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The path forward: a resilient city

Over the last 10 years, Calgary has proven itself to be a resilient city. A resilient city is one which is strong and **adaptable** in the face of challenges such as economic downturns, climate-related events, and social crises. Through a variety of ups and downs, Calgary has navigated great steps forward as a world-class city.

Global issues have a direct impact on Calgary, something that has become more evident in the past decade. From floods and droughts, to fires and hailstorms, **climate change** is affecting Calgary in a number of ways. Dick Ebersohn, City of Calgary Climate Change Program Manager says: “We are working with partners to understand the current impacts of climate change, anticipate how it will affect us in the future, and working to adapt our city to where we need to,” he says. “Cities that understand and work proactively to navigate climate change are cities that will thrive in the future.”

At the very core of being a resilient city, are **resilient neighbourhoods**. In the spring of 2013, Calgary experienced a significant flood that shook and changed the city. Calgarians wasted no time in putting on their rubber boots, taking up their shovels, and working tirelessly to help their fellow neighbours.

Anila Lee Yuen, Chief Executive Officer for the Centre for Newcomers, reflects on how the flood served as a wake-up call for the communities she works with. “The flood reminded us that we are all connected and that we are stronger together,” she says. “It sparked our innate desire to

go above and beyond to help others when they really need it.”

Supporting global populations in tough times is also part of the Calgary way and points to strong social resilience. Early in 2016, Calgary welcomed 1,400 Syrian **refugees** into our communities in a period of four short months. “I’ve never seen such an outpouring and willingness to help,” says Anila. “The number of emails I received every day from Calgarians asking ‘What can I do?’ was totally overwhelming. I don’t know if we would have seen that same level of response 10 years ago.”

In 2016, Calgary was chosen to be part of the 100 Resilient Cities Network pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation. “Resiliency is about planning ahead,” says Brad Stevens, Deputy City Manager at The City of Calgary. “Anticipating how shock or stressors might impact us is critical to the **long-term viability** of our city.” Being part of the Rockefeller network enables Calgary to join other global cities in preparing and strengthening our social, economic, and environmental resilience.

imagineCALGARY set the foundation for **long-term thinking** in Calgary and we are building on this legacy as we look ahead. Knowing that Calgary’s economy is closely tied to global economic markets, building resiliency and diversification into our economy continues to be critical to long-term sustainability. Anticipating and preparing for future global and local impacts is more crucial now than ever before. Calgary’s navigation of global challenges will be the true testament to our **strength** and resilience as a city.

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