

COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

LETTERS

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25. United Way of Calgary and Area
26. Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY)
27. Vibrant Communities Calgary
28. YWCA Calgary





Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary – est. 2004

DATE: Tuesday, July 21, 2020

TO: Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

FROM: Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary
316 7th Ave S.E
Calgary, AB
T2G 0J2


RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the City of Calgary and their pursuit of obtaining the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*. The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) is a non-for-profit organization committed to providing a holistic and traditional approach to the development and provision of services and resources for the urban Indigenous peoples of Calgary. We have worked within the Homeless serving sector for several years and collaborate with like minded agencies to deliver wrap around supports for community members. We are currently assisting on the COVID-19 Housing Provider's Committee along with 40 plus agencies pooling our resources to support the community on a grand scale. COVID-19 has provided a variety of barriers for the community, but more specifically for the urban Indigenous community as the population represents ¼ of the total homeless population in Calgary. The building of additional Affordable Housing is an increasing need within in Calgary as we are seeing 15.5% unemployment rates within the city, which is higher than the national average at 12.3% and Calgary has more than 50% of Alberta's homeless population with almost 3000 people experiencing homelessness daily. More notably, with the introduction of COVID specific isolation temporary housing such as ASIS and Sunalta Lodge which triages those recovering from COVID or flu like symptoms at a higher need than those already on the waitlist for housing. This then prolongs their wait; some community members have been on the wait list for a minimum of one year or more. The Affordable Housing need has remained at a constant 18% and the forecast for housing needs will only increase moving into 2025.

AFCC fully supports this initiative as we provide housing supports for 40 high acuity community members and we recognize how important safe, inclusive and understanding housing opportunities are needed for those experiencing healthier living.

Sincerely,



Shane Gauthier
CEO

Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary



ABORIGINAL STANDING COMMITTEE

on Housing and Homelessness

Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness
1731 10 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T3C 0K1

Tuesday, July 21, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

The Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ASCHH) was formed in 1999 to address the growing overrepresentation of Indigenous homelessness and housing instability in Calgary. Our work primarily has been in collaboration with multiple stakeholders in the homeless sector, landlords, systems and other community stakeholders. Through research, projects, and strategies we have been actively working on reducing Indigenous homelessness and increasing access to affordable and sustainable housing.

ASCHH represented the homeless domain for the Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative from 2003-2015 and has been the temporary holders of the CUAL Community Information Bundle since its closure. Over the last 21 years we have had a collaborative relationship with the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Advisory Committee (CAUAC).

ASCHH developed the *Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness in (2012)*, which was formerly adopted in 2015 by the Calgary Homeless Foundation's own 10-year plan to End Homelessness in Calgary. As a community we continue to work in collaboration with the system of care to identify the unique factors of Indigenous Homelessness and drive policy, projects and opportunities to advance the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in Calgary.

We continue to develop concepts for culturally relevant housing options to address the growing needs with guidance of community and Nation Elders to support the reduction of Indigenous homelessness in the city.

Stream one of the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan* focuses on securing housing with appropriate supports for up to 600 Calgarians exiting homelessness, helping people remain safely housed before additional COVID-19 waves is vital to the advancement of reducing significant homelessness in Calgary. The Indigenous population represents approximately a quarter of the total and absolute homeless population in Calgary based on the previous federal Point in Time Count (PiT), however these numbers do not account for the number of Indigenous peoples who are living in overcrowded or unstable housing situations who are living within hidden homelessness. Therefore, the need for increased affordable housing is significant for the Indigenous community.

The Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ASCHH) has participated within the community conversations of the Affordable Housing's housing provider meetings; as well as we are actively engaged in developing and supporting strategies within the Community COVID-19 Indigenous Task Force – Housing Circle

We are grateful for the Mayor and Council's ardent support of affordable housing as a priority agenda and are completely supportive of the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan as a pivotal direction for the City of Calgary.

Sincerely,



Katelyn Lucas
Chair

Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness

Accessible Housing Society
215, 1212 31 Avenue NE
Calgary, AB T2E 7S8



Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Accessible Housing Society (AH) is a not-for-profit organization and registered charity providing safe, affordable, accessible housing and service delivery to individuals with limited mobility. Since its inception 47 years ago the Society's main goal has been to ensure clients/residents with limited mobility have both housing and wrap around support services specific to their individual needs to ensure individuals can have the confidence and a degree of independence they desire to live their best life.

Accessible currently provides a wide range of program services; from working with individuals who exiting homelessness and assisting to acquire appropriate housing while providing varying degrees of case management services to mid acuity supportive housing and all the way through to all inclusive supportive living with health care services. All our programs focus on ensuring appropriate housing first and then build upon strengthening life skills to help people integrate long-term in community.

Accessible Housing Society was very grateful to be part of the Housing Providers Committee initiated by the Affordable Housing branch of the City of Calgary. We are keenly aware of the need for affordable (and in our case accessible housing) within the city but the opportunity to listen and learn from the challenges and experiences of others has been very valuable. It is understood a collective approach to evidence informed solutions during an extreme event of global dysregulation for every demographic due to COVID 19 further highlights the need to collaborate together to come up with workable actions.

Accessible Housing continues to see and experience the need for affordable (and accessible) housing options. In review of the Advocacy Plan our organization would be a natural fit as a collaborative knowledge partner and participant to the items identified in both stream 1 and stream 2 of the plan. We have both design and construction knowledge as well as the program support and development experience to assist and welcome the opportunity to be part of furthering the solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stacey", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Stacey Stilling
Executive Director
Accessible Housing Society



July 20, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007,
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Re. City of Calgary COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

Dear Members of Council:

On behalf of our 94 member hotels in Calgary, the Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association offers its strong support for Calgary's COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan.

