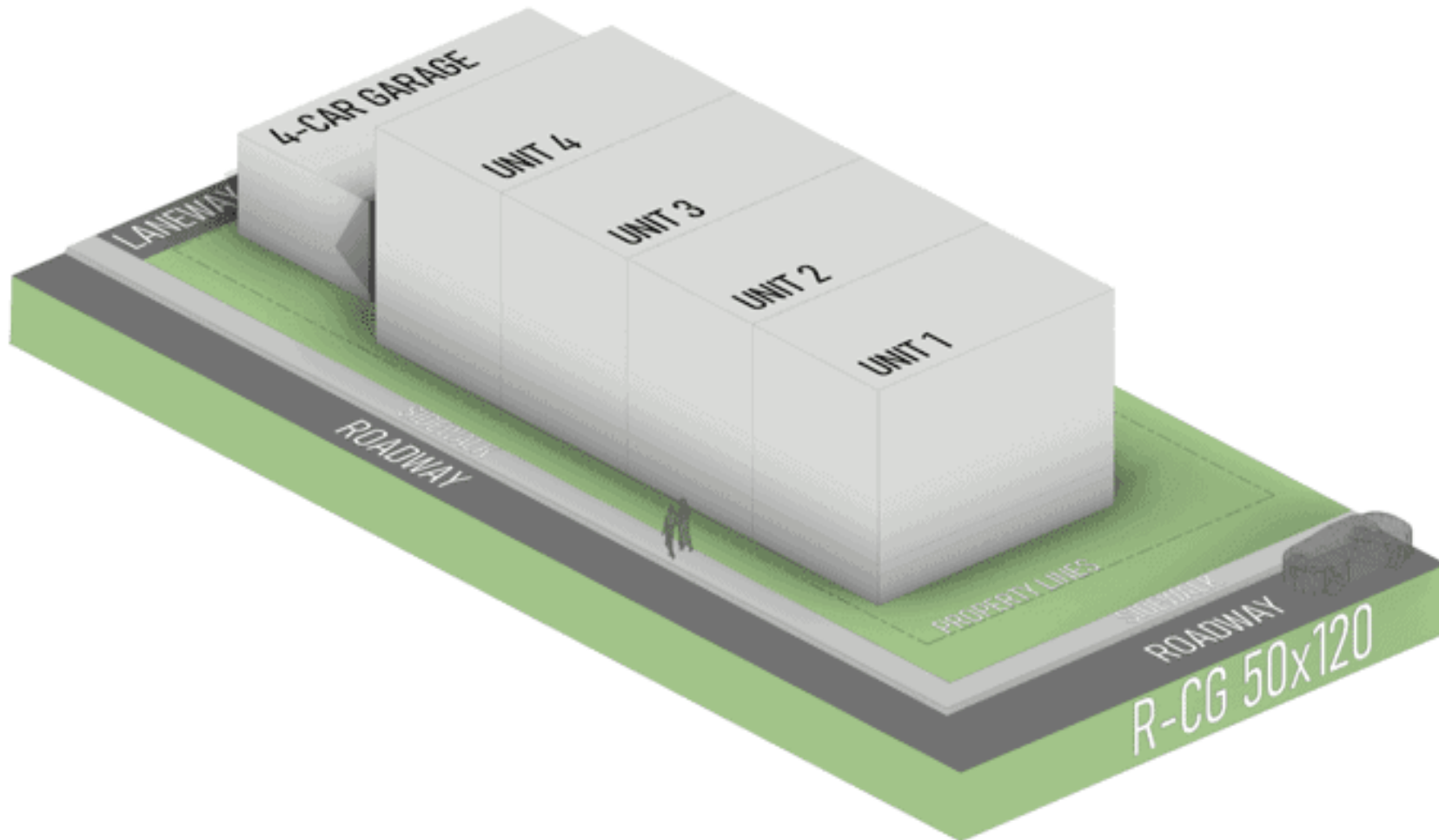


- **Overshadows neighbouring homes**
- **Reduces trees & soft landscaping**
- **Reduces privacy**
- **Reduces setbacks and changes the streetscape**

