

Home is Here – The City of Calgary’s Housing Strategy 2024-2030

PURPOSE

Calgary is in a housing crisis. Our competitive position as a liveable and affordable city is at risk. *Home is Here: The City of Calgary’s Housing Strategy 2024-2030* (“Housing Strategy”) includes a series of integrated outcomes and actions that will set Calgary on a path to ensure that housing is affordable for everyone. **Actions related to land-use or bylaw changes would follow the regular legislated process only after approval of this report; this report does not deliver automatic approval of such land-use changes.**

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Council directed Administration to refresh the Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy on 2022 May 10 (CD2022-0478). It also directed the creation of the Housing and Affordability Task Force to provide “advice and policy recommendations relating to increasing, measuring, and managing housing affordability and affordable housing along the entire housing continuum,” on 2022 June 7 (EC2022-0638). Council directed Administration to incorporate the Task Force’s actions into the Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy refresh on 2023 June 6 (C2023-0415).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council:

1. Approve *Home is Here: The City of Calgary’s Housing Strategy 2024-2030* and rescind *Foundations for Home – Calgary’s Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy (2016-2025)*;
2. Direct Administration to:
 - a. Immediately begin work on implementing the Housing Strategy’s actions that do not need further Council direction or budget approval.
 - b. Prepare recommendations that have a budget implication to be included as part of the 2023 November Adjustments to the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets.
 - c. Continue work progressing actions which, as indicated, require further public engagement, council deliberation and approval, and/or public hearing, and bring those forward to Council as work is ready for consideration;
3. Reconsider Council’s previous direction for quarterly reporting, and direct Administration to provide annual progress updates on the Housing Strategy through the Community Development Committee starting in Q2 2024; and
4. Refer the report back on the Housing and Affordability Task Force Notice of Motion (EC2022-0638) item 1B regarding the Housing Security Commission to the 2023 October 31 Community Development Committee.

CITY MANAGER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Calgary is in a housing crisis that is worsening daily. The Executive Leadership Team is confident that the proposed Housing Strategy presents bold solutions needed to address this crisis and fully endorses the recommendations put forward in this report. On Council’s approval, we are ready to provide the leadership required to implement the strategy and work together with Council to support Calgarians through this crisis.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Calgary is experiencing a housing crisis. With over 84,600 households unable to afford their housing, and with Calgary expecting to welcome another 110,000 new residents over the next five years, the scale of the challenge we face is significant.
- Calgary's business and competitive advantage is a combination of housing affordability, quality of life, and opportunity. If we lose our housing affordability, we lose our competitive position in attracting/retaining labour and capital and may see an outflux of individuals because they cannot afford to live in Calgary.
- This report and the proposed Housing Strategy represent a purposeful and comprehensive approach to increasing the supply of market and non-market housing and creating a diverse range of housing options in all communities to ensure all Calgarians can find a home that is affordable and meets their needs.
- The Housing Strategy delivers a variety of actions, including working with other orders of government, to address the complexity of housing and housing affordability. Some actions will be completed in the short term, and others will require further research, public participation, and subsequent Council decisions.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

Since *Foundations for Home – Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy* was approved by Council in 2016, The City has supported the development of over 3,500 affordable homes. While this represents progress, our efforts are being overwhelmed in the face of growing demand. Currently over 84,600 Calgary households are struggling to afford their housing. The city risks losing its business and competitive advantage as an affordable and desirable place to live. It is time to step up our efforts to tackle this crisis.

Council directed Administration to develop a refreshed Housing Strategy (Attachment 2) to meet current demand and respond to future needs. Because the housing continuum operates as a system and individual components cannot be addressed in isolation, the Housing Strategy delivers a variety of actions that will work together to address the complexity of housing and housing affordability.

Housing is ultimately about positive outcomes for people and is foundational to community and economic prosperity. The refreshed Housing Strategy positions The City to be more intentional in supporting individual and community wellbeing and improving the housing outcomes of Indigenous people and equity-deserving populations¹. This will be done by incentivizing the right type of supply to meet their respective needs and by reducing barriers to access housing.

The Housing Strategy's Outcomes

1. **Increase the supply of housing** by making more City-owned land available for affordable housing, using City funding tools to leverage partnerships with other orders of

¹ The term equity-deserving populations is used to describe groups of people who do not benefit equally due to needs and barriers related to intersecting identity factors, demographics, and geographic location.

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government, and amending planning policy to allow for more diverse housing types and options.

2. **Support affordable housing providers** by advancing City-led programs which have proven successful, conducting research, convening providers, and continuing to advocate to other orders of government to ensure adequate funding for housing.
3. **Enable The City's housing subsidiaries** by leveraging funding and land for development of City-owned assets and ensuring that subsidiaries can deliver on their strategic plans. We have strong organizations with far reach and impact in our community; we can support them to be leaders in addressing the housing crisis.
4. **Ensure diverse housing choice to meet the needs of equity-deserving populations** by developing and implementing programs that reduce barriers, and incentivizing housing to support those in need. It is crucial to target the specific needs of populations such as those with low income, Racialized people, immigrants, those with difficulties or long-term conditions and gender-diverse individuals.
5. **Address the affordable housing needs of Indigenous people living in Calgary** by implementing the actions within *The Ways Forward: Affordable Housing for Indigenous Calgarians Through a Holistic Plan*.

