

Housing and Affordability Task Force Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council:

1. Receive the Housing and Affordability Task Force Recommendations and Actions (“Recommendations”) (Attachment 2).
2. Direct Administration to begin implementation of the Recommendations that have no new funding requirement.
3. Direct Administration, as required, to bring forward specific actions for further consideration and deliberation through committee to Council, including those that require additional budget resources to the monthly standing Executive Committee item “Strategic Discussion on Building and Delivering on Plans and Budgets”.
4. Direct Administration to report on the status of the implementation of the Recommendations with the Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy update report to Council through Community Development Committee no later than Q4 2025.
5. Disband the Housing and Affordability Task Force and thank its members for their time and professional advice.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Calgary is in a housing crisis. Analysis from Calgary Economic Development has shown that individuals earning less than \$87,000 per year have affordable access to only 40 per cent of Calgary’s market housing stock.
- Calgary’s reputation as a world class, affordable and livable city is fundamentally at risk. Once lost, Calgary’s long-standing housing affordability, and its associated economic advantages, will be very hard to regain.
- The Housing and Affordability Task Force (the “Task Force”) Recommendations set out a path to increasing the supply of market and non-market housing and improving our social, economic, and environmental resilience.
- The recommendations aim to 1) Increase and diversify the supply of housing. Boost development by 1,000 more market homes beyond what is normally built in a year, and at least 3,000 non-market affordable homes a year; 2) strengthen the housing sector to support partner collaboration and foster greater impact than if they were to act alone; and 3) improve living conditions for people in rental housing.
- Recommendations with no budget impact can be implemented within existing resources. Those actions that require new funding, and/or Council approval will be brought forward to Council before being implemented. This includes changes that will require legislative steps such as Public Hearings and/or amendments to bylaws.
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** Advancement of the recommendations will address housing and housing affordability challenges being faced by many Calgarians.
- **Why does it matter?** With the expected population growth of 110,000 new individuals over the next four years, and the need to continue to attract and retain talent to maintain Calgary’s economic edge, addressing and improving housing affordability is paramount to our future success.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

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DISCUSSION

Calgary's population growth has surpassed expectations, increasing by 100,000 over the past four years. Growth is expected to continue by another 110,000 in the next four years. That means that Calgary will be effectively welcoming 75 new people each day over those four years. Calgary needs a diverse range of housing options in all communities so that *all* Calgarians can find homes that meet their needs. Current statistics indicate that more housing variety is needed to meet the diverse make-up of households. More housing choices in all areas, allow people to stay and grow in their community. In addition, the development of affordable homes is critical. According to The City's most recent affordable housing research, Calgary is below the national average for affordable housing supply (3.5 per cent compared to 6 per cent), and over 80,000 households are paying more than 30 per cent of their income on housing.

On 2022 June 7, Council approved the Housing and Affordability Task Force Notice of Motion, EC2022-0638. This outlined four initiatives for Administration to investigate and report back on. This report addresses one of those four initiatives: to develop a task force that would "report to Council with advice and policy recommendations relating to increasing, measuring and managing Housing Affordability and Affordable Housing along the entire continuum, including a survey/review of existing programs, policies, and solutions both locally and in other relevant jurisdictions". Two of the four initiatives have previously been reported on (outlined in Attachment 1), and the other will be reported on in Q3 2023.

Members of the Task Force were recruited through a public and transparent process, bringing together 15 experts from diverse fields (10 public members and five members of Administration) who build, study, and have experience working and living across the housing continuum. Between 2022 September and 2023 April, the Task Force met regularly to listen and learn from experts who also work, live, and study along the housing continuum. This combined input has informed the Task Force's recommendations and actions.

The exploration of housing and housing affordability challenges highlighted the following:

- Calgarians do not have access to sufficient housing supply, nor do they have a diversity of housing choice in all communities across the city.
- Housing providers are challenged to acquire land and other resources to build new housing that meets the needs of Calgarians, specifically Indigenous people and equity-deserving populations.
- Service providers across the housing sector could benefit from greater coordination and collaboration to create better outcomes for Calgarians.
- Housing providers face increased financial pressure to build, operate and maintain affordable housing.
- Many Calgarians that live in rental housing are subject to inadequate housing conditions.

The Task Force identified three outcomes and six recommendations which will aim to improve the housing affordability challenges.

Outcome 1: Increase and diversify the supply of housing. Boost development by 1,000 more market homes beyond what is normally built in a year, and at least 3,000 non-market affordable homes a year. This would be achieved by the following recommendations:

1. **Making it easier to build housing across the city** by amending municipal planning policies, plans, and establishing funding and incentive programs.

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2. **Making more land available to build more housing across the city** by enhancing existing programs, identifying, and allocating underutilized land for housing, and allocating funding to acquire more land suitable for housing.
3. **Ensuring the supply of affordable housing meets the needs of Indigenous people living in Calgary and equity-deserving populations** by reducing barriers to access housing, making more land and funding available to build more housing that is culturally appropriate.

