

Did you know?

The area of Kensington was owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway and pioneer rancher Ezra Riley at the beginning of the 20th century. WIKIPEDIA.ORG

Your Neighbourhood:

Kensington/Sunnyside

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'Where people want to come' Festival could catch a break

MICHELLE LINDSTROM
for Metro Calgary

There's more history to Kensington than what the Roasterie's people-watchers chat about or poets profess at Pages.

With all of this buzz, it's easy to forget Kensington isn't a community but rather the business district joining Calgary's Hillhurst and Sunnyside northwest communities.

Annie MacInnis, executive director of the Kensington Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ), says, "We feel like we're creating a place where people want to come to."

MacInnis moved from the Maritimes in 1981 to Kensington because everyone told her it was the "cool place to shop."



The Roasterie is a great place to people-watch in Kensington.

"This felt like a small town and was much less intimidating than other areas of the city," she says.

MacInnis now works with the businesses she always loved. She says the community is strong, and the business owners look out for one another, volunteer for BRZ events and attend annual general meetings to stay involved.

Kensington's day-to-day

traffic, MacInnis says, is three-pronged: Teenagers and 20-somethings hang out at pubs, coffee or tea shops; empty nesters stroll sidewalks towards spas, salons and restaurants; and middle-age parents take kids to nearby schools then go to lunch spots as a family on weekends.

Alderman Druh Farrell has been a resident of Hillhurst for 27 years and

Ward 7's alderman since 2001. "The demographic is very diverse," she says. "A real mix of socio-economic groups, however it is becoming a bit gentrified."

Originally, she says the neighbourhood was quite affordable — full of students, artists, professors and teachers. But, the lack of rental suites and change of apartments to condominiums has affected Hillhurst and Sunnyside's eclectic group of residents.

In spite of increased property costs, she describes Hillhurst/Sunnyside as "very progressive" with community gardens and the city's first community orchard.

"It's a cool place to hang out," says artist Katie Selbee, 20, who is a freshman to the neighbourhood. "It's like a little community, like a little home."

MICHELLE LINDSTROM
for Metro Calgary

The thought of gallons of salsa and tens of thousands of people sounds a little intimidating, but to Calgary festival-goers it's a tradition they're not willing to miss.

The Sun and Salsa Festival will take over the Kensington business district July 25, shutting down 10th Street and most of Kensington Road for much of the day, yet the crowd calls out for more.

"It's always the first Sunday after the Stampede," explains Annie MacInnis, Kensington Business Revitalization Zone's (BRZ) executive director.

"People are sick and tired of sausages and pancakes and it's a breath of fresh air to come to Kensington to eat spicy, tasty salsa."

She says it took a mere four hours last year for 800 gallons of salsa, prepared by Kensington BRZ businesses, to disappear into the bellies of the roughly 90,000 Sun and Salsa attendees.

A proposal city council will look at early next month is if subsidies can go to Calgary festival organizers.

"What may be a large sum of money to a festival organizing group can be very little money to the city," says Alderman Druh Farrell.

She explains fees associated with festivals — shutting roads down, security or paying the parking authority for lost meter revenue — will be reviewed as Farrell feels administration costs to charge for these services outweigh the actual service fees.

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18 your neighbourhood

Local tea shop a hit



MICHELLE LINDSTROM
for Metro Calgary



Jonathan Kane does not own the only tea shop in Kensington, but tries to set The Naked Leaf and its merchandise apart from the others.

Kane had a tea shop in mind towards the end of his dancing career and his artistic background makes today's decisions for suppliers simple: Use local talent.

"If you look at past civilizations when you go somewhere, what is the thing that lasts?" he asks. "It's the culture."

He sells tea pots, paintings, tea tins, cards, chocolates, hand lotion and hair

conditioner — all made with tea as an ingredient, and by Calgary sources.

The tea shop and dancing connection isn't obvious to all, but it is to Kane. "I drank tea throughout my career — it's just so healthy," he says.

He finished full-time, professional dancing 16 years ago in Europe and shifted into teaching and freelance performing. A position with the University of Calgary's Faculty of Fine Arts brought him here, instead of to his American homeland, six years ago.

In mid-September 2008, Kane decided to open The Naked Leaf in Kensington's shopping district. Local art

adorns his store's tea tins as "all part of that moment" to sit down and relax; he hopes that while customers look at the artwork, it brings them joy and removes some stress from their day.

