



# Community

# Perspective



**Federation**  
of Calgary Communities

Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

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## The role of community associations and why it's important

By Bonnie Elgie

There is no doubt that engaging local residents in their community association can be a tough sell. Busy schedules, active families and volunteer fatigue are often reasons that prevent people from getting involved.

For some, it may also be a case of not really understanding the role of community associations and how they contribute to neighbourhood life.

While community associations offer recreational programs and events, they are also the collective voice that links residents with the City of Calgary and other levels of government.

The Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association has extensive experience in liaising between its residents and government, with the 1997 closing and subsequent destruction of the Calgary

General Hospital.

"Bridgeland is unique. The community went through a prolonged planning exercise with redevelopment of the General Hospital site," says Jayden Tait, Bridgeland-Riverside's Membership Director.

More recently, the community association showed the influence of a cohesive voice over a proposed grocery store and 35-storey condominium project slated for Edmonton Trail.

Lori Losowy, President of the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association, explains, "We facilitated a meeting with all of the different parties involved. It gave people a chance to express concerns and also assisted with information gathering. It was a forum for the community."

In the end, the proposed project did not move ahead.

In addition to providing that all-important community voice and dialogue,

community associations are also focused on improving neighbourhood life.

"We have events to bring the community together, such as our annual Christmas party at our new hall," says Losowy.

Adds Tait, "We also operate a facility that hosts community activities and events, and our children's soccer league is very successful and popular. One of the stipulations to joining the league is that you must be a member."

While there is little doubt that community associations do much to enrich the lives of local residents recreationally and socially, it is still a challenge to recruit volunteers and members.

Tait, who is working on a membership recruitment plan to be rolled out in Spring 2009, is motivated to understand how to get people more involved. The plan will focus on an attainable range of goals.

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### The Inside Scoop

In an effort to keep the stakeholders of the Federation of Calgary Communities' informed of our programs, services and the issues facing our Community Associations, we are proud to provide this bi-annual update. The "Community Perspective" is meant to provide an overview of our activities, as well as provide insights and foster further understanding of the issues

facing our communities. It is not meant to be exhaustive but rather a snapshot.

We hope that you, as our valued stakeholder, will find the information useful in your role.

We invite you to communicate with us about issues, concerns or ideas. By working together we can "Improve Neighbourhood Life in Calgary."

## Federation Website Revamped!

Over the summer of 2008 the Federation of Calgary Communities completely revamped its website, making it a more effective tool and an even better resource to our member community association volunteers. The new features added will now make our site more user friendly while providing our members access to a wealth of knowledge, tips and resources.

We are proud to offer the following upgrades:

1) Navigation Buttons on the Home Page - to help you navigate quicker. We know volunteers are busy. By putting the navigational buttons on the home page, our member community association volunteers can find the most frequently visited pages much faster.

2) On-line Registration System –This on-line tool gives our members a complete listing of the workshops and special events allowing community association volunteers to register all on the same page.

3) Services Offered – We have created a new page that highlights the different services offered by the Federation of Calgary Communities. Similar to the navigation buttons on the home page, the “Services” page provides different buttons for each program offered. From audit and bookkeeping to urban planning, organizational development and communications, we have clarified each individual service and how they can be beneficial to our members.

4) Members Only- section of our website is full of resources that will help you as a volunteer in the area of Human Resources, Governance, Facility Care, Volunteer Management, Newsletters, Marketing and Communications, Membership, etc.. If Community Volunteers can't find what they are looking for, they can always send an email to our new Members Services Coordinator, Catherine Halkett (memberservices@calgarycommunities.com).

These new upgrades to our website promise to help our communities association volunteers continue to improve neighbourhood life in Calgary.

“ I AM TOTALLY BLOWN AWAY with what you guys have done... the amount of data you have included, and its relevance is ” ASTOUNDING !!!!  
-RCA Treasurer

Please feel free to check it out!  
[www.calgarycommunities.com](http://www.calgarycommunities.com)

## Federation Offers Quality Support to Community Association Volunteers

The Federation of Calgary Communities is well known for our support in the area of Financial Management and Planning Services. Did you know that we have also offered support in the following areas?:

**Board support** (conflict resolution, compensation (training and mileage), job descriptions, bylaw support and interpretation)

**Connecting Communities** (e-mail distribution from community to communities, networking events, seeking resources from communities)

**Facility Care** (fire box compliance, contractor referral, liquor licensing, noise bylaws, AED care referral)

**Fund Development** (information on funders, review of proposals, letters of support, charitable receipting information)

**Human resources** (job descriptions, HR Manual, recruitment, Employment Standards Workshop and support, salary feedback, employee/employer conflict resolution)

