



**Federation  
of Calgary Communities**  
Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

# Partners in planning

**TERENCE LEUNG  
FOR THE FEDERATION OF  
CALGARY COMMUNITIES**

As the city of Calgary continues its rapid growth, community associations continue to be a vital part of the planning process with development and land use decisions discussed back and forth.

Paperwork, frequent discussions with the city and knowledge of the issues that affect a community is part of the role that community association board members and volunteers have to handle on a regular basis.

As a joint venture between the city and the Federation of Calgary Communities since 2001, the Partners in Planning (PIP) program has seen over 800 participants take part in courses such as understanding land use bylaw, how the development appeals process works and the basics of implementation planning.

Lori Losowy, president of the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association, is one of the 191

graduates of the free program that allows participants to take its three core courses at their own pace.

"I've been sitting in my planning committee for five years and started in the program in the first year. It took a year to do it," says Losowy.

"Since then it's helped me understand what a community association can and cannot do and what powers we have to understand and influence development. It gives you a better background and process on how to go about it."

Participants can also take elective courses such as the role of special care facilities and an orientation to planning processes and issues.

"You don't have to do it all within a certain timeframe. Each course is a day or half-day and you get to pick and choose what interests you," says Losowy.

"I would recommend it highly. There's a lot of great stuff,

networking, and getting a greater understanding of how other community associations operate."

Each course has about 35 to 55 participants who are typically community association members or individuals interested in having a greater understanding of the city's planning process.

"Community associations respond to development applications, local planning and also sometimes start their own planning initiatives. It's very important that community volunteers become knowledgeable about these issues," says Bob van Wegen, urban planner for the Federation.

"These are people who are volunteers in their community who do work around these issues and they really enjoy interacting with other communities and city planning staff who also take part. It's people getting knowledge, ideas, and getting inspired in how they can be effective community volunteers."

The Federation's *A Community Guide to the Planning Process*, is a publication that participants of the PIP program will become familiar with.

"That's part of the PIP program

and that's a big binder and resource for community volunteers to learn about planning in Calgary and their role in the planning process," says Taryn Hayes, urban planning and engagement facilitator for the Federation.

"It's an exciting time for communities to look forward and have a say in what kind of community they would like to have and play a part of the evolution of their community. It's also taking a proactive role in planning."

More information on participating in the Partners in Planning program can be found at [www.calgarycommunities.com](http://www.calgarycommunities.com) or by emailing [planning@calgarycommunities.com](mailto:planning@calgarycommunities.com)

Courses, typically offered on Saturdays, are free.

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**Losowy**

## Abbeydale

The community of Abbeydale is located in Calgary's northeast. It is bordered on the south by the Canadian National Railway, on the west by 68th St. NE and on the north by the Trans Canada Highway.

The community was under the jurisdiction of the Municipal District of Rockyview until it was annexed by the city in 1976. The community has a large child and youth population and contains both a public and separate school. The neighbourhood is primarily residential, with its principle commercial attraction being a simple strip mall. Downtown can be accessed by either Memorial Drive or 16th Ave.

In response to the community's demographics, the programs offered by Abbeydale's community association are primarily youth oriented.

The community center facilitates an out of school care program, numerous sports programs, Jelly Bean Dances and Scouts. They also boast an adult darts league.

The centre also offers plenty of events for the entire family, and the centre's pool tables, dart boards and outdoor skating rink provide an excellent opportunity for families to relax in a pleasant atmosphere.

Abbeydale offers activities for adults as well, with each Friday being open pub night featuring karaoke, crib tournaments or the occasional lobster dinner.

Clearly, Abbeydale seeks to provide programs that match the interests of all of the community's diverse population.

### Schools

Abbeydale Elementary School — Public  
Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Elementary School — Separate

### Demographics

Located in Ward 10, Abbeydale has a population of 6,012 (2006 Civic Census) with approxi-

mately 27.1 per cent comprising the immigrant population (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada). A total of 1,455 families accounted for 2,650 children still living at home with 40.8 per cent of these being 6 to 14-years-old.

According to Stats Canada, 2001 Census of Canada the median household income for Abbeydale in 2000 was \$55,343. In addition, 38.4 per cent of the population over 20 completed college, attended university or graduated university with a degree - an additional 14.7 per cent graduated from Trade Schools (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada).

There are a total of 1,965 occupied private dwellings in Abbeydale with 72.3 per cent being single detached dwellings (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada).

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