

PART II - The Municipal Complex



How to use this guide

The content of this guide has been provided for teachers and students as background and support for a self-guided tour of the Municipal Complex.

Part II of the self-guided tour includes information and interesting stories about structures, meeting rooms and exhibits at the Municipal Complex offering students the current and historical context of Calgary as a city.

Before visiting the Municipal Complex in person to see where the participation, decision-making and service delivery happens for Calgarians, we recommend reviewing **Part I – How Local Government Works** of our self-guided tour resources found on calgary.ca/tours for an increased level of awareness and understanding of local government.

We hope teachers and students enjoy learning from this material to understand Calgary's past, current state and future focus, and to inspire active and well-informed future community members.



Introduction

Our local government, The City of Calgary, provides services that directly impact our daily lives. The Municipal Complex, Historic City Hall and other City buildings around Calgary are where decision-making, future-planning and daily City services happen. This document highlights some of the important areas and exhibits that can be found in and around the Municipal Complex in downtown Calgary.

Honouring the land

Moh-kins-tsis. Guts-ists'i. Wîchispa Oyade. Otos-kwunee. Calgary.

The city of Calgary, where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet, was historically a place of confluence where the sharing of resources, ideas and opportunities naturally come together. Long before Scottish settlers named it Calgary, the original Indigenous Nations of this area had their own names for the land. In the Blackfoot language, it is called Moh-kins-tsis. The Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations refer this place as Wicispa Oyade and the people of the Tsuut'ina nation call it Guts-ists-I. The Métis call the Calgary area Otos-kwunee.



CITY FACT:

An emerging best practice at The City is to begin events with a traditional land acknowledgement, including City Council and Committee meetings.

These statements acknowledge ties the descendants of the First Peoples have to the land and its importance to Indigenous culture, ceremonies, and traditions.

The City of Calgary is committed to building strong relationships and partnerships with Indigenous communities in and around Calgary. For more information on The City's Indigenous Relations work, visit [Indigenous Relations](#).

Welcome to the Municipal Complex

The complex includes the following areas:

- The Municipal Building (*the big blue building*)
- The Municipal Building Plaza (*open area outside facing MacLeod Trail SE*)
- The Municipal Building Atrium (*the indoor public open space as you come in the west doors*)
- The Administration Building (*connected to the Municipal Building and Historic City Hall*)
- Historic City Hall
- Plus 15 North to Bow Valley College
- Plus 15 West to Arts Commons



*A separate handout of this map is available on calgary.ca/tours.

Areas, Exhibits and Artwork inside the Municipal Building



Municipal Building

The construction of the Calgary Municipal Building was completed in October 1985 and has since been the centre for civic administration.

- The modern triangular design of this 14-story building embodies the dynamic and progressive spirit of Calgary and centralizes most City departments.
- The central atrium spans 12-stories in height, walled by concrete and glass office windows, and capped with a rooftop skylight.
- Approximately 2,000 of The City's 13,327 staff work here.

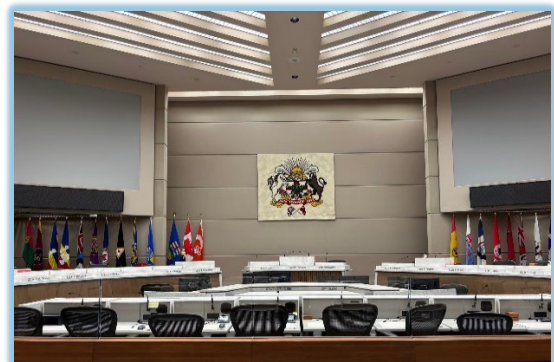
Council Chamber

Council Chamber is where Members of Calgary's City Council meet to discuss policies, bylaws, budget, city planning, and other issues.

- Council public hearings and standing policy committee meetings give Council a chance to hear opinions and sentiments from Calgarians before decisions are made.
- The public can participate in these meetings in person, by phone or by written submission.
- Council meetings are also streamed live at calgary.ca/webcast.

