

Mayor Don Iveson calls Edmonton's housing situation a national problem



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Metro



A looming housing crunch would impact not only people looking for a roof over their head, but the foundations of the Canadian economy Mayor Don Iveson argued Monday.

Iveson hosted a roundtable, drawing community groups, construction companies and rental companies to city hall to talk about the pressure for housing locally.

Iveson said the federal government has to do more to help and argued it's in their best interests to do so.

"If we have insufficient housing to accommodate people in Alberta and in Edmonton in particular, that is going to impair national economic growth," he said. "The country is relying on the Alberta economy and the northern Alberta and Edmonton economies to sustain the rest of the country."

Curtis Way, president of the RMS group of companies who build rental accommodation, said both land and construction prices are on the rise.

"With the cost of rental projects increasing, rents are going to continue to go up," he said.

Way said the city continues to attract a lot of job seekers and those people need rental accommodation, even if only on the short-term.

"The reality is that most people are coming to Alberta are looking for employment, they are looking for jobs, so they are not generally wealthy people."

Job growth

- According to the City of Edmonton, 20 per cent of the jobs added in Canada last year were created in Edmonton

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