calgary economic development strategy
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This piece is printed on Mohawk Options, 100% PC White which is manufactured entirely with Green-e certified wind-generated electricity.
On behalf of City Council I am pleased to present the Calgary Economic Development Strategy. This strategy is a bold vision of where Calgary’s economy should be in 10 years. It is about:

- striving for excellence and building on our strengths;
- being the best place in the world to achieve meaningful results;
- promoting innovation, creativity and increasing our environmental sensitivity;
- building and promoting our international reputation and profile.

First and foremost, it’s about Calgarians, and ensuring they are able to contribute successfully to the economy, take part in its prosperity and feel welcome and safe within our community.

Our strategy is focused on building foundations for long term growth that makes sense for Calgary and draws on its strengths; growth that is sustainable and increases our quality of life.

Our strategy is the result of a process that engaged hundreds of Calgarians seeking their ideas, aspirations and hopes for Calgary’s economy and what it provides for its residents – economic security and sustainability. Thank you to those who participated in the creation of this economic plan. Your input will help shape the future direction of this great city.

Our strategy could not have been completed without the time, guidance and contribution of the Steering Team. This group of business and community leaders met regularly for the better part of a 2007 to ensure the delivery of a sound, thorough and meaningful plan for Calgary’s economy. I want to express my sincere gratitude to them, and thank them for their efforts.

This is a starting point – not an end point – of a process that will yield increased prosperity for Calgarians and position us on the global stage of economic centres of the world. We are working to create an innovative implementation concept that will bring the community together to collectively achieve our goals, led by many of Calgary’s leaders.

The objectives and actions are concepts; bold ideas that we are asking partners to assist us with, either through endorsement, support or resources. These concepts while highly supported in the community will require more time and effort to refine and implement. It will require action by a large number of organizations, working together to effect change and yield results.

To achieve this, I ask our partners to join us in that endeavour.

Sincerely,

Dave Bronconnier
MAYOR
The completion of the Calgary Economic Development Strategy is an important building block for Calgary at a time when there is so much happening, a time of growing challenges, a time of opportunity for continued shared prosperity.

This strategy clearly describes our citizens’ desires, aspirations and a common vision for Calgary’s future.

Throughout the process, the team listened to hundreds of Calgarians from the business community, all levels of government, educational institutions and many other organizations. We considered our strengths and our weaknesses, examined global trends and gathered the best information available. It was an excellent process that built on the imagineCALGARY initiative and helped set Calgary’s direction in the increasingly competitive global economy.

I would like to thank my fellow Steering Team members for their dedication, wisdom, insight, creativity and commitment in providing overall governance and direction to the project team. Congratulations to Adam Legge of Calgary Economic Development, our tireless project manager, and all of his team for a job well done!

Finally, on behalf of the Steering Team and all those involved, I would like to thank Mayor Bronconnier and the members of City Council for asking us to be a part of this process.

This is an exciting, bold and visionary strategy that will position Calgary as a truly global player. It has been an exciting honour to be part of its creation.
The City of Calgary would like to thank all the individuals who gave of their time and ideas in the
development of this strategy.

In particular, we would like to acknowledge the time, commitment and contribution made by the members
of the Economic Development Strategy Steering Team. These individuals are:

Mayor Linda Bruce,
City of Airdrie and Calgary Regional Partnership

Lance Carlson,
Alberta College of Art + Design

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urbanMetrics Inc.

“The point of cities is multiplicity of choice.”
– Jane Jacobs

“When you look at a city, it’s like reading the hopes, aspirations and pride of everyone
who built it.”
– Hugh Newell Jacobsen, Architect
introduction

The city of Calgary is at a critical point in its history. It has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years, the impact of which is being felt at all levels of the economy. The city leads the nation in both population and employment growth, and its unemployment level is by far the lowest among all other cities in the country. In 2006 alone, Calgary accounted for approximately 66 per cent of the employment gains in Alberta and 25 per cent of all new jobs in Canada, year-over-year. It has now surpassed the 1,000,000 mark in population, making it the third largest city in Canada behind Toronto and Montreal.
Changes in the global economy are also being felt. The rise of other global economies, as centres of service and knowledge-based activity, contributes to the sharpening of Calgary as a centre of global influence, particularly as it relates to the world’s energy sector. The changing nature of local economies, the increasing importance of cities, the impact of technological advancement and the increasing importance of innovation and entrepreneurship as a platform for growth, means a heightened level of national and international competition to attract financial capital, a skilled workforce and business investment. Compounding this is the rising importance of several emerging market economies - Brazil, Russia, India and China in particular and the impact they are having on the world economy. Each of these countries have large populations, are hungry for growth and are already reshaping global commerce, with the potential to change it even more so into the future. For Calgary to attain the position of a global city and to effectively compete on the world stage requires a shift in how we view our city, and our approach to lasting sustainable economic growth. It requires a bold vision of what we can become. It is about thinking and acting world class.

This economic development strategy makes a powerful statement on the direction for the city, setting out a plan for sustainable, equitable and manageable growth of Calgary’s economy to 2018. While the City of Calgary has a central role in facilitating its implementation, the Strategy relies on a mixture of public and private sector resources, active partnerships with the business community, public institutions, and all levels of government, as well as bold steps to move the Strategy forward. Given the significant changes that our city has and continues to experience in terms of our economic growth, global influence and global and community challenges, the successful implementation of this strategy will also be about developing adaptive capacities, learning from success and failure, and thereby refining our approach over time to adapt more quickly to changes in our environment. We can choose to be just like other large cities in North America competing for business and people, or we can take our place on the global stage by making bold and strategic decisions about the future of our economy.

THE CALGARY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY INITIATIVE

In 2002, Mayor Bronconnier invited one of Canada’s top business leaders, Murray Edwards, President of EDCO Financial, to chair a task force made up of both the public and private sectors to review Calgary’s economic development model. The provincial government, through Alberta Economic Development (now Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry), and the federal government, through Western Economic Diversification, were both involved in the review and the development of Calgary’s current structure.

The Murray Edwards Task Force identified the need to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy that would guide the activities of all three levels of government within the Calgary region, as they relate to economic development, but most significantly, guide the activities of the four City-funded economic development agencies: Calgary Economic Development; Tourism Calgary; Calgary Technologies Inc.; and the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre.

This economic development strategy makes a powerful statement on the direction for the city, setting out a plan for sustainable, equitable and manageable growth of Calgary’s economy to 2018.
The Calgary Economic Development Strategy is the completion of the recommendation made by the Murray Edwards Task Force. The Strategy was created through an assessment of Calgary’s economic development strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It builds off the output of imagineCALGARY, and most importantly, it identifies those strategic sectors and drivers that Calgary should focus its resources on in order to ensure that it remains at the peak of competitiveness amongst global jurisdictions.

Overall guidance and direction for the creation of the Calgary Economic Development Strategy was provided by a 17 person steering team. Members of the team brought to the table their respective experience as community and business leaders, and their knowledge of the issues, opportunities and challenges that face the city to ensure that the process and the economic development strategy was informed by a diversity of perspectives and sectors.

As part of this effort, consideration was given to a number of other initiatives determined to have an impact on the overall direction for the Economic Development Strategy. This included the Province’s 20 year strategic plan entitled Today’s Opportunities, Tomorrow’s Promise, the Province’s Labour Force Strategy entitled Building and Educating Tomorrow’s Workforce, the Province’s current 3 year economic development business plan and the Federal government’s plan Advantage Canada.

In addition to serving as a guide for the four City-funded economic development agencies, it is hoped that other economic development partners, senior levels of government and the private sector will align their local activities with the overall Strategy.

THE ROLE OF THE CALGARY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Calgary Economic Development Strategy is a strategic 10-year plan for the future of Calgary’s economic development. It was developed through strong consultation with Calgary’s business community. The Strategy contains objectives and actions to ensure that the foundation for long-term prosperity is in place, as well as objectives and actions that represent big, bold, visionary ideas that, if implemented, will ensure Calgary takes its place amongst the pinnacle of global cities.

The Strategy will be used in the following ways:

1. **As Direction for Making Long-Term Planning Decisions.**

   The Strategy can be used as a non-statutory guide for directing longer term economic development initiatives, planning and development initiatives and strategic investments into specific sectors, projects and developments. The intent of the Strategy is that future municipal, provincial, federal, private, institutional and non-profit investments work toward the achievement of common goals as articulated in the Strategy. The Strategy has and is also being used as input into other key City of Calgary plans and documents such as imagineCALGARY, Integrated Land Use and Mobility Plan, and the Centre City Plan.

2. **As Direction into the Development of Economic Development Agency Workplans and Budgets.**

   The Strategy is the cornerstone for each of Calgary Economic Development, Tourism Calgary, Calgary Technologies Inc., and the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre in the development of their strategic plans, business plans, annual workplans and budgets. The activities and resource allocation of these four agencies should demonstrate alignment with, and the achievement of, the goals and objectives of the Strategy.

The Strategy contains objectives and actions to ensure that the foundation for long-term prosperity is in place.
This strategy is a starting point – not an end point – of a process that will yield increased prosperity in the community and a position on the global stage of economic centres.

3. AS THE SOURCE OF IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND COLLABORATION.

Achieving the goals of the Strategy will require the involvement and participation of many businesses, organizations, associations, levels of government and stakeholders. The Strategy can serve as a source of ideas and inspiration for actions aligned with and mutually supportive of the Strategy’s goals and objectives. It is the hope that every business in Calgary will have a copy of the Strategy and will use it in their own strategic planning processes.

This is a strategy for the whole of Calgary. The successful achievement of these goals developed by the community will require the support of all organizations, companies, entities and individuals with an interest in the development of Calgary’s economy. This strategy and its components parts have in no way been developed to be the responsibility of The City of Calgary to implement on its own. The City, within its responsibilities and resource base, could not possibly contemplate affecting the kind of change and breadth of activity necessary to secure Calgary’s future prosperity as articulated in this strategy. Implementation will be a collective endeavour. There is significant need for participation, and more importantly partnership, to deliver on the goals, objectives and actions within.

This strategy is a starting point – not an end point – of a process that will yield increased prosperity in the community and a position on the global stage of economic centres. The Strategy therefore is broad and high level out of necessity. The City’s economic development agencies will be vehicles for creating more specific implementation plans for these goals, as well as in partnership with the private, public and non-profit sectors.

As this Strategy is the beginning of a larger collective action, it should also be viewed as a living document. The list of actions is a starting point based on community input and research at a point in time. Essential for effective implementation will be a high level annual review, and an in-depth review at the five-year mid-point of the strategy implementation. New realities, new ideas and new opportunities will emerge that could not possibly be envisioned during the crafting of this strategy. Therefore the strategy itself must never remain static, closed or rigid. It must never be viewed as “The Strategy of 2008” but as the dynamic and evolving plan that set the stage for the first bold actions. It must be dynamic, fluid and ever-changing in response to the world around us.
introduction //

It will require action by a large number of organizations, working together to effect change and yield results. To achieve this, we ask our partners to join us in that endeavour.

The objectives and actions are concepts; bold ideas that we are asking partners to assist us with, either through endorsement, support or resources. These concepts while highly supported in the community will require more time and effort to refine and implement. It will require action by a large number of organizations, working together to effect change and yield results. To achieve this, we ask our partners to join us in that endeavour.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The development of the Calgary Economic Development Strategy involved the review and alignment of numerous City plans, policies and strategies.

ImagineCALGARY, the City’s 100-year sustainability plan, was used in the formulation of the Strategy. The development of imagineCALGARY and the Strategy accommodated the sharing of concepts, information and strategies aimed at achieving the economic development goal of prosperity for all Calgarians.

While the Strategy aligns closely with the imagineCALGARY plan, it is more tactical in nature and represents the next step in the journey to creating the type of city envisioned by imagineCALGARY. Specifically, goals and objectives where the Strategy and imagineCALGARY are strongly aligned include:

1. BUILT ENVIRONMENT SYSTEM:
   a. Increasing the number of spaces for interaction;
   b. Working to increase the diversity of local businesses;
   c. Increasing affordable housing;
   d. Increasing development near public transit hubs;

2. ECONOMIC SYSTEM:
   a. Increasing research and development intensity;
   b. Increasing environmentally sustainable and commercially viable value-added products and technologies created in Calgary;
   c. Increasing the amount of non-energy related economic activity in Calgary;
   d. Creating Canada’s best environment for business;
   e. Improving settlement and meaningful work for immigrants to Calgary;
   f. Increasing opportunities for tourism visitation and expenditure;
   g. Increasing participation at a higher level in the economy for under-represented demographic groups;
3. SOCIAL SYSTEM:
   a. Increasing focus on education, from primary through life-long learning, as a driver of future economic success and individual prosperity;
   b. Increasing the sense of community and vibrancy in Calgary as a means of attracting and retaining people;
   c. Increasing the creative activity and ethos within Calgary.