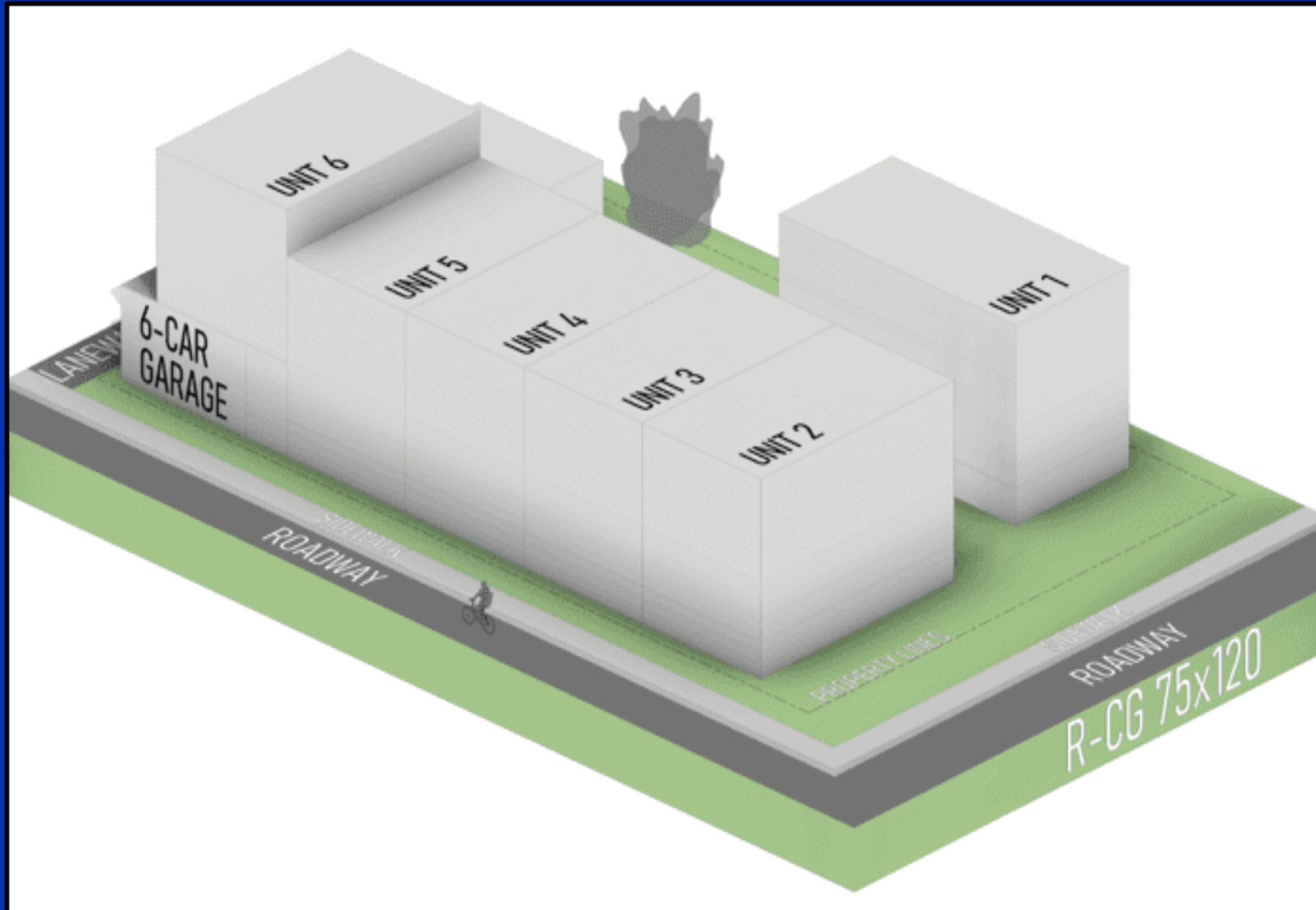


- Increases the intensity of use and on-street parking.
- Creates parking congestion with 8-12 units on one property and only 0.5 stalls per unit. The City is proposing to reduce this to zero.
- Creates bin storage challenge (3 bins/unit = 24-36 bins).

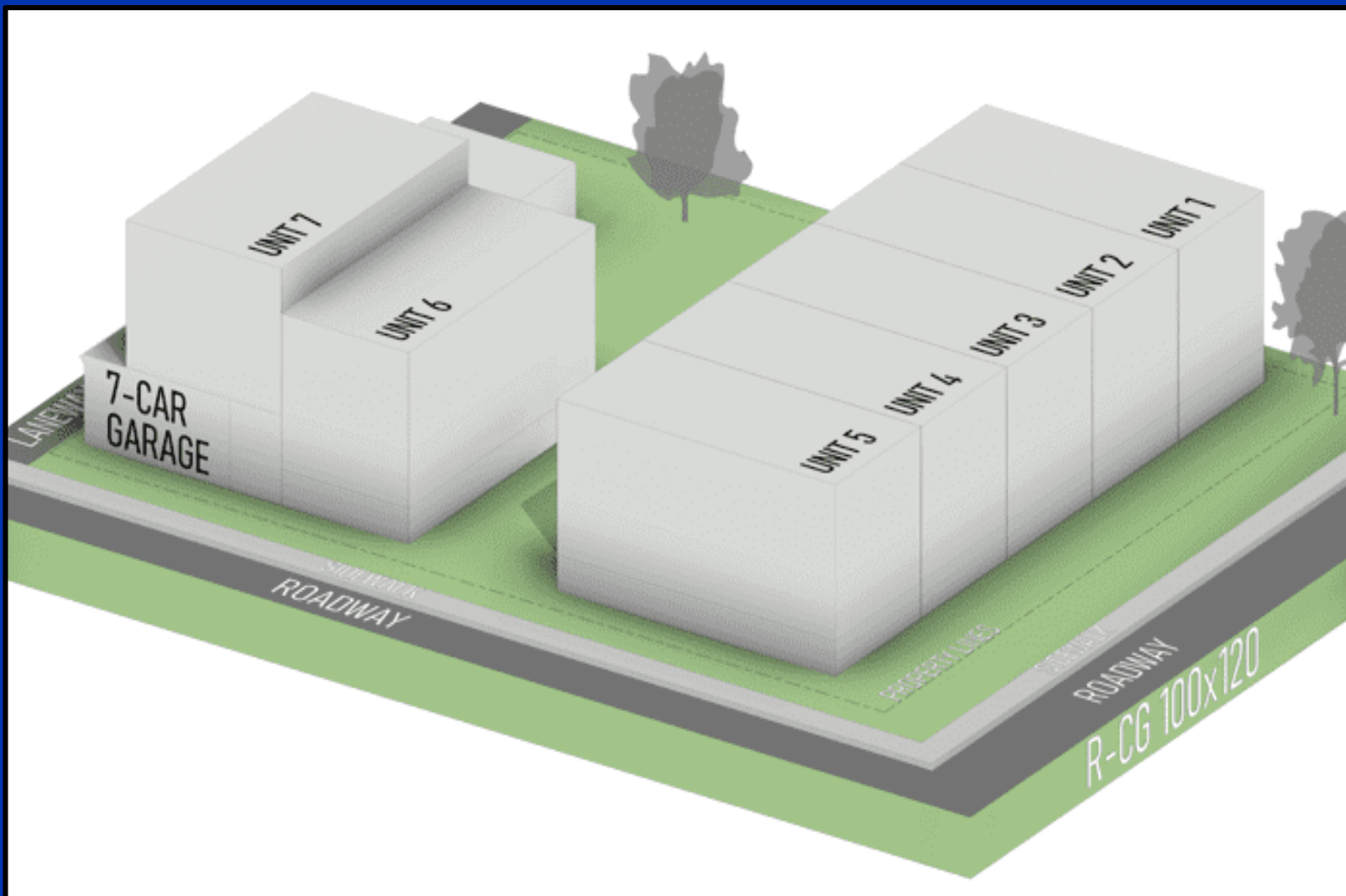
R-CG (Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill)
Rowhouse on 50 X 120 Foot Corner Lot



Rowhouse on 75 X 120 Foot Corner Lot
Many lots in Varsity are 70 feet wide



Rowhouse on 100 X 120 Foot Corner Lot (combining 2 fifty foot lots)



View along the long sidewalk of a corner lot rowhouse

- **Rowhouses and townhouses have 60% lot coverage compared to single family homes at 25 - 45%.**
- **The front setback under R-CG is only 3.0 metres from the property line.**
- **Where would you plant a tree?**



