



Calgarians for Secondary Suites

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December 12, 2014 CITY OF CALGARY

RECEIVED
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

DEC 15 2014

ITEM: C2014-0920
distribution-Woolley
CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

Dear City Council,

Re: Massive constituent, community and business support for secondary suites

On December 15, 2014 City Council will vote on a report which proposes to significantly improve the process for approval of secondary suites city-wide. If this report is approved, City staff will conduct extensive public consultation and draft a bylaw for Council to approve.

Calgarians for Secondary Suites is a grassroots group dedicated to increasing the amount of legal secondary suites in Calgary. We ask that Council approve the December 15 report so that citizens can be consulted.

Since September 1, 2014, we have engaged Calgarians regarding Council's current practice of considering individual suite applications for many areas of the city. The evidence is clear. There is unquestionable support for a better secondary sites process from your constituents.

We identified more than 3,000 unique constituents from across the City who have either wrote a letter to City Council or signed our petition in support of secondary suites.

In addition, we received endorsements for Council action on secondary suites from more than 46 leading civic leaders, community organizations and businesses. See attached list.

In the hundreds of letters sent to City Council, constituents have stressed the major benefits of secondary suites as a safe and market-driven solution for the housing affordability and availability crisis in Calgary. More housing is needed now in order for Calgary's economy to thrive and to compete for world-class talent. All other major Canadian municipalities permit secondary suites in all residential neighbourhoods.

On behalf of the thousands of identified supporters of secondary suites across the city, we ask that you support crucial secondary suites reform on December 15, 2014.

Best regards,

Calgarians for Secondary Suites



December 10, 2014

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council,

On behalf Calgary Arts Development, artists, arts administrators and all those whose livelihoods are found in the arts in Calgary, I urge members of council to vote in support of legalizing secondary suites.

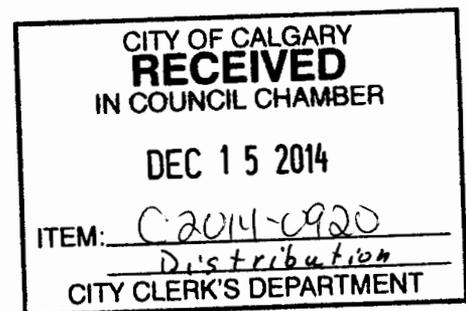
As the city's designated arts development authority, we are keenly aware of all civic aspects conducive to developing a vital, prosperous and connected city through the arts. Throughout the two-year consultation process of *Living a Creative Life: An Arts Development Strategy for Calgary*, a recurring theme was the need to create conditions that encourage artists to build their careers and lives in Calgary. Besides artistic opportunities, addressing housing affordability and availability, and financial security and health care for artists would make Calgary a city where our creators can thrive personally and professionally. Because of these conversations, *Living a Creative Life* includes specific drivers and tactics to increase the affordable housing options available to Calgary arts professionals.

While anecdotally Calgary Arts Development knew that arts professionals in our city faced challenges related to incomes below living wages and access to affordable housing, a 2014 survey of arts professionals in Calgary reinforced the reality of those challenges (the full report will be available in 2015). The survey revealed that 51% of artists, arts administrators and arts educators spend more than 30% of their annual household income on housing costs, with 14% required to spend over half of their annual income on housing. This falls well outside the affordable housing range defined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. 38% of survey respondents rented their residence, meaning that over a third of Calgary's arts professionals are vulnerable to fluctuations in the rental market.

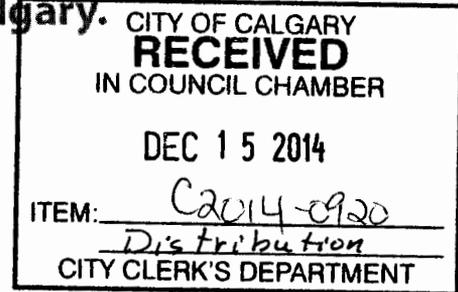
Secondary suites will provide housing options for all Calgarians who are in need of a safe and affordable place to live, and will demonstrate that Calgary is a place where every citizen matters. We urge members of council to support secondary suites and make Calgary a city where everyone can make a living and a life.

Sincerely,

Patti Pon
President & CEO
Calgary Arts Development



Calgary Economic Development's
collaborative energy makes us a
conduit, a connector and a catalyst
for the city of Calgary.



September 5, 2014

Letter of Support for Secondary Suites

Dear City of Calgary Council Members,

On behalf of Calgary Economic Development and the employers we connect with through our workforce development efforts, I am writing to encourage you to support secondary suites. Calgary Economic Development continuously engages in conversations with businesses and employers. The availability of affordable housing for all income levels – in tandem with access to skilled labour – was identified as a critical workforce issue. Secondary suites are one potential solution to providing additional affordable housing.

Calgary faces a shortage of housing

The business owners and senior leaders we have spoken with told us the cost and availability of all housing types (both rental and ownership) are significant barriers to their ability to attract workers to the city. There are two underlying drivers leading to a lack of housing available to all income levels in Calgary:

1. The total stock of rental housing in apartments and row houses has declined by approximately 1,000 units per year (over 20 per cent) over the past decade. This has resulted in a rental vacancy rate of less than 1 per cent and increasing costs for rental accommodations.
2. The cost of housing has increased markedly in more recent years, meaning many Calgarians working in hospitality, retail, education and other sectors, now find homeownership out of reach.

Secondary suites are a potential solution

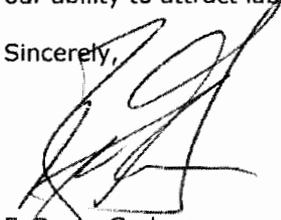
Enabling the development of legal secondary suites has the potential to alleviate Calgary's housing challenges in two ways:

1. Rents in secondary suites are often lower than in conventional apartment buildings enabling lower income residents to gain access to the housing market.
2. Secondary suites can provide extra income to first time homebuyers to purchase a home. For older households that no longer need a large house, a secondary suite can generate additional income and added security, while allowing families to remain in their homes longer. This is a boon to our community, as it contributes to an increased sense of connectivity and reduces the likelihood of leaving a community.

In updating the Economic Strategy for Calgary, stakeholders have clearly articulated the need to continually develop Calgary's neighbourhoods to be people friendly, inspirational spaces with a diversity of housing options. Removing the policy barriers which currently challenge the development of secondary suites in existing homes addresses this objective.

Although there are concerns to be addressed in the drafting of this new bylaw (spill-over parking, property maintenance, and enforcement of safety and standards) we feel that the benefits of this additional housing stock to the Calgary workforce housing environment far outweigh the short-term pains associated with change. We encourage Council to adopt progressive policy which will support our ability to attract labour in an ever-increasingly competitive national and global landscape.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Bruce Graham', written over a faint rectangular box.

F. Bruce Graham
President & CEO



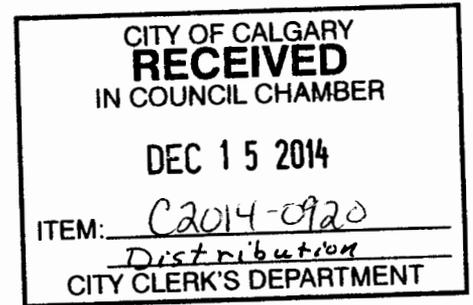
Calgary Food Bank

5000 11 Street SE Calgary, AB T2H 2Y5

T 403.253.2059 F 403.259.4240 W www.calgaryfoodbank.com

EMAIL info@calgaryfoodbank.com TWITTER [@calgaryfoodbank](https://twitter.com/calgaryfoodbank) FACEBOOK facebook.com/calgaryfoodbank

December 3, 2014



Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Dear Mayor Naheed Nenshi & Members of City Council,

I am writing to urge you to support the legalization of secondary suites.

We know that there is a housing crisis in our city. There is a 1.4% vacancy rate due to the floods of 2013 and the employment boom plus the cost of renting has increased astronomically.

"Back in 2008, a friend of mine lived in a nice apartment with not-so-great neighbours on a bit of a sketchy corner. Still, the two-bedroom, 1950s-era space was big, relatively nice and relatively cheap at \$800 per month. Six years later, that same apartment is up for rent, listed on rentfaster.ca for \$3,000. That represents a rise of \$26,400 per year compared to six years ago..." Drew Anderson, November 13, 2014, Fast Forward Weekly

The minimum wage in Calgary is now \$10.20 per hour. Yet according to the City of Calgary, Community & Neighbourhood Services 2012 Fast Facts, you would need to make \$13.90 per hour to afford the rent on a bachelor suite.

With the legalization of secondary suites, we believe that this will create additional rental units that will aid in affordable housing options for low-income Calgarians, all without changing land use or building size.

Calgary is a great city and a great community. But our citizens should not have to choose between rent and food. With more affordable options through legal secondary suites, Calgarians of all incomes will be able to make this city their home now and for the future.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James McAra'.

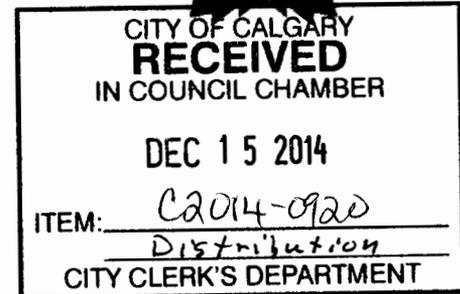
James McAra
President & CEO
Calgary Food Bank

Calgary Region

Canadian Home
Builders' Association –
Calgary Region
#100 7326 10 Street NE
Calgary, Alberta
T2E 8W1

T 403.235.1911
F 403.248.1272
E info@chbcalgary.com
W www.chbcalgary.com

Canadian
Home Builders'
Association



August 25, 2014

Dear City of Calgary Council Members,

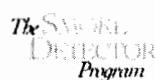
Letter of Support for Secondary Suites

Canadian Home Builders' Association – Calgary Region encourages you to support Secondary Suites. Our organization believes that secondary suites add a needed link in the housing spectrum chain, providing increased choice and diversity to those seeking accommodation in our city.

Calgary has seen significant population growth leading to a scarcity of housing options, rent increases and the lowest vacancy rates in the country. All of these factors have contributed to a real shortage of practical housing solutions for those in the rental market.

Secondary suites such as basement apartments or accessory suites above a garage provide benefits not only to those seeking a place to live but to the primary homeowners as well. Secondary suites provide a sustainable income stream which can sometimes determine whether or not the owners are able to afford to purchase a home or even remain in their current one. In some cases it means the ability to more easily care for aging parents or disabled relatives, giving university students a financially viable head start or for the elderly to remain in their home and age in place following retirement.

Support for homeownership is sound public policy. Homeownership not only contributes to a family's financial security, but also provides them with a further stake in their own community. Through these expanded housing choices, we can both support ongoing ownership and bring secondary suite dwellers into a community. This ultimately furthers the inclusiveness and diversity of all of our neighbourhoods. Those suite renters may one day purchase a home in the very same area if given the opportunity to put down some roots and connect with the community at large.

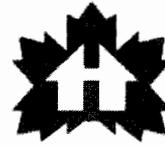


Calgary Region

Canadian Home
Builders' Association –
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W www.chbacalgary.com

**Canadian
Home Builders'
Association**



The safety of our homes is always a primary concern of our organization. Making it easier to incorporate legal secondary suites into a primary residence also ensures safer suites; allowing the city to inspect their compliance with all building and fire code regulations.

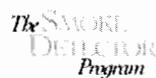
Secondary Suites provide an excellent opportunity for ALL Calgarians. It is critical to ensure there are adequate housing choices for those here today and to support the next wave of economic growth needed to sustain Calgary's strong future.

We encourage you to vote in favour of this important step forward.

Sincerely,

Amie Blanchette
Director, Government Affairs
CHBA-Calgary Region
403.730.4254
amie@chbacalgary.com

via email





humanity above all else

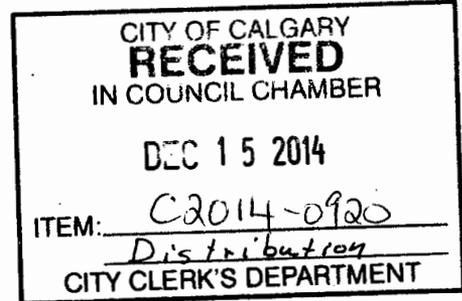
T 403.233.2360
F 403.205.5295

Main Office 250, 707 – 10 Ave SW Calgary, AB T2R 0B3
Louise Dean Centre 120 – 23rd St NW Calgary, AB T2N 2P1

Charitable Registration No. 10688-0172-RR0001

November 27, 2014

Office of the Mayor and City Council
The City of Calgary
800 Macleod Trail SE
P.O.Box 2100, Stn. M
Calgary AB T2P 2M5



RE: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Dear Mayor N. Nenshi and Members of City Council:

We urge you to support the legalization of secondary suites. There are so many reasons to support the legalization of secondary suites.