Alberta's hotel industry has been decimated by the impacts of COVID-19 and the severe downturn in Alberta's oil and gas industry. The Calgary hotel sector has been hit particularly hard, resulting in an oversupply of guest rooms for the foreseeable future. The plan's reference to repurpose surplus hotel units into affordable housing is a "win-win" strategy that both addresses Calgary's urgent need for affordable housing and supports recovery for Calgary's hotel sector.

We applaud the work of the COVID-19 Housing Providers' Committee and City Administration in developing this plan.

Sincerely,

Dave Kaiser,
President & CEO

Aspen/Boys & Girls Clubs of Calgary
731 13 Avenue NE
Calgary, AB T2E 1C8



Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Dear Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

On June 15, 2020, Aspen Family and Community Network Society (Aspen) and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary (BGCC) officially merged and became one amalgamated organization. Aspen has a history of providing services in Calgary since 1984 and BGCC has been serving the community since 1939. Together as one, we are building on the work of both legacy organizations to make a bigger and better impact in our community.

The new organization works with individuals across their lifespan to grow the skills, confidence and connections needed to thrive. This means that across our now 33 programs we support children, youth, families, adults and whole communities to engage, address barriers and build their capacity to overcome future challenges. Of the 33 programs mentioned above we provide 10 programs that reach into the housing sector. These programs focus on homelessness prevention, housing first, transitional supports and the operation of Avenue 15, Calgary's only youth homeless shelter.

Many of the people who come through our doors are in need and impacted by the effects of poverty. On a daily basis we see the need for more affordable housing. The legacy agencies of BGCC and Aspen have served 16% and 8% Indigenous clientele across all programs. Specifically, in programs related to housing and homelessness these numbers increase to 38% and 49%.

This includes housing for youth transitioning from care, young parents/adults, housing for families with multiple generations and Elder/Senior housing. These needs have only been compounded with the downturn of the Alberta economy and the recent introduction of COVID-19.

The proposed Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan is directly in line with the work that Aspen/BGCC is committed to. Working from a holistic model and knowing that individuals and families require stable environments to focus on other life impacts and/or traumas is key to ensuring wellbeing. We are in full support of this proposed plan and are committed as a committee member and community organization to see housing needs eradicated in our city.

Sincerely,



Jeff Dyer
CEO

Aspen/Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary

July 21, 2020



Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 210, Station "M"
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support for the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan ("Plan").

The Plan is the product of significant work completed by Elsbeth, Jessica, Bruce, and the rest of the Affordable Housing team at the City, and a large and diverse group of representatives of the housing-provider community.

It is a well-reasoned, logical, and, most importantly, meaningful plan with clear and concise short-term deliverables.

Attainable Homes Calgary Corporation endorses the plan whole-heartedly. The impact of COVID-19 is already incredibly far reaching and the effects will only continue to grow. Developing well-reasoned plans to meet the challenges of the pandemic are important for us all in maintain housing security and resilience. The City of Calgary's endorsement of this Plan is a step to achieving deeper housing security and resiliency in the face of the pervasive economic and other challenges facing our City.

Thank you for the invitation to participate in this very well-designed and implemented process and provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Jaydan Tait
President & CEO, Attainable Homes Calgary



July 21, 2020

Intergovernmental Affairs Committee - Members of Calgary City Council
The City of Calgary
PO Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Re: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan, IGA 2020-0807

BILD Calgary Region (BILD) is pleased to be connected with the COVID-19 Housing Providers' Committee, both directly and as a member of the Community Housing Affordability Collective (CHAC).

The housing spectrum is a continuum from homelessness through supported housing, near-market and market rental, to home ownership. It is very much like a pond and any impact to a portion of the continuum will have a ripple effect throughout. COVID-19 has been much more than a pebble in a pond and has resulted in waves of shock/stress across the entire housing spectrum, and further exacerbated an already challenged non-market affordable housing sector.

The COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Committee has recognized that within the pandemic crisis there is an opportunity to collaborate and advocate with all orders of Government toward solutions. In response, the Committee has created the COVID-19 Community Affordable Advocacy Plan to implement the concurrent and interdependent approach of Stream 1: *Supportive Housing to Functionally End Homelessness*; and Stream 2: *Build, Acquire and Partner to Stimulate the Economy*. The Plan is intended to stimulate the economy through construction job creation and repurposing underutilized buildings, support the struggling real estate and construction sectors and most importantly, result in vulnerable Calgarians being appropriately and safely housed.

BILD would encourage the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee and Members of Council to approve Administration's Recommendations to endorse the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan and request the Mayor and Council make a submission to federal and provincial elected officials based on the Advocacy Plan attached to the Report.

Regards,
BILD CALGARY REGION

Beverly Jarvis
Director of Policy, Process and Government Relations

c.c. Katie Black, Acting General Manager, Community Services, City of Calgary,
Bruce Irvine, Elsbeth Mehrer; Affordable Housing, City of Calgary



Bishop O'Byrne Housing Association

#510-1540 Northmount Dr. NW
Calgary, AB. T2L 0G6

Bishop O'Byrne Housing Association
#510, 1540 Northmount Drive NW
Calgary AB T2L 0G6

July 21, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Dear Members of Council,

As a member of the COVID-19 Housing Providers Committee, Bishop O'Byrne Housing Association (BOBHA) is in full support of the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan as the right pathway to COVID-19 recovery and to help address Calgary's affordable housing deficit.