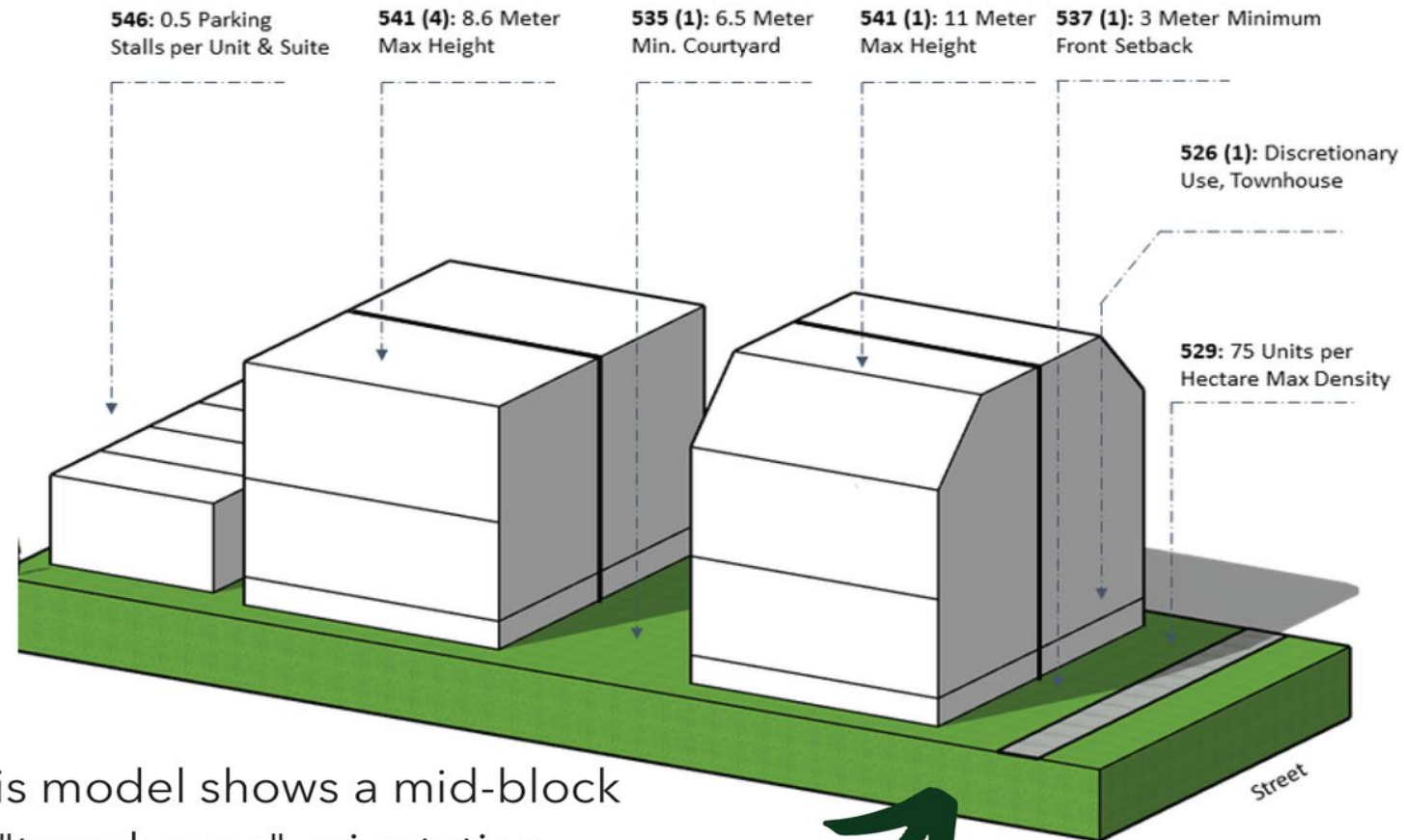
Stairwells to Secondary Suites on a Corner Lot Rowhouse

**Stairwells, window wells, patios, and decks
are projections into the front setback**



Townhouse on Mid-block Lot

R-CG District Mid-block Diagram (4 Townhouse Units and 4 Basement Suites)



This model shows a mid-block "townhouse" orientation. They can also be side by side in a "rowhouse".

Maximum Height – 11 metres or 3 storeys



Why is Interest in Restrictive Covenants Growing?



- **Effective Aug. 6, 2024, both secondary suites and backyard suites are allowed on each property.**
- **Backyard suites include dwelling units in the back yard or above a garage. No parking is required for a backyard suite.**

Why Should You Consider a Restrictive Covenant?



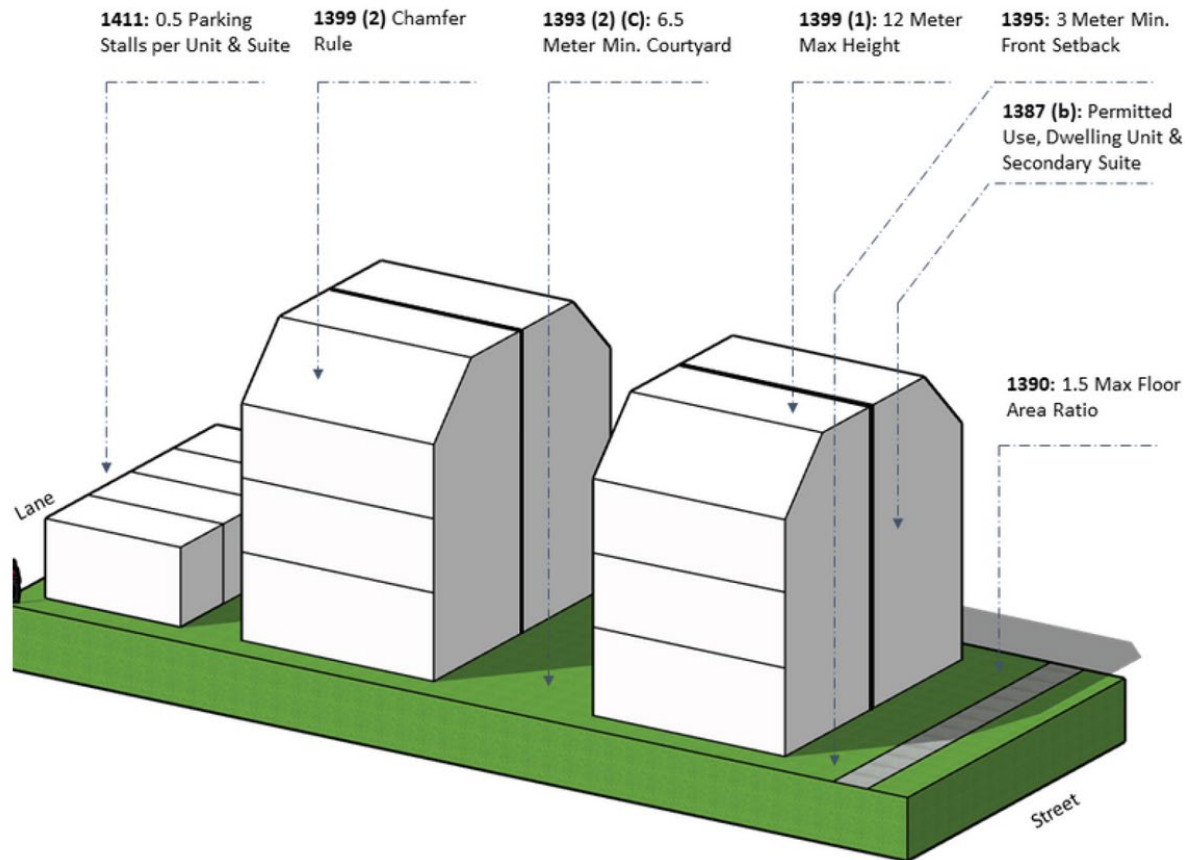
Laneway Suite in Varsity at 4426 – 39 Street NW

