

Winter 2017

Message from Councillor Keating



When I first ran for Council in 2010 I heard from residents that southeast Calgary was a great place to raise a family, but lacked many of the amenities that other areas of the city enjoyed. My key priority in representing the residents of Ward 12 has been finding better value for tax dollars in order to get more of these amenities in place. It has been a long time coming, but we are finally seeing the opening of some long overdue public investments in southeast Calgary. The progress is really encouraging, but we still have work to do, specifically completing the funding puzzle for the Green Line LRT.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shane Keating".

Councillor Shane Keating, Ward 12

Ward 12 Quick Facts

According to the 2016 Civic Census Data:

109,384
people live in ward 12

6,322
increase in Ward 12 population since 2015

Calgary grew by **0.35%** from 2015

Ward 12 grew by **8.56%** from 2015

Mahogany was the fastest growing community in Calgary for 2015

Upcoming Ward 12 Events

- March Coffee With Your Councillor – Come have a cup of coffee and chat about the local issues that matter to you. **Tuesday, March 21, 7:00pm-8:30pm at McKenzie Towne Hall (40 McKenzie Towne Blvd)**
- April Coffee With Your Councillor – **Tuesday, April 25, 7:00pm-8:30pm at New Brighton Resident's Association (2 New Brighton Drive SE)**
- Residential Traffic Safety Town Hall – Calgary Police Service and Calgary Transportation will be in attendance to provide information on local traffic safety initiatives and hear your feedback on areas that need attention in your community. **Tuesday, May 23, 7:30pm-8:45pm at McKenzie Towne Hall**

If you have any questions about these events, please let my office. You can contact us by phone at 403-268-1698 or email at Ward12@Calgary.ca

A Chat About Calgary Congestion

No matter where you live sitting in congested traffic is frustrating. But how exactly do we stack up to other major cities around the world? Earlier this week INRIX released the 2016 Global Traffic Scorecard that tells a rather interesting story. The study took a comprehensive look at 1,064 cities in 38 countries.

According to the study Calgarians are actually quite well off in comparison to other major urban centres around the world. Here are some of the Calgary stats:

- Calgary ranks 159th of all cities surveyed for the amount of congestion that driver's experience.
- Calgary is the 9th most congested city in Canada behind Montreal, Toronto, St. John's, Ottawa, Vancouver, Quebec City, Victoria, Edmonton and Hamilton.

View the full scorecard [HERE](#)

While this information paints a positive picture on Calgary's congestion issues, we cannot be complacent on our need to make meaningful investments in our transportation network. A comparative study gives us an idea how we stack up against other cities – it does not suggest we aren't without problems.



There are a lot of ideas out there on how to tackle congestion issues. Earlier this week I read an interesting article that provided some ideas on how to encourage a more sustainable transportation network: <http://driving.ca/auto-news/news/how-it-works-road-congestion-and-design>

This article talks about how modern traffic engineering principles can be appropriately applied to address congestion issues. The article states that nearly all experts agree that simply adding new lanes can actually cause more congestion problems. How? It's called induced demand. Induced demand points to a marked increase in the consumption of a good after supply is

increased. If all we do is build roads, all we will likely do is attract more traffic. Adding more capacity on our roadways can be part of a solution, but it cannot be the only action. Adding more lanes to a roadway and expecting congestion to reduce is like buying a larger pair of pants and expecting to lose weight. I've tried it – it doesn't work!

If we really want to see meaningful reductions in congestion we need to establish greater efficiency in our transportation network. This means having robust infrastructure that can stand the test of time, offering diverse transportation options and embracing innovative new approaches to traffic flow management. Calgary is often referred to as an auto-centric city. This characterization is often cited as a negative, but I don't see it that way. What we need to come to terms with is that providing additional transportation options can enhance the transportation experience for everybody – especially motorists. We must always be mindful that transportation is not about moving trains or buses or vehicles – it's about moving people. I fundamentally believe that people will choose the path of least resistance to get to where they need to go. That path could be in a vehicle, on a bus, on a bike or even on a train. That diversity of options is critically important.

