

CONVERSATION CALGARY II

Dear Conversation Calgary Participant:

Thank you for registering to attend the Conversation Calgary event at the Thorncliffe-Greenview Community Association Hall on October 31st. I'm very excited about the day and look forward to personally working with you. Come prepared to have a fun and enjoyable experience!

Please arrive for registration at 8:30 a.m. We intend to start at 9:00 a.m. SHARP!

This event is the second in a series of unique working sessions. Once again, we will be testing new and leading edge tools to try and achieve more satisfying and effective citizen engagement. Those who attended the earlier conversation in May overwhelmingly agreed that these new tools can be very empowering and creative.

On Saturday, we will explore Calgary's future through 6 theme areas that emerged from our conversation in May. As we get under way, you will be asked to choose which of those theme areas most interest you. They are:

- Citizenship
- Culture and Community
- Enabling economy
- Environment
- Social Justice
- Urban mobility and design

To get our conversations started on October 31, a number of Calgary leaders have shared their thoughts and knowledge about Calgary's choices and possibilities. The questions they have tackled certainly are provocative. Their answers may surprise, inspire, or agitate. You may approve of their conclusions or you may not. Whatever your response, these "conversation starters" are intended to help you clarify what is important to *you* when *you* think about the future of our community.

You will find these "conversation starters" as you continue reading further. Please review them as you have time in the next few days. Please don't consider this "homework". These contributions are resources for you to use as you consider what are the key challenges and solutions now facing Calgary.

And thank you again for being willing to come to share your answers with others on October 31. I look forward to seeing you on Saturday!

Thank you for your participation and I hope you enjoy this unique experience.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Hawkesworth". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

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CITIZENSHIP

What If Calgary Had Effective Citizenship and Participation?

There is no question that the local communities in which we live, work and recreate will become increasingly important despite, or perhaps because, of our broader engagement in the global community. As we step out onto the world stage, we want the security of strong local communities where we can meet with friends, catch a play and walk the dog. At issue, therefore, is how can citizenship be enriched within our local communities, or in this case within Calgary? Here are some thoughts:

- Local citizenship will compete for time and attention with the engagement of citizens in their province, country and global community; we cannot and should not expect a massive swing away from these other sites of citizen engagement.
- Participation rates in municipal elections provide a poor indicator of the richness of local citizenship, although exceptionally low rates are certainly a warning signal. Engagement *between* elections is the key.
- People become politically engaged for very different reasons. In some cases, and perhaps in many, it is anger and frustration that drives people to vote and meet. Our task has to be to encourage *positive* reasons for citizenship engagement in the local community, reasons that go beyond the protection of self-interest (which is nonetheless a legitimate reason for participation). High rates of participation driven by rage should not be our goal.
- Residents should not be blamed for not becoming engaged. Our starting point must be to recognize that people have very busy and complicated lives. At issue, then, is whether we can develop a compelling case for participation that can compete effectively with the demands of work, family and recreation. The challenge is *ours*.
- A prerequisite for community engagement of any sort is *trust*. If citizens do not see their community government as open and transparent, they will only participate to “throw the bastards out” (see above!).
- Another prerequisite for engagement is connectivity. Here the challenge is to harness an increasingly vast range of tools while recognizing that tools can differ quite dramatically; Facebook is not a town hall meeting by another name.

- Large-scale citizen engagement exercises such as Plan It are important for extraordinary debates and conversations, but they cannot be the norm. Ongoing citizen engagement must be cast at a smaller scale if it is to be financially sustainable; it must be driven by Aldermen and community associations.
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- For many people, Calgary does not start and end with formal municipal boundaries. (In my mind, for instance, Calgary certainly stretches to Banff, and at times to the Edmonton Fringe.) We have to be careful, therefore, not to bottle up people’s creativity within narrow formal containers.

In the final analysis, we want Calgarians to associate their city with a rich and sustainable quality of life. For most people, however, that quality of life will be found through their work, family and friends; it will come through a summer drink on the patio more than through a community meeting. The key, therefore, is to avoid beating people up for not being more active citizens, but rather to provide effective channels and forums of participation that will be there when needed.

In a sense, we are back to the Kinsella novel *Shoeless Joe*, and the belief that “if you build it (in his case a baseball stadium), they will come.” Our task is to build participatory vehicles, embed them within open and transparent city government, and then gently encourage our very busy colleagues and friends to come. I recognize that this is not a ringing manifesto or call to arms, but it recognizes that local citizenship will never be, and should never be, more than a small part of this incredibly rich, complex and diverse world in which we live. Our challenge is to get our small part right.