- **Restrictive Covenants prevail over City planning policies and are an effective tool to protect low density neighbourhoods from development that can damage quality of life, reduce property values and impact community character.**

Other Challenges Facing Varsity

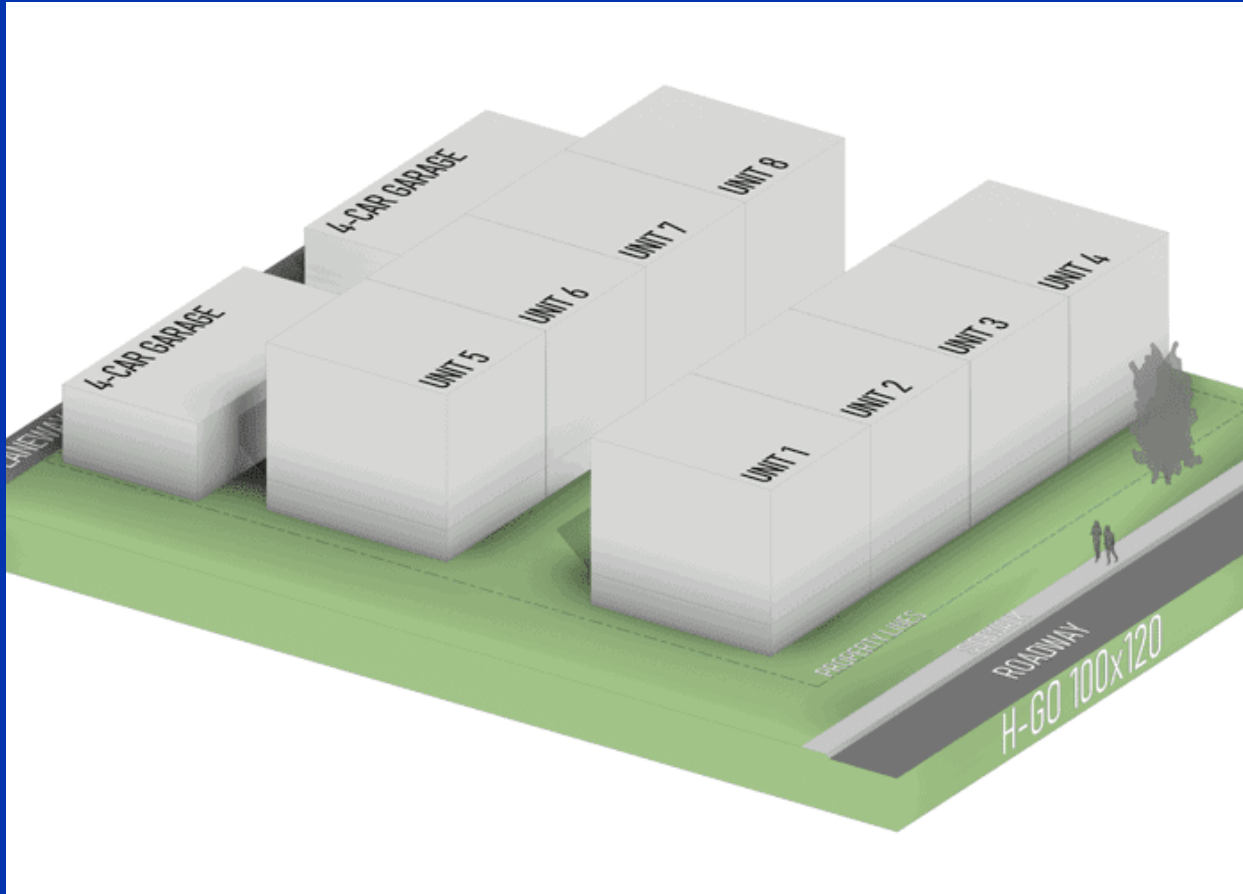
New H-GO Zoning (Housing – Grade-Oriented)

H-GO District Diagram



- Allows for rowhouses and townhouses with more units and a larger building envelope.
- A public hearing at Council is required.
- Allowed on any road designated as Neighbourhood Connector or higher in the Local Area Plan.
- Once the land use is approved, development permits for these rowhouses cannot be appealed.

