



**DE17-24**

Feb. 27, 2017

Regina City Council:

I am the Executive Director of the Heritage Community Association, and represent the Heritage Community Association's Board of Directors. I would like to present the following at the Feb. 27 City Council Meeting.

Thank you,  
Shayna Stock

This rezoning application, and the potential re-location of Carmichael Outreach, has raised a significant amount of conversation in our neighbourhood. The Community Association has been helping to facilitate dialogue between residents and Carmichael Outreach. We have had two meetings since December, and in my experience both Carmichael's representatives and the immediate neighbours of the proposed new location have been very open to communication and responsive to one another's needs.

### **General Community Feedback**

Most of the feedback we have received from community members has been in support of Carmichael's application. Many residents are excited about the possibility of the long-vacant building being renovated and made useful and vibrant again. They see this property as being a suitable new home for Carmichael.

We have also heard from a handful of residents, most of whom live in the immediate vicinity of the property in question, who are opposed to Carmichael moving to this location. Some of these people have lived on the block for over a decade, and have seen it change from mainly rental properties with absentee landlords (including houses with gang activity and drugs) to mainly owner-occupied homes. They value the work Carmichael does, but are worried that the move will be detrimental to their quality of life, their safety, and their futures.

We have investigated these community members' specific concerns.

**Property values:** Our research has turned up no evidence that Carmichael's move will necessarily result in lower property values in the immediate vicinity. Property values depend on many factors and are difficult to predict.

**Crime and safety:** The Regina Police Services report that Carmichael has relatively few calls for service. There is no evidence to suggest that the people who use Carmichael's services are dangerous to neighbours or passersby.

**Litter including needles:** The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region reports that the needle exchange program run out of Carmichael has a 99.97% return rate, meaning nearly all of the clean needles they hand out are returned to their facility and properly disposed of. Carmichael also holds regular Community Clean-Ups, during which their staff and volunteers pick up garbage, including needles, throughout the neighbourhood.

**Traffic:** Carmichael's lunch program feeds about 200 people every day. However, based on the location of other services accessed by their clients, most of the traffic to/from Carmichael will likely enter/exit from the West of the building. It is unlikely that there will be a large increase in traffic to the residential areas to the North, East and South of the building. Carmichael also predicts that having a larger space, and being able to serve meals indoors, will decrease the number of people congregating outside of the building.

### **Insight from the Core Neighbourhood Sustainability Action Plan**

This Plan recognizes that vacant and abandoned buildings are a major source of discontent in this neighbourhood and encourages the "adaptive re-use of buildings" in order to "preserve current infrastructure and the historical character of the neighbourhood."<sup>i</sup> The building in question has been mainly unoccupied for several years; its renovation and re-use will improve the vibrancy and safety of the property.

The Sustainability Action Plan also recognizes the need to "Expand current recreation facilities." Currently there is no facility of an appropriate size to accommodate large gatherings, performances, and other events. Carmichael intends to lend the main floor of the building to other community organizations for holding events, helping to fill this need.

The Core Neighbourhood Sustainability Action Plan also encourages us to "Improve access to existing food programs."<sup>ii</sup> The size of the building at 1510 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue will allow Carmichael's clients to access and consume their food indoors, sitting down, rather than in take-away containers through a window at the back of the building as they currently do. This greatly enhances the accessibility and dignity of Carmichael's existing food program.

### **Stance of the Heritage Community Association**

Taking into account neighbours' concerns, our research into those concerns, and neighbourhood plans and studies, the Heritage Community Association supports this application. With our support comes a commitment to helping to facilitate ongoing communication between Carmichael and residents.

If this application is approved, Carmichael would only be moving a short distance from their current location, but it is a significantly different location in terms of its immediate neighbours (from parking lots to residential properties). We encourage Carmichael to continue to pay very close attention to its impact on, and relationship with, its future neighbours. The Heritage Community Association hopes to support ongoing honest, open dialogue on the issues that have been raised by this application.

Carmichael is not responsible for the issues of crime, addictions, and poverty that already exist in our city and neighbourhood, and should not be blamed for bringing these issues with them. Rather, they and their neighbours should consider themselves partners in addressing these issues together.

Sincerely,

Heritage Community Association Board of Directors

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<sup>i</sup> under Strategy 3: Establish a long-term, sustainable housing strategy

<sup>ii</sup> Action 3 under Strategy 4: Enhance food security and provide access to quality food