First, there is a housing crisis in our city with our very low vacancy rates. With secondary suites, we can create additional units without changing land use or building size. We are simply making better use of current housing stock.

Second, increasing capacity for home ownership. It is the experience of many first-time home owners to rent part of their home. The additional income helps them to carry the mortgage and helped them buy their first home. Given the appreciation in homes in our city, young couples need this help more than when we started.

Third, in our current situation of illegal suites, neither homeowner or tenant is protected. There are no guidelines, no inspections and thus the health and safety of the tenant is compromised.

Fourth, there are no incentives to correct outstanding issues. Should the tenant complain to The City, they are likely to lose their housing.

And lastly, so many other communities like Edmonton have successfully legalized secondary suites.

Calgary is a great community. It has shown leadership in so many areas. I urge to consider legalizing secondary suites.

Sincerely,

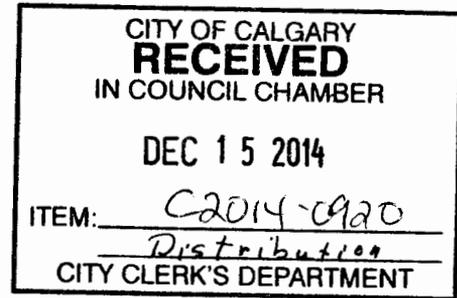
Patricia Jones, CEO
The Catholic Family Service of Calgary



Calgary and Area Child & Family Services Authority

Public Health Agency of Canada

www.cfs-ab.org



Dec. 1, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council,

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Greetings from the Calgary Catholic Diocese,

Many of you have known from the beginning the great support the Catholic community and Bishop Frederick Henry has for the legalization of secondary suites.

We truly believe that the next step in advancing the common good and the strength of our neighbourliness, so strong in the spirit of our city, is to approve secondary suites. The barriers, while possessing real challenges, do not negate the principle of the common good. With this as our final goal, the city is sure to find a clear answer. We also recognize that the process should be considerate to make sure that most parties concerns are addressed. We sincerely thank the City Councillors, and your Worship, for the tireless hours everyone has put into promoting and believing in the common good for all Calgarians.

Pope Francis, in a recent speech to the European Parliament, talked about the importance of assessing individual entitlements: "Today there is a tendency to claim ever broader individual rights; underlying this is a conception of the human person as detached from all social and anthropological contexts, as if the person were a 'monad' (μονάς), increasingly unconcerned with other surrounding 'monads'. The equally essential and complementary concept of duty no longer seems to be linked to such a concept of rights. As a result, the rights of the individual are upheld, without regard for the fact that each human being is part of a social context wherein his or her rights and duties are bound up with those of others and with the common good of society itself."

In union with the Interfaith Council of Calgary and the Interfaith Education Council, we ask you to support the legalization of Secondary Suites, which will indeed support the many looking for adequate housing options.

With deep gratitude,

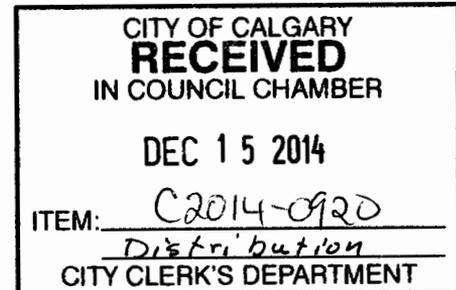
Rev. Dcn. Adrian Martens

RC Diocese of Calgary

Coordinator of Social Justice, Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

December 12, 2014

Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors
City Hall
800 MacLeod Trail SE
Calgary, AB
T2P 2M5



Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

RE: Secondary Suites Progress on December 15th

On December 15th, City Council is scheduled to review a new proposal by administration to create a streamlined mechanism for the approval of secondary suites applications here in Calgary. This is an important time to make meaningful progress on an issue that affects our overall competitiveness, and the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, along with leaders representing the broader business community, would like to offer our full support.

For over a century, the Calgary Chamber has been this city's leading advocate for the interests of business, and those interests are compromised when Calgarians face considerable difficulty finding a place to live. We are a strong, prosperous economy that is attracting more and more people each year, helping to sustain our growth and provide business with the human capital it needs to be successful. But with rental housing vacancy rates well below the national average, our competitiveness is starting to slip.

The Calgary Chamber has long been advocating for a review of our city's zoning requirements relating to the use of secondary suites – some of the most restrictive in the country. Easing these restrictions will open the door to a market-led solution that will help increase rental supply, provide more choice in the marketplace, and help homeowner affordability at the same time. By doing so, we can help maintain and enhance the attractiveness of Calgary as a destination for businesses and talented labour.

We look forward to working closely with you to help us deliver on the promise of a vibrant and more prosperous Calgary, and we look forward to your support on December 15th.

Sincerely,

Adam Legge
President and CEO

Rob Hawley
Chair-Elect



December 4, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council;

Re: **Support for Increase in Secondary Suites**

The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO), strongly urges you to legalize and increase access to secondary suites.

CCVO exists to support and strengthen the nonprofit sector. We have a membership of over 300 Calgary based nonprofits that reflect the breadth and diversity of the sector.

As you are well aware, Calgary requires more affordable housing. Many of our member agencies serve individuals who are on limited incomes and don't share in Calgary's enormous wealth. Calgary's working poor and its vulnerable are no less deserving of dignity and security than any other Calgarian. We need to redouble our efforts to ensure housing options are available to them.

Likewise, for our City to be viable, it must be affordable for all those that don't work in more lucrative occupations, but are essential to promoting the quality of life we have come to expect in Calgary. **Increasingly, affordable housing has become a serious nonprofit workforce issue, especially for those who are early on in their careers.** We cannot let housing serve as a deterrent to entering or remaining in the nonprofit workforce.

CCVO believes that increasing access to secondary suites is an important component of a broader affordable housing strategy. It will not solve Calgary's affordable housing problem, but if Edmonton's modest uptake is any indication, it will improve the lives of thousands while preserving what people value about their neighbourhoods. Taking action on secondary suites is a simple and smart first step.

Sincerely,

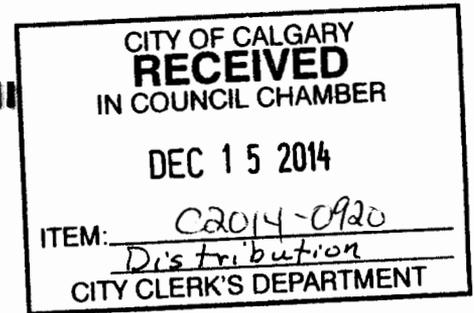


Geoff Braun,
Director, Policy and Research





Calgary Interfaith Council



November 28, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

The Calgary Interfaith Council urges you to support the legalization of secondary suites.

There are so many reasons to support the legalization of secondary suites.

First, there is a housing crisis in our City with our very low vacancy rates. With secondary suites, we can create additional units without changing land use or building size. We are simply making better use of current housing stock.

Second, increasing capacity for home ownership. It is the experience of many first time home owners to rent part of their home. The additional income helps them to carry the mortgage and helped them buy their first home. Given the appreciation in homes in our City, young couples need this help more than when we started.

Third, in our current situation of illegal suites, neither homeowner or tenant is protected. There are no guidelines, no inspections and thus the health and safety of the tenant is compromised.

Fourth, there are no incentives to correct outstanding issues. Should the tenant complain to the City, they are likely to lose their housing.

And lastly, so many other communities like Edmonton have successfully legalized secondary suites. We don't understand City Council's reticence and caution.

Calgary is a great community. It has shown leadership in so many areas. It is high time that it proceeds to legalize secondary suites.

Sincerely,

Murray Nicholson

on behalf of the Calgary Interfaith Council



November 26th, 2014

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council,

Lack of accessible and affordable housing is at a crisis point in our city. Persons with disabilities often experience discrimination from potential landlords when seeking housing, sometimes directly related to their need for accessibility and other times directly related to their income. Without options, persons with disabilities face an increased risk for homelessness. Often, shelters are not accessible, and ill equipped to sustain the supports many of these individuals require to be healthy and safe. Without proper, adequate and safe housing the health, safety and welfare of persons with disabilities is greatly compromised.

Those who have found affordable housing in illegal suites are left without the safety or protection of the law. With choices limited and a very low vacancy rate, citizens may feel they have no recourse but to accept an unsafe suite. They live in dangerous and sometimes unsanitary conditions with no way of improving their circumstances. Landlords are not held to any standard and there is nowhere for these individuals to go to get help. There are no guidelines, no inspections and thus the health and safety of the tenant is compromised. There are no incentives to correct outstanding issues. Many tenants fear reporting issues to the city will result in a loss of housing.

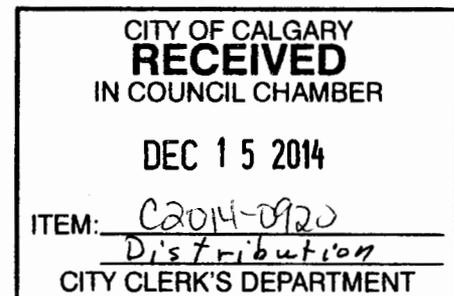
Secondary suites would create additional units without changing land use or building size simply by making better use of current housing stock.

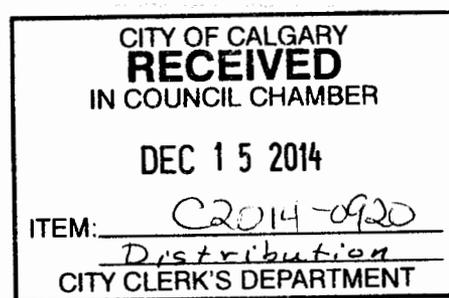
Additionally, secondary suites enhance the capacity for home ownership. The additional income generated by renting a secondary suite makes home ownership more feasible for many first time owners by offsetting mortgage costs. With the current value of homes in Calgary, more and more young couples need the support of this additional income than in years past.

Many municipalities have already moved to legalize secondary suites, giving much needed structure and oversight to their development in the community. Calgary is a community of great leadership and initiative, a city known for its compassion and care of its citizens. It is our sincere hope Council will carefully consider the legalization of secondary suites.

Respectfully,

Kimberley Matthews
Community and Government Relations Coordinator
Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta





To whom it may concern:

Growing up, I lived with my dad. He was a single father raising three kids, working as a forklift driver, making something like \$900 every two weeks. We bounced around a few places when I was young, before settling in Albert Park. We moved into the basement suite of a duplex, the homeowners living on the main floor. It seemed a nice two-bedroom place with a laundry room to use whenever we liked. My dad had made an agreement with the landlords that they could walk down whenever they pleased to do laundry but on Sundays only. It was alright.

The landlords were a couple with two young kids. The husband worked as a custodian downtown. They were quiet and pleasant.

I'm not certain how much rent was, something like \$700/month including utilities. Keep in mind, this was back in like '94 or '95.

We lived there for 10+ years (my dad now lives next door in a friend's property). I moved downtown.

Let me tell you about living there, in this illegal secondary suite.

We did not have an oven. We knew from day one it was not something legit, that's why it was cheap. The landlords talked about this openly. I'm not sure of the regulations at the time, or now actually—but we did not have an oven. It sucks, but when you don't have many options for somewhere to live, ya gotta do what ya gotta do, right?

We cooked everything using a microwave, hot plate, electric wok or electric skillet. There was also a barbecue in the backyard. It was manageable. We made friends with one of the neighbours so we were able to use her oven for turkeys and things like that.

We also had cockroaches. Bad. The landlords ate a lot of rice, lots of fish and imported foods. It was common to come home and see bags of rice or dried fish left outside their door (relatives we thought). We assume there might have been roaches in the rice. Of course we spoke to the landlord about it and he'd walk around spraying a can of Raid on things. He wasn't very good with English, but said he'd take care of it et cetera. Rinse and repeat.

We were in an illegal suite so complaining to the city or anything like that would have resulted in us having to find a new place to live. As well, I wasn't the one paying rent, so I had to live with my dad's choices. I lived with cockroaches for over 10 years before finally moving out. When you're living with cockroaches every day of your lives, you sort

of get used to it. They were in everything. All of the cupboards, closets, beds, our clothing, electronics, in the washroom, coffee table. We did our best to combat them using chemicals, traps and cleaning but it was useless to actually stop the infestation. It was a never ending battle.

Being a teenager, it was extremely embarrassing for me to bring anyone home. Thankfully, the friends I had were understanding, nobody ever teased me about it. I'm glad people at school never found out.