H-GO on Mid-Block 100 X 120 Foot Lot



- 16 units with 8 parking stalls
- 60% lot coverage
- 12 metres in height for both buildings

Mid-block H-GO Development in Tuxedo Park

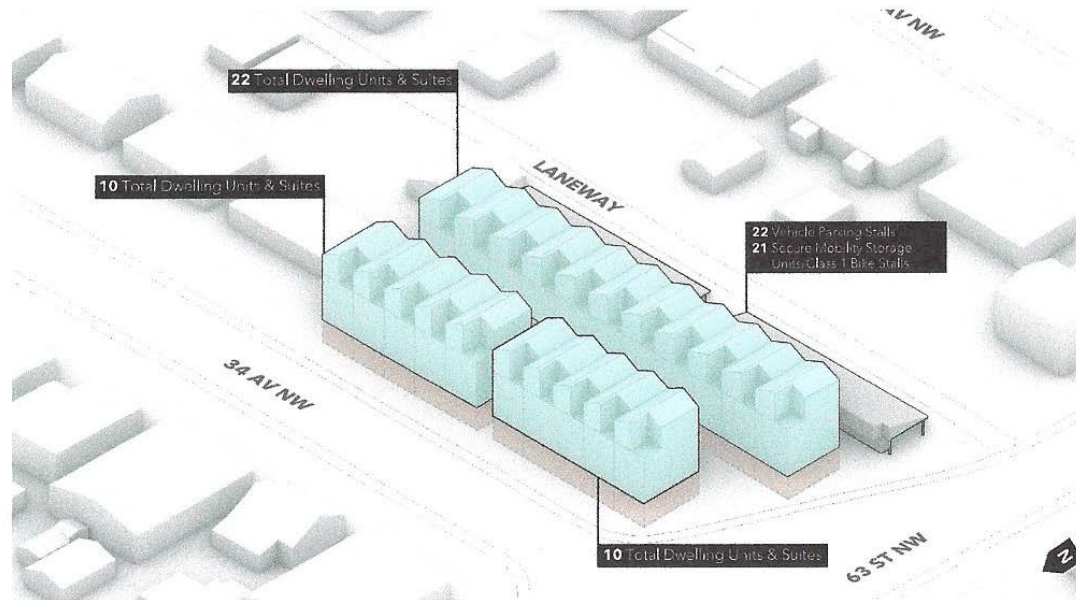


Corner Block H-GO Developments



Consolidation of Lots

Initial H-GO District Proposal

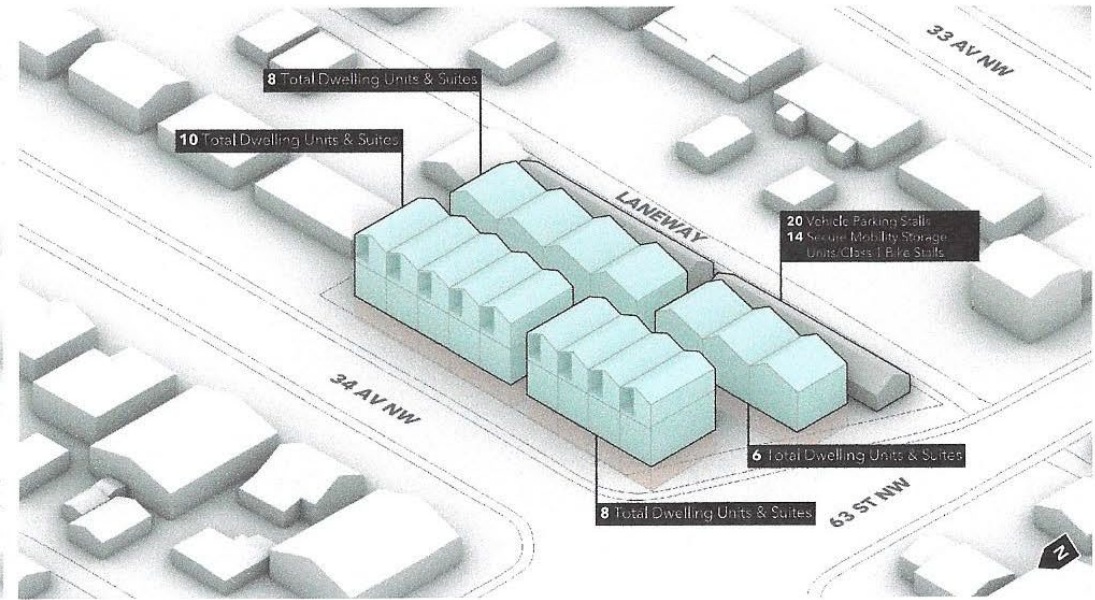


Proposed Density: 42 Units & Suites

Proposed Height: 3 Storeys (12m max)

Proposed Parking: 21 Vehicle Parking Stalls (0.5 stalls/unit), 21 Active Modes Storage Units (1 per unit without vehicle parking stall)

Refined R-CG District Proposal

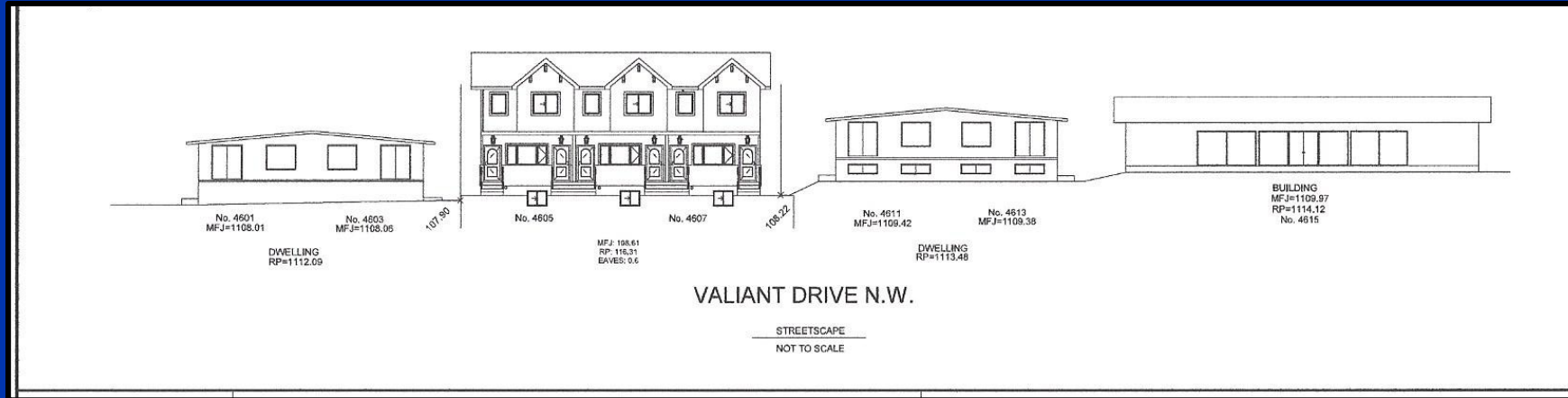


Proposed Density: 32 Units & Suites (25% Density Reduction)