In addition to imagineCALGARY, the Strategy is also consistent with other major City of Calgary plans and policies including the Centre City Plan, and the forthcoming Integrated Land Use and Mobility Plan.

In order to ensure alignment with City of Calgary activity overall, a number of other Business Unit plans and reports were reviewed as part of the Strategy process, including: Corporate Economics reports and forecasts; Environmental Management Triple Bottom Line and Brownfield Strategy; Community and Neighbourhood Services Fair Calgary Policy; and, Corporate Properties Industrial Land Analysis 2003 Update.

In addition to the insight and direction provided by these recent City-led initiatives, the development of this economic development strategy has also received input from more than 200 business and community leaders, economic development partners and local industry experts in the form of telephone and personal interview sessions. The City hosted seven focus groups involving 70 people, as well as a half day economic development summit to discuss the outcomes of the goal setting phase of the Strategy and confirm the needed actions for effective implementation. This step involved a further 50 people. A public web survey was conducted through which more than 430 Calgarians participated. People were asked to give their thoughts and advice on a range of issues and concerns including what about their community makes it distinctive from other cities, and what criteria should be considered as a measure of economic growth.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Being a visionary and strategic document, the Strategy does not include specific financial cost estimates for individual projects or actions. Costing will be done at the time of implementation on specific actions or through an overarching implementation plan.

This project had two distinct components. Part 1 was the Calgary Economic Opportunities Study, an economic base analysis of Calgary and a competitive assessment against other comparable jurisdictions. This supporting report can be found at www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com. Part 2 is the Strategy itself.

In addition to imagineCALGARY, the Strategy is also consistent with other major City of Calgary plans.
A consistent theme that emerged throughout the Strategy consultation was the strongly held view that Calgary is a great place to live and do business. Calgarians love their city. They view the city as immensely liveable and accessible, with a relatively low cost of living when compared to the income levels one is able to achieve. The quality of the region’s natural environment and the city’s proximity to the Canadian Rockies coupled with Calgary’s system of urban parks, trails and recreation and leisure activities are key factors that draw people to the city and keep them here over time. The healthy job market has also acted as a magnet for attracting job seekers from outside the region, across the country and around the world. This has translated into the youngest workforce of any major city in Canada with 24 per cent of the labour force between the ages of 25 and 34 years.
The quality of Calgary’s business leaders and companies is also seen as a contributing factor to Calgary’s success. Calgary’s businesses are among the world’s best and the entrepreneurial spirit of Calgary’s workforce is legendary. The local business community is seen as very entrepreneurial with a maverick attitude towards business and business investment. The broader business community is seen as being highly collaborative, with senior business leaders making themselves accessible to peer groups. The business community is also firmly committed to the community as a whole, as reflected in the significant level of volunteerism in the city and the level of corporate and individual philanthropy.

A STRONG LOCAL, REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ECONOMY

Since the discovery of oil and gas in nearby Turner Valley in 1914, Alberta has been Canada’s oil and gas capital. Alberta’s focus on the energy sector has resulted in a volatile economy in the past, but with structural changes that have directed the sector towards long term investments, coupled with strong global demand for energy, Alberta’s economic future appears bright.

In 2006, Alberta’s real GDP growth was reported in excess of six per cent, more than double that of the national average. While growth is anticipated to be more moderate in 2007, the rate of growth confirms the structural change that is occurring in the Canadian economy as Alberta, and Calgary in particular, emerge as home to one of the country’s most important business regions.

As Alberta’s largest city, and historically the business and financial centre of the energy sector in Canada, Calgary has become known as the energy capital of Canada, specifically for its head office, financial markets and design components. Over the past decade, the city of Calgary has experienced tremendous growth and economic prosperity, due in large part, to the strong performance and expansion of this sector and the significant levels of in-migration to the region that have resulted. This is evidenced in the significant rate of office space absorption and business expansions across a wide range of business services such as engineering, financial services and professional service firms.

With both the population and employment experiencing high rates of growth, incomes levels are also on the rise and unemployment rates are the lowest in the country. Economic forecasts suggest that the Calgary Economic Region will retain its position as one of the leading economic regions in Canada based on the presence of the energy sector and the continued investment activity associated with the oil sands.

A further consideration in the growth of the local economy is the importance of the Calgary-Edmonton corridor. As the result of a 2003 TD Economics report, the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor Region has gained prominence as a centre of high economic activity and prosperity. With energy prices running at record levels, the corridor has emerged as a major economic region both nationally and internationally. GDP per capita in the region is exceeding the national average both in Canada and the United States, buoyed by the energy demand of the U.S. and China.
Considered the gateway to the North, Edmonton is prospering as the primary service and supply centre for resource projects in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories, with a potential boost from construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. Red Deer is a strong service centre for the energy sector.

Calgary resides within the Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP), a collective of 19 municipalities and First Nations surrounding Calgary focused on addressing land use, environment, economic development and shared services related issues in the region. The economic activity occurring within the CRP is the result of growth in a number of sectors including energy, tourism, agriculture and manufacturing. While Calgary is the business hub for the oil and gas sector in the province, as the head office location of most major energy companies, significant activity supporting the energy sector is happening throughout the CRP area. In addition, transportation, warehousing, advanced technology and health care are also sectors experiencing growth. Future economic development efforts at the local level should focus on the synergies evident within the region and to leverage this potential in the promotion and marketing of their communities.

**CALGARY HAS BUILT ON ITS STRENGTHS IN THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

The city of Calgary is the corporate headquarters of Canada’s rapidly expanding oil and gas industry. Over the past several years, surging global demand coupled with supply difficulties have resulted in record-high energy prices, and have provided growth and strong economic momentum for the province and city.

The key impetus for the province and the city’s upbeat performance has been increasing demand for commodities and robust prices. With crude oil prices still strong yet volatile the province will continue to reap the benefits of massive oil sands development. Local companies are also securing a greater share of international activity in South America, Middle East and offshore. The related industry spin-offs being felt in both Edmonton and Calgary have included hefty investment in services and manufacturing, solid job creation, and further gains in export receipts. Calgary in particular has emerged as one of the country’s key business and financial service centres, which in turn acts as a magnet for further business investment.

Once the oil sands projects are complete, Alberta will become the second largest global producer of oil behind Saudi Arabia. Calgary is poised to be one of the major beneficiaries of this activity because of its well-entrenched position as the financial, technological (R&D/engineering) and decision-making hub for the industry by growing, retaining and attracting new companies to the region with both domestic and international scope.

But the city has not relied wholly on the energy sector for its economic prosperity. Rather, it has built on its strengths in the energy sector in a way that has led to the growth and a critical mass of business and investment activity in manufacturing, transportation, logistics, advanced technology, construction, tourism, health and wellness, and financial services. This diversity has also contributed to the city’s steady rate of growth and a positive future of opportunity and prosperity for residents.

Calgary historically has been a source of innovation for the oil and gas sector and the wealth of local expertise continues to position the industry well globally. For example, sectors such as wireless technology, imaging and geomatics are thriving in Calgary and have all evolved from the needs of the oil and gas sector. The demands of the energy sector and the resulting economic and population growth have also kept the manufacturing and construction sectors strong. The business and industry sectors emerging from the energy industry are adaptive, technologically nimble, globally competitive and selling to companies around the world.

Calgary in particular has emerged as one of the country’s key business and financial service centres, which in turn acts as a magnet for further business investment.
Calgary’s geographic location in Western Canada and its integrated multi-modal transportation and logistics infrastructure has also contributed to it becoming a centre for an increasing number of transportation and warehousing operations. This includes an expanding international air cargo and passenger hub operation at Calgary International Airport, rail and intermodal auto and trainload facilities from both Canadian Pacific Railway and Canadian National serving every major city in North America, and access to the Canamex “smart corridor” that runs between Alaska and Mexico City. This in turn has further facilitated the development of its manufacturing base and opportunities in aerospace.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ARE ACHIEVING WORLD CLASS STATUS

Studies in urban competitiveness repeatedly emphasize the imperative of the relationship between the quantity and quality of the urban knowledge base and the innovation-led economic performance of a city, in particular its companies, independent research institutions, university and college led research, libraries and databases. Calgary benefits from having five post secondary institutions within the city and a further two public post secondary institutions located in the broader Calgary region. Three institutions have satellite campuses in the city with main campuses elsewhere in the province and as many as 30 independent research institutions call Calgary home. Many of these institutions have already achieved broad-based and international recognition for their work. These include:

- **The Institute for Sustainable Environment, Energy and the Economy (ISEEE)** at the University of Calgary which provides leadership for engaging world-class, interdisciplinary and mission-based research and education, for advancing sustainable energy, environment and the economy.

- **The Institute for the Creative Process (ICP)** at the Alberta College of Art and Design is unique in a Canadian post-secondary institution. The Institute exists to focus and organize the various activities, enterprises, and initiatives of ACAD with regard to the cultivation of dialogue, research and special projects that directly address the nature of the creative process and design thinking.

- **The Centre for Innovative Information Technology Solutions (CIITS)** at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Polytechnic is a centre of excellence focused on cutting edge technologies specific to the Alberta manufacturing sector, using information technology to streamline business processes and provide continuous access to global markets.

- **The Institute for Non-Profit Studies** at Mount Royal College, is the first centre in Canada to bring together research, education and training tailored to the non-profit sector.

The business and industry sectors emerging from the energy industry are adaptive, technologically nimble, globally competitive and selling to companies around the world.
The Integrative Health Institute at Mount Royal College is Canada’s first post-secondary institute dedicated to advancing complementary and alternative health research, education and practice. It has a particular focus on evidence-based practice and decision making.

Ward of the 21st Century at the Foothills Medical Centre is creating an environment where researchers and health care professionals and students can form multi-disciplinary and collaborative research partnerships that will lead to innovative and transformative ideas that will impact the delivery of health care.

The Sun Centre of Excellence for Visual Genomics (COE), Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary, is an innovative, non-profit organization that contributes toward numerous cutting edge initiatives that develop advanced technology in computational biology. These initiatives are revolutionizing the field of bioinformatics.

The Centre for Biomedical Research and Engineering (CBRE) at the University of Calgary with a mandate for running the unique, multi-disciplinary specialization in biomedical engineering.

The Health Research Innovation Centre (HRIC) which in intended to enhance the University of Calgary’s ability to contribute to leading research and innovation in the areas of health and wellness and designed to attract and retain the world’s best researchers.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, slated to open in 2008, will place the University of Calgary and the Province of Alberta at the forefront of research into animal diseases and food safety. Unique in its approach to teaching undergraduate veterinary medicine, the Faculty will link animal health education and research with human health research and education initiatives.

eCognition Centre of Excellence - The Department of Geography at the University of Calgary has developed a significant reputation in object-oriented digital image processing. They are one of only four world centres of excellence for eCognition: the world’s leading object-oriented image processing software.

The Olds College School of Innovation focuses on research activities in environmental microbiology, agronomy, and new products from crops and bioprocessing.

The Bow Valley College Directions for Immigrants in Trades and Professional Careers assists immigrants who have two years of work experience in their field and hold a degree, diploma, certificate or trades certification from a country other than Canada, and help them restart their career in Canada through assistance understanding Canadian accreditation requirements and local job search assistance.

The Banff New Media Institute is one of the leading new media centres in Canada. The Institute brings together designers, computer scientists, biological and nano-technology scientists, social scientists and various industry partners to develop new technologies and applications.

We are an innovative community. But we can do better. By encouraging more business-based research, we can grow the complement of research activity. By using our strength in energy-based innovation as a “safety cushion”, we can support increased risk taking by encouraging innovation to occur outside the energy sector into new and adapted technologies. Making Calgary truly innovative will be about supporting a culture of increased pan-sectoral risk and providing the ecosystem of capital and business support needed to move into and beyond commercialization.
Calgary is now competing at a new level. Calgary’s business growth, increasing business costs and industry expertise and specialization means that unlike many other Canadian jurisdictions, its ability to compete on cost for new business investment has been diminished. We are now competing on innovation and value-add. This is further evidenced by the move of some companies or functions from Calgary to more cost effective locations in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and areas of the U.S.