Roger Gibbins is President and CEO of the Canada West Foundation, a public policy research group based in Calgary.

CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

What if art was considered an essential service?

This is a difficult scenario to envision because the designation “essential service” is all about safety, protection, and avoiding risk, while artists are all about creativity and exploring something new. Yet, aren’t exploration and innovation the very qualities that have both protected and prospered society through-out the ages?

Children's quaint comments, dancing feet and fanciful drawings are often praised. We value their joy, spontaneity and new ways of looking at the world. However, we do not nurture these abilities in any systematic way because art education is a "frill". Even though innumerable studies have shown that IQ is enhanced and social skills developed by early participation in artistic activities, our society still balks at funding art-based curricula. Why? Because art is not considered an essential service. The contribution the arts make to childhood development is not prized.

The latest high tech device is sure to cause long queues of eager buyers. We desire the instant entertainment and communication these products bring us. Even if the technology is extremely complex and well beyond the grasp of most, we marvel at the innovative spirit that created it. Yet, we do not specifically hire employees for their artistic skills or use design problem-solving in the workplace. Why? Because art is not considered an essential service. The contribution the arts make to economic and product development is not valued.

Despite our ethnically and demographically diverse community, we strive to be inclusive, understanding and respectful. We all long to belong, and to feel attached to a particular place. Social empathy is critical to healthy urban living. Memorable public spaces and icons foster shared community experience. Development of positive self and group esteem is a cornerstone of civil society. All these qualities are inherent in artistic activity. Yet artists are not usually viewed as community builders or leaders. Why? Because artists are not deemed essential. Their contribution to individual well-being and encouragement of strong community bonds is not recognized.

So, what would our city look like if art were considered an essential service? Clearly, there would be more artists or, at least, more full-time artists. Their voice would appear regularly on the editorial pages and their work prominently displayed on The City's website. Every Alderman would have an artist as an Administrative Assistant - even if the Alderman were also an artist. Town hall gatherings would start with citizens enacting various scenarios, much like improvisation theatre. Aldermen would be encouraged to participate so they could feel their constituents concerns in a more visceral way. The aesthetics of building and urban design would become an additional principle of "Smart Growth" and be debated as passionately as density or parking considerations.

Public transit would be full of photos and paintings and music. Tickets to ride would be highly desirable since riders could be up front and personal with local celebrities. LRT cars would have themes created by school students instead of commercial advertising. Taxi cabs would be embellished with photos from local neighbourhoods, so that riders could be educated about their city. Our marvellous pathway system would have regular alcoves of stunning and educational public art. The march of dinosaur sculptures might extend down the river valley from the zoo and into community parks.

Every community centre would be a hub of recreation and studios and libraries. Strip malls would also have that same multi-layered artistic flavour. Homeless shelters, if still needed, would offer movement classes, and community choirs. Once a year, a professional artist along with an art student would be assigned to help a neighbourhood create an artwork that would express something unique about their community. Judging would be on-line, and images of the winning creations would be projected during the Stampede on the walls of the Young Canadians' new

studio. Community songs would be heard at the touch of a button along the East Village music street.

Emergency waiting rooms would be distinguished by soft music and soft light with textures that create private spaces. Any place where waiting is frequent would have lots of color and questions to consider and paper to encourage each person to add a line to the daily story. Banks and grocery stores and doctor's offices would become something of interactive museums.

Office cubicles would be a thing of the past because offices also would be passé. Gathering places with wireless internet would become the norm. Engineers would be known as technical artists, applauded for every new system they test. They would see themselves as true innovators and celebrate their achievements based on originality as well as profitability. White hat ceremonies could be extended to include hats of care and concern for co-workers, worn with pride in the public workplace.

All residents, when asked to name something great about Calgary, would answer, "The art". They would be able to identify concerts and exhibitions and festivals they had attended. (Of course, the tax credit for so doing would facilitate participation). They could also describe something creative they had done, even if it was only coloring the survey as they expressed their opinions. The picture of Calgary in their minds would include a beautiful building or sculpture as well as a mountain and a saddle. There would be no envy of Montreal or New York or Paris. Calgarians would not only see but also be constantly creating the big picture. Everyone would have an important role to play. Art educators, professional designers, writers and actors would be given as much importance as fire fighters, police officers, and paramedics. Why? Because art, and those who create it, would finally be considered essential.