Proposed Height: 2-3 Storeys (11m max in front yard, 8.6m max in rear yard, rear yard buildings now measure 2 storeys)

Proposed Parking: 20 Vehicle Parking Stalls (0.625 stalls/unit provided, 0.5 stalls per unit required), 14 Active Modes Storage Units (1.17/unit without vehicle parking stall provided, 1 required)

H-GO Application on 4607 Valiant Drive



- **Application for 12 units (6 main & 6 secondary)**
- **63 X 110 foot lot**
- **Parking pad for 6 vehicles off lane**
- **Recommended for Approval as Valiant Drive is identified as Neighbourhood Connector in the South Shaganappi LAP**
- **Calgary Planning Commission – June 19, 2025**
- **City Council Public Hearing – September 2025**

Concrete Gutter
0.30 Wide

Concrete Rolling Curb
0.30 Wide

Sidewalk (1.1m Wide)

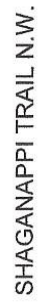
107.48

107.61

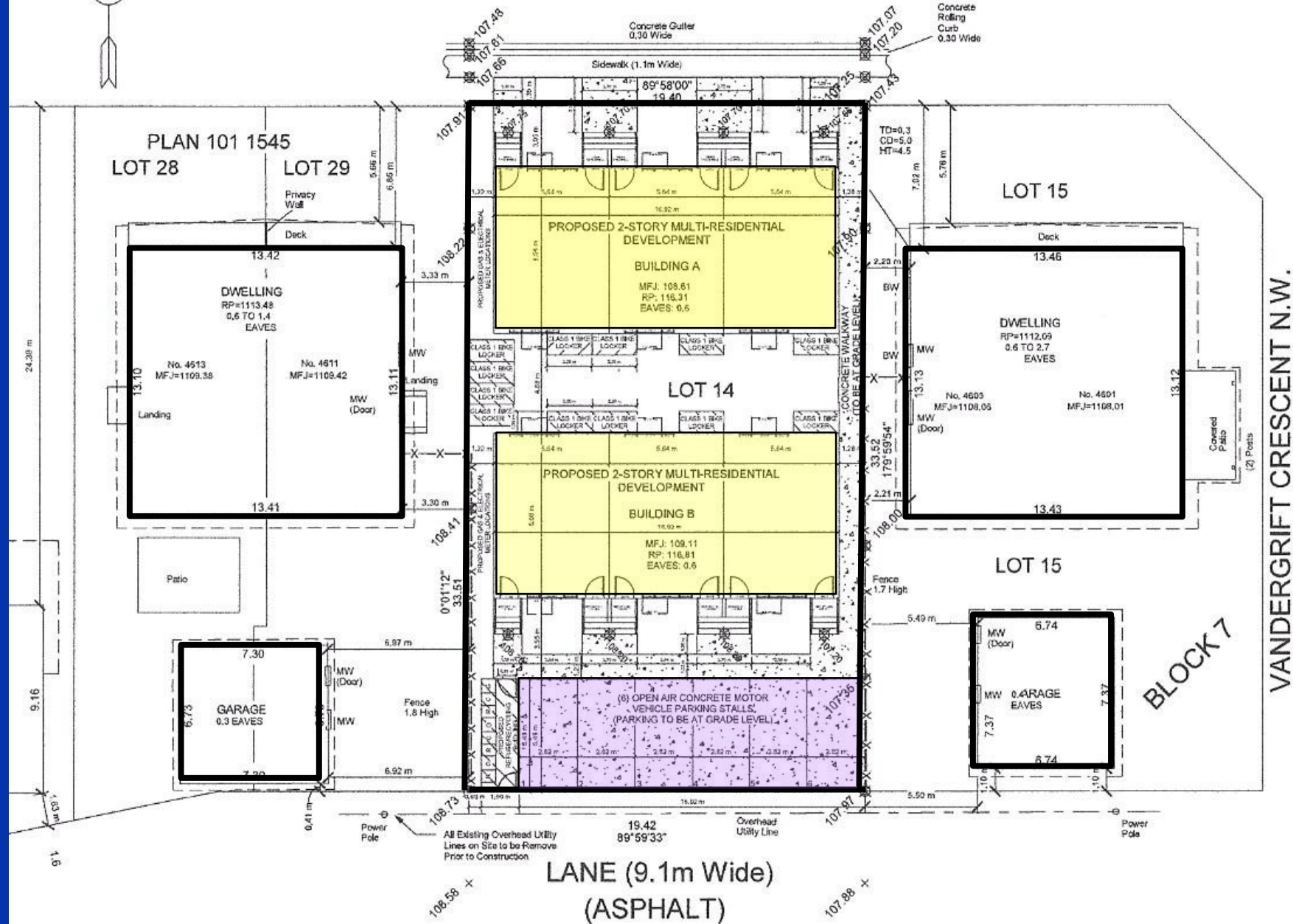
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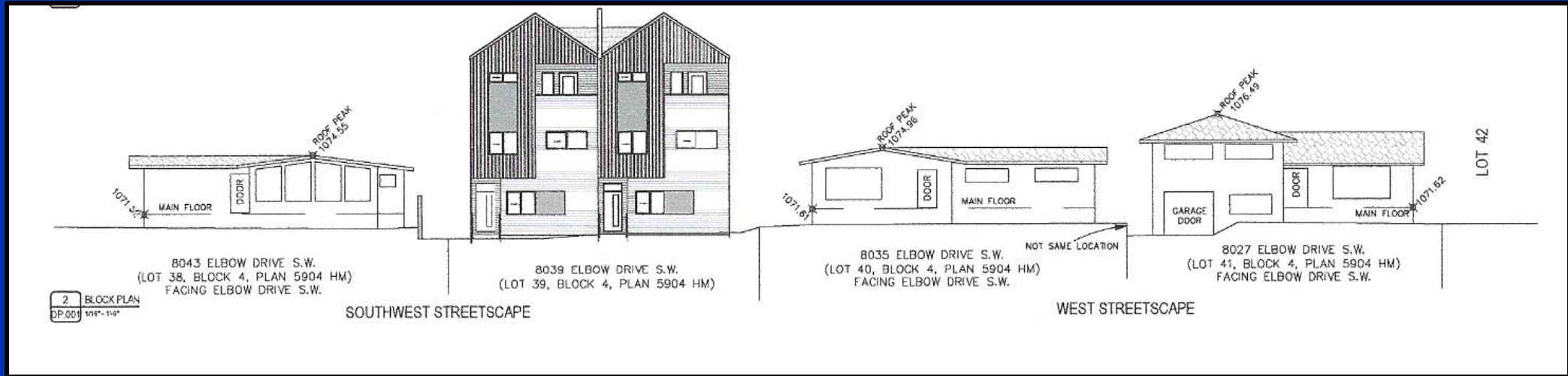
5%



