

Building Housing Choices: Keheewin Surplus School Site
Oct 26, 2015 Meeting - Questions and Answers

- 1. Has consideration been given to moving the Building Housing Choices housing development to another location within the community, for example, next to the YMCA?**

Yes, there has been consideration of this issue, but only with regard to the shared school/park site where the surplus building site is located. The school building sites located close to the YMCA are on a different shared school/park site, have not been declared surplus by school boards and are being held for future school use.
- 2. How realistic is it that seniors' housing could be built in Keheewin considering eight other undeveloped building sites have already been allocated for seniors' housing.**

Seniors' housing could be considered for Keheewin if it is identified among the highest priority need in the community and is supported by residents. This will be further discussed and addressed through the Building Housing Choices public engagement process that follows the October 2015 meeting.
- 3. Eight other undeveloped building sites have been identified as seniors' housing sites. How was the decision made that these locations would get this type of housing?**

In 2010, City research indicated a significant increase in future demand for seniors' housing. Based on this growing need, City land suitable for seniors housing was identified by City staff and, in 2011, the City conducted a public Request For Expression of Interest (RFEI) process to help inform recommendations to Council. This review indicated a greater interest in seniors' housing than expected. In 2012, Administration engaged the public and sought Council approval to use eight undeveloped building sites for new seniors' housing. Council approved the recommended use of these sites.
- 4. What is the long term management plan for access to services for both Supported and Supportive Housing?**

If "Supported Housing" or "Supportive Housing" is the type of affordable housing considered appropriate for all or part of the undeveloped building site, the City will work with the sponsoring organization involved to ensure sufficient off-site or on-site supports are available to meet intended residents' needs. It is not possible to create a management plan without first determining what type of Supported and/or Supportive housing will be built, and which sponsor organization will be involved in the project.
- 5. Would the City consider moving affordable housing developments into new neighbourhoods where purchasers would be aware of the planned development, rather than trying to retrofit them into established neighbourhoods?**

There is currently no mechanism in place to require dedication of additional land to the City to develop affordable homes in new areas. This site is already owned and serviced for development. There is a significant need for housing, including affordable housing, throughout Edmonton. The City is developing this undeveloped building site to meet these housing needs.

6. How will affordable housing in my neighbourhood affect my property value?

The concern that property values will go down as a result of affordable housing development is a common concern shared by residents. Similar developments have been studied in Canada and the United States across a variety of cities in differing neighbourhoods. Twenty-five studies of affordable housing, including some supportive housing, concluded that there was no impact on property values; a 26th study was inconclusive. The Province of British Columbia published a guide that addressed the issue of property values. Seven case studies were undertaken and property values did not decrease in any of the communities; in fact property value increases were reported in some cases.

The key factors that impact property values are the quality and management of the development. These factors hold true regardless of whether the development includes affordable housing or is solely market-based.

7. Is it possible for more than one type of affordable housing type to be included within a development?

Yes. There could be a mix of affordable housing types as well as market housing types, and there could also be a mix of both rental and ownership housing.

8. The City plans to build a housing development to bring in families onto a site where a school was supposed to be. If more families will live in the community, won't a school be needed?

All local school boards were involved in the review of vacant school building sites that occurs every three years and no school board chose to retain this site for future needs. The current demand for new school building sites are highest in areas where new growth is occurring e.g., outside the Anthony Henday.

9. Homeowners in the neighbourhood pay for the municipal reserve. If the property is sold for development will the revenue come back to the community?

Municipal Reserve (MR) land requirements are legislated under the Municipal Government Act (provincial legislation). They are provided by developers as a condition of development prior to subdivision and sale of land to individual homeowners. Removal of MR designations requires Council approval. Residual funds from the sale of land with MR designation are used in accordance with Municipal Government Act legislation and Council policy, which direct the use of these sale proceeds.

10. Where have the figures for the proposed numbers of units (homes) in the development come from?

The number of homes that may be developed on the Keheewin site is determined by the building site size and the range of densities Council directed in the Policy C583. The site is 1.46 ha and the range of housing density extends from 40 to 125 homes/ha. Therefore, the estimated number of new homes may range between 58 and 182.

- 11. This undeveloped building site to be used for the Building Housing Choices development is highly visible when entering the Keheewin community. If rental homes are not maintained well, this will impact the look/feel of the Keheewin community. What assurance do we have that the development will be well maintained? Can the community hold the City responsible?**

All property owners are responsible for maintaining their property to meet City standards. For the Building Housing Choices Initiative, housing provider organizations will be required to meet City requirements for project development and property management standards, including direct experience in building and managing multi-unit housing, or partnering with other existing agencies having that experience. There are also existing mechanisms that can be considered as requirements e.g. the development of a “Good Neighbour Agreement” to be in place. Such agreements between the housing provider agency and community representatives help to facilitate positive conversations and address community concerns shared, and provide methods to receive and address any issues and concerns that may arise throughout the life of the project.

- 12. How did other communities decide what type of affordable housing was needed in their community?**

This pilot public engagement is the first time that community input is being sought to influence the type of housing and built form to inform Administration recommendations to Council. Existing affordable housing in other neighbourhoods did not engage the community with regard to the form and type of housing prior to Council public hearings.