BOBHA has been providing affordable housing to Calgary's most vulnerable citizens for over 40 years. Over the last 5 years our organization has collaborated extensively with sector partners through various initiatives to help put an end to Calgary's housing affordability crisis. A partner in the RESOLVE Campaign, a member of the Community Housing Affordability Collective (CHAC), Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness and the COVID-19 Housing Providers Committee, BOBHA understands the need for cross sector collaboration, as well as Provincial and Federal support in order to make housing for all a reality in Calgary.

Since mid-March, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance and need of housing as a solution to the three-part health, social and economic crisis created by the pandemic. Our organization has seen first-hand how safe and affordable housing addresses the health crisis by providing safe shelter that allows for social distancing to maintain community well-being. In our daily operations we see how stable housing addresses the social crisis by providing stability for vulnerable Calgarians, ending their experience of homelessness. It is also a well-known fact that ending homelessness saves public systems \$70K to \$135K per person, per year and addresses the economic crisis by stimulating private construction and real estate sectors. Increasing the non-market housing supply will ensure Calgary is prepared for future outbreaks. With full support of the plan, through the two streams presented, we can create homes for 12,000 vulnerable Calgarians.

Housing for all is possible. There is an opportunity to harness post-pandemic community and political will for immediate and long-term benefits to address public health, the safety of vulnerable Calgarians and create a sustainable model of affordable housing while stimulating the economy. With more than 100,000 households projected to be in housing need by 2025, now is the time to act.

Sincerely,

Erika Cusimano

Erika Cusimano
Director, Community Relations
Bishop O'Byrne Housing Association



July 17, 2020

The City of Calgary
via email to Jessica.DeVreeze@calgary.ca
Intergovernmental Affairs Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Please include this endorsement of the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan expressed on behalf of Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre Society. Our core agency work reveals unequivocally, the devastating effects that lack of housing has on an individual's health and safety as well as the clear and positive outcomes of improved wellbeing once securely housed. Most recently, as the virus crossed Calgary's thresholds, we witnessed the impossibility of the simple, still-essential preventions of hand washing, staying home and physically distancing while experiencing homelessness.

The Housing Providers Committee has produced a Plan that comes from the invaluable input of members collaborating across sectors and services. The committee's recommendations are sensible and achievable and reflect careful and thorough consideration. Appropriately supported housing within an available array of accommodation over a committed timeline will support our economy and heighten community safety.

I urge Mayor and Council to make a submission of these expert recommendations to Federal and Provincial elected officials following public presentation and deliberation of the Plan July 23rd, 2020 to ensure the needs of the affordable housing community, private sector stakeholders and all Calgarians are elevated to political decision makers at all levels as they make COVID-19 recovery and stimulus investment decisions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Clarkson".

Sandra Clarkson
Executive Director

CALGARY DROP-IN CENTRE
1 Dermot Baldwin Way SE
Calgary, Alberta T2G 0P8

Phone 403-263-5707
Fax 403-234-0677

WWW.CALGARYDROPIN.CA
REG. NO. 11882 3459 RR0001

16 July 2020

Calgary City Council**Open Letter**

Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) is the system planner for Calgary's Homeless-Serving System of Care (CHSSC), and we partner with all orders of government to utilize an evidence-based approach grounded in data to develop innovative solutions that house people experiencing homelessness in our city. Since 2008, we've put 10,000 people into homes, and we've achieved that with a 94% housing retention rate.

CHF recognizes that mental health and addictions contribute to reduced health outcomes for homeless individuals requiring housing and program supports within CHSSC. Additionally, the unique environment of COVID-19 clearly demonstrates that isolating within your own home is vital to health and well-being – and safeguarding public health. It also clearly demonstrates that collective action and political will are required to protect Calgary's most vulnerable and ensure social distancing and isolation are achievable for those without a permanent home.

The compounding of these circumstances has challenged traditional clinical boundaries for health care. Undoubtedly, it illustrates that improved health outcomes for people experiencing homelessness must include a broad, multi-faceted approach that is grounded in collaboration by all orders of government, the private sector, and the non-profit sector.

Clearly, achieving improved health outcomes cannot be attained without a permanent home.

Affordable housing need has remained constant in Calgary at 18 percent over five census cycles, while the average rent has increased by 1.7% to \$1,181. This continues to remain unaffordable for at-risk and vulnerable Calgarians, and as the city's population grows, more than 100,000 households are forecast to be in housing need by 2025. A lack of overall rental stock and expensive rents for low-income households is at the core of Calgary's housing supply challenge.

According to the 2018 Point in Time (PiT) Count, Calgary is the epicentre of homelessness in Alberta with 51% of the provincial homeless population - while comprising only 30% of the province's total population. On any given day, approximately 3,000 Calgarians are experiencing homelessness. This is unacceptable.

Those at risk of homelessness are in a precarious position in an overburdened health and housing system here in Calgary. Living in a shelter or rough sleeping is not a solution and should not be the norm.

We owe it to the citizens of our city to tackle this social issue together and move towards solving it, together.

Home is Health.

Sincerely,



Matt Nomura

Vice President, Calgary Homeless Serving System of Care



Cidex Group of Companies
1301 9th Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T3C 0H9

Tuesday, July 21, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

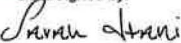
Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

One of my primary roles as Business Development Manager for Cidex is to engage with other housing providers and ensure we are working collaboratively with our neighbors and partners. Although we are a market housing provider we are committed to working with non market housing providers to ensure that all Calgarians gain access to safe housing in our City.