Mary Rozsa De Coquet is the Chair and President of the Rozsa Foundation, a philanthropic family foundation founded in 1990 which is known for its effective arts support and advocacy. City Council appointed her Founding Chair of the Calgary Arts Development Authority.

ENABLING ECONOMY

What if Calgary Made Local Communities the Focus of Economic Development?

What if Calgary made local community the engine for economic growth and diversification and the achievement of sustainability goals?

Banking is sometimes described as the business of taking underemployed assets and turning them to more productive financial uses. What if the City of Calgary were to take a portion of its surplus land and, applying basic banking principles, turned that land – in partnership with entrepreneurs and communities – to more productive financial uses? It might help Calgary realize some of its long-term, strategic objectives.

The City of Calgary owns about 2,000 acres of land. At \$1,000,000 per acre, the value of this land is about \$2 billion. If 10% of this land value were set aside in a Special Purpose Entity (“SPE”) and used as collateral to secure drawings of, say, 30% of that value under a structured lending facility, the City of Calgary could create a new capital investment pool of \$60 million.

How, and under what terms, might the City of Calgary invest these funds?

Calgary is an entrepreneurial centre. Many business ideas are emerging here that could benefit our long-term vision for this city. But some of these ideas have difficulty accessing capital because they do not offer short- to intermediate-term “invest and flip” opportunities. Other ideas are too Calgary-centric and do not offer wider geographic market potential.

The SPE described above could act to fill this gap in the market. It could stimulate private sector business activity that aligns with strategic Calgary objectives and facilitate direct municipal participation in the financial fruits of its private sector involvement.

The governing board of the SPE would be made up of knowledgeable and informed leaders from the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors. The board would be ultimately responsible for the due diligence, screening and evaluating of prospective business plans based on economic viability and an alignment with the long-term vision and strategic interests of our city. The SPE would be one of the vehicles the City would have to help implement strategic plans such as ImagineCalgary and Plan It.

The business screening and evaluation process would be transparent and open to the public for comment at all stages. The process might even incorporate a “*Dragon’s Den*” format at the initial screening stage.

A small management team employed by the SPE could provide active monitoring, mentoring, and – where required – intervention into the activities of the funded businesses. An additional role of the SPE team would be to seek out and actively facilitate community involvement in the funded businesses. In addition, the initial allocation of funds might be made dependent upon the demonstration of local community benefit and community association support for the proposed enterprise.

Local stakeholders such as social enterprises or local community associations could be given an opportunity to earn equity in the SPE funded businesses as well. The City of Calgary would hold the balance of the equity.

Cash invested by the SPE would enter a business as subordinated debt that accrues interest and matures in three to five years. The debt would be secured by a charge over the shares of the funded business and carry with it restrictive covenants. At maturity, the business would have to repay or re-finance the debt. Board control would reside with the City of Calgary until all debt due the SPE has been repaid in full.

How might \$60 million be invested in local community, social enterprises, and business opportunities in Calgary?

Here are a few ideas:

- Development of surplus school sites on a mixed-use model that includes affordable housing;
- Neighbourhood economic development programs that enhance the marketable skill sets and income earning potential of workers in our lowest income neighbourhoods;
- Social venture enterprises that employ people within their community of residence and recycle income and capital within the local community;
- LRT station and transportation corridor redevelopment projects;
- Investment in co-housing as a mechanism to facilitate community revitalization.

There are numerous examples of social enterprises in Calgary - including non-profit community housing corporations that are actively providing social and economic benefits for the neighbourhoods where they operate. Many other cities have found ways to align a "green jobs" strategy with local economic development initiatives in the private and non-profit sectors. These models of locally based economic development could help communities exercise greater control over their future in partnership with business and the City of Calgary. This could be another tool for Calgary to use in maintaining its quality of community and neighbourhood life into the future.

James Schwinn is the founder and President of Aixecar Incorporated and a former director and head of the global conduit finance business for ING/Barings. He is a former member of the advisory board of *The Journal of Risk Finance*. He received a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.B.A. from The University of Chicago.

What if Calgary Committed to be the *Sustainable* Energy Capital of North America?