The current labour force shortage is seen as the most significant issue facing the city in its efforts to sustain economic growth, as there are significant and persistent labour force shortages across all occupations and industry sectors. This is resulting in businesses struggling to maintain consistent service levels, slowing the pace of their capital projects and expansions, potentially leaving the city, and limitations to attracting new business investment to Calgary. To address labour shortages and increasing competitiveness on a national and international level, Calgary will need to enhance its efforts at attracting and retaining workers from diverse cultural and demographic groups and provide them meaningful employment opportunities that meet their skill sets. This has implications for the range of services and support needed in the community to enable faster and successful integration into the community and the workforce.

While Calgary has successfully attracted a significant number of national and international workers the city must be concerned with the education attainment of the local population. Calgary’s post secondary transition rates are not suitable to be competitive in the global economy; an average of only 63.5 per cent of high school graduates move on to a post-secondary institution within six years of graduation across the two main school boards. This is not enough to ensure our future community leaders are sufficiently positioned to lead our businesses and organizations to the levels at which they need to be globally. This suggests a continued reliance on in-migration for skilled labour and educated workers. Although high school completion is not always necessary for secure, high-paying employment within Alberta’s strong economy, it remains necessary for entry into the majority of post-secondary education programs and is becoming increasingly necessary for long-term employment security in a knowledge-based economy.

Statistics Canada, Youth in Transition, 2002
As the unemployment rate remains low and labour shortages persist, employers too, will have to compete for labour by offering higher wages or other incentives to attract potential employees. Although high wage rates are an attractive factor for job seekers, increasing industry wages may hinder an employer’s ability to remain cost competitive, potentially adding inflationary pressure to prices.

Calgary’s rising housing prices, the limited supply of new units on the market and the lack of rental housing options are also impacting the ability of residents and job seekers to find suitable affordable housing. Many businesses have stated that a lack of affordable ownership and rental housing in Calgary is their top challenge in retaining and recruiting staff and consider it unacceptable that working Calgarians cannot find adequate shelter. To be a successful global city, Calgary must be able to provide a greater diversity of housing options to meet the needs of its residents who are reflective of a variety of socio-economic groups.

A further challenge for the city is the growing wealth divide that has resulted in increased social pressures for the city and its social service agencies. Homelessness has increased, as has the percentage of low income households, resulting in a higher level of disenfranchisement of a portion of the population. With the influx of immigrant workers there is a need for enhanced programming and support for their settlement into the Calgary community. The Province’s flat tax on personal income has also contributed to the creation of the province’s working poor. Most recent available information reports that in 2004, 38 per cent of individuals living in Calgary had a total income of less than $20,000, while 52 per cent of families had a total income of less than $50,000. In a rising cost environment, these numbers are not acceptable.

The rapid rate of growth in the province has also put considerable pressure on the region’s water supply. Recent reports suggest that the water levels in the rivers of Alberta have declined 20 to 84 per cent over the last 100 years and waterways in central and southern Alberta have seen the biggest decline. The declining river flows and growing water usage, especially as it relates to the processing of the vast oil sands, extensive irrigation, manufacturing and population growth is contributing to what some have called an unprecedented water crisis in Alberta. In response to this issue, the provincial government has suggested that Albertans may have to reduce water usage by as much as a third within the next seven years, therefore water is and will be an increasing issue for the continued prosperity of the region.

This has significant implications on economic development in Calgary, including future land development patterns, availability of water for both residential and industrial use, and the cost of water. Ways to ensure sustainable water usage given reduced flows will be essential into the future. This would include new water usage technologies and less water-intensive uses.

With the pace of growth, these issues are systemic and will affect Calgary’s future economic prosperity if they are not addressed.

\[\text{Statistics Canada, Income Trends in Canada, 2004}\]
A MORE EFFECTIVE, COORDINATED APPROACH TO MARKETING AND PROMOTING CALGARY IS NEEDED

Marketing and promotion is an important component of Calgary’s economic development activity; one that must aim to ensure that the city is positioned effectively and creates the right international reputation and profile to attract the greatest interest and investment from those that may be considering the city as a location to do business, invest, live or visit.

There is an unprecedented amount of international attention focused on the city of Calgary at this point in time, much of that to do with the growth in the energy sector. This provides the city with the opportunity to capitalize on the access to global businesses and markets, as well as international connections, to promote and convey a more balanced understanding of the strengths and depth of the local economy in terms of its business activity, tourism, workforce and city status.

While a variety of approaches are required to address the different audiences that must be reached, there is a need to develop a more sophisticated and targeted brand and message that reinforces a positive and coherent image of the city as a place to live, work, visit and do business. An effective marketing program for the city will also require learning from the experience of other international cities as to what is effective in investment and tourism marketing.

Another key consideration in the promotion and marketing of the city is the need to develop better cooperation and linkages with our regional partners. By effectively involving the business community, levels of government and other regional partners in the marketing and promotion of the city and region, to other businesses and customers in other jurisdictions, we will be able to develop and convey a new perspective of the city and create a more valuable statement on the attractiveness of the region for business, tourism and industry. This in turn will assist us in influencing the decisions of senior levels of government. To achieve this vision, strategic partners will need to be found and strong alliances with the business community will need to be built, as well as a more aligned approach consistent with regional and corridor brands.
our current state

We will need to work collectively as a region in order to mobilize our combined strengths and talents.

To address the challenges and opportunities that face the city will require effective partnerships and a shared vision for what the city and region can become. We will need to work collectively as a region in order to mobilize our combined strengths and talents, but we must also learn to reach beyond our boundaries to involve new perspectives and address familiar issues in less than familiar ways.
The world economy is also impacting the life and direction of Calgary’s economy. Our response to these changes will determine how well we succeed on the international stage and the degree to which we are able to become a leading global city.
GLOBAL ECONOMIC GROWTH IS A REALITY

The global economy is predicted to achieve a sustained period of expansion through 2015, but the pace of growth will slow between 2015 and 2030. This growth is expected to be broadly based but most significantly focused in the emerging markets of Brazil, Russia, India, China (‘BRIC nations’) creating significant trade opportunities for Canada and Alberta. While the traditional mode of international trade has involved physical goods with high domestic content sold between buyers and sellers in different countries, this model is being reshaped by the heightening levels of competition for investment capital, labour force mobility, the use of technology and the markets themselves. Today, product component parts are produced separately from each other, often in locations that can offer better quality and pricing. This has had a significant impact on the manufacturing sector in countries like Canada and the United States where portions of the traditional manufacturing base have moved off-shore to capitalize on cheaper cost structures. The result has been cheap imports replacing a wide range of domestic goods. In addition, broadband access and workflow processes have enabled analytic, repetitive and design work to be outsourced to companies in these countries at far lower cost than more costly centres in North America and Europe.

Countries like China and India are increasingly taking more of the value-chain as a result of aggressive educational policies and investments.

While the BRIC countries continue to be viewed as low cost jurisdictions, the increasing rates of literacy and education in these countries also mean that these economies have ready access to a skilled workforce, further eroding the competitive position of countries like Canada to attract new business investment. Increasingly, large cities like Calgary are realizing that competing on cost as a means to attract new business and industry investment is no longer an option.

As Thomas Friedman, author of *The World is Flat*, has noted, countries like China and India are increasingly taking more of the value-chain as a result of aggressive educational policies and investments, investments in infrastructure and retention efforts aimed at keeping their best and brightest. It is critical that companies in North American centres realize that their competitive position is being eroded at an increasing rate. And that we ensure we educate, train and develop our people to the level where our companies can maintain the upper-end of the value chain, and Calgarians achieve economic well-being.

The growth of emerging economies provides two key outcomes for Calgary and its business base: first is an opportunity to move into new markets; and, second, the imperative to seek security of innovation and value-add in their business process and value chain to avoid loss of market share from lower cost jurisdictions. We must accept that for certain processes and business functions, we can no longer compete with the cost, quality and supply of labour in countries like China and India. Global trade and value chains have changed significantly and likely permanently. Rather than seeing this as a detriment, the city and its business community must be ready to seize on the opportunities being created in new markets whether it is new business relationships, expanded export and trade or the ability to attract a global labour force pool, our city must better position itself for success in the global market.

Our economic future rests on innovation and high value-added design. As companies in Bangalore and Tianjin capture a larger share of the value-chain pie, Calgary companies will need to establish business relationships with these companies abroad to enable lower cost structures as well as carving out a sustainable piece of high value add in the supply chain that cannot be sent overseas. The key will be to proactively secure the areas in which Calgary companies will retain and build those into export ready competitive advantages.
What is required, both from the perspective of attracting investment and a skilled workforce is astute global marketing of the benefits of working and placing operations in Calgary, as well as doing business with Calgary-based companies. As part of this effort, the City should be promoting the fact that Calgary, Alberta and Canada are a safe and secure business environment both from a business perspective and a regulatory and legislative environment. It also requires that our local businesses as well as the broader region seize the opportunities that trade and investment with the new emerging markets represent, in order to ensure that they remain globally competitive.

**GROWING ENERGY DEMAND**

Worldwide energy demand is expected to grow by 50 per cent over the next 30 years, driven by economic growth and population increase, particularly in emerging markets. The projected growth in world consumption will drive oil sands production, which is expected to increase in the coming decades. The volatility of global oil supplies however, can affect revenues and profits and thus the sustainability of economic development at a local, national and international level. In addition, we must recognize that despite larger deposits in northern Alberta that show promise for many decades, oil and gas are finite resources that will end one day. Furthermore, global prominence and awareness of global warming suggests that Calgary companies will need to be at the forefront of change, innovation and creativity in the energy sector to stay competitive and resilient in the future. In addition, the demand for skilled labour to sustain this growth over the coming decades is likely to intensify in light of the growing competition between companies, cities and even countries for this needed talent. In order to respond to this global demand, Calgary must ensure that the city is distinguished in a way that continues to attract both investment and workers.

**LABOUR FORCE MOBILITY AND COMPETITION**

The effect of the global integration of local economies is the increasing international mobility of labour and strong competition for talent, particularly skilled and educated workers. This trend is further impacted by the shifting demographics that are occurring worldwide. Skilled workers are moving primarily from Asia to the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. There is also increasing mobility of skilled workers between developed countries. The competition for skilled workers is being further impacted by the efforts of emerging economies to retain and re-patriate their emigrated workforce, particularly their skilled workforce. Ireland and China are two examples of where this has occurred in recent years. This has implications for both Canada as a whole and Calgary in particular, given the reliance on attracting immigrants in the future as a means to sustain and expand economic growth. This fact necessitates that an economic development strategy include people and community as a focus for ensuring sustained economic growth as it will be the great cities that attract and retain their highly skilled and educated people – for business and living – that succeed in the economic development game.

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“The Indias and Chinas are increasingly adding one more thing to low-cost labour and high power technology: unfettered imagination – that is, high innovative and creative capacities. They will focus first on solving their own problems with cheap labour, high technology, and high creativity – re-imagining their own futures. Then they will focus on ours. We must have people, lots of people, who can do the same.” — Thomas Friedman, *The World is Flat*
THE COUNTRY’S POPULATION IS AGING

At the start of this century, it was acknowledged that Canada faces a significant aging of its population as the proportion of seniors increases more rapidly than all other age groups. In 2006, one Canadian in 7 was aged 65 years or over. By 2031, one Canadian in 4 will have reached age 65.

There are notable variations in the aging of the population across Canada. In 2006, the proportion of seniors ranged from a low of 2.7 per cent in Nunavut to a high of 15.4 per cent in Saskatchewan. Still, five out of six Canadian seniors live in Canada’s four most populated provinces: Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta. Like the rest of Canada’s population, the majority of seniors – approximately four out of 5 – live in a metropolitan or urban area.

While the city of Calgary has seen a significant influx of workers, it still faces the prospect of an aging population. By 2016, Calgary’s population will not be adequately adding to the labour force from net natural additions. This will compound difficulties in hiring replacement workers in the future. As the age of the population shifts there will be an impact in the marketplace for both public and private sector goods and services. And as the population ages, more investment is required in health care – an opportunity from a business perspective, but a challenge from a government investment and resource perspective.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL DEMAND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

The environment is the number one public issue in Canada in 2007. Spurred by the rising public and industry debate in developed nations on global climate change, and the need to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, there is a significant imperative to address the impact of cities and their industry on climate change, and develop new, more efficient pollution prevention and conservation technologies. This has had the effect of companies examining their business model from an environmental perspective. Many are looking to redefine their activity in terms that go beyond pollution prevention, remediation or recovery, to the creation of new alliances and partnerships with government and academia, focused more broadly on sustainability. Federal and provincial governments across the country are also focused on the environment, with the most notable being the recently implemented emissions regulations established by the Alberta Government, and the announced Environment Plan from the Federal Government. This creates an opportunity for business to link with government programs and initiatives.

