Affordable housing tower to open $25-a-day daycare in SW Calgary [1]

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EXCERPTS

Parents living in a Manchester affordable housing tower will soon have the convenience of dropping their children off at a $25-a-day daycare within the building.

City council approved a land-use amendment Monday that will pave the way for Thornhill Child Care to open a facility at 5717 2nd Street S.W., marking the first daycare operating in a Calgary Housing Company building.

The Lumino building, where the daycare will be located, is an 88-unit affordable housing development with various rent levels managed by the city-owned company.

Ward 11 Coun. Brian Pincott, who's also the Calgary Housing Company board chairman, said he hopes to see more daycares open in city properties, especially more affordable housing buildings.

"I'm absolutely thrilled that we're doing this. I would love to see more daycares in Calgary Housing because ... these are people that need it," Pincott said in council chambers.

The Alberta government has already named the daycare as one of 22 Early Learning and Child Care Centres across the province that will offer $25-a-day child care.

Pincott said having affordable child care within the building will make a significant difference to Calgary Housing Company residents.

"It means the world. It opens up so many things," he said after council's vote.

"I've seen so many people who live in Calgary Housing get their kids on the bus, take an hour bus ride to drop the kids off at daycare, then they've got an hour, an hour and a half bus ride to get to where work is," he said.

"It's just a challenging, challenging environment and this is a quality of life thing for those residents that I don't think we can underestimate."

Teresa Goldstein, manager of affordable housing for the city, told council the new location would be the fifth for Thornhill Child Care Society.

"It is planning to be licensed for up to 84 children. Twenty-five of these families are Calgary Housing Company residents in the building," she said.

"This will allow these families to continue working, going to school and furthering themselves."

The approval comes after council voted in favour last year of a notice of motion from Pincott and Ward 9 Coun. Gian-Carlo Carra asking that child care spaces go in social housing and other civic infrastructure across the city.

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Region: Alberta [3]
Tags: child care [4]
affordability [5]
accessibility [6]

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