

Loud and clear: UEL residents share their beefs

Recently, *Connections* sent an email blast asking readers to share their questions, concerns, questions and ideas about our neighbourhood. We received many responses that we're pleased to share below.

Thanks to all who wrote for your thoughtful comments.

➤ **Overgrown bushes + hedges:**

We have a neighbor who rents his house to students and never maintains his yard. His bushes obstruct the public sidewalk and his yard is completely overgrown. I've mentioned the sidewalk issue to UEL months ago. They said they would send a note to him but nothing has changed.

Given the number of homes that aren't occupied or rented with less interest in yard maintenance, can we not have UEL cut the boulevard lawns as they used to do? The cost would be marginal while the neighbourhood would be more attractive.

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Why doesn't UEL Admin DO something about all the overgrown hedges? Like so many other people, my wife and I have complained about it for years and years but nothing ever happens. Too bad we can't vote them out of office.

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The big problem for us are properties that have no residents with boulevards and hedges of properties growing to amazing proportions, swallowing the sidewalk completely and being extremely unsightly - unmowed grass 2' high for instance and hedges up to 10' high or more.

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Overgrown hedges are a HUGE problem!

➤ **Campervans parked in residential areas**

I have been noticing more people living in camper vehicles in the area. For instance there is someone who has been parked & living in their camper on Chancellor Blvd in Little Australia for some time now.

Also, there is a distinct change to a west coast contemporary style in our neighborhood (Area C) as houses are being demolished.

➤ **Garbage debris**

In addition to what you mentioned in your email blast, there is a problem with certain residents (most likely rented properties) stuffing their black bin to overflowing with garbage that contains food, store take-out containers etc. The crows get into it and distribute the pickings all over the boulevard. The bin sits there for several days prior to the UEL pickup and after the pickup; the pickings remain on the boulevard for several days.

It is quite disgusting.

Possible interventions: a letter to the owners by the UEL, a letter posted at the rental property.

Looking forward to another always excellent newspaper edition.

Up the street from us, the spill-over from the black-lid garbage container consisting of food containers and food scraps gets left on the boulevard for days.

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We have no problems with others stuffing our bins. The issue for us is that there's lots of trash (mainly fast food wrappers and containers and bags) blown onto our property by the wind. We think it is coming from construction workers along the street.

➤ **Tree maintenance and replacement**

Your request for ideas for the next newsletter set me thinking.

I have had no problems with garbage collection or people using the bins. On Sunday evenings over the summer, one or two people did come by car to sort through the recycle bins that were put out for early Monday morning collection but perhaps that is to be expected these days – I was interested that they drove in their own vehicles to have a look and collect.

One thing that concerns me to some extent is the state of the trees on the boulevards in front of our houses and particularly for me, on 7th Avenue and in Little Australia. However, I think my concern does apply in Areas A and B as well. My question is: what is the policy/approach to maintaining the trees in terms of pruning?

A tree on the boulevard across from my house is out of shape and out of control as are a number of trees of the same type on Queensland. Other trees are in need of pruning and some are in need of replacement. I drove down Acadia from University Boulevard to Chancellor Boulevard and noted trees on street boulevards there that need attention – other than that I have not investigated further.

Several trees on Chancellor Boulevard between Blanca and Drummond are in need of attention as well. It seems to me that a plan for regular pruning of the trees should be in place and it may be but if it is then it does not seem to be being acted upon consistently. The approach to watering the trees over the summer is commendable but it is only one part of maintaining tree health.

I wonder if the community should or could have input into the types of trees that are planted on our street boulevards – it seems to me an overall plan for tree replacement as needed would be helpful. Sometimes, trees are replaced with ones that are not particularly suitable and/or we end up with a street with great diversity in types of trees which is unattractive: West 7th Avenue is a good example.

On the subject of trees and garden areas, I wonder if a plan is in place for the rejuvenation of University Boulevard now that the water line has been replaced. Before this work was done, the garden areas were in a deplorable state. Now, some work is clearly needed.

Other than the gardens at the entry to the Boulevard, perhaps we do not need gardens along the route as they do require maintenance. That said, the gardens provide a welcome to our neighbourhood and to the University. Over recent years, it seems to me less attention has been paid to the gardens in public areas including Chancellor Boulevard – is this because of other priorities for our tax dollars or for other reasons? Steve Butt informed me that the Ministry of Transport is responsible for the care of University Boulevard including the grass area – is this a factor to be considered and does it also apply to Chancellor Boulevard grass area?

The other question regarding trees that might be raised relates to trees on private property that are growing over and obscuring the lamp standards. As winter approaches, I am hopeful the UEL Administration may consider this matter but I have yet to contact them about it.

I am not sure that the points I raise are ones for the newsletter – that is your decision. Thank you for inviting input from us.

Pacific Spirit Park authorities seem to ignore the problem developing with invasive ivy overgrowth in Area C along Chancellor Blvd. It's killing more than a few trees which will become a hazard for those using the path along Cancellor when they fall over. Which they do. I've brought it up at CAC meeting in the past but of course UEL admin ignores it.

➤ **Burnt-out street lamps**

What is the procedure in place to monitor and fix burnt out lights on the UEL?

Background: I have recently submitted the tag numbers of 14 burnt out lantern style lights to Jonn Braman which I collected during one of my evening walks. The majority were lights along University Boulevard and in the Village. He was grateful for the information and indicated that they would be attended to in due course.

I may be quite mistaken but I have the impression that the reporting of lights that are burned out has been off-loaded to the residents. Jonn indicated that they are grateful for this information as none of the staff works in the evening.

Could you clarify what the UEL procedure is for reporting burnt out lights, the process

and time line from reporting to actually fixing them?

➤ Noise

UBC's building plans on Wesbrook Mall across from Wesbrook Crescent and impact this will have on the residential Area A, in particular noise pollution from mechanical units on top of buildings, but also construction noise after normal daylight hours.

Impact of building of Block F with respect to traffic, its impact on University Boulevard and construction noise.