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Engage!

Surrey's Path to Progress

Congratulations to Vibrant Surrey on becoming the newest Vibrant Communities Trail Builder!

Surrey is a dynamic and prosperous community with unstoppable growth. Its population is increasing rapidly each month, development trends are strong and business opportunities are flourishing.



Despite this growth, Surrey has serious social issues, visible symptoms of deepening poverty and not enough infrastructure to respond adequately.

Vibrant Surrey's mission is to encourage and facilitate collaborative efforts to respond to the community's social issues and reduce poverty, including moving 1,000 families out of poverty with the means to continue to prosper.

More and more individuals and groups are joining Surrey's movement for change. Vibrant Surrey's broad community-based steering committee now includes members from every sector of the community, including business, government, social service, labour and private citizens.

We look forward to learning more from Vibrant Surrey as its members continue to explore avenues to enhance the quality of life for Surrey residents.



Learn about the path to progress in Surrey

Related Links:

- [About Vibrant Surrey](#)
- [Vibrant Surrey website](#)
- [The Faces of Poverty in Surrey](#)

By: Rachel Veira Gainer

Communities Collaborating for Impact

Once a community decides on its vision for the future, how does it move forward? How can community leaders collaborate for impact?

Tamarack's 2007 tele-learning series will examine how collaborations can make a strategic impact in their communities.

Showcasing stories, case studies, experts and ideas on the real work of collaboration within a multisectoral format, the series aims to further advance the skills of collaborators and practitioners.

The idea for this year's theme stems from the inaugural offering of the Communities Collaborating Institute. Held in September 2006, the Institute brought together over 70 leading collaborators from Canada (and New Zealand!).

These collaborators shared the challenges, joys, frustrations and "wicked questions" that emerge when working in a multisectoral fashion on complex community issues.

The concepts that mattered most to those 70 plus leaders – resilience, ingredients of success, implications for organizations and leadership, and getting to impact – have inspired the session topics for 2007.



Check out the first tele-learning seminar in this series!

Related Links:

- [Register for the full Communities Collaborating for Impact series](#)
- [Explore the 2006 learning theme – Movements for Change](#)

By: Louise Kearney

Ethical Practices in Calgary

The City of Calgary is taking a remarkable step forward to ensure that goods and services suppliers are following socially and environmentally responsible practices.

The Municipal Standing Policy Committee on Finance and Corporate Services recently approved pilot implementation of the City of Calgary's Sustainable Environmental and Ethical Procurement Policy (SEEP) and Supplier Code of Conduct. The SEEP will cover apparel, food and chemical procurements for the City.

Alderman Druh Farrell helped launch this initiative and is excited by the City's ability to encourage positive social change. "We actually have the power to make a difference by changing our buying habits!"

Additionally, city administration has agreed to report back to the Standing Policy Committee on the implications of including a living wage component in the SEEP and Supplier Code of Conduct.

Vibrant Communities Calgary has engaged in living wage research since 2003, supporting the development of policies that ensure tax dollars are being used to help employers with ethical environmental and business practices.



[Calgary tackles ethics policy and advocates push wage component](#)

Related Links:

- [City of Calgary attends to living wage issues](#)
- [Wage data in Calgary](#)
- [Living Wage and the City of Calgary](#)
- [Vibrant Communities Calgary](#)

By: Susan Eckerle Curwood

Vibrant Communities Update

Waterloo Region, ON – Opportunities Waterloo Region will be holding its second annual Valentines Classic Rock Dance and Silent Auction on Saturday, February 10. For more information, click [here](#).

Calgary, AB – Vibrant Communities Calgary is seeking a motivated individual to fulfill a one-year contract as Director. Applications are due by Friday, February 16. Access the full position description [here](#).

BC's Capital Region – The Victoria Cool Aid Society will be conducting a Homeless Needs Survey from February 5-9. Volunteers and donations are needed. Learn more about the survey and access the 2005 results [here](#).

Getting Things Done

The length of my “to do” list often makes me cringe. On days when my list feels long, I buy books like David Allen's *Getting Things Done*.

Allen advocates a system for organizing, prioritizing and acting to become more productive. Though Allen's system may work for many people, I found it too rigid to apply to my life. So, I put the book down and haven't been able to find it since!

Just as we learn, communicate and collaborate differently, we organize and manage our time and priorities in our own way. I've come to realize no single system works for all of us.

I like Stephen Covey's “First Things First” concept, which encourages me to listen to my “compass” and make conscious decisions to do what's important and urgent, rather than what's just urgent.

I'm liberating myself from time management and saying “no thanks” to promises of fool-proof life-organizing methods.

I'm going to get things done in the way that works best for me.



[Louise finds her own way to get things done](#)

Related Links:

- [David Allen on Getting Things Done](#)
- [Stephen Covey: First Things First](#)

By: Louise Kearney

Low-Fat & Fabulous

I'm all about being healthy. What I'm *not* all about is health food!

Nearly a month into our New Year's resolutions, a lot of the talk in the ladies' locker room at my gym seems to centre on finding ways to eat healthy food that still tastes good.

Some of the ideas I have heard from my locker room peers make me cringe. Would you want to eat any of the following

- Tofu brownies - "I swear, no one will know they're tofu," said one woman.
- "Almost cheesecake" made of a baked sweet potato, cottage cheese, cinnamon, Splenda and apple pie spice.
- Delectable Chocolate Protein Pudding Sandwiches.

With absolutely no offense to my Locker Room Ladies, I have found a couple of my own favourite low-fat dessert recipes. They are better for you than their full-fat counterparts, but I guarantee you won't be able to tell!



[Get Susan's recipes for brownies and peanut butter cookies](#)

Related Links:

- [More recipes from Tamarack's kitchen](#)

By: Susan Eckerle Curwood

Featured Resources

Cultural Vitality in Communities - This Urban Institute report defines cultural vitality as evidence of creating, disseminating, validating, and supporting arts and culture as a dimension of everyday life in communities. Learn more [here](#).

How Canadian are you? - According to a recent report, visible-minority immigrants and their children are identifying less and less with the country. Check out the Globe & Mail article [here](#) or download the report [here](#).