There is a significant opportunity for Calgary companies to be forerunners and innovators in addressing environment related issues such as GHG emissions issues, and the environment related business impacts.
The growing trend towards pollution prevention at the source has also spurred the demand for the development of more energy-efficient and cleaner technologies for application in the primary resource sector, manufacturing, energy and service sectors, as well as for government services.

The environmental business sector of Alberta and western Canada has traditionally relied on servicing the Canadian domestic market, most particularly the energy and urban sector markets, as business and cities seek to reduce GHG emissions. While this market will continue to grow, it is the international export market to the developing economies of China and India that holds some of the greatest potential for trade and the export of expertise.

In response to shifting consumer and industry demands, the environmental industry is now much more closely linked to other sectors involved in sustainable community development; green building design and construction; energy efficiency and eco-industrial networking; sustainable urban infrastructure; and sustainable resource management.

However, Calgary businesses have never been ones to wait for government to take the lead. Historically, Alberta has been at the forefront of developing innovative solutions to local environmental problems. The combination of market access and strong technical skills has enabled the industry to strengthen its competitive capabilities and transfer this expertise to other sectors such as petrochemical, agriculture, urban and transportation sectors on an international level. Continued development of Alberta’s natural resources, in particular the oil sands, the growth of its key cities and the pressure for environmental sustainability, should be the catalyst for the development of solutions to environmental technologies in GHG reduction, water management and the agriculture waste/biofuels sectors.

There is a significant opportunity for Calgary companies to be forerunners and innovators in addressing environment related issues such as GHG emissions issues, and the environment related business impacts, to create a world-class environmental technology industry in Alberta. While more needs to be done to put the province into a leadership role in this regard, the province's resource endowments, entrepreneurial culture and technical skills provide a basis for growth in a highly competitive global environment.

In short, Calgary must be a highly sensitive environmental steward as a city and economy, ensuring we deal with the issue and be innovative in what we design, build and operate.
GROWING IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL ECONOMIES

As regional economies go, the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor is currently home to one of the strongest economies in North America, if not the world. Fuelled by growth in the province’s energy sector it continues to post some of the strongest gains in both real GDP and population increases on the North American landscape. What this means for those living in the region, generally comprising the Greater Edmonton region in the north and Greater Calgary region in the south, as well as communities like Airdrie, Red Deer and Leduc, is that according to a 2003 TD Bank study, they are living in “the only Canadian large urban region that has been able to amass a U.S. style level of wealth while maintaining a Canadian-style quality of life.”

In recent years, businesses and individuals have flocked to the region to take advantage of the considerable market opportunities that have emerged, while benefiting from the vast wealth of natural resources, low crime rates, a high-quality education system, a clean environment and a wealth of recreational and cultural experiences. Given all of these assets, the Corridor has enormous potential not only to become an economic engine in North America but also one of the most prosperous and best places to live. This notoriety provides Calgary and the Calgary Regional Partnership with potential to leverage off the region’s performance and critical mass as part of its efforts to promote and market the city and region to the world.

The Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) is a strong force for sustainable enriched communities, prosperous economy, healthy environments, and sustainable infrastructure. The CRP aims to generate sustainable prosperity in the Calgary region through creating a highly desirable place to live, serving as a magnet for skilled talent from around the world.

Economic developers from across the CRP communities are working collectively on projects that will bridge traditional boundaries and generate economic opportunities, awareness and linkages for the entire regional economy.

A very important regional neighbour for Calgary is the Tsuu T’ina Nation. Bordering Calgary in the southwest, the Tsuu T’ina Nation is a neighbour and partner that we have not yet collaborated with to any significant level. There are tremendous benefits that could accrue in terms of economic development and employment that should be explored further.


The Corridor has enormous potential not only to become an economic engine in North America but also one of the most prosperous and best places to live.
A NEW APPROACH TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS NEEDED

The traditional comparative economic advantage for many communities across the country has been ready access to natural resources, an ample supply of highly-skilled and semi-skilled labour at reasonable costs, relatively cheap supplies of energy and proximity to the United States market. These advantages have favoured, and for a long period of time sustained, a resource and manufacturing based economy in many communities across Canada.
But these advantages are diminishing in many centres as evidenced by the rate at which labour intensive industrial activity has moved off-shore to lower cost locations or the degree to which manufacturing functions have been automated in order to reduce cost and increase production.

Necessity requires that Canada, and ultimately Calgary, accelerate its progression down a path of higher-order and value-added innovation, design, services and activities that revolve around knowledge, creativity and intellectual skills. Increasingly however, economic success on this level is linked with a more global knowledge-based information and creative economy. In this economy, the emphasis shifts to the larger cities and city-regions where business and industry are more likely to be able to find the workforce, capital and infrastructure they need to succeed. Big cities are not only the locus of research, development and innovation; they also serve as gateways to global trade. Calgary must strive to enhance its prominence as a global centre of innovation and creativity. To do this, we must increase access to education, continue to upskill Calgarians and encourage business and institutions to innovate and research new ideas and processes.

Calgary’s emergence as a global city requires that we rethink our approach to economic development. As cities and city-regions grow in importance in the global economy, more attention must be given to creating an urban environment that provides a high quality of life and quality of place for all residents and ensures our ability to attract the best and the brightest to our city. We must look beyond the traditional economic development approaches to investment attraction and retention and give balanced consideration to investing in and improving the skills of the city’s workforce and therefore their chances for economic prosperity, developing our entrepreneurs, workforce recruitment and immigration, and providing the technological infrastructure that supports and nurtures creativity and innovation. Increasing prosperity and enhancing quality of life in the city while at the same time being sensitive to environmental impacts is the ultimate goal of Calgary’s economic development.

“…economic developers need to think more about quality than quantity; more about getting prosperous than simply getting bigger…” – Progressive Policy Institute’s New Economy Index

“Prosperity is the fundamental goal for all economic development. The ultimate evaluation of economic development initiatives should be whether the people impacted attain a higher standard of living.”

– Council on Competitiveness, Measuring Regional Innovation

Our vision for the city must be about more than just providing a good job with a good income. In developing Calgary’s Economic Development Strategy, the community has told us to be bold; to make the tough decisions that will differentiate us on the global stage and to develop an international reputation as a distinctive city that people will choose to work, visit and live in. It will be about making choices and investments that are ahead of our time for the Calgary that we can become.

CanadaWest Foundation, Rationale for Renewal: The Imperatives Behind a New Big City- Provincial Partnership. September 2005
We must foster the conditions that enable more people to attain an improved standard of living and make a greater contribution to the economy.

WE MUST BALANCE THE IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS AND PEOPLE

While international energy demands, the globalization of economies and an increase in international trade will provide Calgary with stable economic growth opportunities over the coming years, these same factors are also impacting Calgary’s sustainability, most noticeably the heightened labour force shortage and the widening income divide in the city. While employment growth is occurring in the highly skilled job categories, the service sector economy which is often comprised of low skill, low wage employment is also expanding, contributing to the growing number of working poor in the city.

Calgary’s population is its most important asset. But long term economic growth can only be sustained by making the best use of the talents and energies of the city’s workforce. However, as the city is faced with a growing global labour force shortage, this brings into focus the need to provide a quality of environment that will not only attract and retain business investment but also the workers essential to their continued growth and success. Calgary’s Economic Development Strategy must balance the importance of business and industry with the needs of the workforce that fuel our economic growth. We must foster the conditions that enable more people to attain an improved standard of living and make a greater contribution to the economy, while at the same time ensuring that the conditions prevail to enable businesses to thrive.

As we build our local talent pool and workforce, wise economic development will also be about focusing on our core strengths and recognizing where collaboration and outsourcing makes sense. Rising costs of business, labour shortages, and the rising Canadian dollar, all make certain activities less economical and less feasible in Calgary than they once were. Calgary’s approach to economic development must also include ways to connect local businesses with new markets, and new suppliers around the world to take advantage of more cost effective processes and stages in the value chain. Bi-lateral relationships with cities, trade missions, relationships with individual companies and institutions abroad will also be important. All of these tactics will be required to help Calgary companies become the most globally efficient and effective possible.

Businesses need a stable business climate, a reliable and sustainable pool of skilled and talented workers, high quality infrastructure and access to international markets. A balanced approach to Calgary’s economic development includes the needs of business, higher education and skills training, building a high quality urban environment, social inclusion, accessible public transit, investment in arts and culture, and a sense of purpose and shared meaning for residents.

This balance is the promise of economic development in Calgary.
OUR STRATEGY NEEDS TO BE SMART

With a five year historical population growth rate of 13.4 per cent and a projected annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent over the next 10 years, there are few who would argue that the city of Calgary is a rapidly expanding major urban centre. While growth is seen by some as inevitable, it can be focused, sustainable and equitable. Calgary’s capacity to manage and shape this growth will depend on our collective response to a number of questions such as: what type of business and industry best suits the talent and expertise that resides in our community? What type of skills and training does our population need to effectively respond to the demands of the global market? Are we bearing unnecessary costs or setting ourselves up for costs in the future? Are we all benefiting? Are we meeting basic needs? What level of government investment or intervention is needed in the city? What kind of environment and communities do we want our city and our industry to leave to the next generation?

To answer these questions we must consider not just the prospects or capacity for economic or corporate growth, but capacity to tap the resources and capabilities of our community in a way that improves the quality of life of our city and our residents.

What this requires is a wise approach to economic development. We need to develop our capacities – skill development, training, resilience and sustainability. We need to increase our capacity to grow and to make wise decisions about our future actions. We need to heighten our ability to critically assess our strengths and our weaknesses as a city and continually adjust our plans, programmes and our thinking as to the direction that the city is headed. It is about doing economic development wisely – knowing our strengths and what makes us unique and building off of them to ensure a prosperous future and to have the wisdom to change course and be responsive when we need to.

BRINGING THE FUTURE INTO FOCUS

Throughout the consultation phase of the Strategy, it was clear that people wanted the city to address the essential issues that would protect and enhance our short to medium term economic growth and prosperity. It was also very apparent that people wanted to see the city challenge the status quo to create a bigger, bolder statement of what the city could be – to capture the energy and enthusiasm that is Calgary.

The objectives of the Strategy have captured these two perspectives as foundational and aspirational actions with a planned implementation taking place over a 10-year time frame. The foundational actions direct essential issues that must be addressed in order to protect the city’s basic competitive market position and provide the basic skills and infrastructure needed by Calgarians. The aspirational actions set out much more aggressive targets for the city that will take more time, resources and a collective vision to implement, but whose achievement would launch Calgary onto the world stage like nothing else.

People wanted to see the city challenge the status quo to create a bigger, bolder statement of what the city could be – to capture the energy and enthusiasm that is Calgary.
targeting our growth

While Calgary continues to grow as a major centre for the global energy industry, its expanding economy has diversified far beyond its traditional strength. The Calgary Economic Opportunities Study completed in conjunction with the development of the Strategy revealed that Information & Communication Technology, Financial and Business Services, Environmental Technologies, Transportation and Logistics, Manufacturing, Creative Industries and Tourism are some of the other major sectors contributing to Calgary’s high rate of growth.
To secure our economic future, it is essential that we build our business retention and attraction efforts around key sectors that capitalize on the strengths of the community and best demonstrate the capacity of the city to attract and retain investment. While this will require a continued focus on the needs of the city’s globally-renowned sectors, as well as greater levels of support and development of our growth industries, it also requires us to look to the future in shaping our industries for continued success. The Strategy that follows provides a strong level of support for this effort, as it has focused on those measures that will enhance the competitiveness of our city and that of our industries at a global level.

In targeting our growth the following sectors will play a key role in the future of our city.

ENERGY

From a supply perspective and under current global consumption patterns and preferences, Alberta and Calgary’s economic development through oil and gas is healthy. Calgary is Canada’s energy capital. It is the decision-making hub and head office of every major oil and gas company in the country and is rapidly becoming an innovative national centre for finance, design, and construction associated with the oil and gas sector. As well, Calgary is home to the industry’s major trade associations and the nation’s energy regulator, the National Energy Board. No other industry in the country is as highly concentrated as Canada’s energy sector: the decisions made in downtown Calgary affect multi-billion dollar projects in Alberta, Canada and around the world.