One time I walked in to the washroom and turned the light on. There was a cockroach climbing up the wall. I squished it with my fist. In doing so, some of its juices landed in my mouth. I will never forget that moment for the rest of my life. I vomited. Hey, good thing the toilet was right there!

Remember I mentioned the laundry? Yeah, they abided by that agreement for a few months. Then they would sometimes come down on Saturdays to do laundry. Then any time they pleased, their kids coming down with them. Their kids were 3 to 5 years old at the time and they would walk around our house. They'd open the fridge, leave the doors open (we had a cat so that was not helpful). Once, I woke up with them in my bedroom. When people are randomly opening your door to do your home—and even unlocking it—and walking in, it can be startling and annoying. There was no sense of privacy whatsoever.

We spoke with the landlords about it. They apologised and said it was an emergency, that it won't happen again. But it did. We lived there for a long time and eventually my dad just gave up complaining. It was an illegal suite and we couldn't do anything about it. I really hated those kids.

We also had no control over the thermostat. It was always really cold down there. We used electric heaters and blankets. They had cockroaches in them. One thing we did have control over was the water heater thermostat. My dad would usually turn it up higher to try and heat the basement. His thinking was if the hot water that's primed in the pipes is hotter, we would be warmer. The landlords would always come down and turn them back down and bitch at him.

It was hell living there. The roaches, the privacy, the stupid kids. One time they dialed 911 and hung up. The firefighters and police showed up, ran into the basement and freaked out on me, thinking I was just an asshole teenager who did it. They also searched the place. Once things had calmed down and they traced the phone call, the phone upstairs rang and it was obvious what had happened. One of the officers asked if I was smoking weed and got in my face during this time. I was 14 and had never even

seen weed, never mind smoked it. Of course I said no. Everyone left with no apologies or anything. I was the only one home at the time and when I told my dad what happened, he was really upset. He phoned the police and filed a complaint. Long story short, he got a written apology from the CPS for the weed incident.

Anyway, I could keep going on with stories like these forever. These aren't memories I'm fond of nor really interested in talking about. It sucked. I hated living in that situation. We had no help from the city, any services, anyone. It wasn't a legal suite, we were on our own. I'm sure there are a lot of other families out there in even worse circumstances with not a lot of control over their own lives. They probably have cockroaches too.

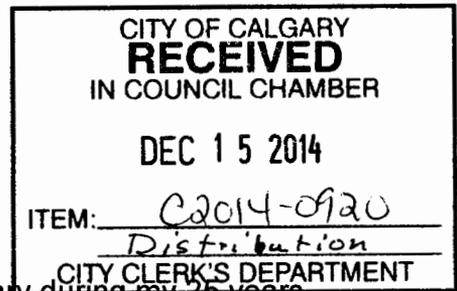
If secondary suites like mine had been regulated, we could have done something about all of the above. We could have had an oven. Fun fact: I was 23 years old before I learned that the oven and the top burners could be turned on at the same time. My food wouldn't have had cockroaches in it. We could have locked our door and had privacy. If secondary suites were legal, would we have had control over the thermostat? Would that be controlled? I sure hope so. When someone controls your heat in -40°C weather, when your home is in the ground, it's quite demeaning as a person.

Please, think about the quality of life for Calgarians and consider doing the right thing and legalize secondary suites. I hope you never have to live with cockroaches, it's so humiliating. Even finding a roach-ridden basement suite like ours was is DIFFICULT in Calgary right now. Secondary suites will bring more homes for families. It's a no brainer.

Thanks for reading.

— Crackmacs (the Mr.)

Note: Crackmacs is a couple living downtown who tweet and blog about urban living. Follow them on Twitter: [@Crackmacs](https://twitter.com/Crackmacs).



To whom it may concern:

I have had a lot of experience with secondary suites in Calgary during my 26 years here. Most came in my late teens and early twenties, when I worked minimum wage jobs and didn't know what zoning laws were or how housing was regulated.

In one basement suite, in Montgomery, I had no control over the heat but I still paid 60% of the bill. Our landlord would turn the heat off in the winter to save money. My roommate and I would frequently go to bed not only fully clothed, but with our coats, hats and mitts on as well. We had windows but they were covered with bars to prevent a break and enter.

We lived with the landlord's piled-up recycling outside of our door. Bundled cardboard and plastic bottles blocked our only means of escape which was a rickety set of stairs to the main floor exit. I think about the people who died in the basement fire and I realize how easily that could have been me. It was all I could afford and I was ignorant. I complained to the landlord and they told me to leave if I didn't like it. I left.

For another rental, I rented a basement from someone who didn't bother paying the rent to the owner of the house. When I fought for my right to stay, the owner informed me it was an illegal suite and one he hadn't been aware was rented out. I had no right to stay. While he was sympathetic and would have loved to rent the suite to me, his house was not zoned for it. I found myself homeless in the winter facing a very tight housing market and making a paltry income. I found myself in another illegal suite but fortunately with a friend as a landlord and everything went well.

Eventually we lucked out into an apartment downtown where we have been raising our family, but now we face skyrocketing rents with a bad management company. The affordable options for a young family with pets are slim, with most being either rental scams or illegal secondary suites.

It is my firm belief that if secondary suites were made available across the city, management companies would no longer have the stranglehold on tenants and they would no longer be able to justify 40% rent increases. Safety for tenants would increase, people would have a legal avenue to pursue within the landlord tenant act and homeowners could supplement their income with rental income. Just think of our seniors, who could rent a portion of their homes out, thus easing the burden on our facilities. That's just one quick example of the ways legalizing secondary suites could help the overall economy of Calgary.

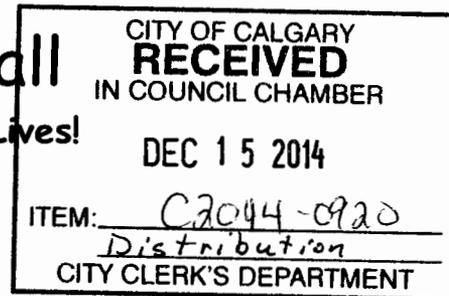
Thank you for your time!

— Mrs. Crackmacs

*Note: Crackmacs is a couple living downtown who tweet and blog about urban living.
Follow them on Twitter: [@Crackmacs](#).*

Disability Action Hall

Tell Stories! Take Action! Change Lives!



December 9th, 2014

Dear Members of City Council,



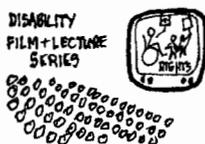
RE: Letter of Support to Legalize Secondary Suites

Members of the Disability Action Hall support the legalization of secondary suites. We support a city where we can have more accessible, affordable and safe rental housing. By creating legalized secondary suites across the City, a person's ability and right to choose where they want to live be more possible. Safe, affordable, accessible rental housing moves us a step closer to alleviating poverty and isolation.

Many of our members struggle with mental health and physical disabilities, as well as live on limited incomes. Much of the social housing available only takes you if you have one disability, yet many of us live with multiple disabilities and become ineligible for social housing and adaptation programs like Alberta Aids to Daily Living.



Our City needs to place more pressure on the private rental housing market for safer, affordable universally designed housing. If we do not, we will continue to see a strain on social housing and crisis services. Homelessness does not happen in isolation. Sometimes people have medical problems, but when layered with a criminal history, poverty, homelessness and poor health, people often get shipped around the system as our current housing models are not set up for a person facing multiple things. By creating more housing options such as legal secondary suites in the community, we think this will alleviate some of the housing crisis.



We also ask if our City decides to legalize secondary suites, when a landlord accesses the permit to rezone the property, that there is a policy to enforce a freezing of rental rates for at least a 365 day period to avoid landlords increasing rental rates, thereby forcing people to leave an affordable rental unit into the street.

Many citizens with disabilities cannot afford a home of their own and by asking landlords to make sure homes are affordable, accessible and built to universal code standards, we will not only create less strain on crisis services and shelters, we will create a better City for all.



Sincerely,

Amanda Gromoff, Colleen Huston & Donna McBride
On behalf of the Members of the Disability Action Hall

A community development project of Calgary SCOPE Society
Suite 219, 19 Street SE, Calgary Alberta T2E 6J5
Phone 403-717-7630 Fax 403-291-4087
Website www.actionhall.ca Email actionhall@calgaryscope.org

Secondary Suites – Support Letter to SuiteYYC

The question of secondary suites is a matter for municipal politicians to lead. Yet, as a provincial MLA in Calgary, I do want to offer my support for the work being done by the City of Calgary to more fully understand the implications and potential of secondary suites in Calgary.

As MLA for Calgary-Varsity, a constituency with significant seniors and student populations, I am pleased to share my constituents' perspectives on secondary suites in our communities of Varsity, Dalhousie, Charleswood, Brentwood, University Heights, Banff Trail and Montgomery. And, the implications of secondary suites for all of the students at the University of Calgary, located at the heart of Calgary-Varsity, are very important to consider.

Everyone in Calgary understands the implications of population growth on our City's infrastructure and housing. With four LRT stops in Calgary-Varsity constituency, we understand what densification looks like. What many of my constituents recognize, as do I, is the potential for secondary suites to provide choices for seniors and students who want to live in our communities.

Students and seniors have been living side-by-side for decades in Calgary-Varsity constituency. And, we like it that way. Secondary suites—properly planned and managed—could offer us the ability to ensure this multi-generational community continues to have these choices. Seniors who want to continue to live in their homes may welcome the income that can be generated with the rental of a secondary suite, with the added bonus of someone young and agile to shovel the snow from the driveway and provide a hand with groceries.

Secondary suites can also facilitate co-housing options for family members as they age, or when they face significant health concerns. In several homes in Calgary-Varsity, secondary suites have enabled multi-generations to live together. This allows a level of independence for everyone, at a time when the aging parents needed caregiver services. Let me share one example:

Yasmin owns her own bungalow in Charleswood community. Her aging parents decided to relocate to Calgary to be closer to their daughter. A secondary suite was set up in Yasmin's bungalow to enable Yasmin to offer her home as a safe, secure, accessible home for herself, and for her parents to age in place. The living arrangements allow privacy, and enable Yasmin to stay involved with the medical needs of her parents, in particular, her father's recent treatment for cancer. As a consequence, this family's living choices meant they were less 'burdensome' to the larger medical and social service system (thereby hopefully leaving more space available for those without the resources to get the assistance they may need from family and friends). Here is what Yasmin has to say about her experience with secondary suites:

"While it has not been easy nor overly affordable to renovate my house and share my space, the positives outweigh any costs. Since moving to Calgary, my parents' presence in my neighbourhood has changed our cul-de-sac for the better – my mother grew enough vegetables to give away an abundance to the neighbours. This facilitated greater community cohesion. My father has become a

mentor to a neighbour who misses his own father. My mother drives a neighbour in her 80's to church each Sunday.

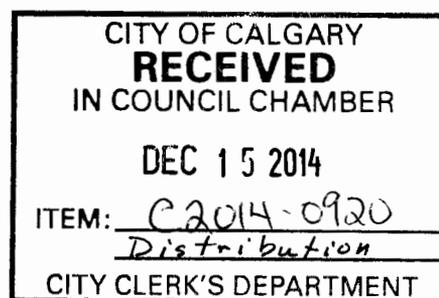
The Tai Chi practitioner from two blocks away now practices in front of my home, and all these neighbours look out for my parents when I am at work or out of the country. And, I have had the opportunity to forge a different type of relationship with my parents – it is deeper and now more evolved than it would have been had they stayed living independently in Ontario and quite frankly, I do not believe that my father's recovery from lymphoma would have been as obstacle free as it became due to our proximity to the Tom Baker Cancer Center, my ability to drive my parents to medical appointments in warmed up cars through last winter, and the full support of so many family and friends in Calgary-Varsity. Now, due to our living arrangements, my parents are able to winter in Sri Lanka and return "home" in the Spring to a safe little house that meets their emotional and physical needs in a way that is unparalleled."

*Yasmin Dean, PhD
Associate Professor
Child Studies and Social Work
Health and Community Studies
Mount Royal University*

The design of effective policy for secondary suites, and proper oversight, will require work. As MLA in Calgary-Varsity, I'm grateful, on my constituents' behalf, for the City's focus on this opportunity, and advancement of the framework.