For more than half a century, Calgary's wealth and well-being have been fuelled by innovative engineering, intensive capital investment and the energetic exploitation of petroleum and coal resources. We've enjoyed an enviably high standard of living and earned a pre-eminent

national position as Canada's energy capital. But now, as the 21st century gets under way, our greatest strengths could become our biggest weakness. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with carbon-based fuels may well eclipse the very core of our economy. Responsible nations around the world are demanding that we learn to produce and consume energy in ways that sustain rather than sabotage the planet. Are we up to the challenge?

I say we are. All we have to do is harness the same innovative zest and pioneer spirit that served us so well for the past 50 years and more.

Already Calgary has forged new ways of doing business:

- ✓ ENMAX led the way with wind power. *Ride the Wind* became one of the most successful ventures in sustainable transportation this country has ever seen. By 2012, our City Hall will have reduced its GHGs by 50% below 1990 levels – one of the best municipal records anywhere in Canada. We have a district heating plant under construction downtown. When fully complete, it will capture waste heat given off from natural gas fired electricity generation and distribute it via pipes carrying hot water to neighbouring buildings – thus effectively doubling energy efficiencies.
- ✓ Our university has proliferated R&D programs dedicated to creating the building blocks for sustainable energy and environmental systems.
- ✓ Individual Calgarians have also introduced new ways of going about their daily lives. [REAP](#) (Respect for the Earth and all its People) is a cooperative based in Hillhurst that facilitates car-sharing. The association is dedicated to creating a vibrant living economy where citizens understand and value the impact of shopping locally.
- ✓ In addition, many architects have promoted green building practices – [Infinity](#) is just one such example. The condos are equipped with micro-turbines approved by ENMAX, so surplus electricity can be sold back to the grid. Garbage chutes are designed for multiple waste streams, giving owners a chance to recycle materials with ease. Rainwater is captured to irrigate the rooftop garden, which also serves to conserve energy.

All these initiatives demonstrate that Calgary and its citizens are well able to meet the challenge.

Still, how much more could we do if we really put our minds to it? Although Calgarians can be proud of our forays into new energy solutions so far, can you imagine what would happen if we all pitched in? If we re-branded our city as the *sustainable* energy capital of not only Canada, but North America as well? What if we turned Calgary into a living laboratory of how to produce and consume energy in the most eco-friendly manner anywhere in the world?

It can be done. Of course, the whole community would need to get involved. New policies and practices would need to be adopted ... happily, the world is full of good examples. Here are just a few to get you started thinking on the sort of things we can do:

- mobile energy audit [units](#) to provide homeowners with consumption data
- [smart meters](#) to give instant feedback on electricity consumption
- solar arrays on all new [homes](#)
- sustainable [community](#) zoning approvals
- electric car plug-in [projects](#)

What else would you suggest?

President Barack Obama recently said "The nation that wins [the global competition for developing new energy resources] will be the nation that leads the global economy." It's all about creating an economy that enables the transition to a new sustainable energy future. Calgary, with its expertise in energy matters, can be a strong contender for that title. The time to start is now.

Senator Elaine McCoy is President of the McLeod Institute in Calgary. She is a founding Director of Climate Change Central, and a former Cabinet Minister in the Alberta Government.

ENVIRONMENT

What if Calgary Understood its Quality of Life Depended on Nature?

The river is fed by the sky. It runs over a bed of shattered mountains, through the dreams of a great forest and into the mouths of ancient fishes. It starts in clouds as gray and heavy as the sea and ends in a windswept estuary haunted by ghosts. It is a place where white swans dance on dark mud flats and salmon lay fragile eggs in nests of stone.

Mark Hume, *River of the Angry Moon*

Mark Hume's poetic meditation on the Bella Coola River in British Columbia could just as easily be an ode to Calgary's own Bow River – or could it? Do we have the awareness, and the sense of

connection, to celebrate the spiritual-symbolic value of this river – and by extension, nature generally – in our city? When we talk about nature or the “environment” in Calgary we focus on instrumental issues such as water consumption, waste generation, and air quality. In this regard we are much like other North American cities, and we hold our heads high because our performance is generally quite good. For example, per capita water consumption decreased by 42% between 1985 and 2005; and waste disposal decreased modestly between 1995 and 2005 – and decreased sharply in the past year with the introduction of a curb side recycling program. But what might the future hold? Do we fully appreciate that any financial or social wealth and well being we create here is ultimately due to nature? When nearly two-thirds of Calgarians say their quality of life has declined over the past five years, do we see the signs of this disaffection – traffic, cost of living and so on – as symptoms of our disconnection with nature?

