

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS, CONCERNS AND  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  
RE: AIRPORT TRAIL TUNNEL

**Northern Hills Community Association –**

“...build out expected to increase our population to 60,000, traffic issues continue to challenge us. ....with the current plan to not connect Airport Trail on either side of the Airport, unacceptable volumes of traffic will be re-routed onto CHB and Deerfoot Trail to gain access to the Airport. Even with the expected widening of CHB, ... traffic volumes will still be excessive. Our residents work in areas that will be disconnected.”

**Carol Steiner, Saddle Ridge Community Association**

“...tunnel is crucial to the many businesses east of the current Barlow Trail, most of whom are located there precisely because of its proximity to the Airport....need the tunnel so that those residents and businesses to have spent money to locate in this area because of proximity to the airport are not suddenly cut off. The alternate routes to the airport are not acceptable, as they will become gridlocked as the area becomes built up. The only reasonable solution is for Airport Trail to continue east, under the new runway...”

**Resident – Coral Springs**

...to limit access to the airport from this area would negatively impact all residents for the following reasons:

1. the Northeast already has a negative image. What still attracts people to this area, in spite of this, is the access to areas such as downtown, Deerfoot Tr. and the airport where many people are employed.
2. As population continues to grow with respect to the new Stonegate industrial area and housing developments north of the airport, the employees and residents will be cut off from easy access which will burden the roads that are left – such a Deerfoot (which absolutely cannot continue to handle any more volume), McKnight and Metis Trail and what is left of Barlow.
3. Driving the extra distance to get to the airport will increase the cost of taxi fares, mileage costs and travel time. Shouldn't we think of being more efficient in getting people to where they want to go? Don't we already have enough lights on our streets?
4. Please think of the future of this city and what it will cost then. It seems that in the past, there has been little foresight – using Deerfoot as one example with dangerous point of exits and entries and volumes trying to get on and off this road...and the lights on the exits, backing up traffic onto a “supposedly” freeway are ludicrous and was not thought out very well in the past.

**Calgary Region – Canadian Home Builders’**

“Having the tunnel put in place now just makes good business sense.”

**Coast Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre**

We trust, without the connection of the new access to the old Airport road, our business and livelihood will be significantly compromised. It is common knowledge location, location, location is the foundation of any successful business. Without this tunnel or connection to the old airport road, our guests will potentially experience double the commuting time to get to us, not to mention the exponential levels of aggravation due to the multiple stop lights and increased intersections. Our single largest market is centered around air/flight arrivals – without the competitive convenience of location, our customers will be forced to take their business to other communities more readily accessible, our national and international convention business may possibly choose other cities altogether considering this bedlam of transportation strain.

### **Resident – Discovery Ridge**

...grew up in the north but have lived mostly in the south and even though your request for support is mostly directed at the residents of NE Calgary, I feel strongly that this tunnel will serve all of us using the Calgary airport. Having only one access road to an international airport that sits within an expanding city is not good forward thinking. I agree with the 'no brainer' concept that points to the building of this tunnel BEFORE the runway is built. Let's apply some forward thinking in the planning of the city expansion – forward thinking that we have been lacking for more than 20 years.

We can't afford to continue losing roads that we really need. Please let's develop the roads in the beautiful city to that of a truly international level and let's do this tunnel before the runway is built so that we have it done at a practical level and cost!

### **Resident – Panorama Hills**

If we assume that McKnight and Country Hills Blvd will provide adequate alternate routing, we are fooling ourselves. Our own City of Calgary Transportation Department stated that CHB will see traffic failures if traffic lights were put up near the Stoney Industrial Park. Council at the time ignored the City experts' report and we now have more lights on CHB. Common sense tells us that adding airport-bound traffic to this already overtaxed roadway will create more problems.

I don't think I need to explain how McKnight is already facing its own issues of overuse. It was also not designed to be a major access route for east-west travel, made self-evident by the number of traffic lights.

What we need is an expressway solution connecting northeast to northwest to compensate for the closure of Barlow Trail where the new runway will be constructed. The tunnel is the most common sense answer.

### **Shane Homes**

One concern is that residents north and east of Métis Trail will be required to enter the Airport via Deerfoot Trail, a considerable distance versus coming through the tunnel. With 100,000 more residents expected to be living in communities east of the Airport within 15 years this alone presents a traffic problem. In addition, part of our commitment to developing communities north and east of the airport is a requirement to participate in the cost of building two (2) interchanges; one at Country Hills and Métis Trail and the other at Métis Trail and Airport Trail. However, without the tunnel the interchange at Airport Road will be irrelevant as there will be no access to the west.

### **Coral Springs Community Association**

...if the tunnel is not built, access for any residents in our area would be made extremely difficult with enormous congestion on Country Hills Blvd. or worse yet having to access the airport by using McKnight all the way down to Deerfoot Trail. Either one of these scenarios would provide a huge inconvenience of extra travel time to anyone trying to access the airport as well as the traffic congestion on these routes will become a nightmare as the population continues to grow north of McKnight. Many people chose to live in our areas because of easy access to the airport for work travel. Unfortunately, this has only been brought to the forefront in the last few months and is hardly fair to any residents of the northeast that were under the assumption that we would have convenient access to the airport as we do now.

