

Hello,

My name is Brittany Huston and I am writing as a long-time resident of Current River who is deeply concerned about the proposed 600-unit development on the green space at 791 Arundel Street. I appreciate your time in reviewing my submission.

Let me be clear: I fully support expanding housing options in Thunder Bay. We need solutions. But location matters, and placing a high-density, 600-unit complex on one of the last remaining accessible green spaces in our city is not responsible planning, environmentally or economically. This proposal requires serious reconsideration.

Thunder Bay is already losing its natural spaces at an alarming rate. Mature trees have been removed across the city, and the environmental impact is visible. Choosing to clear another well-used, healthy green space when alternative sites exist is not only short-sighted — it will have permanent consequences for air quality, water flow, wildlife, neighbourhood stability, city services, and long-term property values. These impacts are real, measurable, and irreversible.

This particular green space is more than land. It is one of the very few accessible outdoor areas available to residents who cannot easily travel to other parks. It functions as free therapeutic space for families, seniors, and children. Removing it eliminates one of the last remaining supports for the holistic mental and physical well-being in this community.

Economically, this project raises even more serious questions. The City advertises Thunder Bay as a place where “world-class outdoor experiences and unforgettable northern magic connect you to nature.” Removing green space for private development contradicts the City’s own identity and tourism strategy. Short-term financial gain handed to a private company cannot outweigh the long-term loss of land that belongs to the public.

Additionally, many large multiplex developments across Canada have resulted in stalled construction sites, rising taxes, neighbourhood decline, and expensive long-term maintenance burdens. We are already seeing cost overruns and infrastructure strain in Thunder Bay. It would be irresponsible to increase that burden.

This is an extremely high density target. Given the timeline required to complete the task in order to obtain the Housing Accelerator Fund seems like wagering that may lead to insolvent issues for the citizens here.

There is also the issue of affordability. Under current Ontario legislation, any building first occupied or built after November 15, 2018 is exempt from provincial rent-increase caps. This means a development of this scale could raise rents annually with no limit. Vulnerable residents who rely on these units could face future displacement and instability — exactly the opposite of what housing investments are meant to achieve.

I have personal, firsthand knowledge of similar large complexes in this city charging over \$5,000 per month for a one-bedroom unit for seniors. Many residents in Thunder Bay simply cannot withstand additional housing instability or escalating rents. We cannot risk repeating these outcomes under the banner of “solutions.”

This is not about resisting housing. It is about insisting on responsible, sustainable, long-term planning that protects the public interest, the environment, and the future of our city.

I ask Council to reconsider the use of this specific site and prioritize:

Protection of key remaining green spaces

Identification of alternative, more suitable locations

A full environmental impact review

Assurance that any new development supports long-term affordability and stability

Thank you for taking the time to consider these concerns. I look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,  
Brittany Huston