We live in an era of unprecedented technological innovation. Not coincidentally, we also live at a greater remove from nature than at any time in our history – more than half the world’s population lives in cities, human-created habitats. In Alberta, nearly a third of the provincial population lives in Calgary. Human ingenuity has flowered in such magnificence that one can almost be forgiven for asking, “Do we need nature?”. The paradox of our ways of living is that our progress has begun to imperil the “natural capital” on which we depend. Think of it this way, throughout human history, the ecosystem (natural capital) has remained fixed in size while the economy (human and human-made capital) has grown. We now find ourselves bumping (or crashing) into the ceiling of these very real ecosystem limits. Don’t get me wrong; the economy can, and should, continue to develop. But our conceptions of wealth have to change from measurements defined by GDP to measures that account for *the regenerative and assimilative capacities of the ecosystem*.

And so to Calgary. Our city today has abundant natural assets – parks, the Bow and Elbow Rivers, and of course, a perch just one-hour from the Rocky Mountains. These assets define our community. They have, through much of our history, been the backdrop against which so many of us have cast our dreams. Calgary’s pattern of growth, however, has not made the most of these assets. Instead, it has imitated the now common place and tired North American model of outward expansion of predominantly single-family homes connected by a vast and expensive network of roads, pipelines and other services. This pattern has masked the true environmental and social costs of our lifestyle. And like many other places, Calgary will find that this sprawl is not economically sustainable in a world of increasingly scarce, and expensive, oil.

Why is it that lifestyle aspirations and choices in Calgary too often run against nature? Why is it okay to leave an empty Lincoln Navigator – the antithesis of fuel-efficiency, by the way – idling at the curb while the kids are dropped off at school? The answer must be more than a failure to “get the price signals right”. We have failed to make the connections between social and economic well-being and nature. We need to do better. We need to forge a dialogue about how Calgary can reduce its ecological footprint (its resource consumption, land consumption and waste production) *while simultaneously* improving its quality of life (its health, housing, work opportunities and livability). This is not easy; it will challenge us to overcome the poverty of imagination that would otherwise prevent us from reinventing or resetting the economy in Calgary. Specifically, three tasks lie ahead of us:

1. The city and the people who live, work and play here must recognize that **nature imposes real limits** on our way of life. Collectively, we cannot continue indefinitely to expand our use of energy, water and materials. We must reduce per capita and absolute resource consumption.
2. **Innovations** in economic and social development must be seen as essential elements of ecological footprint reduction. These innovations will enhance and enrich life without drawing down critical natural capital assets. This needs to be the basis of the new economy in Calgary
3. We need our **governance** system to lead the building of these sustainability innovations. The innovations will: integrate the contributions from business, academia, government and the community; rejoice in the creative expressions of artists who express sustainability sensitivities; and honour the identity and sense of place that is unique to Calgary.

As we look to the future, let us lead with both our head and our heart and make the smart choices that might define a new relationship between Calgarians and the natural environment on which we depend. Our head should compel us to be smart; to make prudent decisions that are not irreversible and to improve our understanding of nature. Our heart should compel us to honour the birthplace of our spirit and the children who will follow us.

Rob Abbott is Founder & CEO, ABBOTT STRATEGIES (<http://www.abbottstrategies.com>) and Director of Sustainability, Stratos Inc. (<http://www.stratos-sts.com>). He is the author of *Conscious Endeavors: Essays on Business, Society and the Journey to Sustainability* (2009), and *Uncommon Cents: Thoreau and the Nature of Business* (2008).

SOCIAL JUSTICE

"What if Calgary committed to being a socially just community?"

Calgary is a city of amazing strengths. One of its assets is the "can-do" attitude that empowers so many Calgarians to success.

But like every community, Calgary also suffers from weaknesses, some of them serious and some of them ethically catastrophic. One of this latter type is this: Calgary is a socially unjust place. The contrast between those that have and those that don't is glaring: seen at its most extreme, Porsches race past dirty, despairing homeless people pushing their junk-laden shopping carts on to the next charity meal.

This inequity undermines quality of life for all Calgarians. For the poor, sometimes it's homelessness. Always, it is the humiliation of having no control over one's own life. The poor

have to rely, in the immortal words of Tennessee Williams' pathetic heroine Blanche Dubois, on "the kindness of strangers". Many Calgarians eek out an income that covers basic expenses – albeit barely – and cannot afford anything else. Things the rest of us take completely for granted, such as being able to pay children's school fees and the occasional night out, are beyond their means.