- 13. Why is the City taking away the soccer field?**

The site for the Building Housing Choices development was identified as a school building site in the original Keheewin Neighbourhood Area Plan (1983). The sports field in this location was created as a temporary field until building site development occurred.

- 14. What is the plan for the additional traffic this housing development will bring into the community?**

The City of Edmonton’s Transportation branch will be conducting traffic impact studies for the Building Housing Choices development in Keheewin to understand traffic impacts and address concerns. The results of this study will be shared with the community at the second public meeting in 2016.

While the increase in Edmonton’s population results in an increase in vehicular traffic in all areas of the city, it is important to remember that Keheewin’s neighbourhood roads were designed and built to meet the traffic created by three school sites when the area was planned.

- 15. The City indicated that Keheewin is the first community where a surplus school site will be developed however there is a site in Bearspaw?**

While Keheewin is the first of two communities where a new public engagement process is being tested, but not the first community with a surplus school site that will be developed as housing. The site being developed in Bearspaw is part of the First Place Program; a market housing initiative helping recent graduates enter the housing market.

In 2009, an additional 20 school building sites were declared surplus. Three were retained for civic purposes, the Council has rezoned eight for seniors' housing, and the residential land use for the remaining nine is yet to be determined. The site in Keheewin is one of those remaining nine sites.

16. If you are postponing the land/mortgage rates, isn't that just building them up for foreclosure?

That City program that defers payment of land costs is the First Place Program which is different than the Building Housing Choices initiative. The deferred payment approach arose through input provided by local financial institutions that help create the First Place Program. There have been no defaults through this program since it was created.

17. The City's information states that \$65,000 per person per year is saved for every person that is housed. Please explain these figures.

In a report titled "The Cost of Homelessness: Analysis of Alternative Responses of Four Cities", prepared by Steve Pomeroy for the National Secretariat on Homelessness, four Canadian cities were observed to develop estimates of the relative costs of addressing homelessness across a range of responses.

A major finding in the report was that overall costs tend to be significantly higher for institutional responses than for community/residential-based options, even when a fairly high level of service is provided in the latter. The report went on to state that institutional uses often incur daily costs well in excess of \$200/day and, depending on facility and city, reaching as high as \$600/day. In comparison, affordable housing without supports (for singles or families) across the four cities averaged \$5,000 to \$8,000 per year.

The \$65,000/year cost saving is explained as being the difference between this report's lower-end of institutional costs at \$200/day (which translates to \$73,000/year) and the higher-end of its affordable housing costs at \$8,000/year.

18. The Keheewin School already exists in our neighbourhood. Why would another school be planned to be built directly beside it?

The Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan (NASP) approved for this neighbourhood supported three schools for this shared school/park site including a public elementary, public junior high and a Catholic elementary/junior high school. Only the public elementary school has been constructed. The Catholic school site was sold in the 1990s to a church group and the public junior high site was declared surplus in 2009. It is on this site that new housing will be built.

19. The proposed number of homes for the Keheewin Building Housing Choices development is 58 to 182. How many additional people would this translate into?

The number of homes that may be developed on the Keheewin site is determined by the building site size and the range of densities as directed by Council. The site is 1.46 ha and the range of housing density extends from 40-125 homes/ha. Therefore, the estimated number of new homes may range between 58 and 182. The estimated population will vary depending on the type of home that is constructed. (for example, townhomes or apartments).

The current estimate of new population ranges between 162 to 327 new residents, in addition to the 2,865 residents identified in the 2014 municipal census.

- 20. Keheewin has also been chosen as a community for the First Place program. Have other communities also been chosen as sites for both First Place and Building Housing Choices programs?**

Yes, Dunluce is an example of where both a First Place and Building Housing Choices development will be built. When shared school/park sites were planned for multiple schools in the past, some neighbourhoods may have more than one vacant surplus building site approved for both First Place and Building Housing Choices development.

New First Place Program housing is being constructed on the undeveloped building site (105 Street and 16 Avenue) in the Bearspaw neighbourhood south of Keheewin.

- 21. “Shortcutting” is a significant traffic issue in Keheewin. Will the City conduct a traffic study now, before time and effort has been put into this development?**

City of Edmonton’s Transportation Planning will be conducting traffic impact studies for the Building Housing Choices development in Keheewin to address the concern that current roadways do not have capacity for additional vehicles. This study will be shared with the community at the second public meeting to be held in 2016.

- 22. The proposed number of homes (58 to 182) is a wide range. What building types would be possible to meet this range.**

The building types that meet the density direction contained in the Council policy include medium-density residential, which may include row housing, stacked row housing, or low-rise apartments (proposed zoning options include RF5, RF6 or RA7). Alternative residential built forms will also be considered if they meet the specific project parameters and policy direction.

- 23. City information states that the original projected population of Keheewin was 5400. What demographic information and other assumptions were used to come up with this figure?**

The original Keheewin Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan (NASP) was approved in 1983 by the City and local school boards. At that time, population projections were based on the approved land uses contained in the plan, and on the family size and market conditions that existed at the time. To review the 1983 approved plan [click here](#).