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## City's future boasts roads less travelled

### Transit and bike use pushed

By [SHAWN LOGAN](#)

Long-range plans for Calgary's future growth envision few expansions to existing roads, relying on commuters to turn more to bicycles and transit.

The city yesterday released draft plans outlining strategies to deal with Calgary's growth during the next 60 years, which despite forecasts of an additional 1.3-million people, call for no substantial expansion to the roads network, hoping instead commuters will look at alternate transportation.



Pat Gordon, project manager for Plan It Calgary, said many of the city's primary thoroughfares have been widened as far as they can and the best solution is to convince more people to park their cars and turn to transit, cycling or walking.

"We can't build our way out of congestion -- we're looking for ways to make it more cost effective without widening roads," she said.

"There will be some expansion where appropriate, but the idea is to create more opportunities to keep users in existing communities."

She said Calgary has the highest ratio of expressways to normal roads than any other city in Canada and noted the road network in the downtown core hasn't expanded in 25 years and continues to work well. The long-term plans for Calgary's growth call for commercial nodes in outlying communities that should curb some of the heavy traffic flows that routinely head to the downtown core on a daily basis.

Ald. Andre Chabot said making it easier for Calgarians to ride buses and trains or opt for bicycles is a noble endeavour, but most commuters still prefer to stay behind the wheel.

"I think it's a little optimistic -- the roads we have right now don't necessarily meet all the needs," he said.

Another critic, Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart, said trying to force future Calgarians out of their vehicles may be enough to make them look for other, more car-friendly municipalities.

"You can only socially re-engineer people so far before they find a way to make things happen for themselves," she said.