

Mayor's Task Force releases report on social housing

An Advisory Group formed by Mayor Don Iveson has released a series of recommendations on how to address Edmontonians' need for social housing. Social housing refers to a wide range of rental and continuing co-operative housing units which are affordable to low-income tenants from a variety of demographic groups, including lone-parent families, persons with disabilities, urban Aboriginal peoples and seniors.



In 2014, Mayor Don Iveson formed the Social Housing Regeneration Advisory Group to discuss emerging housing issues, including low rental vacancies, lack of affordable housing units, and the upcoming expiry of the federal-provincial social housing funding agreements. Federal funding for social housing initiatives across the country is set to end in 2040, leaving questions about how provinces and municipalities will address the costs of providing affordable rental housing while addressing projects in need of maintenance, repairs and upgrades.

The Advisory Group was formed to continue the work done by the City's Roundtable on Housing in April 2014. Members were selected to represent a variety of perspectives on housing issues, including developers, social service providers and community organizations. They met from September 2014 to March 2015 and outlined their recommendations in a Summary Report.

"Safe and affordable housing is a key ingredient in the health, well-being and economic prosperity of any community," said Mayor Don Iveson. "Edmonton is not alone in facing social housing challenges. We can take some comfort in the fact that many of our citizens, including the members of the Social Housing Regeneration Advisory Group, recognize the seriousness of the housing crunch in our city, and their work shows how we're taking the lead in addressing this serious problem."

The report provides an important snapshot of Edmonton's social housing landscape along with key recommendations for social housing redevelopment and regeneration. It's intended to provide a framework to help the City of Edmonton, not-for-profit organizations and community groups better focus their efforts in addressing these challenges.

Today Mayor Iveson made a Notice of Motion, which is the first step in implementing the recommendations contained in the Summary Report. The Motion calls on City Administration to prioritize the Advisory Group's recommendations, provide insight on how these recommendations will be reflected in the City of Edmonton's Affordable Housing Strategy, and how the recommendations will be included in the City Charter process to articulate the City's interest in partnering with the provincial government to ensure safe and affordable housing is available in all communities in Edmonton. The report will come back to Executive Committee in Fall 2015.

For more information:

The Summary Report is available at edmonton.ca/socialhousing.

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