

Calgary City Council votes to look at broader approach for allowing methadone clinics

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The new methadone clinic in Braeside will close its doors.

Photograph by: Christina Ryan, Calgary Herald

CALGARY – City Council voted Monday to look at whether city zoning bylaws need to be changed to allow methadone clinics in industrial areas along with other changes designed to create a more community-wide approach to finding sites for such facilities.

The Council's decision comes as one such clinic, Second Chance Recovery, searches for a new location after neighbourhood concerns forced it from an industrial area in Highland Park. The clinic is temporarily operating in a Braeside strip mall but faces determined community opposition to remaining there.

After an angry public meeting in Braeside earlier this month, Second Chance said it would leave the city, but reconsidered after what it called an outpouring of support.

One of the measure's sponsors, Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart called it a band-aid step towards finding a more comprehensive approach to finding locations for drug treatment facilities in Calgary.

“ It's only a partial answer we ne need to do more than this. It somewhat reminds me of the stigma attached to homelessness six years ago”, Colley-Urquhart said.

Second Chance has about 500 clients using its Calgary clinic, and also has three locations in

Edmonton, as well as one each in Red Deer, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge.

The only other methadone clinic in Calgary is operated by Alberta Health Services at the Sheldon Chumir Centre.

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