Quiz Question: True or False? Only Members of Council and City staff are allowed into Council Chamber.

Answer: False. Members of the public can observe meetings and speak at committees and public hearings.



**Refer to letter (A) on tour map*

Flags in Council Chamber

See separate flag handout for larger version and full descriptions of the flags and City crest at calgary.ca/tours.





**Refer to letter (B) on tour map*

Chief David Crowchild sculpture

This sculpture honours Chief David Crowchild – the late Chief of the Tsuu T’ina Nation.

- The plaques at the base of the pillar name the recipients of a memorial award in honour of Chief Crowchild.
- The Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee, on behalf of The City, presents the award to individuals who demonstrate a commitment to Indigenous issues and promote understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures.
- The four tepees have doors open to represent that his doors were always open.
- Many of the items are based on actual items owned by Chief Crowchild, such as his beadwork and buckskin.

The white hat

Official visitors to Calgary are given a handshake and a White Hat when they arrive.

- This is known as the White Hat Ceremony in exchange for a simple pledge to spread hospitality “to all folks and critters who cross [their] trail hereafter.”
- White hat ceremonies are arranged through Tourism Calgary and The Mayor’s Office.



**Refer to letter (C) on Tour Map*



**Refer to letter (D) on tour map*

The Olympic torch

This official Olympic Torch was presented to The City of Calgary to commemorate the XV Olympic Winter Games in Calgary in 1988.

- The Relay began in St. Johns, Newfoundland and ended 88 days later as 12-year-old Calgary student Robyn Perry lit the cauldron at McMahon Stadium.
- The torch is made with a tapered Canadian Maple wood handle, styled after the base of the Calgary Tower.
- Pictograms of the 10 official Olympic Winter Sports are laser-incised into the maple. The bowls were made to resemble the Calgary Tower.

The Friendship Quilt

In 1999, The City, alongside community partners and citizens, created the friendship quilt to celebrate the International Year of Older Persons.

- There are 45 handmade squares created by either an individual or a group.
- Each of the squares has a story.
- The friendship quilt serves as symbols of community spirit and solidarity with older persons.



**Refer to letter (E) on tour map*



**Refer to letter (F) on tour map*

JOY

This bronze sculpture by Roy Leadbeater celebrates a young Polish immigrant who met the love of his life in the revolving door of Calgary's landmark York Hotel.

- The York Hotel once stood where The Bow building stands today.
- Roy emigrated to Calgary from Derbyshire, United Kingdom in 1953.
- He was commissioned to create this piece for The City of Calgary in 1987.

Calgary flood 2013 display

The bronzed boots are in honour of the hundreds of Calgarians who volunteered to help after the flood in 2013.

- All seven levels of the municipal parkade filled with water during the flood.
- Over 500 sandbags were piled high on 3 St SE (the street between the Municipal Building and the Central Library) to help shield the building's air intakes from floodwater.
- 26 communities were evacuated, affecting approximately 110,000 Calgarians.

Quiz question: How many Calgarians were affected by the 2013 flood?

Answer: 110,000



**Refer to letter (G) on tour map*



**Refer to letter (H) on tour map*

The Bears

In celebration of Calgary's new municipal building, the Devonian Group of Charitable Foundations commissioned this bronze sculpture of a mother bear and cub by French-born sculptor, Suzanne Sable in 1983.

- The bears are positioned in a stance that shows the mother bear protectively turning to face her baby bear who is unaware of any danger nearby

Quiz question: What do you think is the danger that the mother is protecting the baby from?

Answer: You!

Bay of Calgary mural

This mural is a depiction of Calgary's namesake - the Bay of Calgary on the Isle of Mull, Scotland.

- The North-West Mounted Police established a fort located where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet to catch whiskey smugglers in 1876.
- The name "Calgary" was given to the fort by Scotsman Colonel MacLeod.
- This mural was painted in 1984 by Stan Phelps in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Calgary being officially incorporated as a town in 1884.



