

May 13, 2015

Rachel Notley
Premier-Designate of Alberta
Office of the Premier
307 Legislative Building
10800 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Premier-Designate Rachel Notley,

We represent the Calgary River Communities Action Group, a non-partisan advocacy organization of 1000 members who were impacted by the 2013 flood that devastated the City of Calgary. Our mandate is attached and more information can be learned at our website: www.protectcalgary.com. Since our inaugural meeting a few short weeks post-flood, at which all levels of government were represented and addressed an audience of over 500 flood-impacted property owners, we have worked collaboratively with the municipal and provincial governments to raise awareness of issues impacting our membership and in many instances, drive change.

We are in full agreement with Mayor Nenshi that flood protection for the City of Calgary ought to have been the No. 1 issue for all Calgarians in the recent election. Canada's economic engine was devastated in 2013 – not only in the residential communities, but the downtown core ground to halt. To put the impact into perspective: City Hall was severely flooded and not re-opened for several months; the Saddledome was filled with water past the 10th row of seating; the Stampede grounds were devastated and it was miraculous the Stampede was able to proceed; the Zoo was entirely underwater, and several hundred animals were evacuated under dangerous circumstances; large swathes of the downtown core were flooded or rendered inaccessible; 32 communities in Calgary were evacuated, which affected about 80,000 people and thousands of homes were flooded or destroyed; 4000 businesses were impacted; and approximately 5.1 million work hours were lost in the private sector. The Provincial Flood Damage Assessment Study for the City of Calgary estimated \$1.8 billion in direct damages alone.

Perhaps even more shocking, this was not the largest flood to hit Calgary: in the past 150 years, there have been two floods that were more than 30% larger. Failing to implement timely upstream mitigation is not an option for a city of this size – not only to minimize economic damage, but to ensure public safety.

As we near the second anniversary of the flood, it may seem to some that not enough progress has been made on flood mitigation infrastructure. However, we understand that a large scale project of this nature will always take time to proceed, and we also know that much has been accomplished in the past 23 months. The provincial government has identified several options for flood mitigation infrastructure on the Elbow River, and has been collaborating with TransAlta to mitigate flood risk on the Bow River. We were very encouraged in September 2014, when the province moved past the “study phase” and into a clear “action phase”, as confirmed by the Premier's announcement that the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir was proceeding, while further investigation of other options on the Elbow River were continuing. Based on information we have learned from our many

meetings with the Government of Alberta, in addition to the volumes of materials made publicly available on the Government's website, it is easy to understand how the Government arrived at the decision to immediately proceed with the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir as a first project.

We are genuinely concerned that the momentum built up over the past many months to move the Springbank project along will be disrupted by the change in Government. Flood protection for the City of Calgary cannot be a political issue – it is a matter of protecting the economic viability of this City and safety of its citizens. Our ask to you, as the new leader of Alberta, is to ensure that this critical flood mitigation infrastructure at Springbank continues to proceed, with an aim to providing flood protection by 2018. We also ask that you continue to press for solutions on the Bow River, which will likely involve a combination of leveraging the existing infrastructure in collaboration with TransAlta, and building at least one new infrastructure project on the Bow. Our City requires a comprehensive upstream mitigation strategy, involving both the Bow and Elbow rivers, to adequately protect Calgary. Timeliness is critical and momentum cannot be slowed, otherwise we risk having no solution in place when the next, inevitable flood event occurs.

We would like to meet with you at the earliest time possible, so we can further brief you on the above matters and more clearly understand your position. We also present you with an excellent opportunity to assuage the growing fear amongst our membership, by addressing them at our upcoming Annual General Meeting in June. Both Premier Hancock and Mayor Nenshi spoke to our membership at the 2014 AGM, and we have invited Mayor Nenshi to speak again this year. Your voice of leadership in this matter is of critical importance, particularly during this time of change and uncertainty. We have yet to confirm a date, and would be happy to work with your office to accommodate your schedule.

Finally, we would like to extend our congratulations on your and your party's victory in the election. We look forward to working with you and new members of Government on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

CRCAG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Cc: Richard Dicerni, Deputy Minister of Executive Council
Mayor Naheed Nenshi, City of Calgary

Enclosure: CRCAG Mandate

**CALGARY RIVER COMMUNITIES ACTION GROUP
RESTATED MANDATE 2015**

1. CRCAG will continue to advocate for construction of large-scale flood mitigation infrastructure to provide the City of Calgary protection for at minimum a 1 in 200 year scale flood event on the Elbow River.
2. CRCAG will continue to advocate for the Government of Alberta to immediately enter into a legal agreement with TransAlta Corporation to leverage existing infrastructure on the Bow River and its tributaries for flood mitigation purposes.
3. CRCAG will advocate for construction of additional flood mitigation infrastructure on the Bow River to ensure protection for at minimum a 1 in 200 year scale flood event.
4. CRCAG will participate in legal and regulatory proceedings as deemed necessary by the CRCAG Board in furtherance of advocating for particular flood mitigation infrastructure projects.
5. CRCAG will continue to advocate against policy, legislative and regulatory changes that are prejudicial to and negatively impact property owners in flood impacted communities.