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## Airdrie residents move to block housing project

By CBC News

*Plans for an affordable housing project in Airdrie, Alta., are running into opposition from the surrounding community.*

Plans for an affordable housing project in Airdrie, Alta., are running into opposition from the surrounding community.

Habitat for Humanity wants to build a townhouses and condominium complex on an empty lot next to Monklands Soccer Park. The one-hectare, city-owned lot has been empty for 19 years.

However, more than 600 people have signed an online petition to block the project.

Andrew MacLachan, president and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Calgary, said people often think the new homeowners will be unemployed or bring problems into the neighbourhood.

"The reality is that the Habitat for Humanity families that we represent are working families," he said.

"You have to have a job. You have to be able to demonstrate that you can hold a job to be able to apply and be selected for a Habitat for Humanity home."

Airdrie Mayor Linda Bruce said some people have raised concerns about losing green space if construction goes ahead.

"And this area is not a dedicated green space. It's not irrigated, it is not maintained. It is mostly used as overflow parking, so it's not a playing field, it's not the loss of a green space," Bruce said.

City council will decide on Monday whether to rezone the space for residential construction.

Airdrie is about 30 kilometres north of Calgary.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation



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## The following comments were posted in response to the CBC article above

GREAT NEWS! Unless you have been under a rock the last 20 years, the province desperately needs affordable housing. And the people opposing this should be ashamed of themselves. If these Canadians are good enough to serve you food, drive you places, clean up our roads, fix your car and paint your house.... then why aren't they good enough to be your neighbours?!

I live in a pretty affluent part of Calgary and I would welcome affordable housing next door to me, if it meant helping out. But those NIMBY's nope sorry, we don't want those jerks in our neighbourhood.

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Ryan Cameron and his supporters should be ashamed of themselves. They are people who have no real understanding of the words 'neighbor' and 'community'.

Ryan, I know it's scary imagining 'poor people' living next to you. But don't let your suburban paranoia get the best of you. 'Poor people' are almost exactly like you and your neighbors, they just don't make as much money as you. And I'd be willing to bet they're likely more compassionate than you and your ilk.

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I wish everyone well. And to my future new neighbours "welcome to the community". I hope to help out with some drywall taping and mudding on your new home. Now that the decision has been made. I hope we as a community can let this rest. Its time to put our working gloves on and welcome some new friends to the community.

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"Ryan Cameron, who organized the fight against the development, said he is disappointed in the decision. His community has been unfairly smeared by allegations of being anti-poor, he said.

"The NIMBY word came from their mouths, no one else's, and it stuck. Unfortunately the hard working, taxpaying citizens of this community are made out to look like the bad guys."

No actually, the words & actions of yourself and your like-minded ilk got you the label. Period.

Too bad, you lose. Move on. I'm sure there's a homeless person around you can go pick on.

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Once again human nature shows it's true colours. The same thing happened in Calgary last year up in Signal Hill. People need to realize that not everyone makes the 'big bucks'. The people who need affordable housing are usually the ones with multiple part-time jobs, no benefits and just can't afford the ever increasing cost of our materialistic society. These are your bank clerks, your janitors, your cleaning staff - the ones without whom your building would fall apart while you're in your cushy offices. With affordable housing this group of Canadians can contribute to society, afford a roof over their head (one that's a lot more reasonable than rent these days) and remove themselves from being a so-called burden to society by becoming independent. A hand up does not mean a hand out and it does also not mean that these individuals are criminals and are going to bring down the neighbourhood.

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So, the city finally gets sell a lot nobody else wanted (empty for 19 years) and start getting property tax income, and the good people of Airdire get more affordable houseing. Who looses here?

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Ryan Cameron, who organized the fight against the development, said he is disappointed in the decision. His community has been unfairly smeared by allegations of being anti-poor, he said.

"Habitat has launched an amazing campaign since Christmas to discredit us. The NIMBY word came from their mouths, no one else's, and it stuck. Unfortunately the hard working, taxpaying citizens of this community are made out to look like the bad guys."

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If it's not NIMBYism, Ryan, then what is it? If it stuck, it likely stuck for a reason.

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