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**Refer to letter (J) on tour map*

Famous Albertans display

Sculptures by Métis artist David Garneau of historically famous Albertans to celebrate Calgary's 100th birthday.

- **George Murdoch** was elected as the Town of Calgary's first Mayor in 1884. He also served as a Town of Calgary Councillor from 1889-1890, and as a City of Calgary Alderman from 1895-1896.
- **Patrick Burns** was one of the Big Four ranchers who founded the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede in 1912.
- **Robert Edwards** (aka Eye Opener Bob) published the Calgary Eye Opener newspaper in the early 1900s.
- **Samuel Livingston** (1831-1897) was the first farmer/rancher in the Calgary area.
- **Jerry Potts** (1840-1896) was a Métis scout and guide for the North-West Mounted Police.

City time capsule

Named *A Slice of Life in Calgary 1985*, the time capsule was installed during the construction of the Municipal Building to be opened after 99 years in 2084.

- The capsule sits below a bronze plaque embedded in the floor!
- It showcases life in Calgary in 1985
- Some of the items included in the capsule are pins, a key from the old Imperial Hotel, and designs for the Municipal Building.

Quiz question: how old will you be in 2084?

Answer: *Depends on how old you are now!*



**Refer to letter (K) on tour map*

Lego® model of the Calgary Central Library

- The 'real' Central Library is located just behind the Municipal building (East doors).
- The library was officially opened on November 1, 2018 by Astronaut Chris Hadfield.
- If your tour timing allows, we recommend you head over and take a look at this magnificent public space.
- The Calgary Central Library can be accessed out of the East doors of the municipal building and across 3rd Street SE.



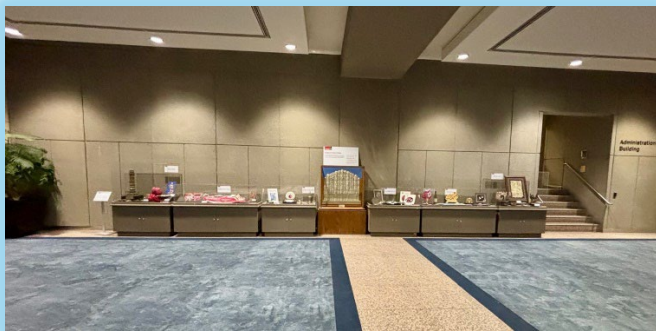
**Refer to letter (L) on tour map*



**Refer to letter (M) on tour map*

Model of HMCS Calgary ship

- Both ship models are named after The City of Calgary.
- There is a badge of honour located on the life buoy under the ships.
- The gold braid represents the grain fields around Calgary, the two blue stripes represent the Bow and Elbow Rivers which flow through Calgary, and the bow and arrow represent the Indigenous people of the area.
- Also on the life buoy are the letters HMCS which stands for Her Majesty's Canadian Ship.
- The frigate also flies the official flag of Calgary at the helm.
- The ship's bell was gifted to The City a few years ago when the frigate was in dry dock to bring the boat up to today's standards.
- Etched on the bell are the names of the babies born to service personnel stationed on The Calgary frigate.
- The back of the frigate is a model of a corvette, which was also named after Calgary.
- It was used in WW II and the five major battles are listed on the plaque in the showcase.



**Refer to letter (N) on tour map*

Calgary's sister cities display

Reflecting the growing importance of international relations, The City of Calgary shares sister city status with six cities around the world.

Our sister cities are Quebec City, Quebec, Canada; Jaipur, India; Daqing, China (pronounced da-ching); Naucalpan, Mexico; Daejeon, Korea (pronounced da-gin); Phoenix, Arizona, USA

- This status ensures mutually beneficial arrangements in such areas as culture, education, business, trade and investment.
- Each gift on display has been presented to Calgary over the years and is seen as a representation of a relationship that individuals and governments have forged.