Despite this concentration and the years of potential unconventional supplies of both oil and gas in Alberta, two realities must be realized: first, they are finite resources; and, second, the global environmental movement is advocating changes in the way we use and burn fossil fuels. However it must be recognized that there is opportunity within the two realities. Opportunity exists for Calgary companies to identify and pursue long-term sustainability of their sector.

It is not unrealistic to suggest that Calgary will be THE world energy centre. Moving into a “greener” world and one where supply will eventually be exhausted will take creativity, planning and strategy – something Calgary business is legendary for. To do this, Calgary’s expertise in energy should be harnessed and spread across energy writ large to encompass all things energy and energy related, including:

- Fossil fuels
- Bio fuels
- Clean and alternative energies
- Power generation, storage and distribution
- Emission reductions technology and carbon capture/sequestration

Calgary is Canada’s energy capital. No other industry in the country is as highly concentrated as Canada’s energy sector.
Rather than ignore realities, there is tremendous opportunity to be proactive and secure our position as THE global centre for ALL things energy, across the entire value chain of research, development, design, finance, production, exploration, education, marketing, transportation, sales and management.

CONCEPT: The creation of the Global Energy Policy & Interpretive Centre, the world’s premier energy policy, educational and interpretive centre fostering increased policy focus on global energy, alternative energy and an interpretive centre on energy types, sources and technologies.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

The capital flows that occur in Calgary, in support of the energy sector, are massive. No other sector in Canada requires the capital infusion that the energy sector does. Significant opportunity exists for Calgary to leverage the existing capital flows from the energy sector and broaden capital availability and expertise in Calgary across all sectors to create Canada’s financial capital and a global capital epicentre. Calgary’s financial service sector already includes a diversity of multinational and retail banks, investment firms, stock brokers, trust companies, credit unions, mortgage companies, as well as insurance companies, agents, brokers and adjusters. All of Canada’s major banks maintain their western Canadian head offices here, making Calgary the banking centre of western Canada.

A continued focus on efforts to diversify Calgary’s capital market base and attract global firms to Calgary for more than just energy transactions will assist in leveraging the critical mass and sophistication of the capital markets in Calgary. This would also include new and innovative financing parties and tools such as growth of passive institutional investors, new equity firms, various funds, and public-private partnership funding.

CONCEPT: Development of Calgary as a global capital epicentre through diversification of presence and expertise in capital markets.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Health and Wellness sector represents a significant opportunity for Calgary. Calgary has become a leader in advanced technological research and service delivery, as well as becoming a leader in wellness. With existing strengths in the areas of sport medicine & fitness, kinesiology, and e-health, the opportunity is ripe for advancement and development of the health and wellness sector as a collective economic driver. The convergence of ICT and related healthcare research and services produces significant niche potential for Calgary given the current activities at the Calgary Health Region. The CHR’s focus on electronic health records has placed Calgary in a leadership role in advancing the development and application of this technology in healthcare.

Additionally, the recently completed Alberta Children’s Hospital is the most modern facility of its kind in North America, and the South Calgary Health Campus, once complete, will be a state-of-the-art model for the use of advanced technologies and approaches to enable and maximize available resources. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, slated to open in 2008, will also place the University of Calgary and the Province of Alberta at the forefront of research into animal diseases and food supply safety and provide the city with an opportunity to become a global leader in this area.

Significant opportunity exists for Calgary to leverage the existing capital flows from the energy sector and broaden capital availability.
targeting our growth //

Calgary has developed a truly integrated international transportation and logistics system.

Calgary truly has the immediate opportunity to become one of the top health care centres in the world. This includes not only traditional expert models of service delivery, but also a system that embraces innovation in technology and in the workforce, emphasizes wellness and community care, develops integration of community specific care and focuses on technology, products and services required in the patient experience and patient safety.

**CONCEPT:** Creation of the Canadian Health and Wellness Centre, an integrated centre of excellence for clinical and wellness services, medical education and research, based at the University of Calgary/Calgary Health Region Foothills Medical Centre and the Alberta Children’s Hospital. It would be supported through collaboration with the Texas Medical Centre, North America’s largest medical complex via our bilateral agreement.

**TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS**

Calgary has developed a truly integrated international transportation and logistics system, with a full range of multi-modal services and solutions for business and industry. These include logistics, supply chain management and transportation system management services, accessible terminals, warehousing and distribution centres, and linked road, rail and air networks and carriers. Over time, the Calgary International Airport and the surrounding industrial and commercial lands should be positioned as a global logistics centre for high-value, time sensitive goods, incorporating integrated supply-chain management and opportunities with multi-modal, including road, rail and air.

**CONCEPT:** Creation of an international aerospace hub at Springbank airport, including the testing facility for composite aircraft, personal aircraft manufacturing, and the expansion of Calgary’s unmanned vehicle systems (UVS) sector.

**ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES**

The drivers for the environmental technologies sector, nationally and internationally, include climate change, corporate responsibility, consumer demand, investor preferences and risk management. As a result there is enormous potential to expand this sector into the developing economies of Asia and South America over the next 10 years, as many of these markets will require considerable investment in primary environmental services - clean air, water and land - as they industrialize or clean-up the legacy of earlier industrialization. This provides the city of Calgary and its business community with the opportunity to be global leaders in the development of environmental technologies and services.

6Western Economic Diversification Canada, Western Canadian Environmental Technology Forum Final Report, March 2004

Developing economies of Asia and South America provide the city of Calgary and its business community with the opportunity to be global leaders in the development of environmental technologies and services.
VALUE ADDED MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing has made a significant contribution to the local economy over the last 10 years and historically has been a major contributor to Calgary’s strong economic growth. It is seen as a diverse industry comprising both consumer and industrial products. The impact of the province’s oil and gas industry has also been felt in the manufacturing sector in the form of strong markets within the provincial, national and international resource sectors. This has resulted in a strong chemical manufacturing sector, primary and fabricated metal manufacturing and machinery manufacturing.

In considering the opportunities to expand or enhance this sector, consideration will be given to growth in value-added manufacturing as it relates to the retention and attraction of related spin-off activity from the oil and gas sector.

In addition, there are also opportunities outside the traditional manufacturing sector including food manufacturing. While many elements of the North American market are considered to be mature, a key source of new growth in the food manufacturing sector is the steady population increase of immigrant groups, and the shift to segmented or targeted marketing of agriculture-based products. Heightened consumer awareness has also increased the importance of food safety and product traceability as well as health and wellness, and convenience of food products. This aspect of the industry may also provide opportunities to integrate our manufacturing capacity with the ongoing research in the bio and life science fields.

NICHE INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

Calgary is well positioned to become a niche Canadian ICT centre given the growing range of ICT firms and expertise. Many of the needed components of a high tech cluster are already present in Calgary – ongoing private and public sector research and development, software and systems development, manufacturing, and telecommunications. Further efforts to support the expansion of the sector should include the development, growth and attraction of more businesses and people involved in geomatics, wireless technology, remote sensing and 3D imaging. It should include development of an increased ecosystem to support innovation, as well as targeted efforts to attract firms involved in emerging ICT consumer markets e.g. media, video games, security and intelligence, personal security, e-commerce and pervasive healthcare.

CONCEPT: Development of Innovation Park at the University of Calgary campus to support a critical mass of academic, institutional and business research and technology development, and new company formation.

Calgary is well positioned to become a niche Canadian ICT centre.
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The importance of creative and cultural industries as drivers of employment, income, and economic development is being widely heralded by cities around the globe. The impact of science and technology on culture, and vice versa, as well as the recognition and commitment to research in the creative industries at both the provincial and federal levels has raised its level of importance and credibility as a component of city building.

CONCEPT: Creation of a hub in the city, a centre of excellence in film and creative industries is required - the Calgary Creative Hub – a purpose-built film studio, and campus facilities for pre and post-production activities, including digital and interactive media.

TOURISM AND CONVENTION

Tourism has long been a key component of the Calgary economy due to its gateway location to the outstanding outdoor adventure and pristine wilderness only an hour away in the Canadian Rockies. This has translated into more than five million visitors to the city each year and a year round tourism industry that comprises a growing wealth of heritage and cultural attractions, sporting teams and events, diverse restaurants, specialty retail, and access to outdoor activities such as golf, parks and trailways. In developing this aspect of the local economy, more effort must be given to promoting all aspects of the city’s tourism potential, particularly its arts and culture.

Calgary’s growing reputation as a cosmopolitan city of more than one million people has also resulted in increased interest in the city as a location for high profile convention and trade show events often referred to as the global Meetings Industry. This multibillion dollar industry which also includes corporate meetings, exhibitions, consumer shows and special events is a source of direct economic benefits to the community as a result of the spending of delegates and event organizers as well as additional community benefits such as destination profile, trade and investment, product showcasing and professional development opportunities.

The competitive nature of this industry and the mobility associated with many of the events, means that the city operates within a demanding, competitive environment with globally recognized expectations. To effectively compete for this type of activities will require the city to seriously consider the quality of its tourism products and convention facilities to meet the growing demands of this market.

The importance of creative and cultural industries as drivers of employment, income, and economic development is being widely heralded by cities around the globe.
the strategy

Strategic planning is the process of defining where a community wants to go and effectively creating a road map for how to get there. In this section, we have recommended a set of goals, strategic objectives and actions to ensure sustainable economic growth in the city, improve the level of competitiveness of the city’s businesses and workforce, promote and enhance the quality of life and experience for all the residents of Calgary, and inspire participants in the implementation of a bold vision for the city. The recommendations are the result of extensive community consultation, research on the current state of Calgary’s competitiveness and critical review by business, community leaders and senior City of Calgary staff.
The Calgary Economic Development Strategy is underpinned by three high level goals, intended to anchor and qualify all strategic initiatives or ensuing actions to support the vision of a greater level of prosperity for the city and its residents.

By definition the goals represent the overall vision and desired outcomes from the strategic planning process and present a view of the type of community that Calgarians have told us they wish to have, one where people play the key role in the future of the city, where business and enterprise are well supported and where the city itself is promoted nationally and internationally for its capabilities and success. The objectives articulate exactly how the goals are to be achieved. Strategies articulate what levels we want to achieve. Actions take on two perspectives – foundational and aspirational. Foundational actions direct us to essential issues that must be addressed in the short to medium term in order to ensure and enhance the city’s competitive market position and quality of life, while the aspirational actions provide longer term direction for what the city should become.

It should be noted that the list of actions is a starting point based on community input and research at a point in time. It is by no means an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all the potential actions for Calgary’s economic development. Other actions exist and new ones will emerge throughout the 10-year lifespan of the Strategy. It will be critical for effective implementation to continually assess the suitability of identified actions and consider additional or new actions to improve overall success.

The result is a community that will retain and attract the world’s best expertise and talent from across the country and around the world, an economy built around centres of excellence, a community with an international profile and reputation – a global centre for business and people; a liveable city of opportunity and activity. To achieve this vision however, requires that we see the strategy not as a series of component parts to be acted on, but as a series of inter-connected steps, each with a key role to play in shaping the future of our city.

Our three goals are:

1. Focus on People and Community
2. Focus on Business and Enterprise
3. Focus on International Reach

The type of community that Calgarians have told us they wish to have is one where people play a key role in the future of the city, where business and enterprise are well supported and where the city itself is promoted nationally and internationally for its capabilities and success.
"Make people the focus of economic development." – CEO’s for Cities, The Young and Restless in a Knowledge Economy

Good cities evolve into great cities by drawing on their citizens’ collective experiences and by identifying and strengthening the very characteristics that make them unique. Civic governments need to ensure that the policy framework and the community infrastructure is in place to foster the sharing of ideas, the development of skills, and the creation of liveable and welcoming communities. They will be vibrant places of knowledge, activity and gathering spots. And our city must preserve our strong values of safety, cleanliness and friendliness as it grows.

Valuable networks must be established where people can engage and interact. These networks can be formal or informal, fluid or stable – whatever their structure, it is critical to enable networks to exist for engagement, integration, collaboration and sharing of ideas. By providing a strong sense of place and experience, we will make our communities welcoming to all Calgarians. This is an essential element to the success of this strategy as it will be our people that drive our future economic growth.

By providing a high standard of education and skills training we will foster a workforce that is able to achieve prosperity and a higher standard of living – the ultimate goal of economic development. Today’s economy requires a skilled, educated and dynamic workforce; one that can think cross-sectorally and across disciplines of creative and unique solutions. Our population will be prepared to adapt to changing demands and apply their skills, knowledge and capabilities to multiple opportunities.

