



# Rundle Affordable Housing

Report Back: What we Heard  
November 2019

## Project overview

The City of Calgary is undertaking a feasibility study to determine the best way to design and operate new affordable housing in Rundle to ensure long-term sustainability. This study is being conducted in partnership with the Province of Alberta and Calgary Housing Company (CHC). The Province provided grant funding to undertake feasibility evaluation and explore the redevelopment potential of the Rundle site.

## Engagement overview

From Wednesday, September 4 to Wednesday, October 9, 2019 insights were gathered from community stakeholders and the public at large to inform the design of new housing that meets the needs and aspirations of low-income earners within the community of Rundle. The process provided two distinct channels for input including an online survey and a pop-up community event at the Village Square Leisure Centre. In total 99 respondents shared nearly 300 ideas.

## What we asked

For consistency, the project team asked the same questions across all engagement methods, which were:

1. What opportunities do you see for this future housing initiative?
2. What concerns do you have about this future housing initiative?
3. What else should our team consider in the design of this housing initiative?

## What we heard

The following pages of this report highlight themes and unique insights heard from those we engaged with during the process. At a high level we heard that good design and maintenance, along with community amenities, are essential considerations in designing future homes at this site.

- For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.
- For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.

## Next steps

The existing Rundle buildings will be demolished in 2021. CHC is working to ensure tenants have the most options for the upcoming relocation in 2021. Redevelopment project funding has not been confirmed and project timelines cannot be confirmed until we receive funding confirmation. The feedback received in this process is now being used by the project team to inform the project feasibility study. Please visit [engage.calgary.ca/rundlehousing](http://engage.calgary.ca/rundlehousing) for updates.



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## Summary of Input – Key Themes

The table below describes prominent themes and ideas which surfaced from the community during the Rundle Affordable Housing engagement from September 4 through October 9, 2019.

<p><b>Urban Design</b></p>	<p>Many participants listed walkability, proximity to amenities as well as the what the development could look like as being crucial design elements to consider. Participants want residents and neighbours to have opportunities for connection with each other through neighbourhood amenities. They shared comments such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A space for BBQs, corn roasts. Currently missing a place to meet neighbours”</li> <li>• “Not such large complexes that look dark”</li> <li>• “Walkable neighbourhood”</li> <li>• “Close to a lot of amenities; people can go without car”</li> <li>• “Tie it into the community and create a possible retail hub within the development with small grocers, coffee shops, butcher, etc”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maintenance and management</b></p>	<p>There were mixed reviews on the previous maintenance of the homes at Rundle. How the buildings are operated and maintained in the future will be under scrutiny, but participants offered the following comments around what goes into a well kept development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “CHC has been responsive to neighbour issues”</li> <li>• “Like the current status of affordable housing – mixed income housing”</li> <li>• “Enforcement of tenant rules”</li> <li>• “Long term, it would be nice if the City/CHC could partner on maintenance”</li> <li>• “I used to live in Calgary housing &amp; I was so happy until my apartment was infested with mice and bed bugs for many years and then I had to leave”</li> <li>• “When people take pride in their community, they are more likely to take care of it”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Building and Unit Design</b></p>	<p>The size and function of the new development is important to people. Some shared past negative experiences, but most have a better vision for the future.</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Design the buildings to encourage the tenants to take care of the building”</li> <li>• “Ensure the building enhances the neighbourhood and adds beauty”</li> <li>• “Units not taller than 3 storeys”</li> <li>• “Not too high so that it blends in with the community”</li> <li>• “More than 1 (at least 2) entrance in/out site”</li> <li>• “It will be too focused on the nuclear family and the low income/disadvantaged will get pushed out of the project”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parks and Open Space</b></p>	<p>Many participants shared ideas about the on-site amenities they believe are crucial to a successful project. Community comments emphasized the need for access to green and open spaces for people of all ages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Green space is important for families”</li> <li>• “Playgrounds on the site”</li> <li>• “Central park for playing/amenity space”</li> <li>• “Play spaces at the centre of the site”</li> <li>• “Park/parkette in the centre of the space”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Perceptions</b></p>	<p>Respondents had differing understandings of the impact of affordable housing on communities. Some respondents were concerned about the potential for increased crime and disrepair, while others were more positive about the potential benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Density – brings more crime to area; Rundle has had numerous shootings in the 5 years”</li> <li>• “Changing the narrative of affordable housing to unlock funding”</li> <li>• “Lower income districts create inferior school populations and schools are not as effective in their education outcomes (e.g., Swanson does not have an active parent council)”</li> <li>• “Think of affordable housing as slums, but this doesn’t seem that bad”</li> <li>• “Move this low income housing to some of the more desirable places to live in Calgary. You’re going to make our area a slum”</li> <li>• “more people to get off street, the better”</li> <li>• “CHC could create good neighbour events (BBQs, picnics, etc)”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parking</b></p>	<p>It was requested by participants that the site offers enough parking. The key concern was that without ample parking, additional cars might congest the surrounding street parking.</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Parking for 145 + visitors”</li> <li>• “Enough on-site parking”</li> <li>• “Parking – too many cars for surface parking only; underground, on top”</li> <li>• “Sufficient parking to address the amount of new tenants”</li> <li>• “Crowded parking – spaces issues”</li> <li>• “May need underground parking with increased density”</li> <li>• “Probably need less parking because close to everything”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Building on Existing Strengths</b></p>	<p>Much of the overall feedback spoke to the existing assets within the community and Rundle Manor. Many spoke to the location having great walking access to amenities and transit. Some shared their satisfaction with the Manor’s intended role of hosting a mixed income development and believe it supports the vibrancy of the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Rundle has easy access to everything”</li> <li>• “Love the ball court”</li> <li>• “Walkable community exists”</li> <li>• “None [concerns]. Good site. Most conveniences and transit stations nearby”</li> <li>• “Like the current status of affordable housing – mixed income housing”</li> <li>• “Likes the existing structure, would want same”</li> <li>• “Close to a lot of amenities; people can go without car”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Safety</b></p>	<p>Safety was raised as it pertains to Rundle Manor residents and neighbours alike. Much of the emphasis however, was put on opportunities to improve the safety of the children who live and play on the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Always dark in the park behind”</li> <li>• “Inner courtyard for kids or place where they don’t go out into traffic”</li> <li>• “The chain link fence around the manor means kids go out into busy street to retrieve it from next door – NOT SAFE”</li> <li>• “Nice place for kids to play street hockey (off of street)”</li> <li>• “Pedestrian safety; have already had deaths at 26 Ave”</li> </ul>