The Municipal Plaza - Buildings, Sculptures and Flags

Municipal Building

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- The modern triangular design of this 14-story building embodies the dynamic and progressive spirit of Calgary.
- The central atrium spans 12-stories in height, walled by concrete and glass office windows, and capped with a rooftop skylight.
- Approximately 2,000 of The City's 13,327 staff work here.



**Refer to number (1) on tour map*

Historic City Hall

- Construction on the building began in 1907 and was completed in 1911.
- The building has national, provincial and municipal heritage designation.
- The original sandstone came from the J.A. Lewis quarry, now the community of Panorama Hills in NW Calgary.
- Home to the offices of the Mayor and Councillors and supporting ward staff.
- Closed for an exterior heritage restoration from 2016-2020 when the sandstone was replaced and/or restored.



**Refer to number (2) on tour map*

City Hall clock tower

- The only remaining timepiece of its kind in Canada, designed to strike on the hour.
- Only 50 were manufactured, and today fewer than 12 are operating worldwide that haven't been modernized with auto winding or converted to electric operation.
- The clock was installed in 1911 at a cost of approximately \$3,500.
- **The clock is heavy:**
 - ✓ Bell = 1500 lbs
 - ✓ Clock = 1700 lbs including the 9 ft pendulum that is 175 lbs
 - ✓ Weights = 750 lbs – two in total, one is 250 lbs and the other is 500 lbs



**Refer to number (3) on tour map*

The Lion

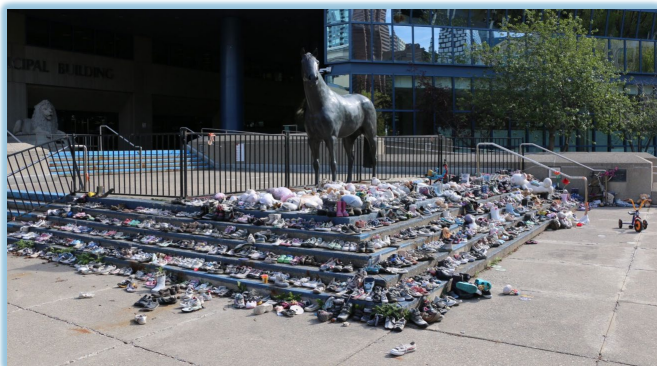
- The Lion is one of the four original lions that were once on Centre Street Bridge.
- Sculpted by stonemason James L. Thomson in 1916-1917.
- In 1999, the bridge was restored, and the four original lions were taken down and replaced by new lions.
- This lion weighs 12,600 kilograms.
- They were modeled after the bronze lions in London, England's Trafalgar Square.

The 'Family of Horses' sculpture

- The bronze sculpture "Family of Horses" was created by Alberta artist, Harry O'Halon.
- The stallion is positioned overlooking the foal and mare, signifying the strength and kinship among Calgary families and the special bond they share with the city.
- It is a reminder that the horse is part of our heritage and history of our city.



**Refer to number (4) on tour map*



**Refer to number (5) on tour map*

Indigenous shoe memorial

- In 2021, with the discovery of 215 unmarked and undocumented graves at a Residential School in B.C., a memorial of shoes and children's items was formed on the Municipal Plaza.
- As part of The City's commitment to the advancement of Truth and Reconciliation, and in response to Call to Action #82 as highlighted in the White Goose Flying Report, we continue to work towards establishing a permanent memorial to commemorate all Indian residential school, day school and inter-generational trauma survivors and the children who never returned home.

Police officers and firefighters tribute plaza

- Opened in 2006 to pay tribute to Calgary police officers and firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty.
- The three-story-tall monument is called Walls of Memory/Lantern of Light which features stone-clad walls covered in historic photographs at the base of a tower of steel and coloured glass that opens to the sky.
- Calgary has lost 69 firefighters in the Line of Duty, nine during active firefighting and 60 due to illnesses related to firefighting.
- To honour our city's fallen firefighters, the Calgary Firefighters and their Honour Guard hold an annual ceremony on the second Tuesday in September in the Police Officers and Firefighters Tribute Plaza.



