

[Autos](#) [Careers](#) [Classifieds](#) [Homes](#)[SSEBMTCAU](#)

## Methadone clinic report divides council

By RENATO GANDIA, CALGARY SUN

Last Updated: February 18 2010, 12:58am

Aldermen's opinions are split on a report that studied changing city zoning bylaws following the eviction of a controversial methadone clinic from an industrial area last year.

Administration told the Land Use, Planning and Transportation Committee it's not necessary to change zoning bylaws and advised the city to treat methadone clinics the same as hospitals and medical facilities.

Ald. Brian Pincott, who endorsed the report, asked for the review six months ago when residents of Braeside took their fight to the city over Second Chance Recovery, a methadone clinic operating in the neighbourhood.

The report says, from a land use point of view, the city followed the right procedures.

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart wasn't satisfied with the report, saying the issue is not just about land use and that there are no assurances what happened in Braeside won't be repeated.

"To me Alberta Health Services really dropped the ball when it comes to treating people with addiction in the community," said Colley-Urquhart.

"It's unacceptable to have 300 people on a waiting list to get methadone or any other form of treatment," she said.

The Alberta Medical Association (AMA) needs to bring in more stringent guidelines on how private operators function, said Colley-Urquhart.

Pincott said the report calls for more openness on the side of private methadone clinic operators and the engagement of the Alberta Health Services and AMA.

"I think what we heard is that engagement, being upfront about this, recognizing that these are facilities of concern for the communities, but they are facilities that communities need," said Pincott.

He said knowing that health officials are "on board with greater public engagement" and increasing community involvement in locating treatment centres give him the assurance what happened in Braeside won't re-occur.

The report also talks about a good neighbour agreement between the operators and the community which is being tested in two Calgary locations.

Copyright © 2010 Calgary Sun All Rights Reserved