Regards,

Donna



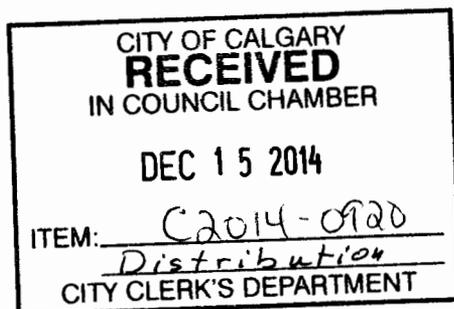
Most of my childhood was spent on 22nd Avenue N.W. in Mt. Pleasant. Every fall my folks would welcome a new boarder into our basement suite. These S.A.I.T. students always seemed to become "part of the family" and I know my parents often stayed in touch for several years after they graduated. It was never an issue, there were no problems and many homes in the district did the same.

Next door, our older French Canadian neighbours had a full basement suite and I can remember visiting with young newlywed couples as a little boy growing up. They were just part of the community.

The point is that I am not sure when having a "suite in the basement" became such a big issue. No one is suggesting that every house suddenly must have a suite; but for many home owners, having "people downstairs" allows them to stay in their house longer. It can eliminate loneliness and for seniors it can mean there might be someone to help with cutting grass, shovelling sidewalks etc.

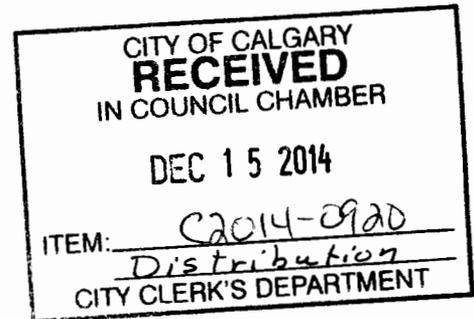
Introducing proper suite legislation will increase the quality and safety of these units for their residents. Of course there will be bad tenants, someone will have an extra car or whatever. On full balance however, allowing proper and legal secondary suites seems like a very logical decision and it feels like we have spent far too much time debating the obvious.

George Brookman



December 3, 2014

The City of Calgary
Office of the Councillors (8001)
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB, Canada T2P 2M5



Dear Mayor Nenshi and Calgary City Council,

Re: Support for Secondary Suites

Sometimes municipal and provincial issues overlap, and the issue of affordable housing is one such issue. Deciding the parameters for secondary suites in Calgary is exclusively in the hands of Calgary's Council, but as the leader of the Alberta Party I do feel there is a place for me to support the work being done to legalize them in Calgary.

Calgary has the enviable challenge of coping with the addition of 40,000 people annually who want to live and work in a great city. While it is a good problem to have, it has led to a housing crisis. Calgary has the lowest vacancy rates and highest rental costs in the entire country – rates that have yet to recover since the 2013 flood, and which will remain extreme unless we focus on creating affordable housing solutions.

As a former small business owner I know the importance of attracting and retaining talent to our rapidly expanding city. Both the Calgary Chamber of Commerce and Calgary Economic Development have explicitly expressed that a lack of affordable housing options in Calgary is a risk for our economy.

For workers to come to our city we need safe and affordable options for them to transition. For young professionals who are hoping to buy their first home they need a source of supplementary income. For seniors who want to stay in their homes longer, or have caregivers nearby we need to give them options. While improving the process for approving legal secondary suites will not be a silver-bullet solution to Calgary's affordable housing crisis, it is a step in the right direction.

Secondary suites are a market driven solution. Legalizing them will not require large government investment or programs, and will improve housing stock without dramatically changing the communities they are located within.

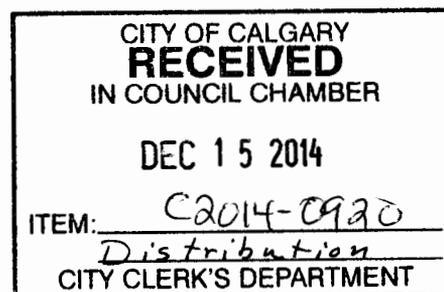
.../2

Calgary's economy needs to continue to attract workers. Affordable housing will be essential to maintain our growth. On December 15, 2014 I urge Council to legalize secondary suites across all of Calgary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" and last name "Clark" clearly distinguishable.

Greg Clark
Leader, Alberta Party



Highland Park Community Association
3716 2nd St. NW
Calgary, AB
T2K 0Y4

December 7, 2014

Dear Councillor Chu,

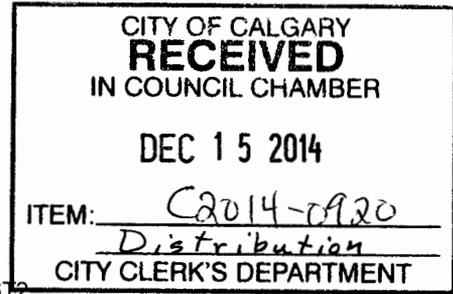
As you are well aware, Calgary is currently facing an affordable housing crisis, and on December 15 Council is being provided the rare opportunity to make changes that can have grassroots impacts on solving this complex problem. Highland Park Community Association would like to voice our beliefs in affordable housing, we encourage safe suites and we beseech City of Calgary Council to consider reducing the "red tape" in order improve access to secondary suites within our city. As Highland Park is an established community in transition we view this opportunity to serve multiple purposes:

- Address housing affordability for both new and young Canadians.
- Increase the vacancy rate and ease economic pressures on local businesses.
- Allow more seniors to age in place (providing for supplemental income and arrangements for assistance around their house).
- Create a more level economic playing field allowing Calgarians to choose to invest in property they own, regardless of their community.
- Counter-act issues related to urban sprawl by increasing urban densification and the effectiveness of transit infrastructure investments.
- Increase City revenue base by creating more opportunities to collect property taxes.

We hope that you will take into consideration the views of Highland Park as an active CA within your Ward, and you will ensure that you best represent our voices on December 15.

Kind Regards,

Elise Bieche
President, Highland Park Community Association



#105 915 – 33 Street NE Calgary, AB T2A 6T2
Tel: 403-263-1881 / Fax: 403-273-2964 / E-mail: admin@isccalgary.ca / Web: www.isccalgary.ca

December 10, 2014

The City of Calgary
Office of the Councillors (8001)
700 Macleod Trail S
Calgary, AB T2G 2M3

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

Re: THE LEGALIZATION OF SECONDARY SUITES

On behalf of the Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary (ISCC) and its 21 member organizations, we are writing with regards to secondary suites and the impact of the shortage of rental units on immigrants and refugees settling in Calgary.

Research demonstrates that new immigrants are both overrepresented among low-income earners and within the rental market – meaning that they are disproportionately affected by the shortage of affordable rental housing units. Each year, more than 16,000 immigrants are arriving and seeking to settle in Calgary – it is critical that Council consider and act upon all options to develop affordable housing. Secondary suites are currently the lowest cost rental housing option in Calgary. Increasing the number and safety of these types of units will support immigrant populations to successfully settle and integrate into Calgary.

With no controls on rent, no incentives for purpose-built rental supply, and no protection against condominium conversions in Calgary, the secondary suite rental market is extremely important. The need for affordable housing in Calgary is of utmost concern to the settlement and integration of new immigrants, and to our members who assist immigrants and refugees settling in Calgary. For the long-term success of these newcomers, we need to make every effort to ensure that they are able to access safe and affordable housing.

We urge you to approach housing as a human right and increase the affordable housing supply through the provision of secondary suites.

Sincerely,

Wendy Fehr, Director
Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary

James K. Gray, O.C., A.O.E.

His Worship Mayor Naheed Nenshi
The City of Calgary
700 Macleod Trail SE
CALGARY, AB T2G 2M3

Mr. Mayor and Honourable Members of City Council

December 5, 2014

CITY OF CALGARY RECEIVED IN COUNCIL CHAMBER DEC 15 2014 ITEM: <u>C2014-0920</u> <u>Distribution</u> CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT
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Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

I wish to offer my support for the legalization of secondary suites in the city.

There are many reasons to support this initiative not the least of which is the housing crisis we are currently experiencing in Calgary due to the extremely low rental vacancy rates. With secondary suites, we can create additional units without changing land use or building size. We are simply making better use of current housing stock.

Secondly, the revenue-generating suites would allow first-time home buyers to consider purchasing a home which may be a distant dream for some people without the benefit of having the assistance of rental income. This income would greatly reduce these first-time buyers' large debt load and allow them to make an investment in our community in this very expensive housing market.

Thirdly, in our current situation of illegal suites, neither homeowner or tenant is protected. There are no guidelines, no inspections and, thus, the health and safety of the tenant is compromised. The legalization of suites will give landlords the opportunity to correct deficits related to their properties and give tenants a voice in the process.

This is a wonderful opportunity for City Council to show leadership. I encourage Council to take this opportunity at the upcoming Council meeting in respect of this matter.

Sincerely,



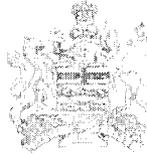
James K. Gray

Jkg2014\Misc\City of Calgary re Legalization of Secondary Suites Dec 5 14.docx

Suite 1700, 335 - 8 Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 1C9
Telephone: 403.663.3335 jim.gray@brookfield.com

LEGISLATURE OFFICE:
201 Legislature Annex
9718 107 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Tel: (780) 427-2292
Fax: (780) 427-3697



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ALBERTA

Kent Hehr, MLA
Calgary-Buffalo Constituency

November 27th, 2014

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Dear Mayor Naheed Nenshi and Members of City Council,

It is fundamentally unaffordable to live in Calgary. We have a full-blown housing affordability and accessibility crisis in Calgary. I've spoken about this issue many a time before, both in the legislature and in the public forum. It is an issue near and dear to my heart as it strikes at the core struggle of what our newest and youngest Albertans face when they first come into their own in this province. And we set them up for failure.

The housing crisis isn't just a problem for renters. The Chamber of Commerce has pointed out, time and time again, how unaffordable housing causes less people to want to move to and live in Calgary. This crisis hurts business and entrepreneurship as it pushes the best and brightest from our city. And for young families buying their first homes or those who want to use their own property to help pay their mortgage, a secondary suite is invaluable. For many seniors this extra income can help them keep and stay in their homes.

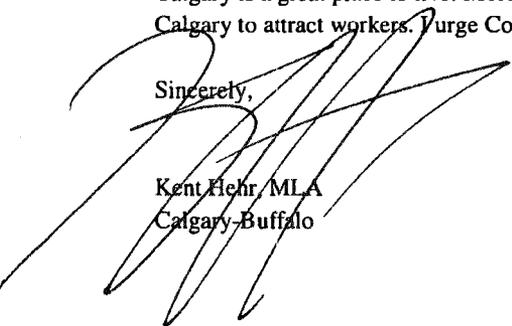
Our rules and policies have made it impossible for these groups to take a leadership role in alleviating this crisis. By making changes to our city's policies on December 15th we can reorient the housing market so our communities can take an active role in improving the affordability of living in Calgary.

In our current framework for illegal suites neither the homeowner nor tenant is protected. There are no guidelines, no inspections, and thus the health and safety of the tenant is compromised. Then, should the tenant complain to the City, they are likely to lose their home. This is an abnormally cruel way to run a city and that causes the greatest harm to the least well off, the fringe in our communities, and those who are the closest to poverty and homelessness.

There are so many reasons to support a better process for secondary suites. Secondary suites will increase the supply of safe and affordable rental housing, without changing land use or building size. We are simply making better use of current housing stock. It is ease the market pressures in housing and make living in Calgary more affordable for all.

Calgary is a great place to live. More housing is needed now in order for Calgary's economy to thrive and for Calgary to attract workers. I urge Council to support secondary suites city-wide on December 15, 2014.

Sincerely,


Kent Hehr, MLA
Calgary-Buffalo

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE:
#130, 1177 - 11 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T2R 1K9

Tel: (403) 244-7737
Fax: (403) 541-9106

CITY OF CALGARY
RECEIVED
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

DEC 15 2014

ITEM: C2014-0920
Distribution
CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

DEC 15 2014

ITEM: C2014-0920
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CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

Secondary Suites

Our KGCA President asked if the Development Committee had received strong feedback one way or another on the Motion by Councillors Farrell, Pincott, Carra, Mayor Nenshi, and our very own Councillor Evan Woolley to look at allowing more secondary suites. We have heard a lot of feedback on the increasing density in Killarney and, yes, there are indeed strong opinions both one way and the other! The majority opinion is that we need to embrace secondary suites and increased density, walkability and sustainable transit-based living. Others strongly feel that since traffic is already a problem adding secondary suites would be just too much. And some folks are concerned about losing the exclusivity of the neighbourhood.

But you know to be seriously realistic, the way we live in our cars now, isolated from each other, shuttling to and from our absurdly expensive homes, is just not sustainable. Council and the Development Authority are taking us to a truly sustainable future anyway, as they must. Since between 15 and 20 thousand people move to Calgary every year, our new reality inevitably will become a dense and inclusive mix of housing types that incorporates affordable options, like secondary suites and like small row houses. This new reality also means tight traffic and scarce street parking, but that's okay.

