

# Focus on Leadership

A SPECIAL SERIES ON CALGARY'S BUSINESS VISIONARIES

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## CREB wants all homes to be 'green'

The Calgary Real Estate Board (CREB) wants your next house to be green.

Not that CREB president Diane Scott has any intention of limiting your exterior colour options – she wants to help Calgarians buy more environment-friendly homes. And she believes the organization's Multiple Listing Service (MLS) can be a powerful tool in that aim.

"In the long run, a green home with efficient windows, doors, appliances and a solid building envelope will save home owners thousands in the face of rising utility costs," she says.

"CREB has recognized this and is working to design a program to include a home's energy efficiency and other green features as part of its listing information on the MLS system."

This new green pilot program, set to be launched this summer, will start by giving buyers the EnerGuide rating – measuring air leakage and the energy efficiency of heating systems – for resale homes.

Eventually, CREB will look to add other green rating systems such as BuiltGreen and LEED for Homes.

"A greener MLS system will allow realtors to recommend green solutions and better serve the growing number of environmentally conscious homebuyers," she says.

CREB was founded 81 years ago, to bring like-minded realtors together, and ensure customers were served in an ethical manner.

Today, the organization also provides its members – more than 5,400 licensed real estate brokers and registered associates – with training, support and regulatory guidelines.

One of the main functions of CREB is the operation of MLS, which delivers the latest information on more than 30,000 residential properties per year.

CREB believes in the power of partnership, so getting involved with the Action Calgary initiative was an easy decision.

"We are interested in building partnerships with organizations such as Calgary Economic



Wil Andruschak photo

**Environmentally friendly homes will save homeowners thousands of dollars, says CREB president Diane Scott.**

Development, the government, other real estate industry officials and city developers to

represent the voice of organized real estate and ensure that our city continues to grow

and change for the better. "Action Calgary is a perfect fit for CREB and its members."

## CED blazes idea trail with WORKshift program

Most large Canadian cities host a major fair every year, but there's only one Calgary Stampede. Similarly, economic development authorities are commonplace in major metropolitan areas, but there's only one Calgary Economic Development.

"The ways an organization like ours can foster economic growth in its jurisdiction are as diverse as our business needs," says Bruce Graham, president and CEO of Calgary Economic Development.

CED takes an active, project-based approach to marketing the Calgary region locally, nationally and internationally. One example is the Action Calgary Initiative, which brings together stakeholders in a partnership beginning with projects that support business and employment growth and diversification.

Another one of CED's initiatives is WORKshift – the Calgary region's telework program.

"Telework typically involves spending a portion of your time – maybe one day a week

– either working at home, or out of an alternative office location," Graham explains.

These locations could be coffee shops or libraries, or a formalized, purpose-built facility with meeting rooms and office services that allow for greater functionality outside the office.

"You don't have to go to work to be at work," Graham explains.

Telework can also mean tweaking employees' schedules so they avoid rush hour.

A successfully implemented telework program takes pressure off of a city's infrastructure, increases productivity, reduces staff turnover and office use costs, and has a measurable, significant impact on reducing a company's total greenhouse gas emissions.

"This ground-breaking work for economic developers," Graham notes.

CED's role is to champion and market the idea of telework, and to help Calgary companies try the arrangement, through a WORKshift pilot program.

"There are obviously technol-

ogy-related resources that have to come to bear, but the technology, in many cases, is not the biggest challenge – it's the culture of the organization.

"We're trying to create a formalized delivery of telework, and provide some tools that employers and employees can use to be more effective at implementing it."

WORKshift is a three-year, \$800,000 program funded partially by Transport Canada. After less than a year, CED has increased awareness and provided educational resources on the triple bottom line results associated with telework to hundreds of members of the business community.

"We're ahead of the target we set when we launched this program in May, so it's safe to say it is being embraced."

ATB Financial is one of the companies that signed on for the WORKshift pilot program, and Andrew Reed, managing director of Alberta Intelligence and Innovation, says it's going well so far.

"We're about a month into

it, and the feedback so far has been very positive about the pilot," he says.

ATB has no plans to implement telework at the branch level; instead, its participation is limited to corporate employees.

"We want to give our employees more flexibility on where they work, become more efficient in how we use our downtown office space and reduce our impact on the environment. We believe that when our employees are happy, they provide a very satisfying customer experience."

The concept behind WORKshift was developed during the height of the boom, when human resources, office space and transportation infrastructure were squeezed beyond capacity. Those pressures have eased, but Graham says the program has proven equally relevant in slower times.

"We've still got to try to retain the best people, so having a flexible work environment for people becomes a strategic asset. Productivity is probably more important than ever,



Wil Andruschak photo

**Andrew Reed is ATB Financial's managing director of Alberta Intelligence and Innovation.**

and the issue of environmental sustainability is growing in importance.

For more information and to get involved in WORKshift, go to [www.workshiftcalgary.com](http://www.workshiftcalgary.com).

## Community drives Herald's success

A lot has changed in the 127 years since the Calgary Herald's days as a weekly, four-page newspaper cranked out on a handpress, but the one constant throughout that time is the paper's commitment to the community.

"The community is the heart of what we do every day," says Siobhan Vinish, vice-president of marketing for the Herald.

"We aim to make Calgary the best place to live, work and play, and provide our readers with the highest-quality information about our city and the world that we all live in."

The Herald interacts with more than half a million people each week, through its traditional newspaper and online offerings.

"Despite the many options for news and information available today, we know that we are the best source for local news.

No other organization in print or online can compete with our local resources, or offer the same kind of credibility," Vinish says. "This is our main advantage as a business, but also something we take very seriously as an important contribution to the community."

The paper realizes that communication is not a one-way street – and so do its readers.

"Through letters to the editor, or by using the Comment features on our website, they tell us about the issues that are important to them. That connection to our community is very important to us," she says.

But great journalism is only the beginning of the Herald's contribution to Calgary.

"We work very closely with community partners, business partners and charities – all those things that help make up a vibrant city," she says.

The Herald serves as a sup-

porting sponsor for many arts and multicultural events, for instance, but it also takes the lead in an array of initiatives.

The paper's Christmas Fund has raised more than \$13 million for local charities and community initiatives – including more than \$1 million alone in 2009. The Herald was also a key partner in the Sandy Beach Riverbank Rescue Project.

"We're also involved with literacy programs like Raise-a-Reader and Canspell. Literacy is very close to our heart, for obvious reasons," Vinish says.

Action Calgary is another great partnership that the Herald is honoured to support.

"We have grown side by side with Calgary and our success is inextricably linked to that of the city itself," Vinish says. "We're pleased to be part of Action Calgary, because it has a vision for the future of our community."



Calgary Herald Archive photo

**City of Calgary Natural Parkland Management co-ordinator Jennifer Symcox, speaks with Calgary Herald publisher Malcolm Kirk during one of the interpretive tours of the riparian vegetation on the edge of the Elbow River at Sandy Beach. Also on the walk are (from left): Jeff Blake, of City Parks, alderman Brian Pincott and Lorne Fitch of the Cows in a Fish organization. The Herald is spearheading a project to regenerate the banks of the river.**

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Join Action Calgary at [www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com](http://www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com)  
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