As our population ages and the global economy becomes more complex, the ability to attract, retain and develop workers will increasingly separate good cities from global cities. We must facilitate the availability and access to of world class education and research programs and facilities, and an environment that promotes creativity and strong linkages between private industry and the education sector.

“As business strategist John Hagel III noted, the “only sustainable edge” for companies and countries is the distinctive talents and entrepreneurship of their workforce. Economics can always be win-win. But those who will win the most today, added Hagel, will be those who are best and fastest at attracting talent." – Thomas Friedman, The World is Flat

We must also recognize that creativity needs to be the ethos of our city; one that is ingrained and nurtured across an entire population. Creativity crosses boundaries into areas not traditionally viewed as creative endeavours – such as construction, finance, engineering, life sciences and others. Culture too, is no longer just about the arts, but is an invitation for people of different backgrounds, ethnic groups, and lifestyles to contribute to the life and vibrancy of a city.

Creative leaders will gravitate to regions where innovation is promoted through educational, cultural, business and research institutions. Investment in these institutions and associated programs is imperative to being globally competitive as a choice location for business success and as a premier location for people to live and work.

“The one responsibility a city has is the encouragement of the possibility of excellence. The extent to which it addresses this duty is how, in comparison to the great cities of the world, it will be judged. Excellence of education, excellence of health care, excellence of baseball, of public transportation, of commerce, of charity, of waterfront, excellence of art galleries, excellence of justice, excellence of opera – to name but a few of the impossible ambitions of a city that might aspire to greatness.

“It is not necessarily the city’s responsibility to achieve these goals, or to pay for them, but it is its job to make room for their possibility, and to celebrate when, against so many odds, that possibility becomes reality. That’s what cities are for.” David MacFarlane, “It’s Open. Who Cares?”, –The Globe and Mail, August 24, 2006.

Goal 1 Objectives

1. Educate and Engage
2. Remove Barriers to Meaningful Employment
3. Enhance the City’s Sense of Place and Experience
Educate and Engage

“There is an economic imperative to tend to the social dimensions of health, housing, immigrant settlement and education, which make for a well-educated and highly engaged workforce.” – The Conference Board of Canada, Mission Possible: Successful Canadian Cities, The Canada Project Final Report Volume III

Economic growth in the city has outpaced the growth of the labour force in the last five years. This imbalance, combined with intensified economic growth in northern Alberta and British Columbia, have contributed to deep and persistent labour force shortages across all occupational groups and industry sectors in the city. While the recent high levels of international and inter-provincial in-migration have alleviated some of the pressure on the labour force demand that has resulted from Calgary and Alberta’s booming economy, the fact remains that job vacancy rates as high as 10 per cent have been reported in many goods-producing occupations and five to 9 per cent in service sector occupations. The demand for skilled labour over the coming decades is likely to further intensify in light of the growing competition between companies, cities and even countries for this needed talent, and demographics – the aging of the population. With wage and business costs already increasing and record low unemployment levels, more needs to be done to address the current and future labour force needs of our business and industry sectors.

If it is the human capital of a city that drives an economy, then it is the talented people within that population that generate the new ideas that drive innovation. However, cities and regions cannot expect to develop and sustain a skilled workforce without investment in the institutions that create and nurture this talent - universities, colleges, as well as the K-12 education system. While staying competitive in the modern global economy requires a greater capacity for lifelong learning and skill adaptation, if Calgary is to be a leader in the global economy this will mean investing heavily in the approach, quality and accessibility of our education system in a way that reflects the changing needs of our population and industry, in particular the need for more industry focused, creative, artistic and technologically advanced programming. At the same time, it must provide opportunities for engaging the various pillars of its economy – business, educators, workers - in a way that fosters ideas and innovations and increases our capacities to adapt to and lead in the changes in the global market.

Our post-secondary educational access has not kept pace with the city’s economic growth. While Calgary boasts the most educated population in Canada, with 73 per cent having attended a post-secondary education institution, Calgary has an extremely low level of post-secondary transition for high school students that move on to post-secondary education at 63.5 per cent within six years, indicating a heavy reliance on in-migration for our pool of skilled and educated workers. Although high school completion is not always necessary to secure, high-paying employment within Alberta’s strong economy, it remains necessary for entry into the majority of post-secondary education programs and is becoming increasingly necessary for long-term employment security in a knowledge-based economy. New approaches aimed at increasing learning, completion, and life-long learning overall, are critical to Calgary’s future workforce prosperity.
We must achieve sustainable growth, accessibility and program development of the education system in the Calgary Region.

Calgary has an extremely low level of post-secondary transition for high school students that move on to post-secondary education at 63.5 per cent within six years.

Increased access to post-secondary education is required, as reports of many Calgary students being turned away from local post-secondary institutions continue year-after-year. This objective cannot be at the expense of any single institution, but rather requires growth in the overall system. Educational investment is an investment in human capacity – the competitive advantage in the future economy. Increased human capacity across the population means increased income and prosperity for more Calgarians. As part of this effort we must achieve sustainable growth, accessibility and program development of the education system in the Calgary Region, for a strong and healthy education system, particularly the post-secondary sector, is critical to Calgary’s future economic success.

We need to foster and support an innovation ecosystem that provides full spectrum support to business and entrepreneurs, and does so in a supportive environment that encourages risk. This innovation ecosystem needs to be based on the stability and health of our energy sector, and focused on using our current strength as a “safety cushion”. Creating a climate of risk taking through this safety cushion, and one that rewards risk, innovation and creative processes is vital to Calgary’s escalation as a centre of innovation. That, along with available capital and, business coaching and research activity will be Calgary’s best path to increased innovation.

**Strategies + Actions**

A. FOUNDATIONAL

i. Make Calgary the education and intellectual centre of Canada.

1. Provide access to Canada’s top education system (primary, secondary and post-secondary) for all Calgarians, to ensure a well-trained and highly educated workforce and a globally minded citizenry. This includes instruction, program and facility requirements.

2. Create the Calgary Business and Education Forum that links business with all levels of education to share needs and ideas, and implement mutually beneficial initiatives.

3. Develop the urban campus in downtown Calgary.
B. ASPIRATIONAL

i. Make Calgary the education and intellectual centre of Canada.

1. Deliver the most technologically advanced programming in primary, secondary and post-secondary education, including e-learning and virtual education, offering cutting edge technology, global educators and experiences to Calgary education programming.

2. Deliver the most artistic, creative and innovative programming for primary, secondary and post-secondary education that works to develop the individual talents, skills and interests of students and to foster a creative, and tech-savvy population.

3. Develop the Calgary Centre for Dialogue, an iconic facility located downtown, for community interaction and events, connecting Calgarians with a global network of ideas, citizens and discussion.

Remove Barriers to Meaningful Employment

Good cities evolve into great cities by drawing on their cultural and creative wealth. Calgary’s population is its most important economic asset and long term growth will depend on making the best use of the initiative and talent in our workforce and our continuing ability to draw new people to our city with the prospect of a high quality of life and excellent employment opportunities. When groups are left out of the community network or face barriers to meaningful employment or re-entry into the employment market such as the lack of available and affordable childcare, our city is not able to capitalize on the whole of our intellectual and cultural resources. Training, housing, childcare, settlement and integration are all aspects of human needs that reduce potential barriers to employment. New immigrants, aboriginals, the less affluent, seniors, women and other often marginalized groups must be included in our community networks so that they can become greater cultural and economic contributors. Addressing this range of issues is critical to improving both the output and equity of the Calgary economy.

With increasing net migration from international and provincial sources, Calgary’s population and labour force is expected to become increasingly diverse. In addressing labour shortages and increasing competitiveness on a national and international level, Calgary cannot do it by educating more Calgarians alone. We will need to enhance efforts at attracting and retaining workers from other countries. We will need to find, attract and retain the world’s best and brightest and we will need to do it fast. This has implications for the range of services and support needed in the community to enable a faster, successful settlement and integration into the community. Calgary must ensure that we are creating a welcoming and supportive community for all of our residents, as well as those that will choose Calgary as home in the future.

While many of our residents have individual and family incomes well above the Canadian averages, the cost of living in Calgary, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), has increased by 12.3 per cent over the past five years. This has significant implications for Calgary’s population in the lower income levels when faced with the increasing cost of housing, transportation and household essentials. In 2004, 38 per cent of individuals living in Calgary had a total income of less than $20,000, while 52 per cent of families had a total income of less than $50,000. Overall, the rising cost of living will impact Calgary’s ability to attract and retain workers at lower incomes, particularly in the hospitality and retail sectors, where lower incomes are more common. This will place greater demands on social service agencies as well as many areas of our business community as they struggle to find suitable employees.

Long term growth will depend on making the best use of the initiative and talent in our workforce and our continuing ability to draw new people to our city.
The continuing high demand for housing in Calgary has been supported by strong employment conditions, high net migration and positive income growth. As a result, average housing prices rose dramatically in 2006 and at the end of the first quarter in 2007 the average resale housing price in Calgary was $372,042. The high demand is also reflected in the overall dwelling vacancy rate which CMHC estimated at 0.5 per cent in 2007. The rental market vacancy rate has also dropped significantly, with the apartment vacancy rate in the Calgary Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) dropping from 1.6 per cent in October 2005 to 0.5 per cent in October 2006. The rising housing prices, the limited supply of new units on the market and the lack of housing options will impact the ability of many residents and job seekers to find affordable housing.

Strategies + Actions

A. FOUNDATIONAL

i. Ensure Calgarians are active contributors to the economy to their full potential.

1. Create a comprehensive labour force development strategy to meet the current and future labour force needs, addressing lifelong learning, up-skilling, education, accreditation, immigration, apprentice programs, career counselling and ensuring increasing participation from under-represented groups such as aboriginals, physically disabled, immigrants and women.

2. Create sufficient child and elder care spaces/options to support individuals in their education or participation in the workforce.

3. Create sufficient affordable rental and ownership housing for all Calgarians, that includes a broad mix of housing forms and options, by creating innovative tools and approaches.

ii. Welcome all new Calgarians with open arms.

1. Implement a Welcome to Calgary settlement strategy and program for all immigrants and new Calgarians that enables new individuals and families to settle and integrate in Calgary easily. This includes information and assistance on housing, health care, language, community networks, residence permits, counselling and other areas of civic life.

Enhance the City’s Sense of Place and Experience

Rather than an environment where cities compete for business and people follow, increasingly we live in world where cities and regions must compete for people and it is the businesses that follow. Educated workers are not only more mobile than they have been in previous generations, but they now have a wider range of choices of where they can live. The challenge for cities today is to figure out how to attract these workers to their community and how to keep them there.
While there is no definitive answer, research from the U.S. suggests that college and university educated workers in the 25-34 year old age group are looking for communities they can be proud of, part of, are globally recognized and are clean and green. Urban quality is increasingly important in attracting both the educated worker as well as business investment. The quality of the built environment and public spaces, recreation, health care, the vibrancy of its commercial and cultural districts, the condition of the road network and transit system, telecommunications infrastructure – all of these are necessary and fundamental to attracting national and international talent and creating a desirable place to live. They also convey our attitude and ethos towards environmental sensitivity and sustainability of our city’s built form – our sustainable, complete communities.

According to author Richard Florida, attracting the workforce that will drive economic success in the future has implications for the design of a city, as ‘creatives’ often prefer cities that provide an indigenous street-level culture and a mix of uses. They are also drawn to places and communities where many outdoor activities are prevalent—both because they enjoy these activities and because their presence is seen as a signal that the place is amenable to the broader creative lifestyle. This would include smaller commercial districts such as Business Revitalization Zones (BRZ’s).

The quality of a city’s downtown or core area is an important consideration. In the U.S. and in Canada, the economic benefits attributed to public sector investment in downtowns total in the billions of dollars, even though the hard economic facts are often inadequately documented. This is particularly true for those expenditures that include improvements to the public realm. These key fiscal benefits – including enhanced real estate value, tourism value and taxation value – are reflected in numerous case studies all of which confirm the importance of public sector investment in a downtown core and demonstrate an order of magnitude of the economic value created with the initial investment.

Throughout our consultation process, stakeholders expressed strong opinions as to the need for the City of Calgary to commit to developing high quality public spaces, innovative neighbourhood design and local architecture. Additionally, they expressed a need to increase, upgrade and build arts and culture spaces as a way to make the city more attractive and appealing to residents as well as visitors.