Believe it or not, living in an area of dense housing and scarce parking is actually good news. A home with a secondary suite is more valuable than the same home next door that has no suite, and is also more affordable because the income from the suite helps pay the mortgage. Row homes with smaller floor space have a lighter environmental impact and are affordable for people with average incomes.

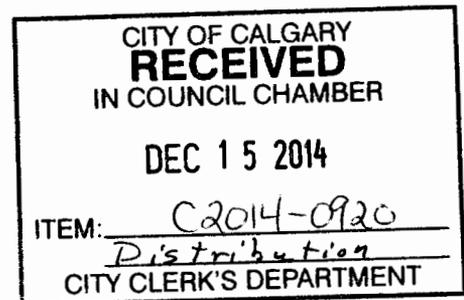
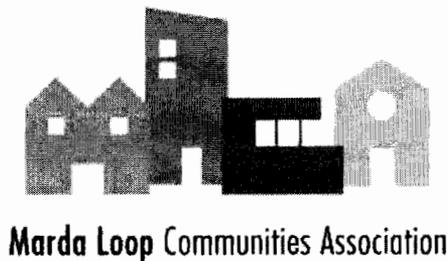
Cities in Europe, even in the far northern countries, rejected the car and started building for humans a long time ago. Closing roads to cars and increasing housing density has been phenomenally successful. After the initial kicking and screaming, residents adapted, and actually now find that they prefer a village lifestyle. Living in an area where cars are banned and housing is dense has huge and surprising benefits. The viability and profitability of local businesses increases, health problems decrease - apparently we humans thrive when we are in frequent contact with other people. Crime decreases, and strangely, inclusive and walkable residential areas promote interactions that lead to amazing innovation and subsequent economic benefit. It's a blow-you-away success story. When you think about it, villages and small towns are where humans evolved, so I guess we shouldn't be too surprised.

We think parking and traffic problems will increase with added home density - after all there would be more cars stuffed into a smaller area, right? But that is not at all what European cities find when they look back. Instead cars "disappear." More people walk or bike or use transit and never need to use their cars or even want to! Extra ridership means that transit improves too.

So what would new rules for Secondary Suites mean for us here in Killarney? Well, we can't fight the increasing housing density in our village, so we may as well wholeheartedly embrace the benefits. So maybe sell that second car. Walk, take transit, dust off that old bike, and perhaps consider how a basement, carriage house or garden suite could generate revenue for you. You would be providing affordable housing and embracing a sustainable future. I can guarantee

you that you will like the result of living in a sustainable village community designed for humans.

Keren Houlgate
Director, Development
landuse@killarneyglengarry.com



December 8, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors,

Re: Secondary Suites Reform

The Board of the Marda Loop Communities Association (MLCA) has considered this issue and are pleased to provide this letter of support encouraging Council to make the necessary changes to the process and regulations currently in place in order to make secondary suites a safe and viable option for Calgarians.

In looking into this issue we find that there is overwhelming support for secondary suites from many areas and organizations in Calgary, and that the arguments are supported by fact based evidence:

- Provides a framework in which secondary suites can be controlled and made safe
- Creates housing options for lower income families, individuals, students and those wishing to save to buy a home
- Provides an additional source of income to seniors and others that helps them remain in their homes longer
- Provides young buyers a source of income to offset the high cost of a mortgage
- Allows homeowners, not their neighbours, to make their own decision on how their property is utilized.

There are also arguments against secondary suites which even some in our community might support – parking shortages, lower property values, higher density stressing infrastructure, etc. but in looking into these we find that they are not supported by data. Property values have soared in inner city communities like South Calgary, Altadore and Garrison Woods and a property with a secondary suite has a higher value than one that does not; parking woes cannot solely be associated with secondary suites and parking stalls can always be required for suites, and; my understanding is that city infrastructure was designed for 5 residents in each home, a number which is not, on average, the case in today's households. So then, are there other underlying reasons that are not spoken of and are perhaps self-serving? And if so, is that the kind of community we want for ourselves?

The notion of safe, available housing options for all income levels is aligned with the current development status of the majority of MLCA neighbourhoods as well as the vision for the MLCA as a whole – an evolving, vibrant, urban community that is engaged, connected and desirable. The MLCA embraces the diversity of it's residents and strives for inclusivity in all that we do. We strive to create walkable, bikeable neighbourhoods that would help eliminate the need for two car families and make parking a non-issue. We wish to increase density to so that local businesses and services are viable and thriving. We hope to create sustainable communities where everyone knows their neighbours and where common spaces and parks are well utilized meeting places.

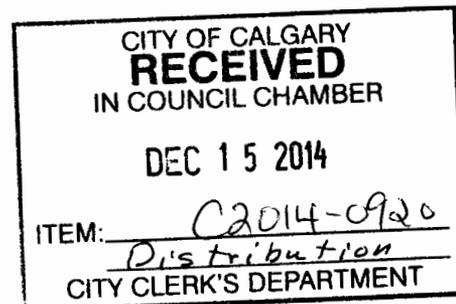
The MLCA currently has people of all ages, dwellings of all types, high and low income earners and a multitude of cultures that combine to create the rich fabric we call our community. This type of community is not possible if we close our minds to methods and approaches that allow for a diverse population to reside and thrive.

We encourage Council to revisit and revise the current regulations surrounding secondary suites in order that a safe and equitable solution can be found for all. It's simply the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Kaufmann".

Anne Kaufmann, President
Marda Loop Communities Association



September 15, 2014

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

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City of Calgary Council Members:

Letter of Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

On behalf of Momentum, I would like to express our support for the legalization of secondary suites in Calgary.

Increased population growth and extremely low vacancy rates have created a housing crisis in our city. Several strategies endorsed by City Council, such as the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative 'Enough for All' report and the Calgary Homeless Foundation '10 Year Plan to End Homelessness', have recommended the legalization of secondary suites. It is time for action to ensure that legal and safe secondary suites are a viable housing option in Calgary.

The allowance of legal secondary suites is also a critical economic issue for our city. Many students, individuals and families who come to Calgary seeking economic opportunity find it difficult to stay and work in our city if they cannot find affordable and sustainable housing options. Secondary suites also provide significant benefits for existing and potential homeowners. The legalization of secondary suites can create opportunities for homeowners to generate additional income. This income can be a determining factor of whether or not owners are able to purchase a home or even remain in their current one. In Calgary's expensive housing market, this is becoming increasingly necessary.

We recognize that the legalization of secondary suites will not resolve all of the city's housing challenges; however, it is a positive step in the right direction. Legalizing secondary suites can provide The City authority to inspect these units, to ensure compliance with all building and fire code regulations.

Increased legalization of secondary suites in Calgary can generate social and economic opportunities for everyone. I urge you to vote in favour of legalizing secondary suites, to promote community economic development and improve living conditions for all Calgarians.

Sincerely,

Jeff Loomis
Executive Director
Momentum

CC: Calgary City Council Members



Constituency Office:
Main Floor, 10328 81 Ave
Edmonton, AB T6E 1X2

Tel: (780) 414-0702
Fax: (780) 414-0703

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ALBERTA

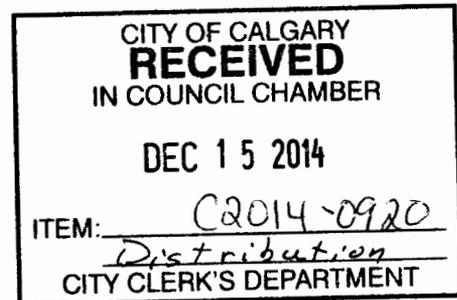
Legislature Office:
230 Legislature Annex
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4

Tel: (780) 415-1800
Fax: (780) 415-0701

RACHEL NOTLEY, MLA
Edmonton Strathcona
Leader, Alberta's NDP Opposition

December 3, 2014

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



Dear Mayor Nenshi and Calgary City Council,

Re: Legalization of Secondary Suites

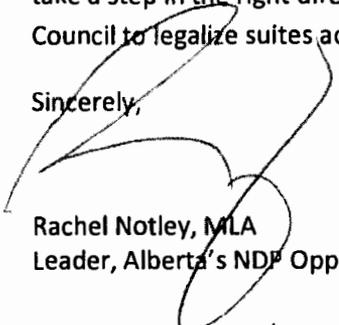
As you know, Alberta is the fastest growing province in our country. We have the incredible good fortune of a thriving economy that is attracting people from all corners to our cities. This has created many opportunities, but major growth it is not without its challenges. A major challenge for Alberta, and particularly in Calgary, is the deficit of affordable housing options. Calgary faces the lowest vacancy rates and highest rental prices in Canada, and with the growth of 40,000 people each year the cost of housing continues to climb. The result has been a housing crisis in an otherwise booming city. Legalizing secondary suites in Calgary is an urgently need beginning of the solution to the housing crisis.

Albertans have a right to shelter. Economically, it is essential that employees who wish to move to Alberta to work have a place to live. For Calgary to continue to attract the best and brightest to keep Alberta's economy strong, we need to find affordable housing solutions. Secondary suites provide an affordable and nearly immediate opportunity to add to Calgary's housing availability.

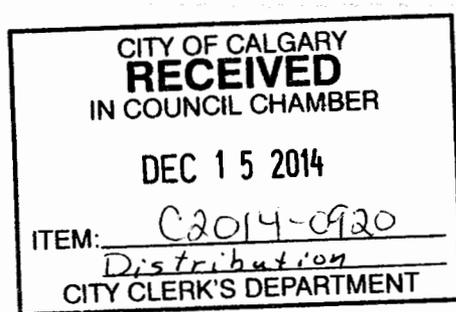
The unfortunate reality is that Calgary's current framework encourages illegal suites, which compromises the safety of tenants. Illegal suites are not held to health or safety standards. If tenants complain to the City about unfair or unsafe conditions they are likely to lose their home.

Calgary City Council's scheduled vote on December 15 has me very hopeful that there is an opportunity to take a step in the right direction to address Calgary's affordable housing crisis. I encourage the city's Council to legalize suites across Calgary.

Sincerely,



Rachel Notley, MLA
Leader, Alberta's NDP Opposition



To: City of Calgary Aldermen

RE: Secondary Suites

I have a lot of experience in dealing with both owners and tenants of secondary suites.

I co-own and manage a property management company in Calgary. We look after all kinds of residential property – so condos, townhouses, single family homes, apartment buildings etc. We also manage several secondary suites.

Part of our business is also to sell investment property to those who would like to have a rental property as part of their investment portfolio, and with prices being as expensive as they are in Calgary many investors favor properties with secondary suites. Others are purchasing in them to live on the main floor and enjoy a detached dwelling with a backyard and using the basement suite to help them pay their mortgages. There is considerable demand for properties with more than one dwelling unit, however the numbers do not work to purchase a traditional 'duplex' as they take up a lot of land and command higher prices as a result.

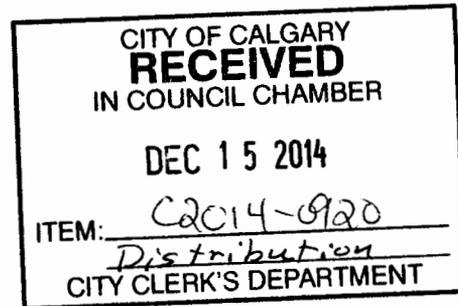
The tenants of the secondary suites we manage just need a cost effective place to live and they are no different than the tenant profile that would rent a house or apartment. They are not evil. They are not going to bring down a community.

The people that are buying and legalizing secondary suites want to do it right. They almost all come from professional backgrounds that promote high ethical standards. Lawyers, pharmacists, engineers, accountants etc. They buy the property and put the suite in to be in it for the long haul. They have a vested interest in these communities because they are spending more than anyone else is to have a property in these areas (cost of house + cost of suite ~\$60k). Those that buy to live up and rent down are the same as any other homeowner they are just trading the benefit of additional living space in the basement for greater affordability.

The time for suite reform is now because legalized secondary suites add more rental housing supply at no cost to the taxpayer (actually generate revenue by way of permit fees and higher taxes), they can be permitted and built within 120 days unlike large complexes that take years and they require no further investments to city infrastructure to annex and service new land for more housing. They are simply the cheapest and fastest way to get more units in the rental pool.

Thank you,

Brett Turner, B.Sc Eng
Broker/Owner, Redline Real Estate Group
bturner@redlinerealestate.ca 403-407-1903



November 17, 2014

Letter of Support for Secondary Suites

Dear City of Calgary Council Members,

As a contractor, real estate investor, and educator, I have spent the last fifteen years building safe and legal income suites across Canada and the United States. My passion lies in educating homeowners to make smart renovation and investment decisions that deliver financial rewards, and the number one way to do that has consistently been adding an secondary suite in their home.