I have been actively involved in the conversations leading up to this presentation. I find the two tiered approached extremely well planned out. The first tier deals with the most urgent need of our vulnerable homeless population. The second tier looks to a long term plan which will both address local need as well as support our economic recovery. Prior to the pandemic we had been actively working with The City on a public-private partnership to support the creation of affordable non-market units within market projects. The benefits of doing so include the provision of needed stock as well as better social integration. We believe that this is the strongest path forward in addressing the long term need to eradicate the lack of available and accessible housing in our City. As such we support the approval of this plan and are committed to working alongside all those supporting this project to see through its success.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

775B43417934435...

Sarah Itani
Business Development Manager
Cidex Group of Companies



July 17, 2020

Attn: City of Calgary - Intergovernmental Affairs Committee of Council (IGA)

Re: Support for the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

VIA EMAIL

Dear IGA Committee Members of Council:

As one of Calgary's leading non-profit affordable housing providers, HomeSpace Society (HomeSpace) recommends the adoption of the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan to address the urgent and ongoing need for more affordable housing in our city.

The need is great, and the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of housing like never before. Nearly 3,000 individuals and families in Calgary are experiencing homelessness and more than 100,000 households are forecast to be in core housing need by 2025. Our city needs to 15,000 new units of affordable housing just to reach the nationwide average.

HomeSpace has developed seven new affordable housing buildings over the last four years, adding to our portfolio of 550 units across 27 properties. We currently have four more projects in various stages of development and two in the pipeline, which will bring a total of nearly 300 new affordable units for Calgary's most vulnerable citizens. Through strong relationships, design-built construction and economies of scale, we are able to leverage funding to quickly and efficiently deploy capital and get new housing units in the ground.

Housing underpins health and safety and is an essential component of a strong economy. HomeSpace is committed to addressing Calgary's supply crisis in collaboration with community partners and we believe the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan is the best solution towards this goal. We look forward to your continued leadership in prioritizing affordable housing and ensuring *A Home for Everyone in our Community*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bernadette Majdell".

Bernadette Majdell
Chief Executive Officer
HomeSpace Society



885, 105 - 12 Avenue SE Calgary, AB T2G 1A1
T. 403.297.1746 F. 403.297.1403 www.horizonhousing.ab.ca

July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Re: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

On behalf of Horizon Housing, I would like to express our support for the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan as presented to you today.

The Plan was developed through collaboration among 42 organizations from private, non-profit and government housing sectors. Through my experience as an advocate for housing affordability and my capacity as an executive leader of a non-profit, I am confident in the Plan's response to the immediate threat of the pandemic and to the long-term health and economic repercussions.

The Plan outlines two streams of concurrent investment as a response to the needs of our citizens and our economy as we adapt to COVID-19 – and it is important that we move forward with both.

The Plan will deliver affordable housing to 12,000 Calgarians and employ approximately 2,800 people over 4 years.

In the midst of rapid and unprecedented change, we have the expertise, capacity and willingness to work together to address the affordable housing shortages in Calgary.

What we need now is the support and resources of our federal, provincial and municipal governing bodies to propel the Plan into action.

Horizon Housing – as a long-standing provider of affordable, integrated and supported homes – is firm in its conviction that the Plan is the most effective strategy for a holistic approach to the challenges we face today and in the near future. We are ready to begin the work outlined in the two streams of investment in the Plan so every Calgarian has a safe place to call home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martina Jileckova".

Martina Jileckova
Chief Executive Officer
Horizon Housing



July 20, 2020

Intergovernmental Affairs Committee
City Clerk's Office | The City of Calgary
700 Macleod Trail SE
PO Box 2100, Postal Station M 8007
Calgary, AB | T2P 2M5

Letter of Support | COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

My name is Heather Morley, and I am the Executive Director at Inn from the Cold – Alberta's largest family homelessness serving agency. Inn from the Cold provides prevention and diversion services, emergency family shelter, as well as supportive housing to assist families to move from crisis to stability. Our vision is a community where no child or family is homeless.

Affordable housing is critical to achieving this vision, and will be even more critical as individual and family financial insecurity increases with Calgary's economic downturn. Affordable housing is foundational to individual and community well-being and COVID-19 has highlighted that housing is a health issue.

The *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan* seeks support towards ending functional homelessness and addressing key gaps in Calgary's housing system, while improving health outcomes for citizens and significantly enhancing the local economy.

Inn from the Cold has been involved in the community consultation process, and is a member of the COVID-19 Housing Providers' Committee. We confidently and wholeheartedly endorse this plan.

Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached at 403-608-0956 or heather@innfromthecold.org should further information be required.

Sincerely,



Heather Morley, MA
Executive Director
INN FROM THE COLD

JACK LONG FOUNDATION

For Community Development

Suite 104, 808 - 5 Street SE,

Calgary AB T2G 4T5

info@jacklongfoundation.com
587-955-6877

www.jacklongfoundation.com

To encourage, support, and build projects and processes, which promote social and ethical responsibility, build healthy environments, and develop dynamic and balanced urban communities in which all community residents have the opportunity to participate and contribute.

Intergovernmental Affairs Committee of Council
% Ms. Jessica DeVreeze

July 21, 2020

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing in favour of the above report and ask the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee to activate this plan for housing vulnerable Calgarians, with its support. As stated in the report COVID-19 has shed a bright light on the social and economic impacts of homelessness and the importance of appropriate housing beyond the immediate and obvious benefits to those directly affected. The Jack Long Foundation (JLF) extends its appreciation to The City of Calgary and its staff for taking a pro-active approach in forming and supporting this committee and its work, and to all participants in the process for their expertise. We are pleased and honoured to be a part of this genuine attempt to create a plan that encourages action; and there is much more to be done.