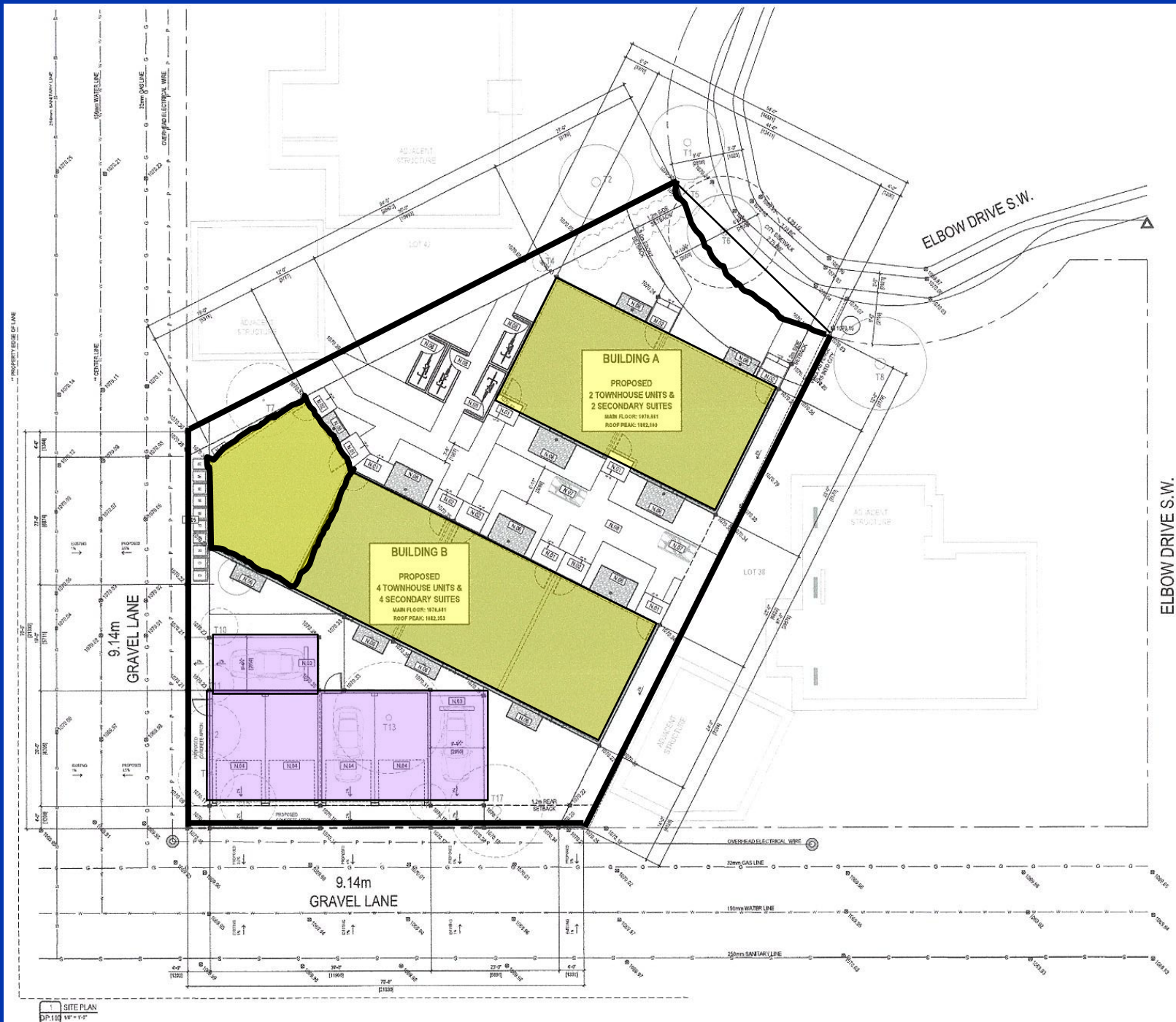
STREETSCAPE
NOT TO SCALE

Concrete Gutters
0,30 Wide

Townhouse Development on Cul-de-sac

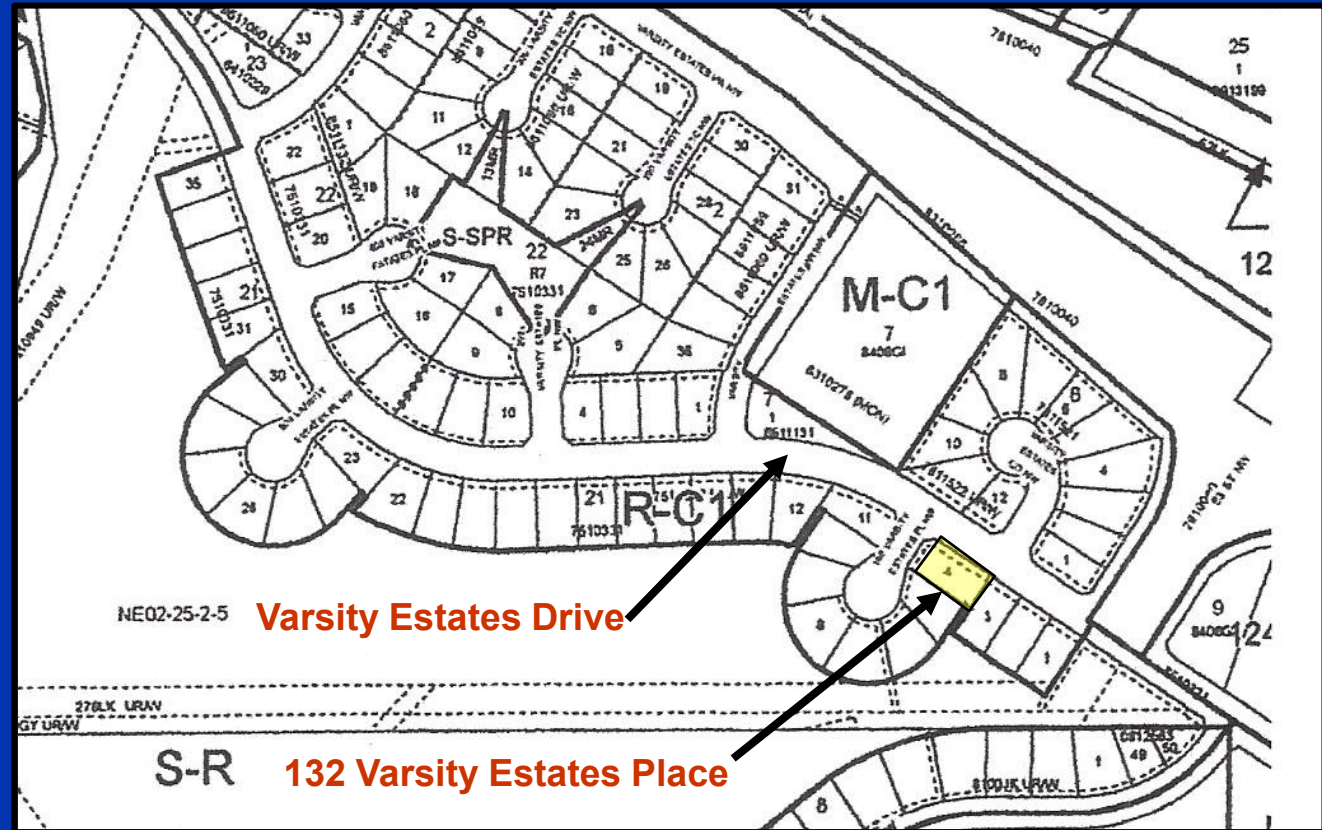


- **Even cul-de-sacs and pie-shaped lots are vulnerable to townhouse development.**
- **The impact of height and minimal front setbacks is worsened on a cul-de-sac or a road with a concave curve.**
- **Laneless parcels are also at risk for redevelopment.**
- **The only requirement is a 3.0 metre side-yard for a driveway to access parking in the rear of the lot.**



H-GO – 132 Varsity Estates Place

- Application for H-GO Submitted
- 67.5 X 115 foot lot
- At least 16 units could be accommodated on this site
- SSLAP identifies lot as Neighbourhood Flex



SHAGANAPPI LOCAL AREA PLAN (LAP)

- **Approved March 4, 2025**
- **Identifies areas for future increased density**
- **Varsity Community Association opposed many areas that were inappropriate but could only get a few reductions**
- **Minimum category is Neighbourhood Local which includes rowhouses**
- **H-GO is allowed in all higher categories**
- **Previous planning policies such as the Varsity Land Use Study were replaced by the LAP**

OTHER CITY PLANNING POLICY CHANGES

- **Municipal Development Plan** to be replaced by **The Calgary Plan**
