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1. What are the top three issues facing the city?

The real issue is that the Calgary Advantage is disappearing. Given our wealth, Calgary should be an example for the world, instead we've actually had people move out of the city and go to Saskatchewan. There are many major issues facing the city, so it is difficult to pick only three. I would say that affordable housing is a major one – when students and new Calgarians don't have a place to stay, you know there is a problem. Calgarians have also told me that traffic is a problem – and I believe we can only solve our traffic problem through a serious investment in transit. Third, Calgarians don't feel as safe in their own city as they used to, so something needs to be done about crime.

2. Urban Sprawl and Housing

a. Do you support the concept of extending Transit-Oriented Development throughout the city, including in established neighbourhoods generally and in your ward? What is your stance on the proposed development at Dalhousie Station (in Varsity)?

I support transit oriented development as a city wide initiative, being implemented at existing transit nodes and all new transit stations. It is important to start the Area Redevelopment Plan process around all LRT stations that currently do not have high density commercial and residential development surrounding them to transform the areas into vibrant high density communities. By doing this, Calgary would not only sprawl less, but we would take cars off the roads, cutting down on traffic and commuting time.

I fully support the Dalhousie Station project in Varsity. Calgary needs more projects like this, not fewer.

b. Are we facing a housing crisis in Calgary? If so, what should be done about it? If you are an incumbent, what have you specifically done about this?

We are facing a housing crisis in Calgary. The best way to increase supply is to put forward an easy process to legalize secondary suites. The proposal in front of city council requires every single suite to pay fees of up to \$3500 and to pass a vote by council after a public hearing. Even if each suite only took 5 minutes to process, it would take 7 years of weekly 12 hour council meetings to approve all the suites.

I believe if suites are safe, they should be approved automatically, not subject to Not In My Backyard politics. The fee paid to legalize suites should be merely a cost recovery for

the inspection. Suites should be given a 24 month window to be brought into compliance, inspected and licensed. This would stop the nearly 100 city ordered evictions every year from secondary suites.

In addition, I would work with developers to fast track high density projects, and would lobby the provincial government for the power to bring in inclusionary zoning. I would commit to spend 60 million dollars a year on affordable housing – by partnering with developers this could be leveraged into 6,000 more affordable housing units within a decade.

c. Do you support legalization of secondary suites in all existing neighbourhoods, subject only to reasonable safety concerns? Why or why not?

The vast majority of Calgarians support legalization of secondary suites, and for me it is a no brainer. All secondary suites should be legalized subject to safety checks. This issue really shows how beholden the Mayor is to special interests and that he is not in touch with average Calgarians. This would improve the safety situation for renters, end the cloud of instant eviction that hovers over all illegal secondary suites, and encourage new supply of suites. As Mayor, I would not only vote to legalize secondary suites but I would show leadership on the issue and work hard to convince council as a whole to move immediately towards the legalization of secondary suites.

d. Do you believe that urban sprawl is a problem for the city? If you believe it is a problem, what will you do to address it? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see it as a problem, please explain why.

I would say sprawl is the cause of many problems in our city. Sprawl is estimated to require almost \$7 billion dollars of new infrastructure to support it over the next 25 years. The only way we will ever catch up on our infrastructure deficit is to stop sprawl.

The current Mayor's position that there is no urban sprawl in Calgary is wrong. The recently approved suburb of Auburn Bay at a maximum density of only 8.0 units per acre! Auburn Bay is the perfect case for higher density, with an LRT station planned for the core of the community. As Mayor, I would set a minimum standard of 12 units per acre density for new communities. I would also offer density and massing bonuses to developers to encourage Calgary to grow up, rather than grow out.

3. Transportation

a. Has the City been doing a good job of addressing transportation needs? What, if anything, would you do differently?

No, the city has focused on roads, roads, and more roads and all we end up with is more traffic. The issue of induced demand (more traffic when we build more roads) seems to be an afterthought in planning the transportation network. We need to use proven inexpensive solutions like lane reversals and HOV lanes.

I would re-jig the city's transportation budget, so that 60% is spent of transit, and 40% on roads. No city has ever solved its traffic problem by building more roads – the only way to reduce traffic is through an investment in transit.

b. How often do you use public transit? Bus, C-train, or both?

I try to take cabs, transit or walk everywhere I can. That is why I put my campaign office where the action is, on Stephen Ave. Having experienced the "sardine can" feeling everyone gets on the C-Train, I've become aware that we need to move to four car trains ASAP.

c. Does our current transit system meet the needs of the city? If not, how specifically would you improve it?

