

BUILDING HOUSING CHOICES: Ogilvie Ridge Phase 1 Community Conversation Questions and Answers

1. What will be the impact of the Building Housing Choices development on my property values? I live across the street.

The concern that property values will go down as a result of affordable housing development is a concern shared by some 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 these new homes. These factors hold true regardless of whether the development includes affordable housing or is solely market-based.

2. Residents of Ogilvie Ridge selected a committee to represent their interests on this project with the City. Why has a public engagement process been initiated, as this committee has already voiced the opinion of the community to the City on this project?

City Council has directed administration to improve its public engagement efforts in all neighbourhoods and ensure an opportunity for all residents to provide input. The previous efforts and insights provided by residents, including the Homeowners Association, are appreciated and will inform the discussion moving forward. The approval of a new [Surplus School Site policy](#) provides guidelines for residential development on 17 surplus school sites, and the project team is working to engage all community residents regarding the form of new homes before presenting recommendations to Council.

3. Will residents of the Building Housing Choices development be part of the Ogilvie Ridge Homeowners Association and pay the associated fees?

Yes, the City is committed to ensuring that residents of the development belong to the Homeowners Association and pay the applicable fees.

4. Can we anticipate a drop in property taxes once the Building Housing Choices development is constructed?

Property taxes are based on two major factors. The first is the City's total budget requirement, and the second is property values. In December of 2015, Council approved a 3.4% tax increase to address the City's budget requirements. If your home experiences a similar change in property value to the average home, you will see a similar municipal tax increase. For details on property taxes and how the city assesses



property value, visit the City of Edmonton's [property assessment and taxes website](#). More details on the City's budget process are available on its [website](#).

5. **According to City Policy C583 (Surplus School Sites), an alternate site can be used for the residential development. Is the City willing to consider the alternate site (southern part of green space on baseball diamond) as opposed to the approved site as the location for the Building Housing Choices development?**

The City has discussed this issue with the Homeowners Association and reviewed the site with regard to alternative building site locations. The Council policy directs Administration to build on the approved building site unless there are economic issues with the approved site or a clear community benefit to relocating. There are significant costs associated with developing on other parts of this site, and other locations are less suitable to attract new home investment. Therefore, the development will proceed on the approved building site.

6. **What studies have been conducted on the impact of building on this approved site?**

A traffic impact assessment, geotechnical assessment and drainage review have been conducted and results will be shared with residents at the second public meeting in Ogilvie Ridge.

7. **The title "Building Housing Choices" is misleading, as residents of Ogilvie Ridge don't get a choice.**

The title "Building Housing Choices" refers to creating additional and appropriate housing choices for all residents of Edmonton. Edmonton has a longstanding shortage of housing within financial reach of young people, families and seniors. Ensuring there are housing choices to meet the needs of everyone is a priority for the City of Edmonton. The Building Housing Choices initiative will determine the form of new homes that will be recommended to Council.

The public engagement opportunities for Ogilvie Ridge residents have been noted in material sent to each home and discussed at the November 16, 2015 open house. These opportunities to influence the new homes include providing input into:

1. the type of **household** that is currently underserved in Ogilvie Ridge, and
2. the type of **of affordable housing** that best fits in Ogilvie Ridge, and
3. the type of **housing form** that best fits in Ogilvie Ridge, and
4. any additional uses ancillary to residential that could fit and benefit existing residents.

8. **How does this development compare to the homeless shelter proposed in Terwillegar Towne in 2013?**

The Building Housing Choices development is not similar to the Terwillegar Towne project. The proposal in Terwillegar was not a City of Edmonton project, but was a joint undertaking involving both the Anglican Church (which owns the land) and Jasper Place Health & Wellness. The proposed development would have housed formerly homeless individuals who required a higher level of support services in situ. The project team is not proposing this form of housing for the building site in Ogilvie Ridge.

What is being proposed in Ogilvie Ridge is a mixed-market project with a minimum of 50 percent affordable homes. The type of affordable housing will be decided in conjunction with the community as a part of the public engagement process that is underway.



9. Services to support residents of affordable housing are located in the inner city, and not in Southwest Edmonton. Where are/will be the services to support these residents in need?

The type of affordable housing (e.g., supportive, supported or independent living) has not been decided yet. This decision will be made based on the outcome of the public engagement process in conjunction with other considerations such as technical feasibility, cost and marketability.

If it is decided that **independent living affordable housing** is needed, then there will be no supports required. If it is decided that **supportive housing** is needed, then the supports (for example, building security, mental health services) will be located in the housing that is developed. If it is decided that **supported housing** is needed, then the supports (for example, personal aides, housekeeping) will be mobile and will either come to the housing to provide their service, or new residents will travel to the services as needed.

10. The average price for a home in Ogilvie Ridge is approximately \$800,000. How can an affordable housing development exist in this area?

The City develops new neighbourhoods across Edmonton that contain a range of housing types to meet the diverse needs of citizens that exist in our city. This reflects current urban planning best practices, and has been adopted by the development industry and accepted by new homebuyers in these communities. The City is engaging residents through the Building Housing Choices initiative to help ensure that the residential development fits with the existing community while also meeting Council direction. Affordable housing can be achieved in Ogilvie Ridge by first taking advantage of land already serviced and owned by the City, secondly by including market rate homes within the development, and thirdly, by providing government subsidies to bring down the cost of the homes.

11. Has the City included the neighbourhood walkway when measuring the amount of parkland available to Ogilvie residents?

The neighbourhood walkways are not included in calculations of planned parkland owned by the City. Ogilvie Ridge is unique in that it contains private walkway lands owned and maintained by the Homeowners Association. This private open space is not reflected in the City parkland information shared with residents.

12. Affordable housing in this community will impact our crime rate. There are many examples of this in the inner city.

There is no correlation between the provision of affordable housing and increased crime. On the other hand, there is a correlation between substandard housing and crime, particularly when it is concentrated in areas such as the inner city. Well-designed, well-managed housing, both market and affordable, provides a safe environment to both residents and the surrounding community.

13. How will the City gather input from residents about what development they favour in Ogilvie Ridge?

A four-phase public involvement process has been designed to inform and engage the community in a discussion about the Building Housing Choices development in Ogilvie Ridge. During each phase, input will be gathered from residents to help refine the elements of the housing development concept until a final



concept is realized in Fall 2016. Visit the [project webpage](#) to find out more about Building Housing Choices in Ogilvie Ridge and to review past engagement materials.

14. Would it be more efficient to conduct a survey with community residents to learn what type of development they favour, rather than a year-long public engagement process?

Due to the many variables involved in this development, it would be challenging to provide enough information through a single tool, such as a survey, to allow for meaningful community engagement.

To engage with as many stakeholders as possible, and to accurately capture community input on this development, multiple engagement methods will be used, including public meetings, workshops, surveys and online input opportunities. During Phase 2 (Spring 2016) of this process, the City will share multiple scenarios with the community that will include built form and types of housing and density. These scenarios will be based on community input received during Phase 1, as well as research and analysis carried out by the project team.

15. Will existing community residents be given first right of refusal to purchase a home in the Building Housing Choices development in Ogilvie Ridge?

Administration is open to the idea, and will discuss the possibility with the development industry.