These outcomes were developed by reviewing key trends and inspiring practices, situational analysis, and setting clear objectives. Administration also engaged with other municipalities and interested parties in a variety of sectors.

The outcomes in the Housing Strategy and the recommended actions from the Task Force are harmonious to address the housing crisis. Both represent Administration's best professional advice to Council and a comprehensive suite of actions that The City can take to remove barriers to housing affordability challenges.

Actions to advance these outcomes align with:

- 33 actions from the Housing and Affordability Task Force Recommendations (C2023-0415). As Administration incorporated the Task Force actions into the Housing Strategy, it has refined and sequenced actions to align with corporate capacity and budget whilst maintaining the intent of the Task Force actions. Four of the Task Force's recommended actions have been amended, details are included within the Housing Strategy.
- Several within the proposed Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan (CD2023-0585). The Action Plan remains confidential.
- 25 actions from the Indigenous Affordable Housing Recommendations report (CD2023-0239).
- 13 actions that continue work from *Foundations for Home – The City of Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy* (PFC2016-0512).
- Six net new actions developed by Administration that address the evolving landscape of housing in Calgary within the Municipal government context.

Following approval of the Housing Strategy, decisions on funding and changes that require legislative steps such as Public Hearings or amendments to bylaws, will be brought to Committee and Council as per the regular legislated process.

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Council directed the Housing and Affordability Task Force Notice of Motion in 2022 June 7 (EC2022-0638) which included four key actions. Due to the efforts focussed on the Housing Strategy, the remaining direction, the Housing Security Commission, is being referred to the 2023 October 31 Community Development Committee meeting. The other directions have been addressed as per the following reports: Housing and Affordability Task Force Recommendations (C2023-0415), Leveraging City Land for Affordable Housing (CD2023-0205), and Strategies to Leverage National Housing Strategy Funding (CD2023-0224).

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 |

Targeted opportunities for public input and participation included:

1. On 2023 July 4, Council expressed the desire to understand citizen perspectives about the Task Force's recommendations. A Perspectives on Calgary Survey was completed over the summer. The results demonstrate widespread support for the Task Force's recommendations and actions. Results are available in Attachment 3.
2. Public and interested parties were informed of the opportunity to participate at the Community Development Committee where this report is being presented. Several tactics such as newsletters, targeted media and social media advertisements, and community bold signs were employed.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

People's diverse housing needs are not being met through our current housing supply. Sufficient, varied, and affordable housing that meets the needs of Calgarians will improve outcomes for everyone. Housing affordability disproportionately impacts equity-deserving populations and the Housing Strategy's actions intentionally respond to gaps identified by people with lived experience and community experts.

Environmental

The lack of affordable housing may cause people to seek more affordable housing away from the centre of our community, and outside our city's boundaries, increasing our collective environmental footprint caused by longer commutes. The Housing Strategy supports the development of a variety of low carbon climate-resilient housing options near transit routes and in established areas which enable active mobility and will contribute to reducing Calgary's greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic

Housing is essential for propelling economic growth and prosperity. Private and public sector investments in housing help create well-paying jobs for Calgarians. In addition, private and public sector investments support economic resilience when housing costs are affordable. Calgary has an undeniable economic advantage over other large Canadian municipalities and

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improving our housing affordability avoids eroding that competitive advantage in attracting and retaining a stable labour force.

Service and Financial Implications

Other: New Operating and Capital Funding

Refer to 2023 November Adjustments to the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets

Several actions may have current or future budget impacts. These have been identified under the *Corporate Implications* section within the Housing Strategy.

Operating and Capital Funding: All actions which cite a budget are included in the current budget adjustment process and will be brought forward for Council consideration in 2023 November. For actions which may require budgets that have not yet been determined, Administration will develop specific estimates and bring forward budget requests in future years as part of the service plans and budget processes. Actions that do not require further budget have been identified as such and can be implemented within existing service line budgets.

RISK

Inaction, or not moving at the speed of the issue, carries significant risks especially for the 84,600 households that cannot afford their housing. It will negatively impact economic and social factors. If Calgary does not have a sufficient supply of housing that is affordable, it will forfeit its business and economic advantage of attracting more people and businesses. It also faces the risk of increased homelessness, poverty, and reliance on emergency services.

Some of the Housing Strategy actions require fundamental changes to how we have zoned our city, and this change is concerning to some, who fear that it will reduce property values or neighbourhood quality. There is no evidence to demonstrate a negative impact on market value for single detached residential properties adjacent to properties which have been rezoned. Research, evidence and expert consensus is clear; abundant housing in a variety of locations, types and price-points is fundamental to housing affordability.

As the individual actions are addressed by Administration, risk assessments will be carried out where appropriate and necessary. The City's efforts to achieve the strategic outcomes could be impacted by shifts in federal and provincial funding priorities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Home is Here: The City of Calgary's Housing Strategy 2024-2030
3. 2023 Perspectives on Calgary Survey: Housing Affordability and Affordable Housing Report
4. Presentation
5. Public Submissions

Department Circulation

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|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| General Manager/Director | Department | Approve/Consult/Inform |
| Katie Black | Community Services | Approve |

**Community Services Report to
Community Development Committee
2023 September 14**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CD2023-0749
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