For ten seasons (141 episodes), my show on HGTV, *Income Property*, has consistently demonstrated how secondary suites can help homeowners pay off their mortgage faster by developing unused space within their own home. Homeowners reap the financial benefit by building equity in their homes and tenants are provided with comfortable and safe units in which to reside.

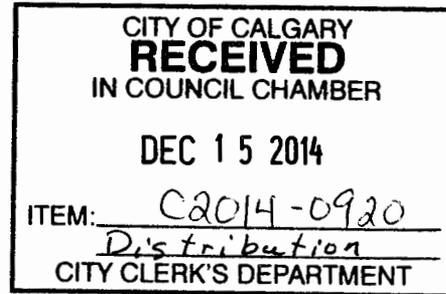
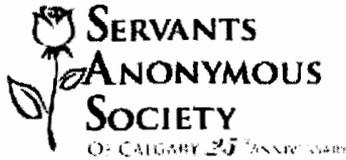
An important message that is consistently delivered on *Income Property* is the importance of building safe and legal secondary suites. Due to the tight restrictions on legalizing secondary suites in Calgary, it is estimated that there are over 16,000 illegal suites. These unregulated suites are not inspected to meet any building or safety standards, thereby endangering tenants. Having an illegal secondary suite also means homeowners may not have legal recourse to deal with troublesome occupants and are unable to take advantage of many of the financial benefits.

Calgary's housing prices are among the highest in Canada, and they continue to climb. At the same time, vacancy rates in Calgary are the lowest in Canada, and rental prices are the highest. The 2013 flood only exacerbated these circumstances. Secondary suites provide a market solution to Calgary's housing crisis.

I encourage Calgary City Council to amend its current policy and allow secondary suites throughout the city, thereby creating safe and affordable housing for renters, providing a sound investment for homeowners, and addressing the quality housing shortage faced by the City.

Sincerely,

Scott McGillivray



November 26, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

We urge you to support the legalization of secondary suites.

There are so many reasons to support the legalization of secondary suites.

First, there is a housing crisis in our City with our very low vacancy rates. With secondary suites, we can create additional units without changing land use or building size. We are simply making better use of current housing stock.

Second, increasing capacity for home ownership. It is the experience of many first time home owners to rent part of their home. The additional income helps them to carry the mortgage and helped them buy their first home. Given the appreciation in homes in our City, young couples need this help more than when we started.

Third, in our current situation of illegal suites, neither homeowner or tenant is protected. There are no guidelines, no inspections and thus the health and safety of the tenant is compromised.

Fourth, there are no incentives to correct outstanding issues. Should the tenant complain to the City, they are likely to lose their housing.

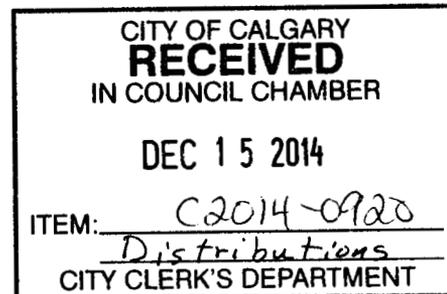
And lastly, so many other communities like Edmonton have successfully legalized secondary suites. We don't understand City Council's reticence and caution.

Calgary is a great community. It has shown leadership in so many areas. It is high time that it proceeds to legalize secondary suites.

Sincerely,

Theresa Jenkins
Interim Executive Director

Community and Business Leader Steve Allan to Report on Council's Secondary Suite Process



Distinguished business and community leader Steve Allan will attend the secondary suite portion of the Calgary City Council meeting on Monday October 6, 2014. Mr. Allan will observe Council's consideration of a number of individual secondary suite applications and will be available to the media following the meeting to provide commentary on the process he observes. Mr. Allan's comments will draw on his extensive business, organizational management and community experience.

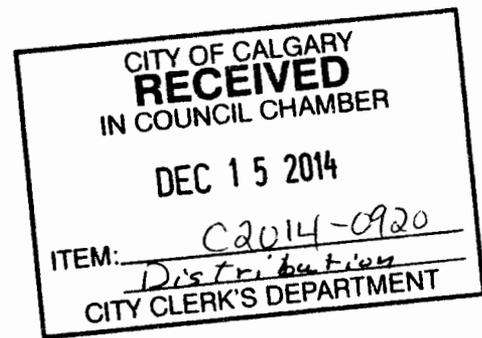
Currently, Mr. Allan is the Chair of Calgary Economic Development, Chair of the Canadian Tourism Commission, and a University of Calgary Board Member. He has also held senior leadership roles at Ernst & Young and on the Board of Compton Petroleum. In the community, Mr. Allan was CoChair of the City of Calgary and United Way of Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative.

Mr. Allan believes that "more housing, including secondary suites is needed now in order for Calgary's economy to thrive and for Calgary to attract workers." He says "I'm looking forward to attending Council next week to see how City Council's current secondary suite process works in practice." According to Mr. Allan, "in the business and nonprofit world, executive boards, or boards of directors, are only effective when they focus their limited time and considerable expertise on strategic issues and establishing policies for implementation." Mr. Allan is encouraged that Council will be considering a more efficient discretionary approach to secondary suites in the coming months.



December 3, 2014

The City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Stn M
Calgary, AB
T2P 2M5



To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support for changes to the existing secondary suites policies at the City of Calgary. We feel that this issue is extremely important to the city as it struggles with a severe housing crisis that impacts our ability to do business.

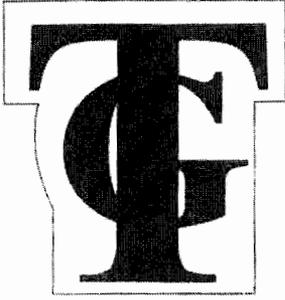
As you may well be aware, Calgary currently has the lowest vacancy rate among large Canadian cities. This shortage is driving rents higher and increasing housing costs for my employees, my suppliers and their employees. The trickle down effects are driving up my costs of doing business in the city. Secondary suites are a market based solution to increase Calgary's housing supply and ease the pressure on my labour pool to find adequate housing.

Our organization has been following developments in Council meetings over the course of 2014. We are encouraged at the possibility that on December 15th, Council will finally decide to enhance the existing policy and allow Calgarians to invest their own money to increase housing options for Calgarians.

We urge you to support any framework that takes the decision of granting permissions for individual suites out of the hands of Councillors and makes it easier for Calgarians to build more housing.

Sincerely,
Strategic Group

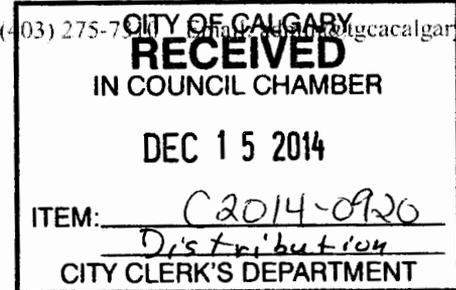
Ken Toews
Vice President, Development



THORNCLIFFE GREENVIEW COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

5600 Centre Street N
Calgary, Alberta T2K 0T3

Administration Office: (403) 274-6840 Facsimile: (403) 275-7911 Email: info@tgccalgary.com



September 16 2014

RE: SPC PUD report item 4.8 to City Council for 22/9/2014

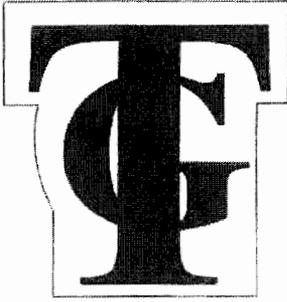
To City Council,

Please see our letter to SPC PUD for item 4.8 on September 10 2014 at the bottom of this update. The Thorncliffe/Greenview Association (TGCA) supports city administration's report to SPC PUD. We find it to be a reasonable and comprehensive approach to secondary suite application reform. We are especially encouraged by the through list of criteria and the use of secondary suites to be discretionary in RC-1 & R-1 districts. We appreciate that as a community association losing the land use re-designation in the process is to lose some of our own influence in the process and as most organizations we are often loathe to lose power. In the case of secondary suites however we welcome that loss as we feel our community planning focus should be on more pertinent issues. Likewise we feel council can serve all communities better by eliminating land use re-designation for secondary suites as recommended by administration.

As our community discussion as progressed we have come to see this as less of an issue about suites themselves and more an issue about better governance and better process. During our continued engagement, even those initially opposed to suites themselves would support reforms similar to those outlined by the administration report to SPC PUD. Although it is vital to consult residents, if they are not fully informed then as a community association we are not doing our due diligence. Without having a broader discussion we would have reached a different conclusion on this issue. A simply blanket yes or no is a disservice to the people we serve and for the issue itself.

As stated in our previous letter TGCA has a more self-serving interest in suite reform. We do see suite liberalization as a way to preserve the character of our neighbourhood from more aggressive forms of re-development at least in the midterm. Nevertheless we sincerely feel that reform is needed on a systematic process level.

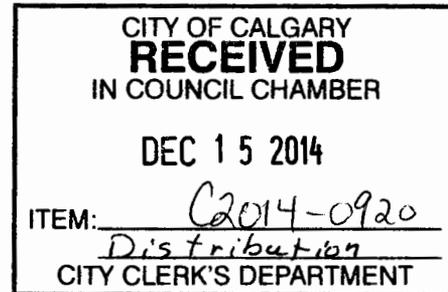
Marvin Quashnick
TGCA



THORNCLIFFE GREENVIEW COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

5600 Centre Street N
Calgary, Alberta T2K 0T3

Administration Office: (403) 274-6840 Facsimile: (403) 275-7310 Email: admin@tgccalgary.com



September 7 2014

To City Council,

Re: SPC Planning & Urban Development Item 4.8 Secondary Suites

The Thorncliffe/Greenview Community Association (TGCA) strongly supports reform on the secondary suite application process and regulations. This reaffirms our support from 2010/2011 when we engaged our residents on this issue. At that time a narrow margin were in favour of some level of reform to the current process. As our conversation has evolved since then, TGCA has concluded our most preferred scenario would be where secondary suites become a discretionary use in RC-1, R-1, & RC-1L. We feel that this removes the most onerous part of the existing procedure (a land use re-designation) while still allowing input and an avenue of appeal for residents and community associations. Also, for a DP to be issued certain criteria would have to be present, such as an onsite parking stall, minimums for lot/suite/window size, ceiling height, etc, not at all dissimilar from current requirements at the development permit stage.

Council by now is very familiar with the arguments for liberalization of secondary suite regulations and TGCA echoes similar sentiments. Most notably;

-Safety:

A saturated black market is rife with product, service & situations that imperils tenants daily. An influx of legal suites would provide more and better choices for renters while urging remaining illegal properties to raise standards in order to compete.

-Expediency:

For homeowners the process of going before city council for a land use re-designation is a formidable & tedious exercise to obtain something so significant and exigent to them personally. Inversely these are usually matters far too trivial and prolonged for city council to be expending its precious time and treasure on.

-Housing:

Legalization of secondary suites is the lowest of hanging fruits to provide affordable housing and ease a cramped housing market.

-Density:

Council is mandated by the MDP to seek greater density. TG is a community of aging but solid bungalows. Secondary suites we feel for our area are a kinder, gentler form of densification than other more aggressive redevelopment options.

-Extending the Edges:

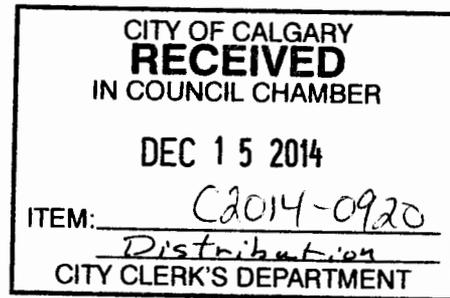
Like many established communities TG is struggling to create viable aging in place on one end and facilitate attainable ownership into starter size mature homes on the other. Secondary suites provide a mechanism for seniors to stay & juniors to start

The above are solid altruistic and common sense reasons for changes to the regulations on secondary suites. TGCA admittedly has decided to advocate not least from our own self-interest of preservation. A common argument against secondary suites in established communities is that they attack and denigrate the existing character of a neighbourhood. While we respect this perspective, it is not at all the parochial focus of TGCA. Adjacent communities to TG have in the last few years felt the surge of infill development. TGCA recognizes infills as an important addition but we would argue that where many 1930s-to early 1950s houses are of a construction standard that expedites their removal and replacement the late 1950's- early 1970's housing stock prevalent in TG can be sustainable while respecting the original design aesthetics for many years to come. Fundamentally we view secondary suites as a saviour to atrophy by our current limiting demographics and a forestallment to sweeping and potentially eviscerating redevelopment.