Good quality urban design is a key to making places that are successful both socially and economically, good to live in, and attractive to visit. Quality of place and experience is essential to creating a strong community identity that provides opportunities for the collision of people, ideas and experience.
Strategies + Actions

A. FOUNDATIONAL

i. Ensure Calgary is a city of vibrant, complete, sustainable communities.

1. Make Calgary a model for higher density living by means of increased densification throughout the city, particularly in the Centre City and around major hubs and institutions that are supported by public transit.

2. Make Calgary a model for sustainable land development and livable communities as articulated in the Centre City Plan, Integrated Land Use and Mobility Plan and imagineCALGARY.

3. Implement a Calgary Cultural and Commercial District Enhancement Strategy, in conjunction with the Business Revitalization Zones, in making Calgary’s commercial hubs highly vibrant and utilized through infrastructure, architecture, urban design and diversity of activity.

ii. Grow Calgary’s position as an international centre of art, culture and design.

1. Hold international design competitions for key city-wide projects, particularly in the Centre City, including East Village, Victoria Park, and transit-oriented developments to create vibrant, exciting, green and complete developments.

2. Make Calgary a top arts and culture destination in Canada by nurturing a more creative ethos in the community through dialogue and educational programming, providing more arts space, increasing support and visibility for arts, and enabling more public exhibition of art.

B. ASPIRATIONAL

ii. Grow Calgary’s position as an international centre of art, culture and design.

1. Strive to make Calgary a North American architectural capital by fostering an increased culture of design, supporting innovation in design and creating appropriate development tools.

2. Make a strong civic commitment to the quality of the city’s architecture and environmental stewardship through the construction of iconic and Silver LEED certified public buildings and public infrastructure.

Good quality urban design is a key to making places that are successful both socially and economically, good to live in, and attractive to visit.
Success in a global economy requires both diversification and differentiation at a national or international level. Great cities offer a diverse range of employment opportunities and expend less energy with the problems associated with boom and bust cycles. Economic diversification, while the goal of many communities, must be undertaken in a strategic manner employing tools such as centres of excellence and promotion of regional clusters of economic activity. We need to capitalize on our local strengths, while at the same time keeping an eye on emerging global opportunities. This will mean focusing on where we have critical mass and strategic advantage, particularly as it relates to energy sector derivatives and developing global symbols or icons that leverage our expertise and strengths. Calgary’s energy sector is vital to the health and sustainability of the economy, and its role as the largest source of wealth, employment and community investment in Calgary, is a key element of the Strategy. But as the world changes, so must the strategic directions of the sector.

While Calgary is recognized as a global energy centre, it also has a significant presence in the transportation, logistics, manufacturing, financial services, advanced technology, tourism and life science sectors. This infrastructure has also fuelled, in part, the convergence with emerging growth sectors, such as health and wellness; aerospace; creative industries; and alternative energies and clean technology.

To be competitive, “Open for Business” can’t be just a slogan, but an attitude that is inherent in our city’s character. It means that as a community we not only support our largest business partners, but also small companies that have the greatest potential for growth and innovation. Our goal is to develop, grow and expand the local head office base to secure increased future decision making capacity in Calgary. This means ensuring that businesses across all sectors and of all sizes have the necessary access to capital to enable them to thrive and to continue to contribute to the economy. It means ensuring timeliness, certainty, responsiveness and ease of access electronically to all city business. It means that the city’s transportation and communications infrastructure enables the fast and efficient movement of goods, people, services and ideas throughout the city and between economic regions. While creating wealth, the city must also provide the infrastructure to transform wealth into a sustainable economy that benefits all citizens.

Goal 2 Objectives

1. Strategically Develop Calgary’s Economy
2. Provide Smart Infrastructure
3. Create the Environment for Smart Ideas and Innovation

While creating wealth, the city must also provide the infrastructure to transform wealth into a sustainable economy that benefits all citizens.
Calgary should be THE global centre for all things energy.

Strategically Develop Calgary’s Economy

Stability and security for the energy sector is critical for Calgary’s future economic prosperity and that of our broader industry base. The energy sector’s importance to Calgary’s economy cannot be overstated – it is vital, and therefore its health and future outlook is vital to Calgary’s overall success.

Alberta and by default Calgary, are in the global crosshairs of the environmental movement to address greenhouse gases. In this context Calgary energy companies have an opportunity to innovate and deepen their focus on energy within the context of a finite resource and growing public interest in climate change. This includes attention to greenhouse gas reduction strategies, technologies and innovations, alternative energies and environmental technologies. As a city, we have the obligation to support our local businesses to become more successful and become larger global players in the energy sector.

In essence, Calgary should be known internationally as THE global centre for all things energy: oil, gas, alternative energy sources, power, carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas reduction technology, research, professional services, capital markets etc. – THE global centre that is THE world leader in ALL things related to energy.

As the energy sector is growing and evolving in Calgary, it will be equally important to facilitate growth and development of Calgary’s other key sectors to ensure strategic diversification into areas of strength and competitive advantage. Calgary is a hub of niche yet strong economic activity in manufacturing, technology, insurance, transportation, health and wellness, and creative industries. These sectors need to be supported and nurtured for continued success.

Strategies + Actions

i. Make Calgary THE global energy centre.

1. Develop a Calgary energy sector strategy and sub-sector strategies to focus efforts on continued strength and diversification of the energy sector.

2. Provide business and economic development support and services for Calgary’s energy companies and their supporting business, financial and professional services.

3. Leverage the existing capital flows and financial expertise from the energy sector and broaden the availability of capital and financial talent in Calgary across all sectors to create a global epicentre of capital and financial services.

4. Create the Global Energy Policy and Interpretive Centre, a world-class energy policy, educational and interpretive centre.

5. Strengthen Calgary’s educational and research activity associated with the energy sector to ensure it remains the top global location.

ii. Make Calgary’s key non-energy sectors world-class competitors in financial services, health and wellness, transportation and logistics, environmental technologies, value added manufacturing, niche ICT, creative industries and tourism and conventions.

1. Develop comprehensive sector-based strategies to enhance the growth, development and profile of Calgary’s key non-energy sectors, including implementation of the flagship concepts for key sectors as articulated in the section Targeting our Growth.

2. Provide business development, retention, investment and trade development services to key non-energy sector businesses in support of Calgary’s economic development.

3. Work with Calgary Regional Partnership communities, Tsuu T’ina Nation, and Calgary-Edmonton Corridor communities to ensure business investment is attracted to, and remains in, our region and Alberta.
Provide Smart Infrastructure

To support the continued economic growth of our city and our ability to attract and retain both investment and people to Calgary, we need to ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure in place to facilitate the efficient and effective movement of goods, people and ideas.

“Good planning and growth management policies amount to good economic policies, and the (admittedly expensive) investments required to restore, maintain, and improve key physical and social infrastructure in the Central Zone’s urban regions represent money well spent.” – Meric Gertler, Smart Growth and the Regional Economy

Strategies + Actions

i. Develop an Integrated Transportation System.

1. Increase the capacity, frequency and distribution of public transit in Calgary to encourage and support increased ridership across the city, including increased routes into new residential and employment/industrial areas, educational institutions and to the airport.
2. Develop a high speed rail link between Calgary- Edmonton-Fort McMurray.
3. Develop regional commuter rail between Calgary and all Calgary Regional Partnership communities.
4. Complete all necessary major transportation infrastructure projects to support the timely and efficient movement of people, goods and services, including the Calgary Ring Road.
5. Provide for adequate and timely transportation support in the form of taxis and cost-effective parking solutions, particularly in the Centre City.

ii. Develop an Integrated Communications Network.

1. Create a city-wide WiMax network with the participation of private industry and service providers to support business, community and telework initiatives.
2. Make all applicable City services and information available on-line, including delivery of all permitting, approvals, and licensing through the City of Calgary website.


1. Provide adequate amounts of appropriately sized, shovel-ready industrial/employment land to meet business needs, including securing future rail-line access.
2. Secure adequate lands required to ensure sufficient supply of facilities for performing and visual arts space.
3. Identify and plan specific hubs in the city for certain economic activity to occur, such as advanced technology near the University of Calgary, a film and digital media campus, and a transportation and logistics centre near the airport.
4. Develop a local business environmental strategy that includes tools and programs, information and advisory services for companies on water use, energy efficiency, green building design and environmentally sound business practices.

We need to ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure in place to facilitate the efficient and effective movement of goods, people and ideas.
5. Require all new large scale commercial and industrial developments to utilize more environmentally sensitive development forms and utility options such as closed-loop industrial eco-development systems, district energy systems and environmental water approaches where feasible through size and critical mass.

6. Create the Calgary Water Conservation and Treatment Research and Education Centre at the Pine Creek Water Treatment Plant.

7. Become a Canadian leader in timely permit and approval processes to support real estate development.

iv. Address the Needs of SME’s and Entrepreneurs.

1. Grow Calgary’s programs for small businesses and start-ups, including advisory and coaching services in business start-up, planning, commercialization and growth at the Business Link, the International Trade and Business Centre, Calgary Technologies Inc., and University Technologies International.

2. Create a Calgary Entrepreneur Laureate who will speak on, advise and support increased entrepreneurial activity in Calgary.

Our ability and capacity to embrace innovation in both our economy and our broader community will be key to driving our economic growth and prosperity in the future.

Create the Environment for Smart Ideas and Innovation

Our ability and capacity to embrace innovation in both our economy and our broader community will be key to driving our economic growth and prosperity in the future. This will allow us to become a global economic engine and support a consistent increase in the well being of Calgary’s citizens. To ensure that this happens we need to approach innovation differently and move beyond efficiency and quality as a means to grow our economy and focus on creating new markets, increasing value to customers by promoting greater levels of research and commercialization and fostering ideas and innovation as key activities within our existing industry base.

Efforts to increase our capacity for new ideas and innovation also require that we look for new ways to bring these ideas to market. All too often, ideas and people are not well connected resulting in a loss of potential in terms of economic development as these ideas are not translated into new products or services. As well, the lack of city-wide or regional networks or forums for the linking and sharing of new ideas reduces the likeliness of success for new initiatives and the ability of new entrepreneurs to successfully reach the marketplace with their product or service.
Strategies + Actions

A. FOUNDATIONAL

i. Deliver the space for innovation to occur.
   1. Develop Innovation Park, one of Canada’s largest concentrated advanced technology campus’ located at the University of Calgary, for collaborative industry and institutional research, and attract all research associated with local companies to this development, providing green space for technology commercialization and company creation.

ii. Attract the world’s smartest people to Calgary.
   1. Create an Alberta Endowed Chair and Ph.D. program for post-secondary educational institutions that will attract the world’s top researchers to Calgary.
   2. Create a Calgary Designer Laureate who would speak on, and advocate for, a creative and design ethos in Calgary.

B. ASPIRATIONAL

iii. Develop Canada’s top innovation system.
   1. Create the Calgary Innovation System, a system that fosters creativity and innovation across a range of sectors, creates risk tolerance and provides the ecosystem of business needs from concept to commercialization and beyond. This system would be a well developed “ecosystem” of education, facilities, networks, firms, support and resources for Calgary entrepreneurs.
   2. Create the Calgary Centre for Innovation, Design and Creativity that brings together cross-sectoral creative enterprises at various stages of development from various sectors to spark cooperation and collaboration and new economic activity.
As a major oil and gas centre; the gateway to the Canadian Rockies; and the host of a successful Winter Olympics, Calgary already enjoys a small share of the global spotlight. However, as the world economy expands at a rapid rate, increased competition for skilled workers and business investment threatens to overshadow our past accomplishments. The effect of this is that we must be more proactive in our response to the changes occurring in the global economy. We must identify ways for our city and our business community to benefit from expanding global markets, in particular Brazil, Russia, India and China, and act on these opportunities as part of our efforts to remain a competitive community. Our business community should be supported in their efforts to access international markets and to forge relationships with global companies who threaten their business processes from lower cost.

To be a great city means we do not wait for the world to come to us, but seek ways to attract and welcome the international market place to our city and create linkages for our businesses abroad. We must promote a strong and contemporary identity for Calgary which sets us apart from other cities around the world and focuses attention on the unique aspects of our city and the region. The lack of international profile and presence on the global stage that is associated with many elements of the city is impacting our ability to attract talent and investment. A dynamic and relevant local brand must also be in place to show the world the pride that Calgarians have in their city.

