



MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Economic concerns and environment - new 2008 Calgary business priorities

(Calgary, AB) – The Calgary Chamber of Commerce released survey results today that identify the business community’s most important issues for the coming year. The priorities, which will guide the work of our Chamber committees and public policy advocacy efforts, are:

1. Labour shortage
2. Transportation infrastructure
3. Taxes (federal, provincial, municipal)
4. Economic health and diversification
5. Environment (land use, water, climate change)

“While the labour shortage, transportation infrastructure, and taxation remain ongoing priorities from last year,” said Heather Douglas, President & CEO of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, “our membership is clearly concerned about the impact of a potential U.S. recession and our economy’s ability to adapt.”

The challenge of sustainable development – growing our economy while reducing the environmental impact – has also emerged as a ‘top five’ issue of membership for the first time.

“Calgary businesses are already leaders in environmental management. They recognize the tremendous opportunity to export technologies and processes abroad, and want to play a major role in solving environmental problems on a worldwide scale,” said Douglas.

Along with overall priorities, the Chamber surveyed members in greater detail on the most pressing municipal, provincial, and federal issues.

“Infrastructure, fiscal responsibility, and tax competitiveness are major themes and concerns of the business community relative to all levels of government,” said Douglas.

On the municipal front, however, the list of priorities has changed significantly from 2007. City expansion and growth management has emerged as the top issue in 2008, with concerns about public safety and crime a new addition.

With a provincial election underway, Chamber members identified health care spending and delivery, and post-secondary education as new entrants to their top five concerns this year. Spending and infrastructure investment remain ongoing priorities.

Federally, interprovincial trade barriers and mobility assumes a place in the top five for the first time.

“Calgary is a wonderful place to be in business,” said Douglas. “By identifying pressing issues and providing new ideas and solutions, the Chamber plays an important role in improving the business environment on behalf of our members. Together, government and industry can continue to build on



the prosperity of our business community and ensure Calgary remains an international centre of commerce.”

About the Chamber:

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce is a volunteer driven, not-for-profit, and non-partisan advocacy group whose mission is to lead and serve the Calgary business community, valuing its diversity.

On critical and emerging issues in public policy, the Chamber acts as the leading forum for debate, and advocates public policy solutions that improve the business climate on behalf of our members.

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BACKGROUND

2008 Membership Issue Priority Survey Results Summary

Margin of error: +/- 5%, 19 times out of 20

Survey conducted January 21 – February 1, 2008

2008 Top Five Business Issues

(Data derived from an open-ended question)

1. Labour shortage
2. Transportation Infrastructure
3. Taxes (Federal, Provincial, Municipal)
4. Economic health and diversification
5. Environment (Land use, water, climate change)

2008 Top Five Municipal Issues

1. City expansion and growth management (e.g. planning, urban sprawl)
2. Transportation – roads and transit
3. Public and personal safety
4. Fiscal management (spending and priority setting) by City Council
5. Quality of environment

2008 Top Five Provincial Issues

1. Health care spending and delivery
2. Fiscal management (spending and priority setting)
3. Infrastructure (e.g. provincial highway system, schools, hospitals)
4. Post-secondary education (universities, colleges, polytechnics)
5. Environmental sustainability and land use planning

2008 Top Five Federal Issues

1. Fiscal management (spending and priority setting)
2. Personal tax competitiveness
3. Interprovincial trade barriers/labour mobility
4. Corporate and small business tax competitiveness
5. Infrastructure investment

2007 Top Five Business Priorities

1. Labour shortage
2. Infrastructure deficit (in particular roads & transit)
3. High levels of taxation (provincial and federal)
4. Municipal affairs (business and property taxation, municipal spending)
5. Affordable housing

2007 Top Five Municipal Issues

1. Transportation infrastructure (e.g. roads & transit)
2. Labour shortage
3. Business taxes
4. Utility rates (e.g. water, electricity)
5. Downtown parking

2007 Top Five Provincial Issues

1. Infrastructure (e.g. provincial highway system, schools, hospitals)
2. Level of corporate and small business taxes
3. Level of personal taxes
4. Government regulation
5. Government spending

2007 Top Five Federal Issues

1. Level of corporate and small business taxes
2. Government regulation
3. Level of personal taxes
4. Government spending
5. Immigration levels to meet workforce demands



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESPONSE PROFILE

- 55% of respondents were from businesses with 25 employees or less; 36% from business with 5 employees or less.
- Largest sector responses were:
 - 1) Professional Services – 19%;
 - 2) Communication/Public Relations/Marketing – 9%;
 - 3) Financial Services – 8%;
 - 4) Information Technology – 7%
- 44% of businesses have been a Chamber member for more than five years