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## Verbatim Comments

### What opportunities do you see for this project?

- it's really great idea, especially new immigrants will be benefit
- also please let the people know through the community
- good. Many opportunities for people in need, especially from the recent downtown in Alberta economy
- very good potential for expansion
- community space for families in the complex
- nice place for kids to play street hockey (off of street)
- playgrounds on the site
- get mixed diversity
- keep well maintained
- potential to increase value
- probably need less parking because to close to everything
- central park for playing/amenity space
- CHC could create good neighbour events (BBQs, picnics, etc)
- playground and green space for the kids
- a space for BBQs, corn roast. Currently missing a place to meet neighbours
- play spaces at the centre of the site
- easy access to the school to the east
- design the buildings to encourage the tenants to take care of the building
- families who are starting out
- long term, it would be nice if the City/CHC could partner on maintenance (talk to Heritage Villa)
- picnic tables and play grounds. Keep it nice
- landing place. This will help societies to integrate into communities easier
- like that it's mixed income!
- thoughtful design. Trees. Eyes on street
- make pass through for access to school
- consider traffic calming in the area
- need elevators for levels



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- park/parkette in the centre of the space
- increase green space in the neighbourhood
- include some nice design elements
- a place to play where little ones can play with their parents can watch
- will rent control come back to Calgary?
- may need underground parking with increased density
- family housing with school
- children safety (soccer)
- would like on site property manager
- make a community in the complex
- more people to get off street, the better
- make a pass entrance (instead of fence)
- likes the existing structure, would want same
- needs a good set of rules for development
- 5 stories at max. built form
- better signage for garbage
- changing the narrative of affordable housing to unlock funding
- a place to meet the neighbours
- space for kids to get to know each other
- it would be nice to have picnic area
- create neighbourhood programming for the complex
- like the current status of affordable housing – mixed income housing
- someone overseeing to control rental setting
- missing management – would like to see management
- more need for single bedrooms
- keep Rundle Manor name
- to be safer. Better fences (wooden)
- nice looking place to entice people to keep it looking nice
- brick on the façade is a welcomed material
- direction unit signage
- per [staff member name removed] gave me the info. I totally agreed to help those people



