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To: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT <planning@fredericton.ca>

Subject: Opposition to provincial jail location in Lincoln Heights

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Dear City Council Members,

I strongly oppose the location of a provincial jail being placed meters from a residential neighbourhood in the city. The City Planning Committee's report shows a graphic of 1,100 meters from a Lincoln Heights backyard. The backyard in that report is mine, and I would argue the 1,100 meters is inaccurate. The committee is measuring from the middle/back of the proposed lot; however, if you measure from the border of the jail lot to the border of my backyard, it is 700 meters. The lot behind mine and closer to the proposed jail location is going to be neighbourhood park once developed. Regardless, 700 meters or 1,100 meters with no natural barriers such as woods, highways, or waterways is far too close. My husband, Rob Hamel, a Realtor with Exit Realty Advantage, completed an in-depth residential impact report on how neighbourhoods are impacted by nearby jails in New Brunswick. The data from his report shows that no other jail or penitentiary in New Brunswick is this close to such a large residential neighbourhood, both in size (600+ detached homes) and home assessed value (Lincoln Heights average, \$317,000).

In the city's future development plans for the proposed lot, it was meant to generate future businesses and employment in the industrial park. Allowing a jail to take up almost 20% of the available space not only isn't fair for the construction of positive growth to the area, but what business would willingly build next to the site? An existing business has already reached out to Rob about leaving the industrial park should this rezoning pass. The city has said it plans to improve the existing trail system that would pass along the side of the proposed jail location. We have spoken with correctional staff at other jails in New Brunswick who have pointed out that this will make it a drop-off location for inmates as it's already a problem at other jails in the province. Furthermore, can you imagine young children riding their bikes or women going for runs on this trail that runs along the jail property line? I would rather increase my property taxes but feel safe and secure in my community and retain my home value vs the city agreeing to place a jail next door.

I have stated in a previous letter that my sense of security would be quashed should this jail be approved. Inmates escape rarely, but it does happen. The idea that at any given time, someone dangerous could escape would be mentally draining. I would worry about my children playing outside and worry for myself on evening walks. My backyard which has always been a space of tranquillity would suddenly feel threatening. Just this past August, an inmate from the Dalhousie Correctional Institution escaped for 40 minutes and in October 2021 an inmate escaped for four days from the Saint John Correctional Center. It would take less than 5 minutes to reach my home from the proposed location. The people of Fredericton deserve to feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods.

At the City Planning Committee meeting, the committee was asked if they'd done a residential impact study on placing a jail near our neighbourhood. Their response was no. They were asked why not and they said they hadn't considered it. They are proposing this lot next to a large residential neighbourhood, but didn't think to consider the impact on the nearby homes. Rob's report showed that the nicest and the newest homes (semi-detached) next to the jail in Saint John sold for \$80,000 less than other semi-detached homes of the same size and year, sold elsewhere in the city. I live in a single detached home and assume we would stand to lose more value should this location be approved.

Fredericton is one of the most highly educated cities in the country. I would argue that the majority of citizens living here know that jails don't work. They don't rehabilitate people; in fact, it has been shown that they further traumatize and cause people to sink further into a criminal lifestyle. Building a jail anywhere in our beautiful city goes against research that it will help crime rates. We should be focusing that money elsewhere. The Higgs government has made many questionable decisions, firing anyone who speaks out against him. Why would we support this government, whose public support is at an all time low, to build a correctional facility?

Should this jail go through, while we have many families who settle down and stay in our neighbourhood, we also have many federal government employees and military families who are required to move out of province for work. Because of this, there is a large volume of homes that sell in Lincoln Heights regularly and the impact of the jail on home value will be very easy to assess. Should our home values go down as anticipated, based on the negative impact of home values around the Saint John and Dalhousie jails (see Rob Hamel's report), I will be encouraging our neighbourhood to pursue a class action lawsuit against the city for the lost

value. I will also encourage everyone to dispute our assessed value for property taxes. We have 600+ detached homes in Lincoln Heights; based on current assessed values (average \$317,000), our neighbourhood earns the city a considerable amount in property taxes. It makes more financial sense for the city to not place a jail next to our community and instead allow the neighbourhood to grow both in home values and with the 215 homes that are planned for future development.

I want to stress that not only do I oppose the location of this jail next to our Lincoln Heights neighbourhood, I oppose it being built near any other residential neighbourhood in the city. Please don't consider this a Lincoln Heights problem. We as a city need to come together and agree that a provincial jail has no business being built in the backyards of any residential neighbourhood in Fredericton, no matter the ward. Doing so will hurt fellow citizens. The City Planning Committee has said the government has 20 other locations around the Fredericton area that they're considering. If they insist on building a jail, surely at least some of those locations aren't in close proximity of residential areas. Please do what's right and vote against the rezoning of this lot.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Hamel

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