



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Release

SW Calgary Neighbours Demand Transparency and Accountability

January 5, 2016, Calgary, AB — The Southwest Transitway and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project was passed by a newly elected City Council February 2011 in an omnibus motion based on a flawed 2010 engineering report and deficient public engagement process. The project has been dormant for almost five years until being re-launched in early October 2015 — following a \$187 million public transit (GreenTRIP) funding announcement by the province on September 4, 2015.

A group of concerned SW Calgarians called ***ready to engage!*** — with representatives spanning 14 communities and growing — have joined together to demand transparency, accountability and answers from their Ward Councillors and City Administration. While the group supports well-planned public transit, they maintain that this project is neither well-conceived nor necessary.

“The City of Calgary has fast-tracked the project with no meaningful consultation, no updated budget, has shared very little accurate or current information despite repeated requests from residents and other stakeholders,” says Alan Hallman, spokesperson for ***ready to engage!*** Several City Councillors were also unaware of the project until ***ready to engage!*** reached out to them.

“Numerous potentially serious health and safety issues have also been identified with the City’s plans to build new roadways and bus-only lanes. These issues include building over high-pressure oil and gas pipelines and other important utility lines along the 14 Street utility corridor — exposing communities to significant risks.” explains Hallman.

No environmental impact studies will be undertaken by the City until after the project has been completed. There have been breaches in several City policies, which a municipality has a duty to comply with under the Municipal Government Act. Such policies include the *engage!* Policy (purposeful dialogue between The City, citizens/stakeholders to gather information to influence decision-making), the Triple Bottom Line Policy (the approach to decision-making that considers economic, social and environmental issues in a comprehensive way) and the Complete Streets Policy (the approach that improves safety and accessibility for all road users), among others.

We are ***ready to engage!*** and our mandate is to give a voice to residents and other stakeholders.

SAVE THE DATE: ***ready to engage!* Community Information Forum**
Thursday, January 21, 2016 - 7:00 p.m.
Calgary Jewish Community Centre (1607 90 Avenue SW)

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For more information please contact:
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www.readytoengage.ca