

To Honourable Minister Amarjeet Sohi. and Monique Nasset, Smart Cities Lead, City of Calgary.

April, 2018

Re: Smart Cities Competition.

As a key member of Rainforest Alberta, I am proud to be involved with the Smart Cities team now and going forward.

Rainforest Alberta is a critically important, rapidly growing, private sector collaborative with 1400 members focused on diversifying the city and province's economy by building a vibrant innovation ecosystem. Great, resilient cities with strong social and innovation fabric are the way of the future. The Rainforest Alberta collaborative is a passionate, diversified, purpose-driven group of investors, successful entrepreneurs, new entrepreneurs, equity dealers, bankers, technology specialists, business strategists, technology strategists, inventors, charities, educators, physicians, fabricators, manufacturers and researchers. 95% are private sector, and government groups participate but do not direct Rainforest Alberta.

The Rainforest Innovation scope encompasses technical innovation platforms, tools and processes; including: software, hardware, chemistry, molecular and life science. The scope includes industries and sectors such as: Environment, Energy, Education, Housing, Agriculture, Transportation, Poverty, Indigenous, Mental and Physical Health, Water, Waste, Food, City Life, Homelessness, Safety, Crime, Music, Arts and Culture.

Some of the key initiatives include:

- All members sign a Social Contract which lays out the cultural values of Authenticity, Paying it Forward, and Teamwork
- Lunch (without a lunch) meetings hosted every Wednesday attracting 50 to 90 people consistently.
- Many special interest group breakfasts and after-hour meet ups.
- Building a 40,000 Sqr. ft. Innovation Centre in the East Village in Calgary.
- A million-dollar Social Innovation Challenge engaging 50,000 to 250,000 citizens from across the city and province. The challenge will be a contest-based competition, including rallies and meet ups across the city, with an innovation media network and the profits to be put into a social venture fund.
- Establishing an innovation corridor that includes major and minor municipalities.
- Establishing a financing and funding ecosystem from early stage high risk capital to large growth billion-dollar project funding.
- Supporting and building specialized maker-spaces and labs.
- Free training for members and affiliates like: 1000 Innovation Ninjas, Legal and Accounting Resources, Technical Advisory, Funding and Financing, Market Assessments and more.

- PivotTech conference, focused on helping engineers displaced in the Energy meltdown re-imagine their careers.
- Nucleus: secured a building in downtown Calgary to incubate and host Rainforest Innovation Ecosystem Initiatives and Meetings.
- EvolveU, a new learning service focused on providing skills that match modern fast moving, companies, technology and personal advancement.

Partners:

Rainforest has attracted many organizations including both private and public groups. To name a few: CDL (creative destruction labs), Zinc Ventures, Calgary Foundation, Data for Good, Mount Royal College, Bow Valley College, Zelos Capital, Tundra Energy Solutions, Zedi Corporation, Telus Spark Science Centre, Children's Hospital Research, Mental Health Association, A100, Start Up Calgary, Chic Geek, COSIA (Canadian Oil Sands Innovation Alliance), Hindle Architects, STEM learning labs, Rocky Mountain Trapeze, Alberta Bike Swap, Social Venture Partners, Calgary Municipal Land Corporation, Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and more.

Stacking and leveraging the award:

Initial discussions with very large and small private equity firms have been started where there is interest in matching the Smart City awards. We believe we can attract significant matching investments to leverage the 50-million-dollar award.

Smart Cities Coalition:

Rainforest will be happy to assist in establishing a full time ongoing Smart Cities coalition that encompasses Urban and Rural Community Innovation which includes process and technology innovation focusing on building stronger communities and a better province, country and planet. Rainforest can be a positive, neutral conveyor of cooperation and activities.

Finally, the Smart Cities initiative has already initiated a smarter sense of teamwork and collaboration that is needed to drive lasting positive results.

Peter Lafontaine
Social Good Interloper.
Rainforest Alberta, Host of lunch without a lunch.
www.rainforestab.ca