

## City of Calgary wins Natural City Award

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**Toronto, Ontario** – When The City of Calgary celebrated Alberta's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday it launched a vision for what a sustainable and environmentally friendly Calgary would look like 100 years from now, engaging thousands of citizens, getting commitments from dozens of organizations to take up the new challenge and garnering the admiration of the Canadian Urban Institute, which will grant Calgary the 2009 Natural City Award June 5 at the Urban Leadership Awards in Toronto.

“Calgary’s sustainability plan comes out of a true community vision that shows incredible leadership. This award acknowledges that Calgary is a city and a citizenry determined to reducing its environmental footprint and its carbon emissions making Calgary an even better city for its citizens in the future,” said CUI President and CEO Glen Murray.

About 500 elite members of Canada’s who’s who of city building will gather in Toronto on June 5 to honour The City of Calgary and 17 other groups and individuals ([www.canurb.com/awards/ula/leadershipawards2009.php](http://www.canurb.com/awards/ula/leadershipawards2009.php)) across the country who are making Canadian cities exciting and dynamic places to live and work.

The imagineCalgary (<http://www.imaginecalgary.ca>) idea was both a process and an action plan. It started by engaging 18,000 citizens in public meetings, surveys and focus groups – possibly the largest public engagement of its kind in the world. It made a special effort to reach the youth, senior, Aboriginal and multi-cultural communities. It ended with The City of Calgary Council adopting the imagineCALGARY *Plan for Long Range Urban Sustainability* and attracted over 50 organizations, which have signed up to make the plan a reality in very practical ways. The plan addresses social, economic and transportation issues; looks to protect or improve the natural and built environment; addresses infrastructure and water supply challenges; and sets very specific targets. One of its immediate and concrete commits is to have all City-owned buildings (new or retrofitted) meet the Silver Level of the Canada Green Building Council’s LEED rating system.

“Calgary has experienced extensive growth and prosperity in recent years - and that growth deserves a long term strategy,” Calgary Mayor Dave Bronconnier said. “We attract people here from all over the world who want to make Calgary their home because they want to live in a vibrant, resilient city. The imagineCALGARY process and plan was designed to create a shared vision of a healthy, environmentally friendly home for their children and their grandchildren.”

“This award acknowledges that our extensive community involvement was a leading practice for Canadian cities and is something others can adopt,” said Mayor Bronconnier, whose municipal staff have been called upon by cities as far away as New Brunswick, Oregon and South Africa to explain how Calgary’s success can be replicated in their cities.

**The Urban Leadership Awards (ULA) Program** honours Canadian individuals, groups and organizations that have made significant contributions to improving the quality of life in Canada’s cities and urban regions. The 2009 ULA’s have been made possible by the generous support of a variety of corporate sponsors including Gold Sponsors Loblaw Properties Ltd., Scotiabank, TD Bank Financial Group, the Ontario Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, Environics, the City of Toronto and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). Community Builder Sponsors

include Toronto Hydro, Local 27 of the Union of Carpenters and Allied Workers, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Great West Life, London Life and Canada Life Assurance Companies.

The judges for this year's awards included Canadians who have dedicated their lives to public service and who have detailed knowledge of the local stories and triumphs of Canadians in their home communities. Under the chairmanship of the Hon. David Crombie, the committee included; Al Duerr, former Mayor of Calgary; Newfoundland's Dr. Linda Inkpen; Dr. Antonia Maioni, Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada; John Kim Bell, founder of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation; Ms. Mitzie Hunter, a Vice President at Goodwill Industries; and, Dr. Nola Kate Seymoar, President & CEO, International Centre for Sustainable Cities, based in British Columbia.

The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in urban areas across Canada and throughout the world.

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## Some facts about City of Calgary

### **imagineCALGARY:**

- Is a city-led, community-owned initiative focused on creating broad support and action to create a 100-year Vision of The City of Calgary.
- Was an 18 -month consultative process, considered the largest in the world with over 18,000 community members involved, including hard-to-reach populations such as youth, urban Aboriginals, seniors and diverse ethno-cultural groups.
- Included direct involvement of nearly 150 citizens resulted in 10-year to 30-year goals to help the community meet its needs for water, energy and transportation
- Resulted in 2007 Council adoption of "The imagine Calgary Plan for Long Range Urban Sustainability" document
- Led to 52 organizations signing the "imagineCalgary" partnership agreement to collectively work towards the vision of the plan. This was a unique governance model featuring a commitment to keeping the plan alive and current within partner organizations across the city.
- Was a process that resulted in greater pride for residents and widespread support for clear sustainability targets for other city-based institutional and organizational partners.
- Other cities it has influenced include, Saint John, NB; Portland, Oregon; Durban, South Africa.

### **Sustainable Building Policy**

- Was adopted in 2004 and included a sustainability building policy committing all city-owned buildings (both new and retrofits) to meet or exceed the Silver level of LEED standard.
- Used participatory and cross-departmental approach to ensure buy-in from independent business units.
- The best examples can be found in Cardel Place, Crowfoot Library and Country Hills Multi-Services Centre.