

Londonderry Social Housing Redevelopment Project

Phase 1 Open House Questions and Answers

Here are responses to the questions we received at the Open House held on Monday, January 25, 2016 at the Kilkenny Community Hall.

How large is the site and how many units are there currently?

The current Londonderry social housing complex sits on five acres of land. The complex consists of four buildings which contain a total of 80 units; 40 are two-bedroom units and 40 are three-bedroom units.

Who was managing them?

While the land and buildings are owned by the City of Edmonton, Capital Region Housing (CRH) has been managing the Londonderry Social Housing Site since 1995. Previously the site was managed by the Edmonton Housing Authority (which later became CRH). CRH contracts with and oversees the site managers who directly manage the buildings and grounds.

Why are the buildings at the site being taken down?

The buildings on the Londonderry social housing site have come to the end of their lifecycle. The buildings, along with the mechanical and electrical systems are no longer sound, and it is more cost effective to demolish the old buildings and redevelop the site into something that will more effectively serve Albertans for the future.

You say part of the problem with the old buildings was maintenance. How will the redevelopment be maintained? Will this mean problems again for this site in a few years?

Unfortunately, over the lifespan of the Londonderry social housing site buildings, while funding was provided for basic maintenance, there was insufficient operating and capital funds available to ensure the buildings' lifespans could be maximized. In the future, and under a new and improved model for managing and maintaining these sites, revenue will be generated and specifically set aside for planned maintenance and capital expenditures, thereby expanding the lifespan of the new development.

More about “maintenance”

There are a number of different types of “maintenance”. “Emergency” and “demand maintenance” refers to maintenance done on a request basis, such as dealing with leaking faucets or fixing a light fixture. “Planned maintenance” refers to the scheduled tasks designed to maintain the property and building components (such as furnaces or elevators) to ensure they are in proper working order. The costs associated with these types of maintenance are paid out of “operating funds”. In turn, “Capital funds” are used to pay for improvements or enhancements such as replacing roofs, siding, sidewalks or electrical systems.

How much has been decided already?

The decision has been made to proceed to demolish the existing buildings. Similarly, the decision to redevelop the site to support affordable housing has also been made. Beyond that, no further details about the site redevelopment have been finalized. We are committed to ensuring the planning and redevelopment process will be inclusive and transparent, and guided by the principles of financial, environmental and social sustainability.

What will the redevelopment look like?

The “look” of the redeveloped site has not yet been determined, but the “vision” for the site is to establish a “mixed market housing” development. This means the complex could include a combination of affordable housing units (approximately 60%), community housing units (approximately 20%) and market rent housing units (approximately 20%). The development could also incorporate programs and/or services which will support and benefit the community as a whole. Through the public consultation process, residents, families, neighbours, businesses, organizations, community partners will have several opportunities to contribute their comments, thoughts and ideas to what the redevelopment will physically “look” like, including the number and type of buildings (e.g. apartments, townhouses) that will be constructed.

This “mixed market housing” model will allow us to ensure that revenues generated can support the appropriate maintenance budget for the site. In these early stages, it is suggested that the site could contain between 150-240 units. We are committed to incorporating “green technology” LEED Silver standards into the eventual design and construction.

The plan for demolition seems clear. When does the construction start? Do you have the funding already?

The funding for demolition is already in place which is why we are able to move forward with this phase of the project. We hope to confirm funding for the redevelopment very soon. This could enable us to begin construction in 2017. However, until we have the funding for construction secured, we cannot confirm a start date.

Why redevelop this site?

Not everyone has the financial means to compete effectively in the housing market, nor is the marketplace necessarily able to meet distinct housing needs of some groups, such as persons with disabilities or those with low income. For those individuals or households whose needs cannot be met by the marketplace, governments, community and non-profit organizations and the private sector are working together to provide affordable housing solutions. This site has long been and will continue to be designated for social housing. Once redeveloped, this site and the people who call it home will be an integral part of the community, supporting and helping to keep viable the neighbourhood amenities (such as schools, recreational facilities, transit and shopping) that make Kilkenny a strong vibrant community.

What about other opportunities for social housing to be built in other parts of the City?

This is the first of several social housing sites throughout Edmonton that have been earmarked for regeneration. With 120 social housing sites across the City that are managed by Capital Region Housing there will be other opportunities to redevelop similar properties in the future.

How can our neighbourhood absorb the number of families that are envisioned?

CRH will work closely and collaboratively with the community, the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Public School Board, and others to ensure that the development that takes place on this site, and the resulting numbers of families returning to the neighbourhood is appropriate and manageable. This will include having consultations and discussions, and assessing the impact on those elements that contribute to neighbourhood quality of life including (but not limited to) traffic, parking, school capacity and recreational facilities, to ensure the redevelopment does not negatively impact the neighbourhood.

There are existing concerns about crime levels in the neighbourhood. Will the increase in population mean a greater police presence?

Unless there is a significant spike in crimes committed within a neighborhood there should be no reason for an increased police presence.

CRH is partnered with the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) in the [Crime Free Multi-Housing Program](#). CRH has made a commitment to ensure all of our properties comply with the strict standards of this program, which includes Crime Prevention, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Concepts (CPTED), Combating Crime Problems, Working with the Police Service and Dealing with Non-Compliance. This program helps ensure that our sites are a safe and welcome part of the communities in which they exist. The new Londonderry development will be a part of this program.

Additional measures, such as: CRH's Crime Free Lease Addendum, which cites actions that will be taken if a resident, or somebody under the resident's control, is involved in illegal or dangerous activity on the rental property; having private Security on contract to conduct random patrols during the evening and early daytime hours; and a Call Centre available during weekends and non-business hours, are also in place to ensure that tenants and the community can feel safe and secure.

What is the difference between affordable, community, social and market housing?

Different organizations may use these terms in slightly different ways. CRH differentiates types of housing and our associated housing programs by the "type of assistance" they offer. Here's how CRH defines and differentiates between these similar, yet different terms:

What is "affordable housing"?

Affordable housing is a program that assists people who need a lower rent by offering rentals at below market rent. Rents are fixed at a rate which is at least 10% below the market rents for a given area. To qualify, tenants' income cannot exceed the maximum limits established for this program.

What is “community housing”?

Community housing is a subsidized rental program that provides housing to families and individuals who have a low or modest income. Tenants pay rent based on a percentage of their income. Funding to support this program comes from federal, provincial and municipal governments.

What is “social housing”?

The term “social housing” is often used interchangeably with “community housing”. However, social housing is just another term for community housing and usually refers to rental housing that is supported in some way by the government.

What is “market housing”?

This refers to properties that are rented by people who pay rent at current market rates. There is no subsidy or assistance associated with type of housing.