I do not believe our current transit system meets our needs. Lines are planned to service transit oriented developments 20 years after residents move in! That is why I have many specific promises to improve transit. Here is my platform on this topic:

IMPROVING THE CURRENT LRT SYSTEM

Calgary's LRT system is one of the most successful systems in North America, but that does not mean it cannot be improved. By running longer four car trains on the entire system by 2010, we can increase capacity at a reasonable price – this is 15 years ahead of the current plan! In addition, building the missing station along existing tracks between Dalhousie and Brentwood Stations will connect Northland Mall and create more “Park and Ride” spaces or possibly a new area for transit oriented development.

LRT EXPANSION

The C-Train is an excellent way of getting around if you live and work near the existing lines. However, many Calgarians do not live near the current system. I would start the West LRT construction as soon as possible and have the line completed by the end of 2010. I would also begin immediately planning the South East LRT so that it can be completed by the end of 2018. These two extensions would give 250,000 more Calgarians the option of leaving their car at home and taking the C-Train into work.

NEW FRONTIERS – HEAVY RAIL FOR CALGARY

Calgary is fortunate to have a heavy rail system that connects the centre of the city to the rest of the country for freight travel. It is time to leverage this existing infrastructure as other cities have done to make getting into downtown easier at peak hours. I would work with Canadian Pacific to develop a pilot project transporting commuters from the edge of the city to the core directly. If successful, this pilot project would be extended further along existing rail in multiple directions from the downtown core, being modeled on Vancouver's West Coast Express and Toronto's GO Train.

FASTER BUSES

Buses are constrained by the fact that they flow in normal traffic. By extending the city's high occupancy vehicle lane program to more priority corridors, buses can move more freely in traffic. Traffic signal priority and traffic signal control will also be used to improve services along high demand routes. Dedicated buslanes, will be examined to prioritize transit in new neighbourhoods, and provide more efficient access to downtown.

BETTER BUSES

New higher capacity articulated buses will be phased in on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and high use routes. More BRT lines will be implemented to provide faster cross town movement. BRT routes will operate on the same principle as the C-Train, with boarding at all doors, and fare payment at the bus stop, not on the bus.

MORE EFFECTIVE BUSING

Modern technology and small changes alike can help make bus service more effective. A pilot project to provide real time projected stop times would test the workability and usefulness of real time scheduling. Placing bicycle racks on all buses, and adding route schedules at bus stops are two examples of low cost measures that Alnoor Kassam will explore in order to make Calgary Transit more user friendly and to improve service.

d. Are you in favour of the current strategic plan for transit? Why or why not? If not, what changes would you make?

I would accelerate the timelines for the West and South East LRT, completing the West LRT by the end of 2010 and the SE LRT by the end of 2018. I would also move to four car trains by the end of 2010, 15 years ahead of schedule, in order to ease congestion on the current routes.

e. The City's current plan does not envision direct C-Train service to either the airport or Mount Royal College. Would you favour amending the plan to reach these two destinations (both within close distance of planned lines)? Why or why not?

Service to the airport is a no-brainer. The line would run on relatively flat land, which is mostly open prairie. The airport is a large employment centre, and it would save many travelers expensive parking or taxi rides. I envision at the time of the next NE LRT extension, following the construction of the west and south-east lines that the NE LRT would split into two lines, one serving the airport, and one continuing on the planned route into Saddleridge.

Mount Royal College is an interesting case. Bus Rapid transit to provide service from downtown, the future West LRT and the South LRT seem like an ideal solution.

f. Are there other areas of the city that are underserved by transit? How would you address this?

Most of Calgary is underserved by transit. The design and density of our suburban neighbourhoods prevents much of the city from benefiting from world class transit economically.

By increasing density, neighbourhoods would have the population to support transit that is often enough, and convenient enough that would be truly competitive with the car. Allowing secondary suites, encouraging multi-family development, mixed use buildings and easing the rules for infills can help transform Calgary into one of the world's most liveable cities.

4. Vibrant and sustainable communities

a. What will you do to address homelessness and urban poverty in the city? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see this as a problem, please explain why.

Continuing with the current system of managing homelessness in Calgary will never yield a permanent solution. Emergency shelters and the confrontational public behaviour bylaws have been completely ineffective. Under my leadership, the city of Calgary would work with the federal and provincial governments to adopt a ten year plan to end homelessness, similar to those successfully implemented in Portland and New York City. Under this plan, special temporary and permanent housing will be built with the facilities necessary to re-integrate the chronic homeless into society. Co-ordination between hospitals, law enforcement, and agencies that create economic opportunities for the homeless will ensure a long term solution, saving the city the money and resources currently devoted to futilely treating the symptoms of chronic homelessness.

Urban poverty at its core is a problem with accessing housing, and accessing services. I would ask the province to allow inclusionary zoning in all new developments to encourage income diversity in communities and to prevent ghettos and the problems of

large socialize housing projects many cities have experienced. Basement suites would also allow easier access to housing. I would also streamline the way low income individuals apply for city services. A harmonized guideline on who is low income would allow one to avoid duplication in bureaucracy of different departments determining who is eligible for reduced fees for city services.

b. What is your stance on arts funding? Do you support the recent recommendations of the Calgary Arts Development Authority?