The rest of us suffer too. Many Calgarians are nearly paralyzed with shame every time we encounter the homeless and destitute on our streets. We know the discrepancy is deeply wrong. But whether we feel that pain or not, all Calgarians suffer the consequences of poverty in our midst. There are whole parts of town where some won't venture because they fear the street people. Poverty costs us all with the increased demands it places on all of our social, medical and emergency services.

But it needn't be like this. Calgary could be a socially just place. We have only to commit to realizing this single, overriding goal: every Calgarian should have the opportunity and ability to flourish. We can come together as Calgarians to insist that everything possible be done to end poverty.

We aren't working to end poverty now. For example, earlier this year, Calgary Aldermen rejected proposals that would have required the City to pay at least a "living wage" to employees and people employed by companies contracting with the City. Had the City adopted a "living wage", that leadership could have rippled through the community, spreading greater dignity and good sense. Instead, what held sway was small-minded cowardice and silly ideas about a "free-market" in labour – which hasn't existed in any pure form for centuries in developed democracies. Most Calgarians do not think success should be achieved through exploitation of others. However, the majority of our City Council displayed a quite different set of values. We can do much better than this by our local civic government.

We can also come together as citizens and community leaders to insist that the provincial and federal governments take meaningful steps to eradicate poverty. For example, Calgarians should be marshalling support for Senator Hugh Segal's proposal for a guaranteed annual income (negative income tax) as an efficient, humane solution to the poverty that cripples poor individuals and families, and less directly – but just as surely – lowers quality of life for all of us.

Calgarians could lead on the achievement of social justice. Calgary could be a place where poverty is a thing of the past and every Calgarian could flourish. First, we have to decide that is what we *want* to do. Then, our *can-do* spirit will enable us to realize our vision of a socially just community.

Janet Keeping is President of the Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership in Calgary.

URBAN MOBILITY AND DESIGN

What if Calgary Were Designed Around People Instead of Around Cars?

North America emerged out of the Second World War with a ramped up industrial base, a considerable energy surplus, and a population inspired by the promises of progress. With these drivers, it embarked on an unparalleled approach to development – both in its scope and its scale. Every aspect of contemporary North American culture has been shaped by this development - from planning and regulation through financing and construction to the industries, businesses and lifestyles that it supports. Calgary serves as a good case study of this phenomenon. Like the rest of the continent, 85% of our community has been built in the postwar era. The majority of our economy is directly connected to the energy and development industries.

What exactly is this “form”, what makes postwar development so “unparalleled” and is it a bad thing? The post war pattern of development is of single-use pods connected by a road system devised for the sole purpose of moving cars. It has abandoned the traditional wisdom of centuries of urbanism for an experimental sub-urban pattern. For the first time in the millennia-long history of human settlements, the scale of the human being as the focus of development has been replaced by another measure: the requirements of the automobile. Any Calgarian who has either made the conscientious choice, or been unfortunate enough to be unable to drive, can attest that the scale of our city makes being a pedestrian at best inconvenient – and more realistically – impossible. As Dennis Bathory points out in his paper, Calgary can inspire us only if we first embrace human scale urbanism as the basis for our redevelopment.

The suffering global economy is calling attention to North America’s dependence on the suburban development industry and its addiction to non-renewable energy sources. As a result, the postwar pattern of development is being reconsidered. Additionally, long term social, fiscal, and ecological analyses of this pattern of urban development have fuelled a wakening environmental ethic. Increasingly, the automobile scale of North American suburbanism is seen as the crux of the matter. The paper prepared by David Hughes on the end of cheap energy, provides a good critique of our suburban vulnerabilities. The scale of automobile-focused suburbanism is deeply imbedded in our city’s built form as well as in our financial, regulatory and cultural systems. This makes addressing the shift back to human-scaled urbanism very challenging.

Any engagement with Calgarians that asks them to consider the big picture and the common good, is likely to find a great deal of support for returning our urban development patterns back to the human-scaled urbanism that characterized our prewar growth. To return to that pattern of development requires three conditions:

1. There will need to be a clear understanding of the fundamental differences between automobile-focused suburbanism and human-scaled urbanism that could be characterised as an *Urban Shift*.
2. There will need to be an adaption and evolution of the systems that currently support automobile-focused suburbanism to promote, provide for, and establish the development of human-scaled urbanism – *Systems of Change*.
3. There will need to be the people that link these first two – that instigate an *Urban Shift*, and introduce, develop, and sustain *Systems of Change* - the *Agents of Change*.