Secondly, we are very concerned that with no Airport Trail Tunnel, access would be cut off to all the airport area businesses that make up a huge sector of the northeast. This of course would have a devastating affect on the northeast area as a whole as businesses that depend on this traffic would lose all their airport business due to inaccessibility. Unfortunately, this would also cause a domino affect causing business closures and job losses.

## **Calgary Hotel Association**

Our member properties based in the North East will host on average over 40,000 travelers each month that come directly from the Airport to our properties doors. Currently these visitors while en route to their property of choice will encounter an average of 5 traffic lights, under the revised plan without the tunnel; it is understood from review of city planning drafts that they can expect to stop at over 25 sets of lights. Without this tunnel or connection to the old airport road, Calgary visitors will potentially experience double the commuting time to get to our properties and the businesses they are here to visit. There can be no doubt that North East businesses operating in the areas south of the International Airport will be negatively effected by the lack of direct access to the very entity we serve. On a personal note, it is unfortunate that first time visitors to Calgary will see an industrial park and not our famous city skyline and painted oil containers as they leave the airport.

## **Resident – Coventry Hills**

From an Emergency Planning point of view, has the city even considered the numerous sour gas wells in the area? If one of these gas wells leaks or blows out and a mass evacuation is required, the lives of many residents will be placed at a significant risk if they cannot evacuate in a timely fashion. Since 95% of Calgary's wind is from the west and north, it's imperative to have an additional western escape route. There's the potential for a major disaster here from a blowout or leak, or the inability for additional Police, EMS and Fire crews to get to the area in a timely manner. This tunnel provides one more escape / access route.

The net effect if this tunnel is not constructed will result in traffic chaos on Country Hills Blvd. and McKnight Blvd. to name a few during peak travel hours. If the city is going to openly support east-west commuting through it's support of urban sprawl and location of industrial areas along Deerfoot Trail, then it's their responsibility (and should be their mandate) to work towards building the network to support it. This proposed tunnel on Airport Trail is part of that long-term solution. When there's potential money on the table from the provincial and federal governments, it would be ignorant to pass up this opportunity to develop this important piece of transportation infrastructure for future Calgarians.

While you're at the table, perhaps it would be wise to consult the province on expanding the parking lot we call Deerfoot Trail. It's unbelievable to me that in the past 15 years that no one has taken the initiative to work with your provincial partners to add a lane or two to Deerfoot and get traffic moving again. Let's build a new HOV lane, enforce it, and reward drivers who carpool.

It is the role of the mayor to ensure that all citizens of Calgary are represented equally. This clearly has not been the case for a long time, and the disparity is all too obvious in the NE. It's time to take a step in the right direction with this tunnel.

My advice if the city decides not to pursue the Airport tunnel? How about renaming Airport Trail to Airport Close.

## **Saddle Ridge Community Association Land Use Committee**

Question – Why would the Airport Authority build a new runway that increases substantially the airport usage, but cut off easy access to the businesses, community amenities and homes that have been established in its proximity?...without the airport Trail tunnel, the economic vibrancy of our region and attractiveness to reside here will be deeply affected.

## **Resident – Mayland Heights**

If this tunnel is not built, it also affects residents of the deep SE. With the construction of the East Freeway, SE residents could use the new freeway to quickly access the airport via Airport Trail, rather than having to drive the Deerfoot. Isn't the East Freeway supposed to help relieve traffic from the severely overused Deerfoot?

### **West Springs / Cougar Ridge Community Association**

While this particular piece of infrastructure is not in our community, the airport and surrounding lands are a vital part of the City of Calgary, used by all residents. Allowing the Calgary Airport Authority to build the proposed new runway, without including the tunnel for Airport Trail, will be a mistake all Calgarians will pay for over the next 50 years.

### **Resident – SW Calgary**

Even though your request for support is mostly directed at the residents of NE Calgary, I feel strongly that this tunnel will serve all of us using the Calgary airport. Having only one access road to an international airport that sits within an expanding city is not good forward thinking.

### **Resident – Calgary**

What ever will happen on those all too frequent days when the Deerfoot is closed due to an accident - will the airport close as well?

### **Resident – Downtown**

For the business in the area.....the road (Airport Trail) is a lifeline to sustaining business”

### **Erin Woods Community Association**

How will Barlow Trail closure impact bus service to the Airport?

### **Hilton Garden Inn – Calgary Airport**

We have calculated that the travel time from our hotel to the airport will increase from 20 minutes to a minimum of 60-90 minutes round trip. In addition, gas and repairs to operate the shuttle bus will increase proportionately by approximately 80 – 90%. More importantly, our revenue will be impacted as the advantage of being close to the airport has been negated.

If our corporate and leisure guests must take a 30 – 45 minute ride from airport to hotel, it is highly likely that many of them will choose to spend that time travelling to the downtown location and we will loose our competitive edge. The limited drive by visibility of the hotel will also decrease our projected revenue. We estimate the closure of Barlow Trail as planned will result in a loss of at least 18 – 20 % in total revenue. This would also be applicable to the other 2500 guest rooms represented by 14 hotels in the airport area.