

As editor of the Now for the past seven years - and now as a council candidate - I am very concerned about what I have been hearing about what has been happening in neighbourhoods like Grandview Heights.

As reported in several stories and subsequent letters to the editor in the Now during the past few months, residents have become increasingly frustrated by the current city council's blatant disregard for residents - and its very own rules.

Against the community's will - and without an NCP in place - council approved a subdivision despite overwhelming community opposition. Furthermore the OCP and GLUP is supposed to prevent spontaneous development in rural zones like Grandview 5.

Unfortunately, this is not unique to Grandview 5. For the past several months, my Safe Surrey Coalition colleagues and I have been reaching out to residents by knocking on their doors, attending community events and listening to their concerns at private meetings.

In every neighbourhood we go, including my neighbourhood of Cloverdale, people tell us the same thing - city council does not listen to them and development seems to be running roughshod in our communities, despite what residents say. Whole communities feel like they are being ignored and Grandview 5 is a classic example.

This must be incredibly frustrating for residents.

It's clear to me that the current council's growth-at-all costs strategy is putting immense pressure on neighbourhoods and just as importantly, it is leaving Surrey residents feeling like their voices do not matter. This must change. And it will change on Nov. 15.

As a city councillor, I will commit to residents right now that their voices will be heard.

Development and growth is important to our city. But unabashed development, especially development that breaks the city's own rules, is not the kind of growth that will build our communities.

I know how important it is for our rural communities to maintain the rural feel of their neighbourhoods. They have been very vocal about it.

It's a shame council has not been listening.

As a city councillor, I intend to listen, just as I have listened as editor.

Thank you.

Beau Simpson, Safe Surrey Coalition