Calgary’s own tourism infrastructure – not just the attractions in the surrounding region – must also tell a great story and make visitors feel that they are being hosted by a great city. World class convention facilities must be in place to attract and ensure continued international interest and investment in our city. A seamless and hassle-free transportation network should make visitors remember the destination and not the inconveniences of the trip.

**Goal 3 Objectives**

1. Promote the Calgary Brand and Identity
2. Diversify Tourism and Convention Activity
3. Enhance International Business Development and Connections

**Promote the Calgary Brand and Identity**

A clear and distinctive identity is essential in the attraction of both people and investment to a city. The impact of global markets and competition means that cities must be proactive in responding to the growing trend of international migration, rising levels of education worldwide, the growth of information and technology and the heightened flow of financial investment into foreign markets by investing in sophisticated product development and promotion to gain and maintain their market share.

Different areas of the economy will also face different competitive pressures. Calgary’s oil and gas sector will compete with the likes of Houston, London and Saudi Arabia, while its creative industries will have to compete directly with the likes of Toronto and New York. Tourism on the other hand will have to compete internationally as will the city’s advanced education sector. In positioning the city’s brand and international identity, Calgary’s message will need to be adapted for particular markets and industry sectors.

**GOAL 3 - A FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL REACH**

**PROMOTE AND MARKET OUR REPUTATION IN BUSINESS, TOURISM, INNOVATION AND ARTS AND CULTURE**

We must promote a strong and contemporary identity for Calgary which sets us apart from other cities around the world.
Calgary also faces aggressive competition from other North American and international cities in the attraction of a skilled workforce. This is particularly significant given the reliance that Calgary has on the in-migration of workers to sustain its current level of economic growth. While Calgary is in a fortunate position of having drawn considerable national and international press coverage as it relates to the oil and gas sector, its booming economy and high rate of growth, it has also drawn negative press with respect to labour force shortages, rising costs and the lack of affordable housing.

Given the level of international interest that is focused on the city, Calgary has an unprecedented opportunity to craft and promote the message of how and why Calgary is unique among Canadian cities and indeed international cities. Critical in the branding of Calgary should be the level of safety and security as a place to do business from a regulatory and legal perspective, democratic processes, and certainty within decision making processes. With growing activity in BRIC nations, Calgary’s brand should reflect the interest of its business community in working with companies and cities abroad that are growing as centres of outsourcing and analytic work.

Calgary should promote itself as a successful, diverse and growing city in an increasingly competitive environment. The source of Calgary competitiveness must be drawn from its intellectual capital, the quality of the local business environment and the degree of entrepreneurship, to the range of skills available and the creativity and technical capabilities of its workforce and business community. The local quality of life is also an integral part of a brand and promotion, specifically the safe environment, personal and professional growth, a vibrant urban culture for families and individuals, and the wide range of public and recreational amenities.

**Strategies + Actions**

**A. FOUNDATIONAL**

1. **Awaken the world to Calgary.**
   1. Promote, profile and increase awareness of Calgary’s brand internationally, through an international media and publications campaign.
   2. Create and implement a TEAM CALGARY awareness trade mission campaign in key target markets.
   3. Launch a Calgary Ambassador program for senior executives to promote Calgary in their business abroad.
B. ASPIRATIONAL

i. Awaken the world to Calgary.

1. Undertake a campaign to make Calgary ranked as the top North American city to do business by leading business publications such as Fortune and Fast Company magazines.

Diversify Tourism and Convention Activity

The traditional image of Calgary is well established, particularly its western heritage and history as evidenced through events like the Stampede. Calgary’s position as the ‘Gateway to the Rockies’ and its proximity to world class natural areas are also seen as significant drawing cards for visitors and residents alike. But as Calgary’s reach and reputation expands, there is a pressing need to promote the city as a unique, increasingly diverse, and welcoming city with a wide range of experiences and attractions for visitors. Sole reliance on the traditional methods and markets for attracting visitors and convention activity could leave the city lagging behind other cities of comparable size and reputation in an increasingly competitive environment. Established and new niche markets need to be explored and promoted as part of the effort to position the city as a world class destination.

Linked to the need to maximize trade opportunities for local business, attract new inward investment as well as an international workforce, is the idea of successfully attracting international organizations and institutions to the city by playing host to a wide variety of international tradeshows and convention activity. This provides the city with a significant opportunity to promote the city’s brand and image as an emerging global city with all of the amenities, services and experience of a large urban centre. To do this requires investment in the quality of the city’s tourism infrastructure and the product being marketed.

Strategies + Actions

A. FOUNDATIONAL

i. Grow Calgary’s unique tourism opportunities.

1. Diversify and develop the range of Calgary tourism products and become a top North American destination for culinary, sports, art and architecture, and western tourism through a Calgary tourism development strategy.

ii. Provide critical tourism infrastructure.

1. Establish Visitor Information and Welcome Centres at strategic gateway points into Calgary.

2. Increase tourism signage throughout the city for local tourism attractions.

B. ASPIRATIONAL

ii. Provide critical tourism infrastructure.

1. Expand Calgary’s Centre City convention facilities through architecturally iconic development, and physically link the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre with the Calgary Stampede facilities through a covered skyway or mono-rail.

2. Attract an iconic 5-star/diamond hotel to Calgary.

There is a pressing need to promote the city as a unique, increasingly diverse, and welcoming city with a wide range of experiences and attractions for visitors.
Enhance International Business Development and Connections

To enhance the overall competitiveness of Calgary’s economy requires an effective program for increasing international trade opportunities for local businesses through the identification of key markets, as well as increasing foreign investment to the region as a result of Calgary being positioned as a key entry point to the North American market. Essential elements of any international business development program includes efforts focused at business recruitment and retention, sophisticated marketing, access to capital, access points to key foreign markets and the development of new trade relationships. This is an important consideration for Calgary, as there is a considerable number of small and medium sized businesses (SME’s) that may not have the global reach and connections of larger firms. While this demonstrates the high level of entrepreneurism present in the community, it has important implications for the focus of any economic strategy in terms of providing the needed support to ensure that they prosper and grow.

As cities around the world are able to attract more standardized and analytic work at cheaper cost, Calgary-based companies will require support in the form of communications infrastructure and the development of business relationships and collaborative networks to enable them to take advantage of lower-cost work and outsourcing.

For any program to be successful, the key assets or allies in this endeavour must be linked. This requires forums for business, government; agencies and industry associations to discuss, develop and coordinate international business initiatives. Notwithstanding Calgary’s recent success, the city needs to maintain an advocacy and promotion role that highlights local capacity for innovation, resources and expertise and recruit a range of local firms that highlight local efforts as part of any marketing effort. This information needs to be shared at an international level to better inform the global business community as to the talent and capabilities present in Calgary.

**Strategies + Actions**

A. FOUNDATIONAL

i. Grow Calgary’s international trade capacity.

1. Develop the Calgary International Trade and Business Centre, a destination for international trade and small businesses by offering business and trade specific programming.

2. Develop strategies for Calgary in emerging global markets such as the BRIC nations, and operationalize through business and economic development services, including strategies and services to establish B2B relationships with companies in those countries.

3. Establish direct air connections to all major energy and financial centres in the world.

ii. Enable Calgary business to meet the world.

1. Create and implement a plan to increase the presence of international trade and investment offices, consulates and foreign officials in Calgary including procurement of their residences.

B. ASPIRATIONAL

i. Grow Calgary’s international trade capacity.

1. Establish bi-lateral agreements with target cities in China, India, Russia, Brazil and the Middle East with committees of locally based experts and proactively identify market opportunities.

ii. Enable Calgary business to meet the world.

1. Establish Calgary trade and investment offices in key international markets.
implementation principles

This strategy will only be successful if the ideas and objectives are implemented and if there is measurability of performance. To ensure that this occurs we must identify and make the best use of the resources available to the city, develop effective relationships with new stakeholders and ensure that our ongoing partnerships are strengthened. It is also essential that we identify where we have shared priorities with other agencies and organizations in order to maximize the impact of the Strategy and ensure the best outcomes for the city.
THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING

This is a strategy for the whole of Calgary. The successful achievement of these goals will need the support of all organizations, companies, entities and individuals with an interest in the development of Calgary’s economy and shared prosperity. Implementation will be a collective endeavour. There is significant need for participation, and more importantly partnership, to deliver on the goals, objectives and actions within.

This Strategy is a starting point – not an end point – of a process that will yield increased prosperity in the community and a position on the global stage of economic centres. The Strategy therefore is broad and high-level out of necessity. The City’s economic development agencies will be vehicles for creating more specific implementation plans for these goals, as well as in partnership with the private, public and non-profit sectors.

The objectives and actions are concepts; bold ideas that we are asking partners to assist us with, either through endorsement, support or resources. These concepts, while highly supported in the community, will require more time and effort to refine and implement. It will require action by a large number of organizations, working together to effect change and yield results. To achieve this, we ask our partners to join us in that endeavour.

THE STRATEGY IS ALIVE

As this Strategy is the beginning of a larger collective action, it should also be viewed as a living document. The list of actions is a starting point based on community input and research at a point in time. It is by no means an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all the potential actions for Calgary’s economic development. Other actions exist and new ones will emerge throughout the 10-year lifespan of the Strategy. Essential for effective implementation will be a high level annual review, and an in-depth review at the five-year mid-point of the strategy implementation. New realities, new ideas and new opportunities will emerge that could not possibly be envisioned during the crafting of this strategy. Therefore the strategy itself must never remain static, closed or rigid. It must never be viewed as “The Strategy of 2008” but as the dynamic and evolving plan that set the stage for the first bold actions. It must be dynamic, fluid and ever-changing in response to the world around us. As described earlier, it must be bold enough to implement those dreams that have been articulated yet wise enough to continually assess our capacities and realities.
Given the regional implications for many of the strategic initiatives, it will also require a heightened level of collaboration between the partners of the Calgary Regional Partnership.

**STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS AND NEW PARTNERSHIPS WILL EMERGE**

The effective implementation of the Strategy will also require participation of all our partners in economic development – city departments, other levels of government, regional partnerships, organizations involved in community-based economic development, the private sector, industry associations, community organizations, and our public institutions. Given the regional implications for many of the strategic initiatives, it will also require a heightened level of collaboration between the partners of the Calgary Regional Partnership. The rising importance of the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor as a significant economic region within the country also requires that we identify opportunities to collaborate with the City of Edmonton and the City of Red Deer to promote and enhance economic growth.

While there is much that the city can do to move forward with this vision for Calgary, there is also a significant element of the Strategy that will require the support, cooperation and resources of partners to make it a reality. Far from being a weakness, the cooperation required to implement this strategy will ensure an effective implementation process. The strong support for the direction of the Strategy outlined in this report is a strength that can and will be built on as the city moves forward with this vision for the community.

**STRONG LEADERSHIP IS REQUIRED**

A strategy of this kind will face challenges in its implementation. As a result, its success will rely on the ability of different organizations to work together around a common objective and to influence decision makers at the local, provincial and national level. This will require, to some extent, a high-level approach to affecting the change set out in the Strategy and strong, informed leadership that is able to direct the development of a more detailed implementation plan.

The development of the Strategy benefited from the input of more than 500 people with ideas and energy for a new vision for Calgary. These individuals should be part of the core group of individuals involved with the Strategy’s implementation.

Its success will rely on the ability of different organizations to work together around a common objective and to influence decision makers at the local, provincial and national level.
The overall success of this strategy will mean an improved quality of life and experience in the city.

**MONITORING IS ESSENTIAL**

Effective monitoring and evaluation is an important part of any strategy development process as it ensures that projects are realistic and kept on track, it justifies the costs that may be involved in their implementation and determines if adjustments to any of the actions are necessary.

The overall success of this strategy will mean an improved quality of life and experience in the city. This will be measured by tracking three different kinds of economic indicators:

- performance based around the desired outcomes of the Strategy
- key economic indicators that profile structural changes in the economy and community success factors
- key milestones and results achieved by the city government and its partners

**A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WILL CONVEY THE MESSAGE**

Throughout the consultation process it was clear that Calgary needs to improve its image and reputation locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. The heightened level of interest in the community as to the direction and vision that will be shaped by this Strategy provides an opportunity for greater public support and involvement in the Strategy’s implementation. Promoting the creation of an economic development strategy through an effective communication plan will assist in raising the visibility and credibility of the city, ensure an ongoing public debate as to the issues affecting the city and help to increase the community’s influence with key decision makers and opinion leaders both in and outside our community.

Promoting the creation of an economic development strategy through an effective communication plan will assist in raising the visibility and credibility of the city.
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calgary economic development strategy