- **Land Use Bylaw** to be replaced by **The Zoning Bylaw**
- Many **discretionary uses** will become **permitted uses** including rowhouses
- **Open Parking Strategy** - Reducing parking requirements to 0 for all residential development including apartment buildings
- **Parks Plan**
- **Local Area Plans** – approved and underway

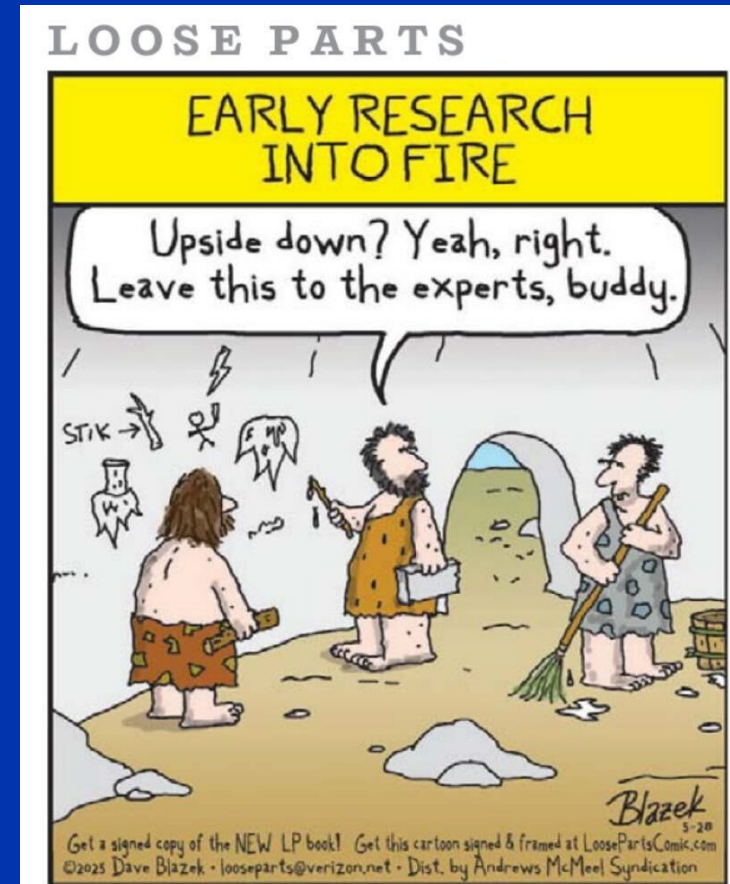


Please disperse. There's nothing to see here.

Civic Election – October 20, 2025

It is crucial to become informed and involved!

- **Must get 8 supportive votes on Council who listen to citizens and aren't afraid to challenge city administration**
- **Must amend land use bylaw to repeal blanket rezoning**
- **Must also amend local area plans**
- **Must amend other policies including parking strategy, Calgary Plan, and Zoning Bylaw**



Restrictive Covenant Legal Defense Fund



- **\$750.00 one-time fee covers legal fees and a portion goes to a legal defence fund**
- **We are fortunate to have a generous donation to the legal defence fund.**
- **Funds are currently in a trust account with Carbert Waite.**
- **A non-profit society and trust account will be established with representatives from each area to administer the funds.**

