

Recommendations Regarding the Overall Direction of Plan It Calgary

Background

- Plan It Calgary is an 18-month project to develop a long-term plan for Calgary's land use and transportation networks.
- The Calgary Plan is guided by 11 sustainability principles that drew from imagineCALGARY, City policy and Smart Growth principles. The sustainability principles were adopted by Council in January 2007.

The proposed direction of Plan It Calgary will be considered by the Land Use, Planning and Transportation Committee on **April 16, 2008**.

Social Agencies' Recommendations

Social agencies were first engaged in this process on March 10, 2008. We presented the following concerns to Administration on this date, and would like to reinforce them at the Land Use and Transportation Committee hearing on April 16, 2008. We thank The City of Calgary for the opportunity to participate and urge the Committee to carefully consider our feedback at this stage of the process.

A Strong Commitment to Affordable, Accessible Housing and Special Care Facilities

The Calgary Plan must ensure that a range of special care facilities, and affordable and accessible housing options are proactively planned for and dispersed throughout Calgary communities and measured with appropriate indicators for diversity, affordability and accessibility.

1. Affordable Housing

- The issue of affordable housing becomes more pressing in Calgary every day. Despite Calgary's economic prosperity, more than 58,500 households need affordable housing. This number is expected to increase with Calgary's continuing population and housing costs boom.
- As a committed partner in the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, The City of Calgary must demonstrate leadership and ensure that municipal policies incite solutions that support this as affordable housing will continue to impact our quality of life and economic competitiveness.
- The City projects a growth of 1.3 million people in Calgary over the next 50 to 70 years. Immigrants will account for 100% of all labour force growth in the next 10 years, yet 37% of recent immigrants to Calgary are living in poverty. Clearly, affordable housing appropriate for non-traditional family composition will be critical to the successful integration of this group.

Recommendation

As part of the Plan It process, The City should develop an inclusionary zoning policy whereby a minimum of 10% of units or land is dedicated to affordable housing in Area Redevelopment and Area Structure Plans.

Plan It Proposed Principle 1: "Create a range of housing opportunities and choices" is amended to ensure that affordable and accessible housing options are proactively planned for and dispersed throughout Calgary communities and measured with appropriate indicators for diversity, affordability and accessibility.

2. Accessible Housing

- Census 2001 found that in 28% of all Calgary households there was at least one person with a long-term disability or activity limitation.
- Statistics Canada (2002) estimated that 12% of the population of Calgary would be between the ages of 60 and 79 years in the year 2007; a proportion that will almost double to 22% by 2026. Accessible housing needs will grow due to this ageing population.
- Over 90,000 households in Calgary reported the presence of a disability in 2001; one-fifth of these were in need of affordable housing. This need is expected to grow (City of Calgary 2004).

Recommendation

As part of the Plan It process, The City should develop a universal design policy whereby all commercial and residential structures in Calgary be built with universal design guidelines.

3. Special Care Facilities

- All Calgarians have the right to be welcomed in the city's communities. The facilities which serve our most vulnerable citizens should be regarded as an essential component of Calgary's diverse and inclusive communities, particularly as the population ages.
- The 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness calls for the development of 11,250 new units of affordable housing, including 1,200 new supportive housing units and treatment beds.
- A strong direction from Council is encouraged in high level policy, such as the Calgary Plan, to promote the inclusion of special care facilities and create proactive opportunities for their location in Calgary communities.

Recommendation

The City should develop an inclusionary zoning policy whereby a minimum of 10% of units or land is dedicated to affordable housing in Area Redevelopment and Area Structure Plans. Of these units, a proportion should be dedicated to special care facility use.

Plan It Proposed Principle 6: "Mixed-land uses" should ensure that special care facilities are proactively planned for and dispersed throughout Calgary communities with monitoring of corresponding diversity indicators.