I talk a lot about the need to improve our public transit infrastructure, but I am also a big proponent of continued investments in our roadways. Let's look at the current Deerfoot Trail Study as an example. We are looking at some engineering solutions to address some of the pinch points that contribute to some of our congestion issues – that's great! But that isn't all we are doing. The study isn't just about looking for ways to make Deerfoot wider; it's about finding ways to make Deerfoot better. That means looking into things like real-time digital traffic updates, variable speed limits and high-occupancy vehicle lanes. These are all components that could contribute to ensuring we have a transportation network that is efficient, convenient and safe.

When we think about our congestion issues, we need to look to the future. One of the biggest parts of our future is the Green Line LRT. Green Line LRT offers commuters with a choice. An option like the Green Line could remove significant numbers of vehicles from Deerfoot every day while freeing up road capacity for people still make the decision to drive. That is potential for a significant reduction in congestion without building a single new lane on Deerfoot.

I believe that our existing LRT network has played a big role with how our congestion compares to other major cities. We have one of the highest performing LRT networks in North American and it is certainly the gold standard here in Canada. We designed a network that focused on moving as many as people as possible in a way that was quick, safe and convenient. We made getting the LRT out to where people live a significant priority. The Green Line will double our LRT network and reduce city-wide congestion by 10-15%. That's a huge win for Calgarians!

Your time is valuable. Time spent stuck in traffic is dead time. It has an economic cost, an environmental cost and it has a cost on your quality of life. As a city we have done a decent job managing our congestion issues, but we still have room to improve. By making strategic investments in our transportation network we can ensure that you get to decide how best to use your time – that's an idea that I will always support.

Green Line LRT – Moving From Vision to Reality

As a city we have been fantasizing about an LRT to southeast Calgary for decades. Residents in the southeast waited patiently for their turn but often saw other projects move forward first. The same could be said for folks that live in north-central Calgary. Many folks in southeast and north-central Calgary saw LRT as something that might never happen in their lifetime. The solution to their problems came in the form of the Green Line LRT.

Over the last few years we have been able to effectively take the Green Line LRT from a visioning exercise to a tangible project. It took a lot of very hard work and some hard political decisions to get us here. Four years ago we were still talking about a transitway for southeast Calgary; today we are talking about the biggest capital project this city has ever considered.



Over the weekend an article came out in the Calgary Herald that shed some light on the status of this project. The article looked at the scope of the project and the associated costs that we are facing. It also offered comment from Transportation Minister Brian Mason. You can read the full article [HERE](#).

It is important that we reflect carefully on where we are with this project. A few years ago we had a rough idea what this project might cost, a rough idea of where the stations would be and a rough idea of how it would provide better transportation service to Calgarians. Every component of this project has evolved over the last few years.

During the early stages of this process we had a ballpark number of what the project might cost. Our preliminary projections pegged this project at a cost between \$4.5 billion and \$5 billion. This projection did not take into account financing charges if funding for the project was amortized out over a long period of time. We began with a target for

getting the entire project built, but as we moved through the study refinements had to be made. Today we still believe that we can deliver a feasible LRT line for \$4.5-\$5 billion, but we need to decide how long that line will be.

Divulging the specific costs of a project is not in the best interests of the corporation or of taxpayers. If we were to give a specific dollar figure on what we were willing to spend, we can almost guarantee all bids will come in at the top end of our budget. While we can set some internal targets of what we would like to spend, it is a best practice for us to keep specific financial estimates private to ensure we get the most competitive contracts. That is where Council has a direct responsibility to make sure Calgarians are getting the absolute best value for their tax dollars.



Decisions on the alignment and the station locations have contributed to more refined cost projections. Calgarians made it clear how they wanted to see this line delivered, specifically through the downtown. We could have made the decision to stay at grade through the downtown and likely delivered the entire project for our visioning budget, but that is not what stakeholders wanted to see. Overwhelmingly Calgarians made it clear we needed to make an appropriate investment that would integrate well with the downtown; we could only accomplish that by tunneling.

Line LRT and I am supportive of that. With that in mind, tunneling will require us to make some other hard decisions. There are a number of stations that we may need to abandon or temporarily forgo to ensure this line gets out to the maximum amount of riders. Tapping into ridership is the whole justification for this line in the first place and we cannot lose sight of that.