Agents of Change are citizens, community leaders, developers, professionals, government employees and elected officials dedicated to the collaboration required for the achievement of a sustainable human habitat. *Agents of Change* understand that urbanism straddles the political spectrum; that urbanism finds an effective balance between local autonomy and other orders of government; that urbanism promotes an environment where social justice and private enterprise can co-exist; that urbanism calibrates proven ideas from elsewhere to address local conditions; and that urbanism is nested within volunteerism, social capital, and a thriving democracy.

As *Agents of Change*, participants at the October 31st Conversation Calgary event, will be asked to arrive at actionable ideas. Human-scaled urbanism offers a time honoured pattern of development that breaks with the post war pattern on which most of our city has been built. To that end it challenges us to consider the following questions:

- What can *I* do, to live well in Calgary without *having* to own an automobile?
- What can *my neighbourhood and community* do, to help people live well in Calgary without *having* to own an automobile?
- What can *The City of Calgary and other orders of government* do, to help Calgarians live well without *having* to own an automobile?
- What can *business* do, to help Calgarians live well without having to own an automobile?

Gian-Carlo Carra is a Senior Urban Designer with T Six Urbanists Inc. He holds a Masters Degree in Urban Design and is currently working on his PhD. in Urban Geography. He is President of the Inglewood Community Association.

What if Calgary Inspired Us (and We Inspired Calgary)?

Cities often inspire us. It's now our turn – perhaps our responsibility - to inspire our city.

Recall a vacation to a favourite city. Remember the impressions, the joy, the affect you carried away from that urban experience. It may have been defined by a building, a plaza, a park, a festival, an archway, a gate, a clean and welcoming feeling. There are indeed special cities of the world! Almost by popular agreement, San Francisco, Paris, and New York are attractive to many people. Their growth, vitality and appeal seem never ending. Why not imagine Calgary as a special city of the world!

How might Calgary inspire us as a special place?

Calgary will certainly grow and reach a total population in the order of 2 million residents. Let us imagine Calgary occupying the same total land area it had when it reached 1 million people. We will have accommodated twice as many people while also preserving and protecting the productive ranch lands, farms, and natural areas around Calgary. Our rivers and waterways remain clean and accessible as recreational amenities.

Calgary's clean and natural image attracts visitors. Its close connections to the prairie and foothills, its profile as a clean safe city, are appealing. It remains a head office city because of its fundamentally high and balanced liveability characteristics.

Calgary's inner city neighbourhoods have become rich and exciting residential areas blending new mixed use infill developments. Redevelopment has been of predominately low to mid-rise residences with ground floor commercial, retail, offices and restaurants.

A downtown arts district is a living, vital "destination neighbourhood" in its own right. Within the central east end of downtown is found an artists' residential village, arts hotels, a teaching arts college, the expanded national music centre - Cantos, the country music hall of fame and a folk festival pavilion. Calgary's arts community, along with the Calgary Stampede, and our status as a recreation and elite sports training centre, gives us a nationally significant profile that attracts visitors, conferences, and trade shows. The new high speed rail system between Calgary, Red Deer, and Edmonton connects with a total travel time downtown to downtown of just under 50 minutes. Alberta's one international airport hub is expanded here in Calgary.

Our major roadways and streets easily handle vehicle flows because more people have opted to use transit. Travel trips are shorter due to employment centres that are located closer to, and within, growing integrated neighbourhoods. New commercial office employment centres have been completed at the Varsity/Dalhousie, Brentwood, Fish Creek and Chinook LRT stations. Each has regional retail centres with offices and new seniors' residential towers.

A significant proportion of Calgary's growing electricity capacity (domestic and industrial) is produced within city limits from district energy systems, solar, and off site wind farms. Many neighbourhoods receive both electricity and heat through locally based, natural gas fired, district energy systems.

Air and water quality is ranked the highest in the world. Calgary leads, and is the envy of others; in part because our landfill site(s) and waste water disposal systems operate with net zero impact.

Inspired leaders have created an inspiring city. Calgary has been transformed into an even more liveable, robust, and safe community. Our quality of life and the beauty of our natural surroundings make us as special a place as any city in the world!