The Naked Leaf (#103, 305 10th Street N.W.) was nominated this year for two Calgary Oscars: Best in Retail, against 58 competitors, and Best Independently owned Business, against 47 competitors.

Calgarians can vote online (calgaryoscars.ca) until Feb. 19.

What to do for fun in Kensington/Sunnyside

- **Resolution Gallery** (233 10th St N.W., 2nd Level of Eleven:Eleven) has Ignite by Egg Light on until Feb. 7. From Feb. 10-28, the gallery will feature ACAD students' Wearable Art. Both shows are free.
- **The Plaza Theatre** celebrates its 75th anniversary in Kensington later this year. Cur-

rently showing An Education, and then 2009 World's Best Commercials on Feb. 12. Typically \$9.50 per adult ticket, but Feb. 7 is pay-what-you-can with proceeds going to a local man who sells Street Talk. Go to theplaza.ca for more.

- **Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association's** (1320 5

Ave. N.W.) flea market is every Sunday from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. It's been running for 35 years.

- Unpredictable entertainment comes every Thursday at **The House Coffee Sanctuary's** (126 10 Street N.W.) open mike from 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Free.

— MICHELLE LINDSTROM
/FOR METRO CALGARY

Swimco Celebrates 27 Years in Kensington!

In 1983, Swimco opened the doors of its first retail store location, in the heart of Kensington. 27 years later, Swimco has expanded to five Calgary stores (recently opening in CrossIron Mills), and is Western Canada's leading swimwear retailer. The Kensington location remains one of Swimco's largest stores, easily accessible from the city core, and offering free parking behind the building or street metered parking just outside the front door.

Swimco's Kensington location is well-known for its personalized customer service. With a great selection of styles and brands, customers are guaranteed to find the best-fitting swimwear. A free one-on-one swimwear consultation with a trained Swimco Fit Expert can be booked by calling 1-888-979-4626.



Kensington Swimco, 1983

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Did you know?

The oldest building still standing in Kensington is the Plaza Theatre, which was built in the 1920s. WIKIPEDIA.ORG

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Sunnyside station one of the best: Farrell

MICHELLE LINDSTROM
for Metro Calgary



When the City of Calgary ran the C-Train through the northwest community of Sunnyside in 1987, it creat-

ed an uproar among residents as it demolished homes and left others with no front-street access.

Despite the complaints, Alderman Druh Farrell believes the city made a good decision.

"It's one of the best stations and one of the safest in the city," says Farrell.

"When you arrive in Sunnyside, it's right in the middle of the activity, and the new Transit Oriented Plan is taking advantage of that,"

she says, adding the city will use the C-Train station as a community hub and focal point by having nearby greenspaces reworked.

Like all other C-Train stations adjusting to Calgary's growing population, Sunnyside will be renovated to accommodate four LRT cars, but still remain along the same track line, says Farrell.

James Michi, executive director of Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association, says the area already

has a higher percentage of residents who use public transit and walk or bike to work compared to other Calgary communities.

"I think we may be ahead of the curve in Hillhurst Sunnyside."

Secondary suites an issue

MICHELLE LINDSTROM
for Metro Calgary



Last February, city council updated the Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) for Hillhurst/Sunnyside, starting the ball rolling for growth in the historical communities, but some questions and concerns remain.

"The value of land is creating a pressure on the affordability, and it is eroding the traditional vibrancy and mix of income and demographics in the community," said David White, Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association (HSCA) community planning committee chair.

Out of last year's ARP came the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy, with council and community's vision being to increase residential density around Sunnyside LRT and along Kensington Road, 14th Street and 5th Avenue.

TOD is a special development policy for city areas already with significant access to mass public transportation. The focus for such areas is on housing first, says White, and then on creating strong LRT connections, bike paths and wide sidewalks to encourage pedestrian-oriented lifestyles.

The city and HSCA researched methods to potentially increase transit line residential density. Basement suites and secondary (above garage) suites were proposed to solve the lack of affordable housing, as either could create rentable property for non-homeowners and assist mortgage-payers with a rentable suite in their home.

Alderman Druh Farrell said the area used to have many secondary suites but as redevelopment occurred there was "antipathy towards basement suites with the community and planning department, so they just weren't being replaced."

• An information session on secondary suites will be held tonight from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the HSCA centre (hillhurstsunnyside.org).



Senator Paul Zuzyk, 1913–1986



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