**Insurance Support** (Market value evaluation referral, access through Toole Peet)

**Meeting Support** (AGM preparation, minute taking template)

**Membership** (ideas on how to increase membership, media profile, referral to membership database)

**Programming** (sharing success stories, attendance at special events)

**Recognition** (Milestone awards, celebrating volunteers, sharing of best practices, resourcing Herald Stories)

**Referral and Interpretation** (Canadian Revenue Agency, funders, Volunteer Calgary, CNS, Employment Standards, SOCAN, CentrePoint, lawyers, newsletter editors)

**Risk Management** (articles, referrals, compliance check list)

**Small project financial support** (playgrounds, forums, beautification projects, ice rink equipment)

**Tools and Templates** (rental form, compliance report, financial statements, bylaws development template, timesheets, job descriptions)

**Volunteer Support** (recognition, referral to Volunteer Calgary, tools to recruit volunteers)

**Website** (update, information)

**Workshops** (Land Use Bylaw, GST, Grants/Fund Development, Employment Standards, SOCAN, Finances)

## Connecting with our community association members...

The September General Meeting was another great opportunity for us to connect with our members. After some Federation business and a tour around the building by our host the Calgary Inter faith food bank, we had a chance to really open up the meeting and find out what the concerns of our member community associations were.

One of the common concerns shared by our members was volunteer recruitment, both in short term positions to help run events and long term positions like board members. In response to this the Federation of Calgary Communities has strived to come up with some solutions to this common problem.

One of the ways we have met this challenge is by partnering with Volunteer Calgary. Volunteer Calgary has provided us with a massive amount of information, resources and tips on volunteer recruitment and retention. We include this information in our monthly newsletter as well as on our website, making it readily available to all of our member community association volunteers.

On November 7th & 8th the

Federation also teamed up with the City of Calgary to hold a conference on community sustainability called "get engaged!". This Conference was attended by over 100 guests. Again it was a great opportunity for us to connect with our members.

This Conference also gave us an opportunity to provide our community association volunteers with tips and suggestions on how to engage the residents of their communities to get involved including a workshop that provided information and advice on how to engage residence to get involved through special events and programs. Alderman Pincott was also able to share some suggestions on ways to encourage residents of all ages to get involved in improving their community through his presentation on Street Painting.

As we continue to work with our member community association volunteers we will search for new ways to help them continue their valuable work. The Federation has also teamed up with the Calgary Police Service to provide our members with crime prevention tips and will look to set up other crime prevention initiatives in the future.

## why it's important con't...

"I am working with other Board members to figure out how we can simplify the process of engaging people. We need to try to think of other people in the community who are busy and running on all cylinders. What can we do to get them to give a bit of their time?"

Losowy says, "It's about getting people interested in focal points. Volunteering can be as big or as small of a commitment as people want. Our volunteer coordinator has been very good in breaking things down into smaller pieces for people. There are different kinds of commitments. You can tailor it."

Many of Calgary's communities have people moving in from different parts of the province, the country or even the world. Community associations are a conduit to connecting these individuals and families.

"Through a community association, you really get to know your neighbours and work on common causes that impact your day-to-day lives," says Losowy. "Besides, it is a lot of fun!"

## Feedback

What our members are saying:

"Great site, lots of good information and I'm sure way more to come."  
-Tom Banks  
Triwood CA

"I am always happy to have the newsletter. It provides a lot of information."  
-Zirong Chen

"I admire the work that you and your staff are doing."  
-Fred Hertha  
Strathcona CA

"I just want to say how much I enjoy receiving updates from the Federation. Thanks so much for forwarding them on"  
-Bobby Jo  
Riverbend CA

## Mission

To improve neighbourhood life in Calgary by providing services and programs that create, support and sustain vital and representative Community Associations

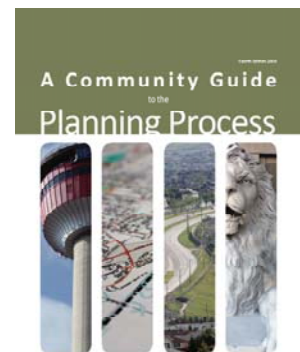
## Vision

That each Calgary neighbourhood has a vital and representative Community Association

## Values

In pursuit of the of our Vision, the Federation of Calgary Communities operates with Commitment, Integrity and Leadership, recognizing Community, Diversity and Volunteerism

## Guide to the Planning Process



The 2008 edition of the Community Guide to the Planning Process was launched on October 1. This was done in partnership with the Alberta Real Estate Fund and the City of Calgary. Updates were made to correspond with the new land use bylaw. A hardcopy is available for all community association boards. By outlining the proper steps and the community association's role in the planning process we believe that this document will make Planning Issues and concerns a much smoother process for all parties involved.