**Refer to number (6) on tour map*

The main bank of flags and provincial flags



**Refer to number (7) on tour map*

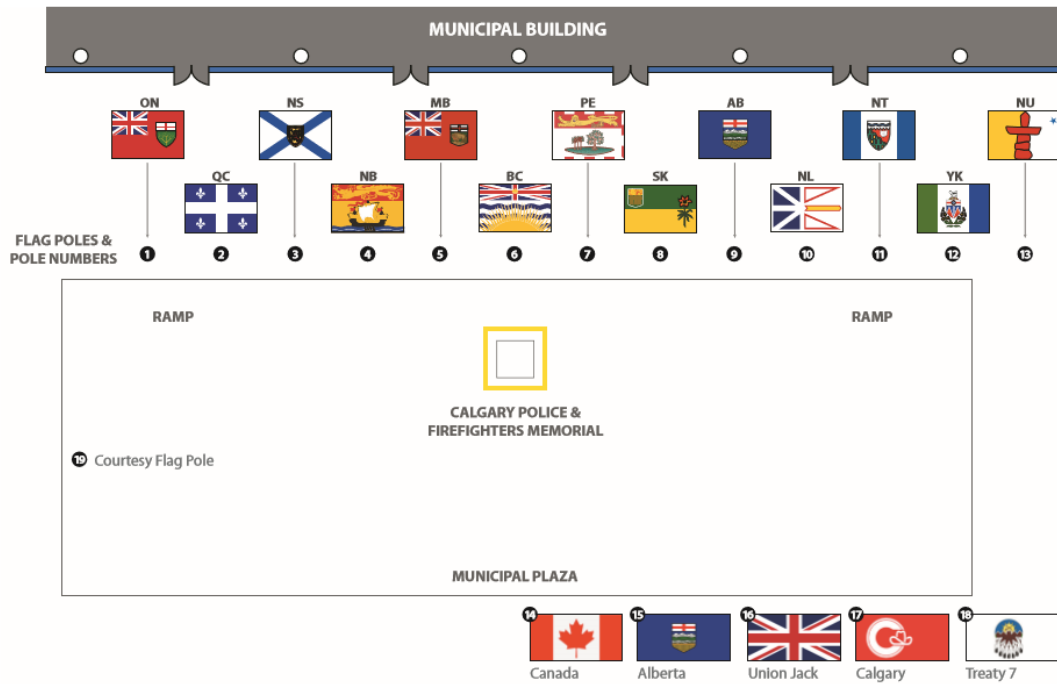
- All flags are symbols of honour and pride. Flags at City sites are displayed in a respectful way. The City follows accepted guidelines for displaying flags. The City's flag guidelines align with the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada.
- The Main Bank of Flags includes (when facing Municipal Building): Canada, Alberta, Union Jack, Calgary, Treaty 7.
- All Province and Territory Flags are represented along the Municipal Building and are in order of the year that they became part of Canada. They are NOT alphabetical.

Quiz question: What flags are displayed outside the municipal building?

Answer: *Canada, Alberta, Union Jack, Calgary, Treaty 7*



Flags in Front of Calgary Municipal Complex



Prepared by Protocol, City Clerk's Office

MACLEOD TRAIL

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**Refer to numbers (7 & 8) on tour map*

1	Ontario		8	Saskatchewan		6	British Columbia		13	Nunavut	
2	Quebec		9	Alberta		7	Prince Edward Island			Union Jack	
3	Nova Scotia		10	Newfoundland and Labrador		14	Canada			Calgary	
4	New Brunswick		11	Northwest Territories		15	Alberta			Treaty 7	
5	Manitoba		12	Yukon		19	Courtesy flagpole				

The City will fly flags on a temporary basis on the courtesy flag pole to mark special occasions.

See larger version and full descriptions of the flags on calgary.ca/tours.