

#KeepCalgaryStrong
A Calgary Coalition in Support of the Principle: Strong Cities Do Least Harm
www. keepcalgarystrong.ca

July 5, 2019

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City of Calgary Councillors,

#KeepCalgaryStrong is a growing coalition of organizations and Calgarians that support the principle set out by City Council: cuts in the operating budget should do the least harm to Calgary's most vulnerable and poor. We believe that if budget cuts are necessary, they should not compromise access to jobs, safety, education, health care and the social participation of those most dependent on City services.

We respect the financial challenges confronting City Council. We find the principle of "doing least harm" is most critical in guiding decisions and establishing priorities. Any cuts in supports and services for those who are already vulnerable will only increase stress and trauma. Demands on community resources and support networks will only go up, not down. Losing needed City services for the less fortunate will weaken, not strengthen, our community.

We request that at its July 22, 2019 meeting, City Council allow #KeepCalgaryStrong coalition to express our concerns regarding the impact of cuts on our most vulnerable fellow citizens.

Specifically, we are requesting that City Council:

- 1. Preserve services to the vulnerable and those on low incomes. (Concerning 122,000 Calgarians)**
- 2. Maintain current transit services and fare structure (Concerning 330,000 Calgarians)**
- 3. Keep moving forward with Calgary's mental health and addictions strategy. Specifically, this includes providing adequate funding for effective implementation. (Concerning 260,000 Calgarians)**

We understand that the City needs to find savings. As one example, we suggest pausing the expansion into 14 new suburbs and repurposing the business opportunity fund.

It is said that one can judge the vibrancy and strength of a community by how it supports its most vulnerable members; how effectively it brings them into greater participation with civic life. We support your stated commitment to build a strong and resilient city by doing least harm to our most vulnerable citizens. We believe these requests will help you keep our city strong and vibrant.

Thank you in advance for considering our request to speak to Council at its July 22, 2019 meeting. We welcome the opportunity to work together toward our shared goals.

Sincerely,

Beth Tzedec Congregation, Rabbi Shaul Osadchey rabbi@bethzedec.ca

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Calgary Climate Hub, Joe Vipond, jvipondmd@gmail.com

Calgary Inter Mennonite Church, Dale Taylor, daletaylor.home@gmail.com

Calgary Interfaith Council, Rabbi Shaul Osadchey rabbi@bethzedec.ca

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Christ Church (Anglican) Elbow Park, Rev. David Pickett, Rector@christchurchcalgary.org

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