

# WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

## Aldritt Tower Development Application (LDA16-0082)

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**PROJECT ADDRESSES:** 10110 - 96 Street NW  
9565 - Grierson Hill NW  
9601, 9608, 9625 and 9645 Jasper Avenue NW

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

- Plan amendments to the Quarters, North Saskatchewan River Valley, and Capital City Downtown Area Redevelopment Plans
- Text Amendments to the Quarters Overlay, the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System Protection Overlay, the Special Area Downtown
- Rezoning from (A) Metropolitan Recreation Zone, (AP) Public Parks Zone, (CCA) Core Commercial Arts Zone and (DC1) Direct Development Control Provision to (DC2) Site Specific Development Control Provision
- Road closure to portions of 101 Avenue NW and a portion of Grierson Hill (retaining wall only)

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	DATE	RESPONSES/ # OF ATTENDEES
Notification	Mailed April 6, 2016	9 emails and calls received
Open House	October 17, 2016	89 attended

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**ABOUT THIS REPORT**

This report includes a summary of:

- Calls and emails received in response to the notification letter
- Feedback gathered at the open house on October 17 (sticky notes and feedback forms)
- Emails received after the open house

Who will receive this report?

- Everyone who has emailed the file planner directly
- All attendees who provided their email address at the open house
- The applicant and consultants
- The Ward Councillor

If/when the proposed application advances to Public Hearing this report will be included in the information provided to City Council.

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## FEEDBACK SUMMARY

<b>Revitalization</b>	This type of development is needed for the east side of downtown. It will bring people and life to this area.
<b>Existing Plans</b>	The development does not conform with the Quarters plan. The proposal goes against the work of City Administration, the Artists' Quarters development and the community.
<b>Heritage</b>	The proposal does not maintain the integrity of the heritage district.
<b>Parkland</b>	The river valley and its views are a public asset that should not be sold. The area should be developed as a park as planned.
<b>Height</b>	The building is too tall. It is out of scale with surrounding development and what was proposed in the Quarters.
<b>Location</b>	The proposal should not be on public land when there are many under-used private sites downtown that could support this type of development.
<b>Design</b>	The building design is beautiful. Concern about the terraces becoming dead space, particularly if the pedestrian bridge is not included.
<b>Geotechnical</b>	Concern about the slope stability for the building and that a tower so tall will have geotechnical issues.
<b>Access</b>	Important to still be able to walk and cycle through the site and along the top-of-bank.
<b>Traffic/Parking</b>	Concern about the traffic and parking impacts on the St. Barbara Church.

### WHAT WE HEARD

All comments from the open house, and from emails sent to the file planner are summarized by main themes below.

#### Revitalization

- I think a signature project on this site is positive for the river valley, the city and the neighbourhood
- Let them build - this area needs some love
- There hasn't been any development in this area in a long time
- It revitalizes and gives life to an area that needs it
- Positive development for the Quarters
- A development like this is long overdue for this corner
- I like that it will revitalize and spur development on the east side of downtown

- More housing with a view of the river valley would be nice
- This part of downtown desperately needs a boost from innovative development
- Pioneer for the Quarters
- I like that it will bring more residents, commercial space and visitors to our community
- Will increase the population enjoying the river valley
- Terraces bring vibrancy to parks and river valley areas
- Will bring life and energy to Quarters area
- Promises to be a vibrant community hub
- A development of this scale and investment will hopefully inspire further development

### **Existing Plans and Precedence**

- This is setting precedent for future development
- Building this will set a precedent, and the Quarters will Blossom
- This is at odds with the ARP
- Stick to the laboriously developed current plan
- This developer and landowner was around thru the Quarters ARP process and they should stick with that plan
- Why would the City undermine its own planners and administration and sabotage this plan?
- A passive solar project is planned at the Artists Quarters nearby
- Convincing people to move into the Artists Quarters is partially based on the promise of a river valley view and solar access
- The City has put considerable money into the Quarters and this project totally sabotages the Artist Quarters
- This area was planned as a green zone with a park promenade in the Quarters in 2000
- We should keep the area public and it should be a park in keeping with the plan

### **Heritage and Character**

- Regarding the blue and pink buildings just because they don't have heritage designation doesn't mean that they don't have heritage value
- I want a historical downtown
- Doesn't fit with historical concept of this block or the heritage Quarter
- Changes the whole character of the neighbourhood
- This is not what we want for the quarters
- Must preserve the integrity of the heritage district
- Not at all in keeping with the heritage concept
- The proposed building is an insult to downtown residents and to everyone who cares about Edmonton's history
- Would like the historical buildings to remain
- I've always liked the concept of building new next to heritage - if done well the tower will support a thriving Gibson Block

- Development does not necessarily conflict with preservation - 104 Street is a great example of a well preserved historic district where development has created a vibrant streetscape
- Use St. Barbara for a statue in the park, the park name or a boulevard
- Focus on historical elements that support the church

### **Parkland and Public Space**

- Why are we setting a precedent of selling parkland?
- River valley and its views are a great public asset
- Don't even entertain the idea of selling our river valley
- City should not sell parkland
- River valley should not be for sale
- River valley belongs to the people of Edmonton not the developers and private interests
- Appalled by the proposal to destroy the beautiful natural, and historical view of Edmonton's river valley
- We should be preserving the Ribbon of Green
- Although the tower is slim, it will still take away the gorgeous view of the river valley
- I don't like the view from Jasper Ave being compromised
- Do not interfere with the view for Edmontonians
- We need more quality park space and downtown Edmonton needs more parkland
- The idea of a park and viewpoint is much more appealing
- This site should be a public park