Tunneling provides enormous advantages, but it also makes the project much more complex. Council has decided in principle that this is the direction we are going with Green

Projects of this magnitude require a lot of really hard decisions. If this project were simple, it likely would have been done by now. As we come to terms with our budgetary realities we are going to have to find a way to provide Calgarians with the maximum benefit through this project. That means agreeing on a staged approach that serves the highest number of Calgarians while providing economic stimulus, job creation and reductions in city-wide congestion.

This is not about pitting the north-central component of this project against the southeast component of this project. The line is not feasible without the integration of both components. As Councillor for Ward 12, obviously my heart lies in southeast Calgary. I am very happy to support a phased approach to the Green Line, but it must service the folks in southeast Calgary that are starved for better service. Getting this line to McKenzie Towne brings the train to the places where people live – and expanding to Seton from this point is relatively inexpensive in the broader sense of the project.

A phased approach to this project is exactly how we have approached our LRT network in the past. We build what we can and seek to do expansions as additional funding becomes available. In the past if we had been presented with the option to build a full line or not build the line at all, we wouldn't have LRT service in Calgary. We will be tackling the most complicated and expensive aspects of this project first and leaving the door open for feasible extensions that are much less capital intensive.

I'll conclude my thoughts by offering a brief commentary on our need for provincial involvement in this project. Transportation Minister Brian Mason was quoted as saying "our government is broadly supportive of public transit...however, unless we have a really clear definition of project scope and what its costs are going to be, we're not in a position to make a decision". While I certainly see his point, I still find that commentary frustrating.

While we still have some technical decisions to make on the project, we have been quite clear with the province. We want to build a \$4.5-\$5B LRT line. The price tag of the entire line may be more, but we have asked for a contribution of \$1.53B from the province at this stage.

Uncertainty on this project flows both ways. Council is being asked to make important technical decisions on this project, but they are doing so with an absence of understanding on just how much money we will have. The province says they want us to finalize the technical aspects before they commit to the project. That puts us in a bit of a logjam.



We were very fortunate to receive a funding commitment in principle from the Government of Canada back in 2015. At this stage we had very few technical details firmed up and had a tremendous amount of work to do, specifically around the inner city alignment. The federal government committed to funding the project once they received an application that fit a set of criteria that they would establish at a later time. We didn't receive the funding at that time, but we were at least given piece of mind that the commitment would be there. I appreciate that the provincial government wants to find their own way on this project, but it would certainly be helpful if we had a few more assurances on their intentions.

We have come a long way on Green Line LRT, and we still have further to go. With the funding we have received we will begin some pre-construction work in southeast Calgary this year. What started as a paper exercise is now a project that Calgarians will likely benefit from in the next ten years. The project will continue to evolve and our budget will become more sophisticated as we approach the start of construction. The Green Line LRT is going to transform our city dramatically and we cannot afford to miss this opportunity.

Meet the Ward 12 Team



Shane Keating, Councillor

Councillor Keating was first elected to represent Ward 12 in 2010. He is now in his second term on City Council. Shane was born in Regina and move to Alberta in 1991. He received a Bachelor of Education at the University of Regina and his Masters of Education Administration from the University of Calgary. Prior to becoming the Councillor for Ward 12 Shane spent 31 years in education; 17 as a school teacher and 14 as a school administrator/principal.



Jordan Pinkster, Chief of Staff

Jordan graduated from Mount Royal University with a degree in Policy Studies. Prior to joining Councillor Keating's team in December of 2014 Jordan was the Media and Public Affairs Officer at the British Consulate-General here in Calgary. As Chief of Staff Jordan manages the Ward 12 office, provides valuable advice to Councillor Keating and develops the communication strategies for the Ward 12 team.



Meghan Oliver, Community Liaison

Meghan graduated from the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo. Meghan has worked in urban planning and has a strong interest in community development. As Community Liaison, Meghan works closely with our Community Associations and provides support to concerned residents that contact the Ward 12 office.



Karen Spiers, Executive Assistant

Outside of working for the Ward 12 team, Karen owns First Serve Tennis with her husband here in Calgary. As Executive Assistant, Karen manages Councillor Keating's calendar and appointments and also manages the administrative needs of the Ward 12 office. Karen and her family lived in McKenzie Towne for 8 years.