



September 13, 2023

City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Attention: Community Development Committee

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

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of Calgary Housing Company (CHC), we are writing to recognize the work of the Housing and Affordability Task Force and The City of Calgary as they present the *Home is Here* strategy to the Community Development Committee on September 14, 2023. We commend The City of Calgary for taking leadership during the affordable housing crisis we are experiencing. This is a bold long-term strategy that represents a good starting point to support affordable housing solutions for Calgarians, and we are hopeful that other levels of government can build on this work.

The role of affordable housing providers in Calgary is an essential component of any solution to Calgary’s housing crisis. CHC serves over 27,000 Calgarians through housing portfolios owned by the Government of Alberta, The City of Calgary, and CHC. CHC has a unique perspective into the affordable housing crisis since we serve such a large segment of the housing continuum – providing housing options that include social housing, rent subsidy programs and a range of affordable housing rental options. Over 50% of our residents are from equity deserving populations and approximately 7% of our residents are Indigenous.

We are seeing a growing number of applications for social housing and demand for all types of rental programs coupled with a housing and rental market that is tightening and becoming unsustainably expensive for the average Calgarian. The housing system in Calgary already has limited options for low- and moderate-income households, and private sector opportunities are becoming less attainable every day. The gap between our affordable rental programs and the closest private market housing has become so large that households cannot afford to move out to private options – essentially freezing our ability to tackle increasing demand. The needs of those living in and applying for the homes we manage, and affordable housing elsewhere in Calgary, are urgent.

It is vital that we continue working together with all housing partners in Calgary to find affordable housing solutions. As the largest operator of affordable housing in Calgary, we are interested in learning more about the strategy to better understand its goals and inform our role, as a wholly owned subsidiary of The City of Calgary, in its implementation. CHC is particularly interested in the strategy’s actions that relate to the following three key areas:

1. **Maintaining existing affordable housing** – Through Outcome 3 in *Home is Here*, direct support for asset management, maintenance, and renewal of City-owned and CHC-owned housing is an essential investment to retain existing homes and ensure they continue to serve Calgarians into the future.
2. **Addressing immediate needs** – The Housing Land Fund offers an opportunity to address affordable housing needs in the short-term. To maximize the impact of this effort, the land acquisition fund should be increased to \$100M and expanded to include acquisitions of existing rental properties to quickly preserve and/or expand affordable housing more rapidly than new development could achieve.



- 3. Addressing long-term needs** – Efforts to increase Calgary’s affordable housing supply over future years will benefit from expanded support through capital grants, which can then be utilized to leverage other funding sources. This work will also benefit from streamlined processes and new supports which will see growth in affordable housing in the long-term.

We look forward to working with The City of Calgary to further explore opportunities to work as partners to meet the housing needs of Calgarians.

Sincerely,

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Will Bridge, Board Chair
Calgary Housing Company

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bo Jiang", is shown on a light grey rectangular background.

Bo Jiang, Acting President
Calgary Housing Company