TGCA is currently dealing with a major development on what is possibly the largest commercial site in the area. Despite its controversy, complexity and impact, it requires no land-use re-designation and only a DP to proceed. Concurrently we have seen a number of single family owners go before council to obtain a land use re-designation in order to obtain a secondary suite. This is a topsy-turvy absurdity. On the one hand we have a project of such magnitude that it will define its site and extended environs for a generation requiring only a development permit. Meanwhile the modest bungalow owners have been obliged to endure the rigours of council's political oversight for a change of use that even their immediate neighbours may not notice. If only for this most anecdotal of examples, TGCA is compelled to voice our concern over the current system and urge city council to seek reasonable secondary suite reform.

Sincerely;

Marvin Quashnick
VP Public Service
TGCA



Wednesday, November 12th, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City of Calgary Council Members:

Letter of Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Thrive, Calgary's community economic development network, wishes to add its voice to the growing support for legalizing secondary suites across our city. Legalization of secondary suites will:

1. Assist in increasing the number and quality of rental units in Calgary, **broadening the scope of housing options** for residents in a city with a very low vacancy rate;
2. Gently increase density in certain pockets of the city, **increasing the viability of local businesses** and adding **vibrancy to neighbourhoods**;
3. Make newcomers' arrival to our city easier and more affordable, and support their smooth transition into **work, cultural, civic participation and self-reliance**;
4. Bring rights to renters currently living in illegal spaces, allowing them to self-advocate, and **permitting the City to inspect** and ensure compliance of all landlords with respect to building and safety codes;
5. Provide homeowners with the option to **create a sustainable income stream** while putting to productive use the idle, underutilized areas of their home;

Concerns from those not in favour of secondary suites include parking in our neighbourhoods should secondary suites be legalized. Experience from other communities indicates that as secondary suites are developed within established areas of the City, they are geographically in close proximity and access to existing public transit and don't place additional stress on parking in the neighbourhood but, instead, support the public outcomes related to increased walkability and use of transit.

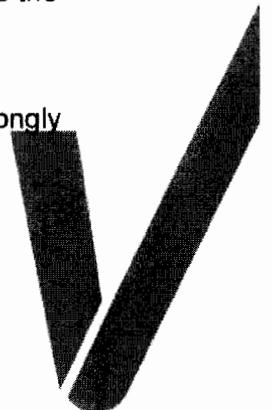
While the legalization of secondary suites may not be a panacea to the broader affordable housing issue in our city, it will go a long way in revitalizing neighbourhoods, accommodating students in search of affordable, temporary accommodation, and encouraging the ongoing growth of pedestrian-friendly, local business hubs across our city.

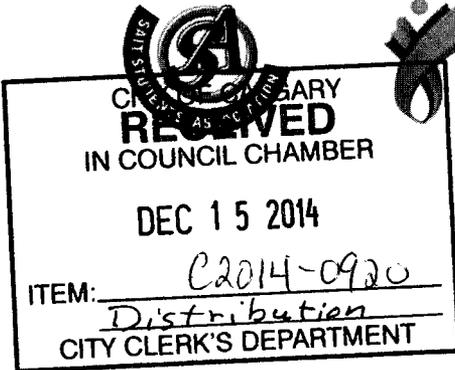
We should also appreciate that easing-up on restricting the development of secondary suites accommodates a market-driven response to this issue that enables homeowners to pursue the many benefits of secondary suites while not requiring major public capital investment to effectively respond to Calgary's affordable housing challenges.

Therefore, on behalf of Thrive, Calgary's community economic development network, I strongly urge you to vote for the legalization of secondary suites in our city.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Davis
Community Relations Director, Momentum





Sept. 19, 2014

Members of Calgary City Council,

As representatives of over 70,000 Calgary students from the University of Calgary, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Mount Royal University, and Bow Valley College, we enthusiastically support the legalization of secondary suites in the four inner-city wards and close to LRT stations. Students attending post-secondary are increasingly relying on secondary suites as a form of affordable housing as the city-wide rental vacancy rate hovers around 1%. We applaud the councillors in favour of this motion for their support in ensuring that our city's future leaders and innovators have access to safe, affordable housing.

Secondary suites are one of the best forms of transitional housing for post-secondary graduates and young adults. Legalizing inner-city secondary suites will provide more opportunity for young professionals and future leaders to contribute to our city long after they have left post-secondary. Calgary must be able to continue to attract and keep Canada's top talent, and a lack of affordable housing constrains this endeavor. As students we want to continue to contribute to our great city. Secondary suites are an essential facet of this.

Our number one concern is safety. With between 10,000 and 80,000 illegal suites in Calgary, thousands of Calgary residents have no legal protection as tenants. The current situation offers suite occupants no remedy for safety concerns. If their landlord is unwilling to address a concern, tenants cannot appeal to any higher authority as doing so would result in their eviction.

Secondary suite reforms have been refused due to fears that changing the zoning laws risks "the character of the community". This argument ignores the fact that suites already exist throughout Calgary's communities. The residents in many of these suites are high-achieving Calgarians who depend on these accommodations while gaining the skills and experience necessary to lead Calgary into the future. We know that Calgarians welcome these ambitious young people into their communities, and we ask council to give them the legal opportunity to do so.

Calgary has established itself as an economic and social leader in Canada. Yet it remains the only major Canadian city that refuses to legalize secondary suites. If council denies the legalization of secondary suites, it jeopardizes the skilled labour force which contributes to the character of this bold and dynamic city. On behalf of Calgary's 70,000 post-secondary students we urge city council to support the proposal to continue to move Calgary forward.

Sincerely,



Lexi Nilson

VP External,
Students' Union,
University of Calgary



Jarett Henry

President
Students' Union,
University of Calgary



Eric Queenan,

President,
Students' Association of
Mount Royal University



Carmen Fons Revilla

VP External
Students' Association of
Bow Valley College



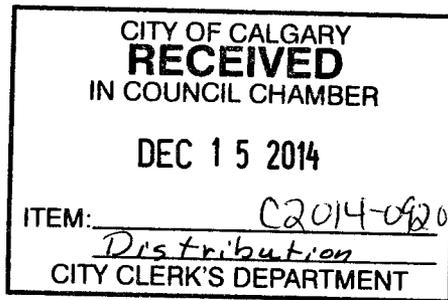
Joshua Bettle

VP External,
SAIT Polytechnic
Students' Association



Jared Stock

President
SAIT Polytechnic
Students' Association



United Way

Calgary and Area

United. Building a great city for everyone.

December 11, 2014

Dear Councillor,

RE: Secondary & Backyard Suites Policy & Other Housing Options – Revised Report C2014-0920

United Way of Calgary and Area (UWCA) is proud to partner with The City of Calgary in building strong communities. Partnering on initiatives such as the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative (CPRI) is a testament to our common goals. The CPRI's Enough for All strategy, approved by UWCA and City Council in May 2013, highlights the need to take action on affordable housing. The Secondary and Backyard Suite Policy & Regulatory Framework presents an opportunity to do so.

UWCA is optimistic about the potential for land use bylaws to help us tackle complex issues such as affordable housing and poverty. The proposed regulatory framework lays out a clear path for reaching agreement. While there is no single solution that will resolve the issue, we believe working with Calgarians to develop and amend land use bylaws based upon shared principles will help move this work forward.

United Way of Calgary and Area encourages City Council to approve the Secondary and Backyard Suite Policy & Regulatory Framework as it represents an important step towards addressing the lack of affordable housing in Calgary.

As we continue to partner on these critical issues, we express our utmost gratitude and respect for your ongoing efforts to make Calgary a great city for all.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Miller, Ed. D.
President & CEO
United Way of Calgary and Area

Joe Lougheed
Chair, Public Policy Committee
United Way of Calgary and Area

An Open Letter to Calgarians,

The pressing issue of affordable rental housing in the city of Calgary directly effects the post- secondary student population at institutions such as the University of Calgary. As increasing numbers of students are attracted to the city for education as well as post-graduate employment the low rental housing stock will retract from both attendance as well as retention of graduates. Our association began campaigning on the University of Calgary main campus four weeks ago to encourage students to write and contact their councillors for support and to sign the petition of Calgarians for Secondary Suites.

Students are key stakeholders on this issue as they are significantly impacted by this policy. An increase to the rental stock, particularly with access to LRT or BRT lines in inner city communities such as Banff Trail, Hillhurst, Charleswood and Brentwood, is crucial in order to provide housing that is accessible and affordable, and in proximity to post-secondary institutions. With legalization, homeowners are incentivized to implement more secondary suites contributing to this rental stock and hopefully stabilizing, if not depressing, the average rental price. This option creates opportunities for both populations seeking to rent, as well as homeowners which can benefit from an additional method of income.

As the last major city in Canada to address this issue we must continue to pressure our City Council to continue this discussion, which is part of the larger challenge of affordable housing. With our vacancy rate as one the lowest in the country, we cannot continue to ignore the surmounting demand for rental housing. Thousands of Calgarians are presently residing in secondary suites, with a far few number of permit applications to Council, concluding that this option is applicable to our city but greater legal measures are required.

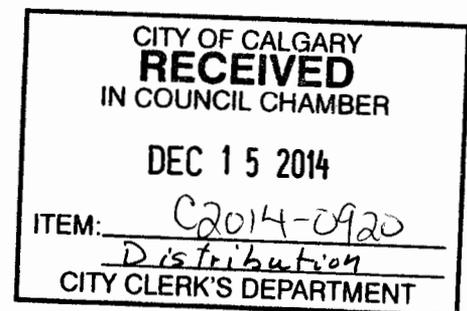
Secondary suites are a safe and affordable housing for students and requires necessary legal infrastructure and appropriate policy for implementation. A lack of housing in a continuously rapidly growing city will have widespread economic and social consequences if adequate options are not made available. Secondary suites are not a complete solution, but will contribute in alleviating and mitigating the current situation.

We encourage you to contact your Councillor and let them know that you support legalizing secondary suites in Calgary.

Sincerely,

The Urban Calgary Student's Association

contact@urbanca.org
www.urbanca.org
University of Calgary

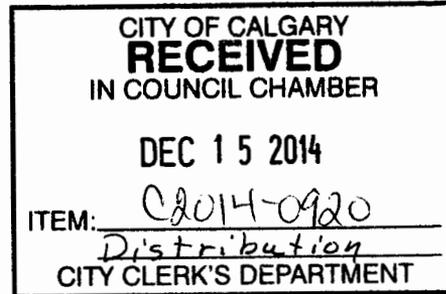


Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research
3304, 37th Street NW Calgary, AB T1L 2A6
Tel: 403.284.1121 Fax: 403.284.1146
www.vecova.ca



December 3, 2014

Mayor Naheed Nenshi
Office of the Mayor
City of Calgary
700 Macleod Trail South
Calgary, AB T2G 2M3



Dear Mayor Nenshi:

RE: ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE AND SAFE HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Housing supports for persons with disabilities is a major area of service provision within the Community Disability Service sector involving significant financial resources, legislative and regulatory control and staffing support. Persons with disabilities face significant challenges surrounding affordable housing, particularly those who are aging, have concurrent mental health issues, or have physical accessibility challenges. The population of persons with disabilities has increased in Alberta and persons with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed or under employed and have lower incomes than the general populations. As a result home ownership is usually unattainable due to limited credit ratings, limited income sources, and ongoing costs such as property repairs and property taxes. Within Calgary and Alberta limited housing options for persons with disabilities exist. Commonly persons with disabilities must settle for the 'least incompatible' housing, instead of the most optimal housing situation to facilitate success.

The existing supply of affordable housing in Calgary is very low. In July 2013, Vecova generated a report on the 'Best Practices in Housing Support Models for Persons with Disabilities.' Noted within the report, Calgary's rental vacancy rate was less than 2% and the city had just over 400 accessible units, making it difficult to find housing for those with a physical disability. The average home price, a two-bedroom or one-bedroom apartment in Calgary at that time well exceeded the affordability guidelines and average incomes that an individual with a disability can afford. The inventory of safe, affordable and accessible homes remains low.

Finding creative affordable housing solutions for persons with disabilities is a critical issue in the Community Disability Services sector. A variety of housing support options is necessary to accommodate the variable and distinctive needs and wishes of persons with disabilities. One of these models is a supported neighbour support model whereby a person with a disability resides in a secondary suite within a home and may be supported by the tenants in the home. This model of support varies in the intensity of support provided. It is a model that works well for some individuals and requires the availability, affordability and inventory of secondary suites that meet safety regulations and standards.