## 2008 Member

### Community Associations

Abbeydale	Mid-Sun
Acadia	Millican Ogden
Albert Park Radisson Heights	Millrise
Applewood Park	Monterey Park
Arbour Lake	Montgomery
Banff Trail	Mount Pleasant
Bankview	Mount Royal
Beddington Heights	North Glenmore
Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught	North Haven
Bonavista Downs	Northern Hills
Braeside	Oakridge
Brentwood	Palliser Bayview Pumphill Parkdale
Bridgeland-Riverside	Parkhill Stanley Park
Britannia	Penbrooke Meadows
Calgary Evergreen	Pineridge
Calgary Marlborough	Queensland
Calgary Parkland	Ramsay
Calgary Rosedale	Ranchlands
Calgary Wildwood	Richmond/Knob Hill
Cambrian Heights	Rideau Ridge Society
Canyon Meadows	Rideau-Roxboro
Capitol Hill	Riverbend
Cedarbrae	Rocky Ridge Royal Oak
Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge	Rosemont
Citadel	Rosscarrock
Cliff Bungalow-Mission	Rundle
Coach Hill/Patterson Heights	Rutland Park
Coral Springs	Saddle Ridge
Crescent Heights	Sandstone MacEwan
Crossroads	Scarboro
Dalhousie	Scenic Acres
Deer Ridge	Shawnee/Evergreen
Deer Run	Shawnessy
Discovery Ridge	Shepard
Dover	Silver Springs
Downtown West	Somerset/Bridlewood
Edgemont	South Calgary
Elbow Park	Southwood
Elboya Heights	Springbank Hill
Erin Woods	Spruce Cliff
Erlton	St. Andrews Heights
Evanston-Creekside	Strathcona
Fairview	Sunalta
Falconridge/Castleridge	Temple
Forest Heights	Thorncliffe/Greenview
Forest Lawn	Triwood
Glamorgan of Calgary	Tuscany
Glenbrook	Tuxedo Park
Glendale/Glendale Meadows	University Heights
Hamptons	Valley Ridge
Hawkwood	Varsity
Haysboro	West Hillhurst
Hidden Valley	West Springs/Cougar Ridge
Highland Park	Westgate
Highwood	Whitehorn
Hillhurst/Sunnyside	Willow Ridge
Hounsfield Heights Briar Hill	Windsor Park
Huntington Hills	Winston Heights/Mountview
Inglewood	Woodcreek
Killarney/Glengarry	
Kincora	Associate Members 6
Kingsland	1. Bearspaw Glendale
Lake Bonavista	3. Bragg Creek
Lakeview	4. Chestermere Regional
Lindsay Park	5. Glen Eagles (Cochrane)
Marlborough Park	6. Springbank Park
Marquis de Lorne	
Martindale	Service Members 50
McKenzie Lake	Detailed list upon request
Meadowlark Park	

## Federation Board

The Federation's Board of Directors is comprised of 12 members. Executive Officers are selected at the first meeting of the Board.

#### Executive:

Bob Lang, President  
John Wakoluk, Vice President  
Neil Hughes, Secretary  
Bill Scott, Treasurer

#### DIRECTORS

Kendrick Charles  
Robin Elford  
Christopher Harper  
Lisa Homer  
Melanie McDonald  
Robert Matheson  
Petre Rishaug  
Ned Shillington  
CITY OF CALGARY Pam Meunier

## Staff

Leslie Evans, Executive Director  
Heidi Brauer, CMA  
Bob van Wegen, Community Planner  
Brendan Murray, Community Relations  
Catherine Halkett, Member Services  
Joyce Sponholz, Office Assistant  
Lois Fuss, Accountant  
Liz Man, Accountant  
Sophie Khatkar, Accounting Tech  
Linda Lin, Accounting Tech  
Elena Ozhog, Accounting Tech  
Zhou Wang, Accounting Tech  
Vivian Jie Zhao, Accounting Tech  
Tetyana Tretyakova, Bookkeeping

## Volunteers

Janice Broome, Office  
Steve Garcia, Web Support  
Luis Horna, Database  
A.J. Hill, Youth Volunteer  
Donna Lennon, Mail Outs  
Loraine Luterbach, Mail Outs  
Chelsey Nicholas, Youth Volunteer  
Jessica Nicholas, Youth Volunteer  
Ashley Nicholas, Photography  
Mark Townsend, calgaryarea.com

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Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

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