As part of their investigation into an alleged kidnapping and sex assault in Barrhaven on Jan. 18, police canvassed motorists at the Fallowfield park and ride on Jan. 25 in a search for witnesses. Police said on Tuesday that the 16-year-old girl's story was a hoax, but they have decided not to charge her for the false claim. (QMI Agency file photo)

OTTAWA - Residents in a west-end neighbourhood are seething after learning a rape claim by a local teen turned out to be bogus.

Police announced Monday they have closed the books on the sexual assault investigation, saying rape claims made by the girl are "unsubstantiated" and "unfounded."

The 16-year-old won't face charges after she told police she was abducted at gunpoint and sexually assaulted in broad daylight on the morning of Jan. 18.

The two-week investigation had police canvassing the quiet neighbourhood and scouring footage from a Park and Ride lot where the teen claimed she was dumped after the assault.

"It's our belief the incident did not happen," said Sgt. Jeff Webster, who declined to comment on the investigation, saying it remains a "private matter."

The girl provided police with a detailed description of her attacker and of the getaway vehicle in a case that sent shockwaves through a community still reeling from the 2005 murder of local teenager Jennifer Teague.

"That was the first thing I thought of when I first heard," said Tom Stone, 55, outside the Mac's convenience store on the corner where Teagi was last seen alive.

"We believe we live in a quiet neighbourhood and all of a sudden, holy smokes, what's happening here? And in the middle of the day," said Stone, who has two young daughters and a teenaged son.

James Gilliland, president of the West Barrhaven Community Association, said residents are expressing both relief and frustration.

"On one hand, I'm relieved that it is a hoax and that means we don't have a predator trolling around our streets. On the other hand, it's frustrating that police resources were wasted on a hoax," said Gilliland, who said there was a heightened sense of concern in the commun since the allegations first made headlines.
"With what happened to Jennifer Teague, it certainly had everyone on edge. I had some people calling for self-defence seminars, and I knx parents were making sure their teenagers were keeping their cellphones on them at all times. We were concerned even with (a teenaged family friend) taking the bus here ... It certainly serves as a reminder that bad things can happen in good communities."

Galliland is among the many residents calling on the girl to issue an apology for duping police and the community.

"There should be some repercussions," he said.

Police said they considered charging the girl with public mischief, but declined to pursue criminal charges after consulting with the Crown Attorney's office.

"It is a crime to make a false police report, and in this case we've looked at that and, given all the circumstances, we're not going to lay a charge," Webster said.