- like vetrans 36 St NE – build a community
- Its location is excellent; creating playground space, community rooms to be used on-site would be great; close to all amenities, great schools, hospital, sports, perhaps locate what used to be a Hull Patch Project on-site to aid with access.
- I hope to see more spaces for disabled and elderly occupants. And single disadvantaged people. Families are important but so are single people. It would be nice to see space for unconventional families as well.
- if economically feasible, include solar power and/or heat in the design (is LEEDS a posible target?); use sustainable, environmentally-friendly building materials and methods
- It will house more people but there will be no place for people to park their cars.
- Opens A Brand New Opportunity For Others Looking For Low Cost Housing In Calgary.
- Everything up to code
- Involve private investment/developers for mixed-use market + affordable housing mix.
- can make modern nice apartments
- mixed housing
- move this low income housing to some of the more desirable places to live in Calgary. You're going to make our area a slum.
- A modular off-site construction may aid in speeding up the process and seems to be an approach on other affordable housing projects in the City. The mixed use aspect is a good feature and may also offer opportunities for residents as live/work ops.
- Solar panel to lower the cost of electricity. Green house for planting vegetables or anything year round. And place that they can have animals like chickens for eggs or pigs.
- Tie it into the community and create a possible retail hub within the development with small grocers, coffee shops, butcher, etc.
- I see the biggest opportunity is to select a design that provides good quality living environment that is right sized but also provides quality, safe common areas for outdoor use. The model if successful could then be adopted at other locations.
- The city keeps building "affordable housing" instead of building housing. The fact that 40 year old homes are not worth fixing tell me they weren't build well to begin with. instead of focusing on the affordability focus on the quality.



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- mixed use, affordable housing, CRUs as part of development, medium density at least 3-6 storey comprehensive development with amenity spaces

## **What concerns do you have regarding the site?**

- Calgary NE
- none. Good site. Most conveniences and transit stations nearby
- I used to live in Calgary housing & I was so happy until my apartment was infested with mice and bed bugs for many years and then I had to leave
- Appearance is good
- Well managed
- Enforcement of tenant rules
- Crowded parking – space issues
- Congestion on 36 street. Only 3 crossovers 26 Ave, 36 Ave Rundle
- Pedestrian safety, have already had deaths at 26 Ave
- density – brings more crime to area, Rundle has had numerous shootings in the 5 years
- lower income districts create inferior school populations and schools are not as effective in their education outcomes (e.g., Swanson does not have an active parent council)
- higher car density creates a safety hazard. Fire trucks and ambulances are severely impeded now in an emergency during rush hour
- shortcut to get to school
- put parking along street no neighbours
- parking issues now
- 75 units is lots
- not enough play space for children (no gate to school)
- chain link fence removed so wooden fence broken
- housing's short life cycle is disappointing
- concerns about homeless moving in when units empty
- property value may decrease with high density
- wants reassurance that the City will help when needed
- keep it family-oriented as much as possible
- orient E-W to limit impact on neighbours to the north
- construction is a concern if all at once



- don't want it to look like Forest Lawn
- 36 St already has lots of density
- passive fence entrance to park
- no flags for curtain! Keeping it looking nice
- bad experience with Calgary housing with mice and bed bugs
- worried about deterioration in rental
- concern about turnover
- lack of stability with rental units
- concern about traffic
- concern about shutting down schools because community will not have people
- aesthetics if worn seem easier to break into
- 145 units may be too many – can we accommodate density?
- sufficient parking to address the amount of new tenants
- not 145 units = lots traffic
- parking – too many cars for surface parking only; underground, on top
- the chain link fence around the manor means kids go out into busy street to retrieve it from next door – NOT SAFE
- units need to be monitored
- building height no more than 4-5 storeys
- consider on site parking
- not too tall – 3 storeys is good
- None.
- It will be too focused on the nuclear family and the low income/disadvantaged will get pushed out of the project.
- Where will the current tenants go during the redevelopment? Will they have "dibs" to return when it is completed?
- What is the density of this new initiative compared to what currently exists on the site. Who is paying for the project? Will the residents be predominately people who are working or are they on social assistance?
- It will make current tenants homeless.
- Camera Security -Very Important That The Housing Project Has Video Surveillance At All Times...