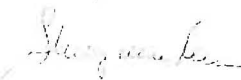
Advancing this report to its intended purpose of engaging the other orders of government is crucial to meeting:

- The immediate need to protect vulnerable peoples and the spread of COVID-19; and
- Making a meaningful contribution to safe and appropriate housing of our most vulnerable.

As housing advocates and providers, we are highly dependent on the support of all orders of Government engagement as true partners in building below market housing.

The support of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee is key in furthering the reach of this work and spurring true action to meet our urgent housing needs.

Sincerely,



Shirley-anne Reuben

Katrina Milaney
3D29, Hospital Dr. NW
Calgary, AB
T2N 4Z6
katrina.milaney@ucalgary.ca

To: Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007, The City of Calgary P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

July 21, 2020

Re: *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

I am submitting this letter with enthusiastic support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*. I have been a researcher engaged in community driven solutions to social issues for more than 15 years. I have led several research projects looking at the health and housing needs of vulnerable Calgarians. In 2017 we interviewed 300 people staying in Calgary's emergency shelters and rough sleeping. Results from this study showed very complex physical and mental health issues and five times the rate of childhood trauma as compared to the general population. Results also showed that the longer a person was without stable housing, the worse their health became. As a follow up, in 2018-2019, we led a research project with 160 people living in Calgary's affordable housing units. Results from this study showed that having access to affordable housing increased access to education, healthcare, and basic needs for adults and children, reduced dependency on emergency and crisis services as well as increased hope, self-esteem, and quality of life for families.

The *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan* was developed through collaboration and cooperation among many of Calgary's housing and homelessness service providers. Their collective asks would create an increase in affordable housing units in Calgary at a time of heightened need. The COVID-19 pandemic is happening when Calgary and Alberta are already facing a recessed economy. I do believe the pandemic will lead to increasing numbers of vulnerable people who have lost income, and/or increased debt levels and who may be facing eviction. If realized, this funding would help bring the number of affordable housing units in Calgary closer to the national average and would bring an important boost to the economy.

History and research have shown that if we do not invest in safe and affordable housing options, we increase the risk for lifelong issues of poverty, mental and physical health issues and risk for homelessness. By endorsing and supporting these asks, you are actively involved in creating safe and sustainable solutions that will have long and far-reaching positive impacts on families, communities and our city. I encourage you to support this important and timely plan.

Sincerely,



Katrina Milaney, PhD

Metis Calgary Family Services Society

Ke Mama Nnanik Family Support, Medicine Wheel Early Learning Centres,
Aboriginal Students Program, Native Network Family Resource & Parent Link Centre, Elders Program,
Rainbow Lodge, Little Sundance Child Care Centre

Monday, July 20, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Metis Calgary Family Services Society relevance is serving our urban Aboriginal population since 1994 in Calgary. One of the primary social determinants among our community is housing and homelessness, and with Rainbow Lodge Supported Housing program helping over 154 individuals a year, and our Native Network Family Resource Centre supporting over another 1500 people a month, we recognize the challenges are too great at this time for any one organization, Indigenous or not, to create the fulsome environment for our urban Indigenous children and families to flourish. Healthy Indigenous families lead to stronger communities and improve citizenship, which is a fundamental to meaningful reconciliation and improved outcomes for Calgarians overall.

Metis Calgary Family Services Society, as an independent nonprofit Aboriginal entity, has increased our capacity as a community organization to better serve our urban dynamic through key partnerships and stakeholders such as the City of Calgary, through standing with us as our efficacy grows.

We know that meaningful opportunities for our families will increase as the Affordable Housing Advocacy plan is realized, and at this particular time in history, our urban Indigenous groups are facing monumental disruptors to family, culture and community. We know that collectively, in honest and respectful partnerships, we can achieve our common goals. The City of Calgary has been an important influence in leading our larger society overall towards such effective collaborative community initiatives, one example is the recently implemented Indigenous Relations Office, another is the FCSS FSII Indigenous Indicators, both reflect the bold efforts required by governments, systems, and non-indigenous entities for meaningful change to occur.

We look forward to a continued positive relationship, as both stakeholder and partner, as the Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan unfolds.

In Spirit

Mark Laycock CEO Programs

Metis Calgary Family Services Society



MÉTIS URBAN HOUSING CORPORATION

"Helping House Our People"

Head Office: 11923 121A Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5L 0A2 PH 877-458-8684 FAX 780-452-1076
Calgary Office: 6-2135 32 Avenue NE, Calgary, AB T2E 6Z3 PH 877-458-8684 FAX 403-235-3878

PROTECTED

July 20, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Métis Urban Housing Corporation of Alberta Inc. has been in operation since 1982 and together with its sister organization, Métis Capital Housing Corporation provides a safe, secure, and affordable housing to Indigenous people in Alberta. We have had many families with many struggles and we have had many successes with these families over the years.

Currently, funded by the Government of Alberta we are staying on our course to help our people attain affordable, adequate and suitable housing. We strive to help our families not only with housing but by seeking many resources for them in their communities to help them become more responsible and accountable tenants while living in our homes. We hold monthly tenant workshops to explain lease agreement in detail and have an open discussion on their life goals and their responsibilities as the tenant of Métis Housing. We also give them resources to help them attain their goals of getting a higher education and attaining a job that will eventually help them become home owners. We believe in offering them a "Hand Up" as opposed to a "Hand Out".