### **Building Height**

- Building sticks out like a giant middle finger
- Too tall
- Would like to see it be 30 stories or less
- Should be 4 stories not 80
- Better to cut it in half or less
- Other buildings in the Quarters are restricted to 3 to 45 stories maximum
- Building does not fit the community character
- It is completely out of scale with surroundings
- This project is much too high density for the neighbourhood it is being built in
- Too close to the river valley to have this tall of a building
- Concerned about the shadow the building will cast
- The concept is great, but too high - it should be 20-30 stories
- Do 80 stories - nothing less

### **Location**

- The location is good as it will connect to the funicular
- Showy and creative, but not right for this site
- We have many vacant parcels in the Quarters

- Why couldn't it be built on private land that Alldritt owns?
- The tower is okay, but it is the wrong location
- A tower like this should be towards the City limits not in the downtown
- There are more than enough high priced towers being built downtown
- We have current underused downtown office and condo space
- There are derelict rooming houses and parking lots that could support this kind of project

### **Design**

- Landmark building is very important to the City and the site
- I like the tall thin building
- I enjoy the design, especially the parkade, the main levels for businesses, and the modern outdoor spaces
- Beautiful building design
- I like that the plan takes the Hyatt and heritage buildings into account
- Please approve and ensure lots of lighting along the sidewalks
- The slenderness of the structure alleviates the shadow and view concerns
- Disappointed to see hotel proposal - condos would be a better fit
- Want to make sure we don't build dead space
- Concern that the terraces will become dead space and place for homeless to camp
- Concern that the bridge linking the hill to the park won't be built, which is essential to keeping the terrace from becoming dead space
- Unfortunate that the bridge will not be included - it is the most appealing part of the plan

### **Bank Stability/Geotechnical**

- Concerned about the slope stability along the rim of North Saskatchewan River Valley
- Natural instability, combined with human activity makes the size and design of the proposed development seem foolhardy and a liability to Edmontonians
- Geologic instability of the edge of the Grierson Hill, compounded with historical human disturbance (coal mines, garbage dumps, etc.) have created a dynamic slope that probably cannot withstand a structure which is literally the height of folly
- Who pays when it fall over?
- What will happen to the park when the roof of the parkade is compromised by water seepage?
- Move it away from the unstable river bank

### **Access and Connections**

- A development like this will tie into the pedway network and compliment the shaw conference centre and downtown
- Development will aid access to the river valley
- Concerned about public access along the southern edge of 101 Avenue as it is a well-used bicycle and pedestrian corridor

- Will you still be able to walk and cycle along top of bank from Grierson Road to 97 Street and see the view?
- It is important not to lose any further public access to the top of our riverbank
- Will the site be connected to the Shaw Conference Centre?
- The connection between the building and the Shaw Centre is a promise that cannot be kept and therefore it should not be shown to the public at this time

### **Parking and Traffic**

- Concern that the parking entrance will decrease the business operations of the St. Barbara Church (i.e. funeral procession, wedding)
- Concerned about access to the church and where the parishioners are going to park
- Concerned with increased noise and traffic
- Impact of cars getting into and out of parkade not dealt with in this proposal
- Will bring way too much traffic to this area
- Jasper Avenue is already very congested, even without the current LRT construction

### **Developer Accountability**

- Will the project be built as proposed and what is the guarantee that the development will occur?
- There may be a disconnect between the proposal and what actually gets built
- May end up with an empty hole
- Once the land, roads and paths are sold who holds the developer accountable?

### **Community**

- People living in an 80 story, even 50 storey or any large highrise, will not participate in the community on the ground level
- This development need to be more community centered to better incorporate itself into the environment it is being built
- Needs to be inclusive of the surroundings not dominate them
- We are downtown residents, professionals who care about the city, and this is not what we want - we want parks and historical preservation and some human scale

### **Consultation**

- Consult First Nations people
- The Project is developer's and City Council's plan not the people's plan
- This event seems too late, and way after initial concept consultation

### **Construction**

- I'm concerned about neighbourhood access during construction
- I'm concerned about potential 24/7 construction noise definitely having a huge impact one block away

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Will the site be barrier free?

- A primary corridor has been identified that would flow through the site, from the upper to lower terraces. This pathway would be barrier free, with appropriate width and slope provisions.

What type of LRT station would the Quarters station be?

- The proposed station is identified as a “Downtown” station typology in the Transit Oriented Residential Guidelines. For more information:  
[https://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/urban\\_planning\\_and\\_design/tod-guidelines.aspx](https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/tod-guidelines.aspx)

Will the parking go down towards Grierson Hill?

- Parking will be accessed off of 96 Street. If a hotel is developed, a drop-off route will be located off of Jasper Avenue. Underground parking will be located in the hill between Jasper Avenue and Grierson Hill Road, this parking will not be visible from the street.

Will the developer be removing the trees along Jasper Avenue? If so what kind of landscaping would it be replaced with?

- No tree removals are planned at this point, but if any trees are removed the Corporate Tree Policy would apply:  
[https://www.edmonton.ca/residential\\_neighbourhoods/PDF/CorpTreeMgmtPolicy-C456A.pdf](https://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/PDF/CorpTreeMgmtPolicy-C456A.pdf)

Will the public property be protected and differentiated from the private land?

- For this development to proceed, it is necessary to sell public land to the developer. Public access to the surrounding park land will be protected through public access easements.

How does the Hyatt feel about this development?

- As a landowner, the Hyatt has been notified of this project and invited to provide comments to the City. The developer has also been in discussions with the Hyatt, and other nearby property owners.

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If you have questions about this application please contact:

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