

February 17, 2009 / For Immediate Release

New Strategy Boosts Youth Engagement

Airdrie, Alberta – At their regular meeting on February 17, 2009, Airdrie City Council accepted Airdrie’s first youth strategy. The Airdrie Youth Strategy provides a framework to guide the community to engage and empower youth in meaningful ways.

“Youth in our community play such an important role,” says Robbie White, Community Developer for Youth. “The strategy will help ensure our youth are connected to our community and help the community understand the value and contributions youth can make.”

The Social Planning Department has been working to develop this strategy, researching best practices, and developing recommendations. Part of the process in developing the strategy was a youth outreach program, which included extensive surveying of Airdrie youth. The Airdrie Hyjinx Youth Council has also contributed many hours in gathering information for the strategy.

“The input from youth in the strategy was essential to ensure we addressed all the key areas,” says White. “Their feedback provided the basis of what we are doing right and what we can be doing better.”

Next steps include collaborating with community partners that work with youth, such as the school divisions, Family Community Support Services (FCSS) funded agencies, Airdrie Public Library, RCMP, Alberta Health Services, and Chamber of Commerce. Recommendations of the strategy include:

- Communicating the breadth of the municipal services to youth
- Engaging youth by involving them in City of Airdrie decision making processes
- Researching how existing public facilities can be better utilized by youth as a social gathering place
- Establishing an employment mentorship program at the City of Airdrie so youth can be paired with a City of Airdrie employee for the purposes of career research, job shadowing, informational interviews, and work experience

The strategy is available at www.airdrie.ca.

-30-

Robbie White
Community Developer for Youth
City of Airdrie
403-948-8800 ext 743
Robbie.white@airdrie.ca
www.airdrie.ca