My role as the Director of Housing is to oversee the day to day operations for the Calgary and 3 other rural branches in southern Alberta. We have a small team of Tenant Relations Officers in the Calgary branch office together with 3 Rural Field Officers in the Red Deer, Rocky Mountain House and Medicine Hat locations.

Our organizations fully support the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan. We see ourselves helping the homeless Indigenous people by providing them housing which is safe, secure and affordable together with necessary wrap around services which will assist them and enable them to take that next step and maintain a home that is right for them.

We wish to see this Plan implemented successfully which will assist the Indigenous peoples in Calgary attain housing that will enable them to walk side by side, with their fellow men and women and to, once again, lift their spirits and raise their head and look forward to their bright future.

Sincerely,

Denise Fayant
Director of Housing Calgary/Rural South
Métis Urban Housing Corporation of Alberta Inc.



Miskanawah Community Services Association
2716 Sunridge Way NE
Calgary, AB T1Y 0A5

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Miskanawah is an Indigenous non-profit agency that draws jointly from the strengths and guidance of Indigenous teachings and traditions, and evidence-based practices in human services, to support vulnerable children, youth and families. Serving Calgary and the surrounding area for over 30 years, Miskanawah works from a trauma-informed and strength-based perspective to support families in building skills and resiliency by forming natural supports.

[Miskanawah](#) (meaning "Pathways" in Cree) is our philosophical framework that is rooted in Indigenous teachings, ceremonies and guidance from Elders. As its name implies, this approach assists individuals and families in building pathways to and within the community, strengthening their natural supports, and engaging in healthier ways of living.

In light of this, we recognize that the systemic effects of homelessness and the predominant need for housing security is an issue faced by many. In our efforts



miskanawah
empowerment • strength • family

to provide ongoing support to this population, we acknowledge that this issue needs to be addressed in collaboration and partnership. Miskanawah supports a collective response to homelessness in Calgary, in hopes of providing more seamless services to vulnerable children, youth, and families.

I would like to reiterate Miskanawah's support for the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kirby Redwood

CEO, Miskanawah



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

National Initiative on
Mixed-Income Communities

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007, The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

July 20, 2020

Dear Calgary Council,

Re: COVID – 19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan.

I wish to express my very strong support for a community-level advocacy proposal to our federal and provincial governments.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of housing as an underpinning factor for protecting people and public health. Specifically, the pandemic has:

- Resulted in income loss and rental arrears, especially for lower-income households who are mostly renters. Eviction bans have had some effectiveness in preventing or slowing down evictions; but when those bans are lifted, many households will be on the brink of absolute homelessness.
- Revealed the housing-related inequities faced by low-income households and racialized persons, who more often rent, rely on public transit and carry out work that exposes them to infection.
- Diminished peoples' ability to get mortgage approvals, in part because many people have reduced income (or lost their jobs entirely) and also in light of new mortgage rules taking effect on July 1.¹ This means an entire cohort of would-be homeowners will be stuck in the rental market, driving down rental vacancy rates.
- Exposed the patchwork of social services in place for persons experiencing homelessness. Challenges have included: the closure of daytime services (e.g., drop-in centres); the closure of public spaces offering access to washroom facilities (e.g., libraries); and a lack of Internet access.
- Created additional costs and operational pressures on supportive housing programs and emergency shelters—for cleaning, personal protective equipment and increased staffing.

¹ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. (2020, June 4). CMHC reviews underwriting criteria. Retrieved from CMHC website: <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca>



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

National Initiative on
Mixed-Income Communities

The downturn in the real estate market offers an opportunity for the federal government to assist non-profit housing providers to acquire new stock. We must therefore act now to expand the creation of housing options to the point where, when we are hit by a future wave or new pandemic, all Canadians will have a home in which to stay safe. We must commit to a new normal.

The COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan provides precisely the kind of strategy needed at this time. This well-researched, well-referenced and well-written set of asks is anchored in the local policy context and brings together a very important group of housing providers.

I strongly encourage Calgary City Council to endorse this crucial proposal.

Regards,

Nick Falvo, PhD
Research Affiliate
National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities
Case Western Reserve University



NORFOLK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Norfolk Housing Association
1118 Kensington Road NW
Calgary, AB T2N 3P1

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Norfolk Housing Association (NHA) is a mixed-income housing provider operating 6 buildings in the Hillhurst-Sunnyside area. NHA operates without significant funding, balancing a 50/50 mix of market and rent-geared-to-income units that support a diverse, inclusive, and thriving community. We are focused on answering Calgary's growing need for more affordable units through the acquisition of purpose-built rentals, and concurrently piloting a small portable housing benefit program to better assist families in immediate need.

Prior to the pandemic, we have seen decreasing numbers of purpose-built rentals and a shrinking rental market. After the pandemic, it may become increasingly difficult for smaller, private organizations such as Norfolk Housing Association to add affordable units to Calgary's housing landscape. However, with the support of partners and government bodies, NHA and other organizations could quickly realize this growth, acquire, and actualize increased affordability and diversity of choice in housing in the short term (2-5 years).

The organizational goals of NHA align closely with that of the City's Affordable Housing Unit and directly with Stream 2 of the proposed Advocacy Plan, with a focus on acquisition and partnerships, and the specific aim to see more Calgarians housed appropriately and affordably in a mixed-income model. The

1118 Kensington Rd NW Calgary AB. T2N 3P1 Phone: (403) 270.3062 www.norfolkhousing.ca



mixed-income model is sustainable long-term and provides a social safety net and community without stigma, where individuals that do not require high supports can thrive and contribute.