I believe arts are a vital part of our community, and improve the quality of life for all Calgarians. That is why I support the recent increase in arts funding, and propose creating the Enmax Legacy Arts Fund. These funds would be distributed in a way that increase innovation and encourage new arts organizations.

I also support the creation of a dedicated arts studio space in the beltline. When the city moves out of the Victoria Park bus barns, I would support a renovation into flexible studio space for a variety of performance and visual art. An artist collective such as this have been proven to improve collaboration between mediums and spur innovation.

c. What is your stance on the city's curbside recycling plan? Would you extend the plan to include recycling of organics and plastics? Why or why not?

I support the curbside recycling plan and think it is ridiculous that Calgary will only be getting it 20 years after Edmonton and Toronto. Even Red Deer has had a curbside recycling program since the early 1990s! I have concerns over how the program is funded, and how it does not reach multifamily buildings. I would encourage recycling at buildings with private pickup by providing a small tax credit in proportion to the % of waste diverted from the landfill. The new curb side recycling fee is regressive. I would fund curb side recycling out of property taxes, and not the current levy that is the equivalent to a 1% tax increase for a house in Mount Royal and 30% for a house in Greenwood.

If a cost effective solution is found to expand the program into organics, we would explore it.

d. What other environmental initiatives, if any, would you favour?

I favour a comprehensive ban of unnecessary pesticides since Calgary is the largest city in Canada without one. In addition, I believe that slowing outward growth of the city, and increasing the transit load share in comparison to private auto use are the foremost environmental initiatives the city could take. I would also promote cycling by better lighting and widening current cycling trails, and by building a bike station with bike lockers and showers downtown – this would encourage Calgarians to commute into work on their bikes.

e. What will you do to address crime and safety issues in Calgary? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see this as a problem, please explain why.

As Mayor, I would address the persistent recruitment troubles of the Calgary Police Service. We have been short of officers from the budgeted amount for many years. We need to end the culture of confrontation between the City and the Unions to help increase morale. Focusing on retention of current officers would also reduce our recruitment burden. Once these two issues are solved, I believe that recruitment will no longer be as difficult.

A zero tolerance for hard drug sale and use must be implemented. Crack use has tripled in the past 6 years, and has brought additional crime like theft and prostitution needed to fuel the addictions. Bringing Calgary's crack epidemic under control would be a focus.

5. Taxes and Revenues

a. Does the current system of funding municipal government largely through property taxes work well? If not, what changes would you recommend?

The current market value assessment system works well in general. I would add a section on the tax bill that shows the dollar amount paid in taxes for each of the past 5 years so that property owners better understand the complicated tax system.

Too often, seniors and individuals on fixed incomes are overlooked at the time of tax assessment. Seniors should not be expected to move out of their home due to high property taxes. This is why I would introduce a tax deferral plan for senior home owners. The city would allow seniors to defer their city property tax until the time their home is sold. At that time, the taxes owed would be paid to the city with a portion of the revenues of the house sale. Across the country, cities such as Halifax and Hamilton have initiated similar programs, showing the program is practical and possible.

b. Is there enough money in the system currently to fund your priorities? If now, how will you fund them?

Yes, there is enough money. I would not institute any of the 6 new taxes current Mayor Bronconnier has proposed.

6. Political reform.

a. Does the current system of campaign financing work well? If not, what changes would you favour?

I would work to bring in a spending limit of 1\$ per enumerated voter on all candidates during municipal election campaigns. To prevent undue influence, corporate and union donations to campaigns will be banned, and personal donations will be capped at \$5,000. All candidates will need to submit audited financial statements and war chests will not be allowed to be carried over from one campaign to the next.

b. In the absence of rules around disbursement of campaign surpluses, what will you do with any leftover funds?

I will donate the funds to charity, in the event I have raised a surplus this year.

c. Are there any other structural reforms you would favour?

I would establish an office of the Municipal Auditor General, whom will report to the public and council. The Auditor General would submit conflict of interest reports and conduct audits to ensure programs deliver value for money, meet environmental and safety standards, and follow a fair tendering process.

I would also bring in a Municipal Ethics Commissioner whom would advise elected officials on ethical issues and conflicts of interest and how to avoid them.

To help combat conflicts of interest, I would move to have elected officials and members of Calgary's public commissions register any property they own in a Real Estate Registry. They would also be required to also declare their assets in an asset registry.

This would allow the public and civic officials to monitor whether a conflict of interest exist on land, development, and infrastructure projects.

7. FOR INCUMBENTS ONLY: What are your three major accomplishments this term? Of what are you most proud?