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- More outlets next to the kitchen sink
- Single use purpose "affordable" housing will more likely create/sustain a stigma and accordingly contribute to what some Calgarians unfairly consider NE Calgary as the "ghetto" with only immigrants.
- garbage and people with addictions
- nothing
- We have lived in Rundle for over 25 years and it was a nice place to live. Now we have to endure the planes flying overhead and now more low income and high crime. Rundle is already one of the lowest cost housing Communities in Calgary.
- Hopes that it won't become another "projects" that stigmatize affordable housing. A pride in the place they live should be paramount and the importance of urban design remain at the forefront as an overall improvement of the community and city.
- There should be more trees around the project not parking.
- It lacks maintenance and begins to look run down similar to the condition it's in currently.
- When people take pride in their community they are more likely to take care of it.
- Will there be accessible suites in this building?
- I'm concerned with the tendency that too often these are one-of projects and that these initiatives are not part of every neighbourhoods development guidelines. Inclusion of affordable housing should be part of all development requirements.
- That these be more cheaply build, tear downs instead of home that are build to last.
- not enough affordable housing, want to see mix of affordable and market

## **What do we need to consider as this site develops?**

- Access to the LRT. Immigrants will be struggling..... there life without own car, mainly they depends the LRT
- Opinions of neighbouring housing owners (single homes)
- Offering more houses
- Flood of applicants. May be overwhelming in the future
- Currently I have seen no community spirit with the current multi housing development. This project will not improve it.
- concerns about opioids in community nearby green space



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- the signage/address could be more clear – mail, taxis, etc get lost
- always dark in the park behind
- inner courtyard for kids or place where they don't go out into traffic
- immigrants 100% will come to the NE
- best access to transit here
- new immigrants are mostly coming to NE
- want residents to take pride in where they live
- walkable community exists
- all levels of school (elementary to high)
- so close to so many schools
- a lot of widows and elderly in surrounding areas
- think of affordable housing as slums, but this doesn't seem that bad
- 20 minute walk to pool, hospital, groceries
- need to be close to everything; can't drive on her own, so needs to be a walkable development
- love the ball court
- cul-de-sac runs east and west, shouldn't run north or south because dense
- Rundle has easy access to everything
- will there be space for kids? For cars?
- bus and train already very walkable
- kids play street hockey around development
- support tenants in affordable ownership. Owen Hart example. Housing project, savings matching, 1 year program for down payment
- need longer term tenancy to integrate into community
- not a lot of garbage receptacles existing
- create something (built form) that goes with the neighbourhood
- nicer-looking developments encourage tenants to take care of it
- Rundle has a large immigrant population (30%)
- not such large complexes that look dark
- CHC has been responsive to neighbour issues
- more than 1 (at least 2) entrance in/out site
- green space is important for family



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- not too high so that it blends in with the community
- passive house construction; net zero; cost savings in utilities
- lower rent to responsible tenants to act as manager
- prevent housing from going into disrepair
- ensure the building enhances the neighbourhood and adds beauty
- units not taller than 3 storeys
- enough on-site parking
- parking for 145+ visitors
- respect the existing desire lines (walking paths)
- what do the residents behind the development think?
- like the existing
- units that are well maintained encourage people to take better care of the property
- more housing like this
- pretty walkable neighbourhood
- tiny homes on site
- more rental in this area than other areas
- the senior community surrounding is already established – don't need to integrate as much. More important for community to integrate with each other
- allow pets
- close to a lot of amenities; people can go without car
- walkable neighbourhood
- safety from discarded materials
- the maintenance of the fence on the south is an issue currently
- like that it will be mixed income housing
- enough green space
- Ensure children have things to do that are free, on-site playgrounds (inside and outside); community room, perhaps locate what used to be a Hull Patch Project on-site to aid with access., social-community building, access to transit and green spaces.
- Recognizing the need for economic development, the site (and interiors) should none-the-less be an attractive-looking part of the community.



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- Have no idea what your plans are for redevelopment. Need more information before you can suggest ideas for design transit. You guys should talk with Transit to ensure bus 48 and 34 will be there for years to come.
- Building Safe, Manageable Housing Units For All Individuals
- Modern look, no shortcuts using silicone to seal instead of glue
- Mixed use, private/public, market/affordable, combination of built types.
- a design to upgrade area more of it.
- Move it to some other community. Stop making the value of our houses go down.
- Phased approach if possible to impact a minimum number of residents then ability to incrementally move them in.
- There should be composting and recycling and trash management
- Tying it into the community with a potential commercial area for small local shops. Rundle and most NE communities are lacking hubs such as what Bridgeland, Maria Loop, Sunnyside, etc have.
- New homes and developments should be built like they are going to be filled with people who will create a community because a community will happen if you build with purpose.
- mixed use, close to transit, provide on-site amenities, high quality architecture, 1-3+ bedrooms, balconies, amenities spaces, outdoor space, playground space