Housing support models and environmental design must work together to create the most positive home environment for persons with disabilities. Research surrounding therapeutic environmental design and the importance of creating a 'home' environment should be considered when creating housing for person with disabilities, particularly surrounding designing for diminished condition level, landscaping and implications for mental health.

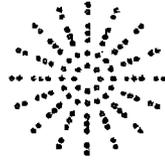
Innovative affordable housing for persons with disabilities will require creative partnership between different levels of government, residential developers, banks, non-profits and citizens, willing to work together to develop holistic solutions.

Vecova recognizes the need for safe, affordable and accessible housing. Secondary suites are an option that has potential to provide housing for people with disabilities that would meet their needs.

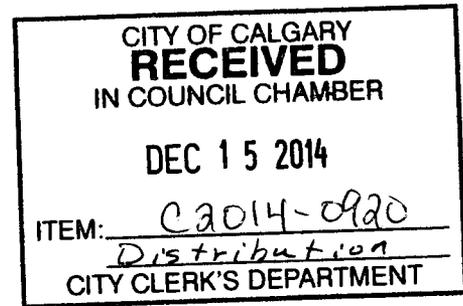
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Lee".

Joan Lee
Chief Executive Officer



vibrant
COMMUNITIES
CALGARY



September 15, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City of Calgary Council Members:

Letter of Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC) encourages you to legalize secondary suites across our city. We believe that secondary suites are part of the solution in repairing the market, affordable and social housing spectrum. The legalization of secondary suites will assist in increasing the number and quality of rental units in the City of Calgary.

We know that you are aware of the significant population growth in our City. This growth, compounded by the June 2013 flood, has led to a scarcity of housing options and the lowest vacancy rates in the country. Many of these individuals are coming to our City to work. If they are unable to find the adequate housing, they will be unable to stay and work, negatively affecting our vibrant economy.

In addition, the short supply and high demand for housing further reduces the amount of affordable housing available in our city. This reduces the housing options for our working poor.

Many Calgarians now rent illegal suites. The safety of this housing is a primary concern. When suites are legalized conditions need to be met. It allows the City to inspect and ensure compliance with all building and fire code regulations, improving the quality of life for Calgarians.

Some have noted a concerns about parking in our neighbourhoods should secondary suites be legalized. Experience from other communities indicates that as secondary suites are developed within established areas of the City, they are geographically in close proximity and access to existing public transit routes. These tenants access public transit and don't place additional stress on parking in the neighbourhood.

Lastly, while secondary suites such as basement apartments benefit working poor, students and people coming to our City to work by providing them with a roof over their head, the suites also benefit the homeowner. Secondary suites provide a sustainable income stream which can sometimes determine whether or not owners are able to afford to purchase a home or even remain in their current one.

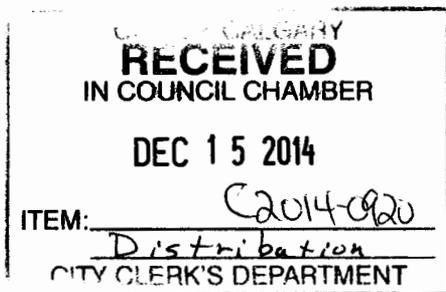
In conclusion, we believe that the legalization of secondary suites is an excellent opportunity for all Calgarians. It will both increase the quantity and quality of housing options.

Therefore, we urge you to vote for the legalization of secondary suites in our City.

Sincerely,

Joe Ceci, Chair
Board of Directors

Franco Savoia, Director



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the
**WOMEN'S
CENTRE**

November 27, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

On behalf of the Women's Centre of Calgary we urge you to support the legalization of secondary suites.

The Women's Centre is a community organization that provides a safe and supportive space accessed by thousands of women in Calgary annually. While the Women's Centre is open to all women, more than 80% of the women who access our services identify as living in poverty. We have been working to advocate for social and economic policies that are reflective of their realities and experiences.

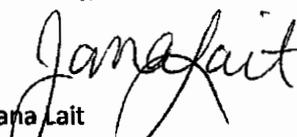
Safe and affordable housing is a major issue for many women in Calgary and this disproportionately impacts low-income women. The legalization of secondary suites could increase women's access to affordable housing.

There is a housing crisis in our City with our very low vacancy rates. With secondary suites, we can create additional units without changing land use or building size. We are simply making better use of current housing stock.

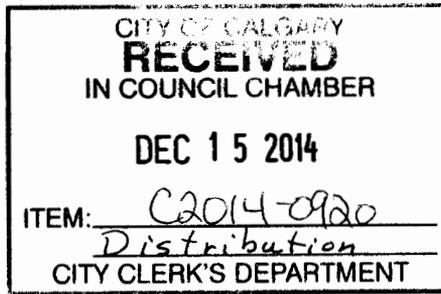
In our current situation of illegal suites, neither homeowner nor tenant is protected. There are no guidelines, no inspections and thus the health and safety of the tenant is compromised. There are no incentives to correct outstanding issues. Should the tenant complain to the City, they are likely to lose their housing.

We are very pleased to see that the City of Calgary is taking steps to address the housing issue in our city. Calgary is a great community. It has shown leadership in so many areas. It is time that it proceeds to legalize secondary suites.

Sincerely,


Jana Lait
Chair of the Board of Directors


Susan Gillies
Executive Director



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November 26, 2014

Dear Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council

Re: Support for the Legalization of Secondary Suites

We urge you to support the legalization of secondary suites.

Each day in our work with women in our community who are vulnerable, we encounter many people who could benefit from the approval and regulation of safe secondary suites.

More than 200 women and children slept under a YWCA of Calgary roof last night in one of the emergency shelter or housing programs meant to support a woman in crisis due to family violence or homelessness.

Our challenge – and the painful reality for women we support – is that their crisis is often protracted by the lack of safe, appropriate and affordable housing in community to which they can move on. The average length of stay in our shelter and housing programs has increased by more than 20 per cent in the past year.

With secondary suites, we can create additional units by making better use of existing housing stock and adding density in communities already equipped with infrastructure and services. While this will not be a boon in terms of real numbers, any additional housing capacity which can be brought into the market in short order is both necessary and welcome.

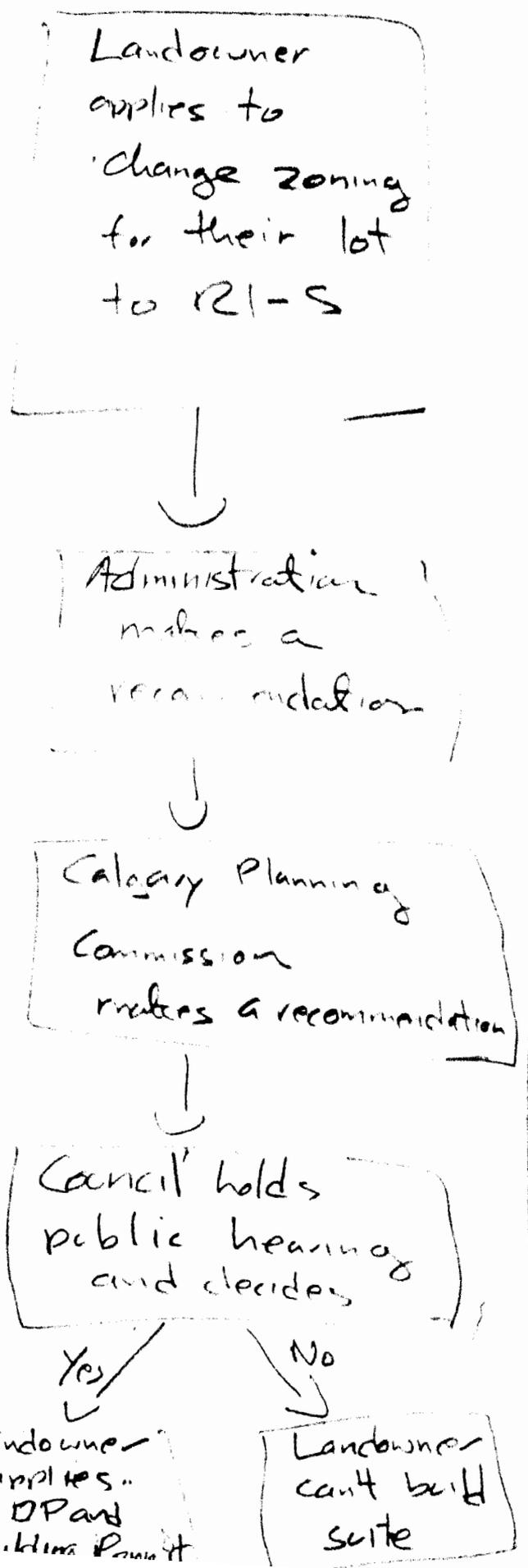
Suites are an affordable rental option and also enable greater numbers of Calgarians to attain homeownership by assisting with income and offsetting mortgage costs. The legalization of suites can also offer greater protection to both owners and tenants by ensuring guidelines and inspections are in place so that units are safe. Further, for women who have experienced violence or for women who may be living alone, the addition of another person in the building can contribute to a greater sense of security.

We urge council to end this debate and address the critical needs of people who simply need a roof over their heads. Approving suites would demonstrate that council is indeed ready to make a meaningful commitment to address Calgary's housing crisis.

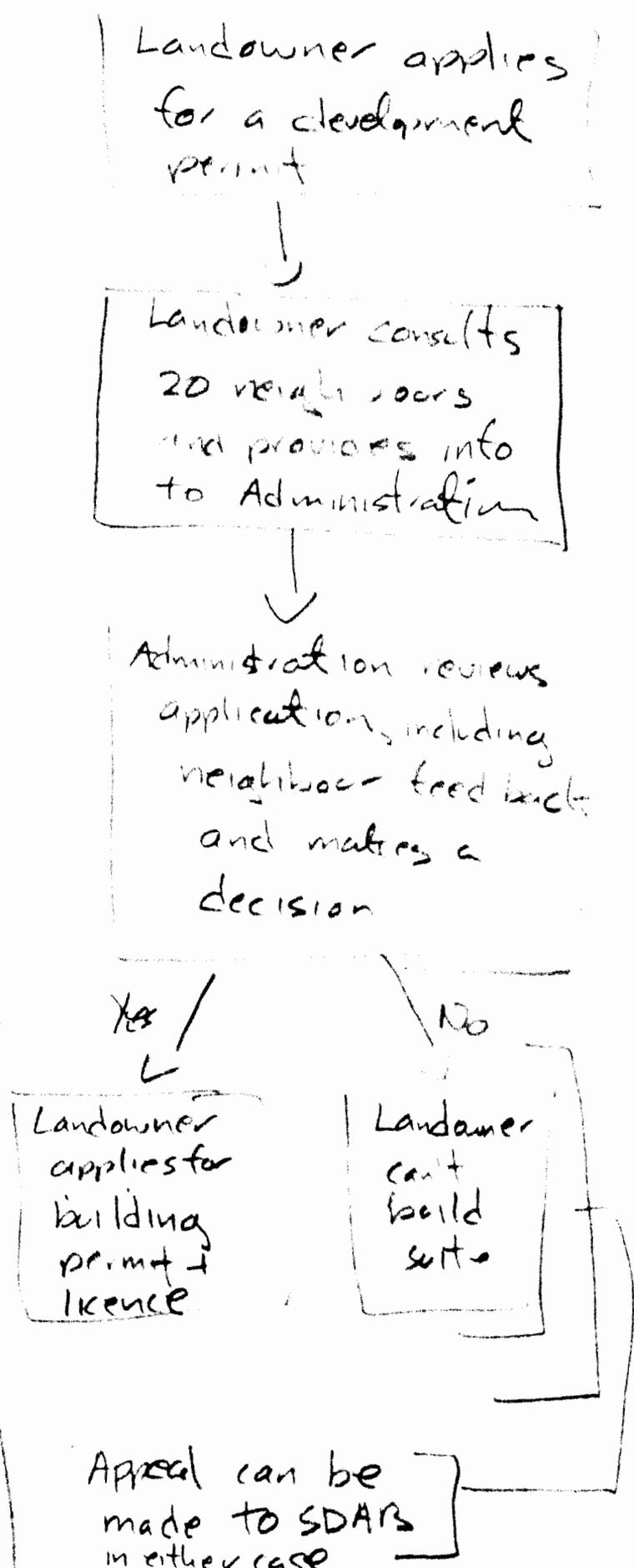
Sincerely,

Sue Tomney
CEO
YWCA of Calgary

Existing Approval for a site in R-1



Proposed Approval for a site in R-1



CITY OF CALGARY
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ITEM: C2014-0920
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CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT