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Brown changing shape of our city



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AROUND TOWN

Most of us get to know of new developments when we see the publicity from builders in communities such as Garrison Woods or read releases as to which retailers have taken space in projects such as Deerfoot Meadows. But long before any of the promotion takes place, a tremendous amount of vision, designing and planning has taken place, and in the Calgary area a good deal of it has been quietly accomplished by **Brown & Associates**, a company that has been shaping communities since 1989.

Twenty years ago, **Greg Brown**, a graduate in environmental studies at the University of Waterloo who added an MBA from the University of Manitoba, joined Ramsay Walker to form Walker Brown Urban Consultants. At that time, Calgary was beginning to recover from the recession of the 1980s and the new company was soon at work on residential land development for clients such as Melcor (Arbour Lake), Markborough (Richmond Hill) and Tirion (The Hamptons).

Ramsay Walker departed for Washington in 1994 to become vice-president of North American Development for Mills Corp., and the company was renamed Brown & Associates Planning Group while at the same time expanding its regional influence engaged in public and private sector projects throughout Alberta.



Stuart Gradon, Calgary Herald

Brown & Associates partners, from left, Bela Syal, Ron Wrigley, Greg Donaldson, Greg Brown and Darrell Grant.

Ron Wrigley had been with Ramsay Walker when Brown joined the firm, **Darrell Grant** joined in 1989, and **Bela Syal** came on board in 1992. In 2004 they joined Brown as partners of Brown & Associates and in 2008, **Greg Donaldson** and **Paul Mercer** also became partners.

Today, the firm has a staff of 30 people who provide unique in-house expertise in multiple areas including sustainable urban and rural community design; municipal, commercial and industrial policy planning; growth studies/annexation; and the all-important public consultation leading to development approvals.

They have performed work that has resulted in the successful planning of a tremendous amount of projects both within and outside the city. Today, more than 50 per cent of its creative thinking, sound judgment and knowledge of the regulatory environment is benefiting rural Alberta as well as communities in Eastern B.C.

Among the many current projects Brown & Associates is involved in are the residential communities of

Walden for Genstar, Crestmont for Qualico, Mahogany for Hopewell, Buffalo Hills in the M.D. of Rocky View, and it is the lead planning consultant involved at Currie Barracks for Canada Lands.

It implemented the blueprint and formulated the policy for the Beltline Inner City Redevelopment and is working for the city on the planning rationale for the Westbrook LRT Station. An interesting exercise that includes land-use designation and subdivision planning for more than 5.5 hectares, including the underground station and surface development of retail, office, highrise residential and a bus depot.

These projects will happen thanks to Brown and his partners quietly working behind the headlines for long periods of time, some with clients preparing many years in advance of developments such as the newly annexed land on the north side of the city and to the west of Chestermere.