Dennis Bathory

Architect, development manager, inner city developer, and citizen of Calgary

What if Calgary Planned for the End of Cheap Energy?

Climate change is on the public radar and in the rhetoric of politicians. What is much less understood is the issue of physical limits to our profligate and expanding levels of energy consumption. The end of cheap energy is now unfolding and will profoundly impact our children and all future generations, unless the finite nature of non-renewable resources is clearly understood and managed for long term sustainability. This has profound implications for how we plan future developments and for infrastructure in our urban communities.

The limits to our ability to ever grow energy supply from non-renewable resources are now becoming evident. More than half of the world's oil production comes from countries that are past peak production. Estimates of the timing of the peak of global oil production range from now to as late as 2040, with a mean estimate in the 2012-2014 timeframe. Peak oil production in North America has already happened. The U.S. peaked in 1970, Mexico in 2004. Only Canada is now able to grow oil production thanks to the tar sands. Peak North American natural gas production happened in the early part of this decade and a global peak of gas production is forecast to occur before 2050. Natural gas is not expected to be able replace the energy lost from the depletion of oil supply after the peak in global oil production. Other forecasts suggest that global peak coal production, once considered an energy resource for "hundreds of years", could occur as early as 2025. Although there is a debate over the timing of peak production of oil, gas and coal among energy experts, the debate is only about "when", not "if".

What does this mean for urban planning? The cities we live in, with their sprawl and car dependence, have by and large been designed for an era that will soon be gone forever. Urban planning must recognize that limits to non-renewable energy resources mean that the future will not be an extrapolation of the past. In order to avoid an extremely unpleasant transition into the post-cheap energy world, decisions taken today must recognize that energy costs are likely to be much higher in the future. Given that infrastructure lasts for several decades and takes years to build, these decisions are needed now, even if they may not make economic sense at today's fuel costs.

The energy- and carbon-footprint of our cities can be greatly reduced while preserving a high quality way of life. Higher density walkable communities, with local access to daily requirements, can also justify investments in mass transit – an alternative to cars. David Owen, author of *Green Metropolis*, points out that New York City is the greenest community in North America in terms of energy footprint, and its citizens are much fitter than the average because of it. If you are in a hurry in Manhattan, you walk, bike or take mass transit, rather than relying on cars. To radically lower our energy- and carbon-footprint future, investments should be spent on the next paradigm of urban development - not expending resources on new urban sprawl, interchanges, and eight-lane expressways to make it easier for people to drive.

Planning for the end of cheap energy through urban planning at the municipal level (certain European cities and cities like Portland are leaders), is only one important aspect of addressing the problem. Rethinking the energy infrastructure that supplies cities is also required. Installing more renewable energy sources, and resilient distributed generation, providing incentives to reduce consumption and generate local power through policies such as time-of-use-pricing and net metering will also be very important. Energy efficiency retrofits to existing building infrastructure will be needed, as the majority of the buildings we will still have 20 years from now, have already been built. The bigger picture must also address the vulnerability of the supply lines for food and other essential resources required by our cities, which often stretch thousands of kilometres. In an era of high cost energy, geopolitics and competition for resources from the developing world, these supply lines must be seen as risky and vulnerable.

In summary, we are facing the need for a new paradigm in how we think about and consume energy. It will not be without its trials and tribulations, but the sooner we get started the better and more secure our future will be. It is very important to understand that *THERE ARE NO SILVER BULLETS – NO ONE SHOT FIXES* in managing the transition to a more secure and sustainable future. But, there are many smaller incremental contributions that together can add up to a solution. What is required is an overarching awareness of the constraints the end of cheap energy will soon impose upon us. Capital that would otherwise be invested in the old paradigm can instead be invested in projects that contribute to lowering our energy- and carbon-footprint and building resilience to potential supply disruptions of what we need for everyday urban life. This must be an ongoing, long term process. We have a long way to go, given the vulnerability of our current urban infrastructure to the end of cheap energy. The good

news is that there are many opportunities for investment in the next paradigm, which will arrive whether we like it or not. Continuing to throw good money after bad through investment in the old paradigm is likely to end badly for us, and certainly for our children and grandchildren.

David Hughes is a geoscientist who has studied the energy resources of Canada, including 32 years with the Geological Survey of Canada as a scientist and research manager. Over the past decade, he has researched, published and lectured widely on global energy and sustainability issues in North America and internationally. He is a board member of the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas – Canada and is a Fellow of the Post Carbon Institute