NHA and our many partners have seen the positive impact that purposeful, mixed-income, and permanent housing solutions can have on individuals and families; where stability creates resilience and offers everyone a life of dignity. Through partnership, appropriate funding and a strategic approach, we can work together to ensure the housing needs of current and future Calgarians are met through a sufficient supply of all types of housing and housing providers.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter in support of the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Mazereeuw
Interim Director of External Relations
Norfolk Housing Association



United Way of Calgary and Area

600 – 105 12 Ave SE

Calgary, AB T2G 1A1

T: 403-231-6265

F: 403-355-3135

calgaryunitedway.org

Reg. Charity Number: 13022 9750 RR0001

2020 July 20

Elder and Dr. Reg Crowshoe
Elders Knowledge Circle
c/o: United Way of Calgary

Mayor Naheed Nenshi
Chair, Intergovernmental Affairs Committee
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Oki Mayor Nenshi:

Re: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

The Elders' Knowledge Circle is an evolution of the Elders' Project (which began in 2015) supporting a group of 20 to 30 Indigenous Elders, helping them build capacity and to enhance Indigenous Strategies within an urban context in Alberta. Similar to an institute, the Knowledge Circle, will expand on this work with the establishment of a centralized place, where knowledge and wisdom from Indigenous Elders (from a number of First Nations and Métis groups), will be preserved, protected, revitalized, and shared. The Elders' Knowledge Circle will help bridge the gap in cultural understanding and reconciliation and allow the transfer of knowledge to the next generation.

On behalf of the Elders' Knowledge Circle, I am writing to offer my support to the City of Calgary (The City) on your efforts to convene the housing sector to advocate together to end functional homelessness and build future sector resilience. We also believe that housing is an important factor to health and safety. As you know, the well-being of Canada's Indigenous population continues to be affected by historical events and current challenges including racism and social exclusion. More than 150,000 children were removed from their families and sent to residential schools, where they were forbidden to speak their language and practice their culture. Today, two-thirds of urban Indigenous people report being impacted by residential schools personally, or via a family member. We are at a unique period in time where we are experiencing the first generations who did not attend residential schools themselves, but still experience the intergenerational trauma that is a result of them.

Housing has also been identified as one of most pressing issues impacting the Indigenous community. Sustainability and accessible housing remains a challenge and

presents struggle for community members. We support the advocacy plan and encourage the City to support the voices and ideas of Indigenous people directly in the development of creative approaches that will lead to long lasting solutions to affordable housing. We look forward to working with you as we move forward in the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan. This is an opportunity to promote mutual learning and our continued relationship.

With Kindness,



Elder & Dr. Reg Crowshoe

CC: Councillor G-C. Carra, Vice-Chair
Councillor G. Chahal
Councillor P. Demong
Councillor J. Farkas
Councillor R. Jones
Councillor E. Woolley
Cynthia Christison, City of Calgary
City Clerks. City of Calgary



July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as considered and strong support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*.

Today, one in 10 people in Calgary is 65 or older. In the 2030s, it will be one in five. A growing number of older citizens are living on low and moderate incomes. For many of modest means, the path forward is uncertain, including whether they'll be able to secure an affordable home with services to live out their longer lives.

For more than 55 years, Silvera has been a leading Calgary-based non-profit providing safe and affordable housing to older adults. More than 1,450 people make their home with us in 25 independent and supportive living communities throughout the city.

As you consider other voices of support for the Advocacy Plan, I would like to emphasize the following.

- With the growth in the number of seniors and the continuing economic challenges they are facing, a steadily increasing number of new affordable housing units is required. Calgary is well behind other major urban centres in investing in the construction of affordable seniors communities. Seniors were unquestionably hit the hardest, with life loss due to the COVID virus and housing investment is critically needed.
- The vast majority of the existing housing stock for seniors was built decades ago and is becoming increasingly unsuitable and expensive to operate.
- There are prospects to lever existing assets and create new communities through public-private partnerships.
- Construction of new communities for older adults will create jobs and generate positive and enduring economic impacts during operation.

- Too many seniors are unnecessarily living in hospitals and higher levels of care. There is a rich opportunity to redirect existing government health spending to seniors housing for more cost-effective and positive outcomes – immediately and in the long-term.

Together, with wise priority-setting and investment, we can have a profound impact on how we support vulnerable, yet deserving, older (and other) citizens.

Silvera endorses the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan* as a smart and worthy approach to achieving this goal.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arlene Adamson', followed by a horizontal line.

Arlene Adamson, CEO



July 22, 2020

Calgary Council
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan (IGA2020-0807)

Members of Council,

Please consider this letter as support for the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*. The Mustard Seed has served the vulnerable population in Calgary for over thirty years. As such we have developed a full cycle program of care including basic services, support services and housing. We recognize there are many obstacles that those experiencing homelessness must overcome to become productive members of society. One of those obstacles is the inability to access affordable housing. This Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan identifies a number of markers which, if addressed, will move our clients along the continuum of self-sufficiency and self-management. Aspects of the plan dovetail well with the intent and strategic plan of The Mustard Seed. We are committed to help meet the housing shortage need for low income families through a twenty four unit two and three bedroom apartment building to provide housing for vulnerable families.

Sincerely,

Stephen Wile, Ed.D
Chief Executive Officer



United Way of Calgary and Area
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Calgary, AB T2G 1A1
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calgaryunitedway.org

Reg. Charity Number: 13022 9750 RR0001

His Worship, Naheed Nenshi
Mayor, City of Calgary
Chair, Intergovernmental Affairs Committee
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Dear Mayor Nenshi,

RE: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

United Way of Calgary and Area is a member organization of the COVID-19 Housing Providers' Committee. I am writing to support the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan that is being presented on July 23 to the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. United Way fully endorses the plan and the advocacy priorities identified.

