

## **Learning Themes**

### ***Vibrant Communities Calgary: Community-Driven Policy Change***

A number of issues emerge from the story of government-community collaboration through Vibrant Communities Calgary. These questions are likely not unique to Calgary's experience. The following themes may point to helpful lessons and important considerations in other contexts, as well.

*Through Vibrant Communities Calgary, both the City of Calgary and Province of Alberta have, in various capacities, partnered with the community in the development and assessment of policy.*

- How might community groups like Vibrant Communities move from advocate to policy partner? What are some of the roles of community groups in policy development?
- How do government officials manage these relationships?

*During the lifespan of Vibrant Communities Calgary's Living Wage Initiative, City officials (public servants and elected officials) have engaged the community through a number of informal policy networks.*

- What are some of the opportunities and challenges presented by these relationships?
- Are there any formal supports or structures that could be instituted to improve the efficacy of government-community engagement?

*At times, a mobilized community can speak to elected officials in ways that public servants cannot. Indeed, public servants and elected officials engage community representatives differently.*

- What are some of the different opportunities available to communities in engaging public servants and/or elected officials?
- What are the implications of different strategies?

*Community engagement of senior levels of government (provincial and federal) is often more challenging than engagement of local governments.*

- Are there potential approaches by which community groups are more likely to achieve success in engaging senior levels of government in processes of policy development?
- With a focus on long-term, systemic change, how important is the wider, deeper involvement of governments?

