

# Inner City Coalition

*Of Calgary Society*



*Quality of Life in the  
Face of Booming  
Growth*



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**AN ON-LINE ELECTION FORUM  
CALGARY 2007**

## **THE FORUM PROCESS**

The Inner City Coalition invites all candidates in the upcoming Municipal Election, including incumbents to participate in our on-line forum. In the interest of fairness, we have provided issue statements and background information, along with one key question.

The ICC has posted responses on the ICC website, [www.icccalgary.ca](http://www.icccalgary.ca). We are assisting interested communities to more effectively evaluate candidates by sending this summary of the critical issues to them. We encourage the general public to become involved in meaningful municipal debate. We also hope to encourage communities to join the Inner City Coalition's efforts both in our election endeavours and on a permanent basis.

**P**erhaps the most important overall issue facing a new Council will be managing and paying for rapid growth while maintaining the quality of life that citizens have come to appreciate. The following issues generate from these concerns. The new Council's vision, how it deals with these issues, the tools it uses, and the consistency of decision making will determine the Calgary of the 21st century.

The success of Calgary as a growing physical and economic entity has a price. Increased traffic, greater isolation of individuals, inefficient characterless suburbs, homeless citizens, an apparent increase in crime, higher taxes, higher service fees, overcrowded schools, lower standards of health care, alienation from politicians - all factor into the cost of growth. The impact of these effects will be the greatest on established communities. Planning and building policies, decisions, and public spending priorities are key elements of the city's strategy for growth.

In 1999 Calgary City Council adopted the Calgary Transportation Plan (GoPlan) for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, then called the "Go Plan". It identified an interactive triangle of three elements for City growth. The Calgary Transportation Plan called for careful balancing of these components for a successful city future.

Today, Calgary appears to be imbalanced. Community and environmental standards are threatened, mobility and access to services is reduced, as is the affordability of housing and transportation systems. All of these bare a high cost to the quality of life for *all* Calgarians.

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## THE ISSUES

The Inner City Coalition and various inner city communities have identified more than a dozen issues. The five issues below capture and reflect the potential negative impacts of growth and concerns for the loss of the qualities, which Calgarians value (friendly, safe, affordable, healthy, and comfortable communities). We have posted each issue, prefaced by background information as viewed by the ICC membership and specific questions along with Candidate responses on our website. Log on to [www.icccalgary.ca](http://www.icccalgary.ca)

### **1. AFFORDABLE, LOW INCOME HOUSING, SOCIAL HOUSING POLICY**

*We believe the City must increase its options for solutions to the housing squeeze.*

### **2. THE TRANSPORTATION DILEMMA**

*We believe the City must balance its plan for growth in all quadrants of the city. Additional employment centres and localized community services will help mobility systems become more efficient and effective.*

### **3. TAX FAIRNESS**

*(Property taxes, user fees, and service charges)*

*We believe the current system is unfair to a wide range of Calgarians and has negative planning implications for the City as a whole.*

### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY**

*We believe that better planning tools such as land use and building regulations, and new engineering standards are required for an ecologically sustainable future.*

### **5. DEMOCRATIC PROCESS & POLICIES**

*We believe that the financing of election campaigns at the municipal level should be subject to the same financial scrutiny as those of federal and provincial elections.*

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