The United Way's mission is to mobilize communities for lasting social change.

We work collaboratively with agencies, philanthropists, foundations, corporations, indigenous communities, all levels of government, and many other partners to address complex social issues and improve people's lives. We understand the pressing needs facing vulnerable Calgarians, and the struggles many face to build better lives for themselves and their families. These struggles have been amplified by the social, health, and economic impact of COVID-19, and the economic downturn in Alberta.

Housing is a critical component of a co-ordinated system of care for improving people's lives. Many of our neighbours face income barriers to maintaining safe, decent, affordable housing, and they often have to make choices to sacrifice other basic needs to stay housed. Many of the families we support through our agency partners share stories of the stress and anxiety of maintaining housing, at the expense of providing a quality of life for their children beyond meeting the basic needs of life.

COVID-19 and the economic downturn have significantly increased the need for short- and long-term affordable housing in Calgary. We appreciate the work the City of Calgary is doing to seek federal and provincial support to help those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity in our city. Our common goal is to ensure a resilient future for all Calgarians where everyone thrives. We urge the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee to endorse the COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen Young".

Karen Young
President & CEO

CC: Councillor G-C. Carra, Vice-Chair, Councillor G. Chahal, Councillor P. Demong, Councillor J. Farkas, Councillor R. Jones, Councillor E. Woolley, Jessica DeVreeze, City of Calgary and City Clerk's Office



July 20, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

It has been brought to my attention that The City of Calgary is seeking community support for funding to provide opportunities for housing which will focus on securing housing with appropriate supports for up to 600 Calgarians exiting homelessness and helping people remain safely housed before additional COVID-19 waves.

As a local community organization, we at the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) are aware of the need to provide suitable and safe housing to Indigenous people for sustainable community development. We also know it is important to focus on the Indigenous populations specifically and intentionally in this plan as Indigenous people represent a quarter of the total homeless population in Calgary.

We feel that the concept suggested by The City of Calgary considers the need for positive reinforcement and focus for urban Indigenous people living in the community. As such we wish to endorse the work of The City of Calgary on this endeavour.

USAY commends the goals of The City of Calgary which is a step toward sustainable community development through nurturing self empowerment, healthy collaboration and communication and ensuring that Indigenous people have the ability to envision and attain a healthy sustainable futures through adequate and safe housing strategies.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter of support, please contact me directly at 403-690-4004.

Yours truly,
LeeAnne Ireland
Executive Director
Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY)
Email: executivedirector@usay.ca
Ph.: 403-690-4004



July 21, 2020

Office of the Councillors
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary AB Canada T2P 2M5

Dear Members of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee of Council,

Re: Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC) is the steward of Calgary's poverty reduction strategy, *Enough for All*. Access to affordable and accessible housing decreases the likelihood that families and individuals will fall into or remain in poverty and is therefore indicated as one of Enough for All's critical levers of change for reducing poverty in Calgary.

Access to affordable and accessible housing was already at a crisis point prior to COVID19. According to the 2016 Calgary Point-In-Time Report, 3,430 people were counted as experiencing homelessness. Indigenous People are overrepresented, women are under-represented, and the number of homeless seniors is increasing. This does not account for those individuals with no fixed address living a life of transience; "couch-surfing" and circulating between friends, family and partners¹.

Housing is also a health issue meaning now is the time to create meaningful and systemic change in affordable and accessible housing for all Calgarians. Recognizing that a total housing spectrum should be developed to ensuring that all people are housed in a dignified way to prevent homelessness, Vibrant Communities Calgary wholeheartedly supports and endorses the *Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan* before Committee.

Sincerely,

Meaghon Reid, Executive Director

¹ See our *Snapshot of Poverty* report from 2018 <http://vibrantcalgary.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Poverty-Snapshot-2018.pdf>

July 21, 2020

Calgary City Council, Intergovernmental Affairs Committee
c/o City Clerk #8007
The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station "M"
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Dear Intergovernmental Affairs Committee Members,

RE: Letter of Support for COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan

YW Calgary is one of the largest housing providers for women experiencing housing instability and domestic violence in our city. We see the high demand for safe, affordable and accessible housing for vulnerable women in Calgary everyday.

YW Calgary encourages the Committee to support the *COVID-19 Community Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan*, proposed by Calgary Housing. This Advocacy Plan will support 12,000 Calgarians with safe, affordable and accessible housing, distinguishing our community as a place for people to thrive – all while making thoughtful investments to reignite our local economy.

We know affordable housing is a lifesaving tool to prevent domestic violence for the women and gender diverse people. Through the development of the new YW Calgary Hub, we learned that there is a great demand for affordable housing for single women and lone mothers. Women experiencing homelessness are described as being 'invisible' because they do not access traditional homeless shelters and sometimes are forced to stay in abusive situations to remain housed. The proposed Advocacy plan has a tremendous opportunity to position Calgary as a leader in affordable housing, especially for women in Calgary who are even more vulnerable by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn.

As the city recovers, we must use a variety of tools to get Calgarians back on their feet. The creation and delivery of affordable housing is a crucial first step towards recovery. Should you have further questions, do not hesitate to reach out to Nesreen Ali, Government Relations Manager, YW Calgary at 403.750.2519 or via email at nali@ywcacalgary.ca.

Sincerely,

Sue Tomney
Chief Executive Officer
YW Calgary