Outcome 2: Strengthen the housing sector to support partner collaboration and foster a greater impact than if they were to act alone. This would be achieved by the following recommendations:

4. **Convening the housing sector to collaborate** on developing new housing supply, reducing stigma, and building more awareness in the community.
5. **Increasing the investment to support housing providers** by advocating for consistent funding from the Government of Alberta to support housing development and operations and enhancing existing programs that support non-profit providers.

Outcome 3: Improve living conditions for people in rental housing. This would be achieved by the following recommendation:

6. **Ensuring more individuals have a safe place to call home** by supporting programming that increases awareness among renters, investigating models used in other jurisdictions to ensure rents are balanced, and providing funding for programming that can prevent Calgarians from becoming unhoused.

More details on the six recommendations and 33 actions can be found in Attachment 2.

Task Force Recommendations with no budget impact, for example those that relate to advocacy or that involve minor changes to existing practices can be implemented within existing resources. Those actions that require new funding, and/or Council approval will be brought forward to Council before being implemented. This includes changes that will require legislative steps such as Public Hearings or amendments to bylaws. Administration has identified such actions within Attachment 2.

Several initiatives related to housing, including from other orders of government, are before Council at the same time. On 2023 June 6 there are two other housing reports: Indigenous Affordable Housing Recommendations (CD2023-0239) and the Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan (CD2023-0585). Several actions identified by the Task Force, outlined in Attachment 2, are also included within these reports, and where applicable, Administration has identified the associated actions within the respective reports.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public engagement was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public communication or engagement was not required |

The Task Force was directed to report back to Council with advice and policy recommendations. Specific and targeted engagement was completed in developing the recommendations. The following opportunities to engage with Calgarians were leveraged:

- 17 public submissions, received via the Engage portal between 2022 October and 2023 February, were reviewed and discussed.
- Administration engaged members of The City's advisory committees to inform the Task Force on key themes and barriers impacting equity-deserving populations.

It should be noted that the Task Force was assigned a specific mandate to make recommendations based on expert and professional advice, rather than conduct a major public engagement exercise. For many of the Recommendations, additional steps will be required, including Public Hearings and additional Council decisions prior to implementation.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Having a diverse, sufficient, and affordable supply of housing is foundational to individual and community wellbeing. Income disruptions and economic fluctuations exacerbate the need for affordable housing. The need in Calgary for affordable housing is expected to increase from the current levels, over 80,000 households, to over 100,000 by 2026. Responding to housing and housing affordability issues not only makes life better for everyone, but it also saves taxpayer money by reducing pressure on emergency services.

Environmental

Lack of affordable housing choices within our city results in people seeking housing they can afford, further away from the centre of our community, and outside our city's boundaries, increasing our collective environmental footprint. Communities with a diversity of housing types are more resilient. Climate hazards impact various forms of housing in different ways. New housing development will contribute to climate action goals through alignment with The City's growth and development targets.

Economic

Calgary is expected to see its population increase by 110,000 over the next four years. Investing in housing affordability is critical to support new job creation, attracting and retaining a stable workforce and saving taxpayers by reducing pressure on emergency services. People who can adequately afford their housing have greater opportunities to find and keep jobs, learn, and build skills, and be active participants in their communities.

Service and Financial Implications

Other:

Council directed the Task Force to contemplate and propose actions that would significantly impact housing affordability. These along with the other actions will require further refinement by Administration as part of the implementation process. As part of this process, these items will be considered as part of the Adjustments to the service plans and budgets in 2023 November and be included in the Standing Executive Committee Item – Strategic Discussion on Building and Delivering on Plans and Budgets.

RISK

Many of the Recommendations would result in transformative change and, as such, carry a level of risk. Before the individual actions are implemented by Administration, all usual processes will be followed, including carrying out a risk assessment and creating a mitigation plan.

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As described above, there is also significant risk of not acting. Calgary could lose its long-held advantage as an affordable, livable, and vibrant city. The Task Force's recommendations take this risk very seriously and represent specific actions The City and others can take to ensure Calgary remains a place where everyone can live and thrive.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Housing and Affordability Task Force Recommendations
3. Letters from the sectors to Members of Council
4. Administration Presentation
5. Task Force Presentation
6. **Public Submissions**

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Stuart Dalgleish	Planning and Development Services	Consult
Michael Thompson	Infrastructure Services	Consult
Chris Arthurs	People, Innovation, and Corporate Services	Consult
Les Tocher (A/GM)	Finance	Consult
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Consult
Jill Floen	City Solicitor	Consult
Josh White	Director, City and Regional Planning	Consult
Debra Hamilton	Director, Community Planning	Consult