



## How would Rip feel about Calgary 2108?

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Once upon a time, writes Washington Irving (1783 - 1859), a simple, easygoing man named Rip Van Winkle lived in a picturesque village at the foot of the Catskill Mountains. Although he was enormously popular amongst his neighbours and their children, he was married to a harridan who nagged and browbeat him night and day.

One morning, to escape Dame Van Winkle's tongue-lashings, Rip ran away to the Catskills and fell asleep under a shady tree. He dreamt he had stumbled upon a group of men bowling with ninepins so joined them in their revelry and moonshine.

When he woke from his lengthy sleep, his gun was rusty and his beard was white and long. He climbed down to the village. Large new-fangled houses had replaced the old familiar homes. He failed to recognize the people he met. Everything was different. Nothing was as it had been because 20 years had elapsed.

The story has a moral. Society sometimes needs radical changes to move forward, but these changes must not eradicate the old ways and traditions entirely. If a modern day Rip Van Winkle, citizen of Calgary, dozed for 100 years, what extreme urban makeover would he find in 2108?

Last year, city hall adopted a 100-year vision and sustainability plan. Council asked its planners for an integrated land use and transit plan to match the centenary vision ([www.calgary.ca/planit](http://www.calgary.ca/planit)). The draft plan predicts another 1.3- million people will live here in 60 years and perhaps three million by 2108.

The city's plan envisages three scenarios. The dispersed model assumes that most new housing will be on the urban fringes and modest redevelopment would occur near LRT stations. The compact scenario presupposes no new subdivisions and all business and housing growth would happen in the existing footprint. Major roads would be redeveloped to incorporate all existing transportation types, including cycling and walking, and rapid transit will be built to efficiently serve the entire city.

The hybrid development presumes 62% of the new population and 92% of new jobs will take place in the existing urban footprint. Community roads, built to encourage pedestrian use, would feed into the same rapid transit system as the compact scenario.

Today is the deadline for Calgarians to comment on the city's plan.

After polling its members, the Calgary Chamber of Commerce throws its considerable weight behind the hybrid model. We believe it incorporates many elements of the Chamber's Renaissance Calgary project and preserves the finest of the old with the best of the new.

The Chamber submitted some recommendations critical to the success of a hybrid scenario, including:

- Prioritize housing affordability and include it as one of the city's sustainability principles.
- Maintain a 30-year supply of land to ensure land costs stay affordable.
- Participate in a regional land use plan by co-ordinating Calgary's with the surrounding districts.

Would Rip Van Winkle be amazed upon re-entering his native Calgary? Would the extreme makeover preserve the finest of the old with the best of the new? After all, real, lasting change is an amalgam of both the old and new.