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Calgary leads building pack

Construction rocketed to \$4.76B in 2006

By [TARINA WHITE](#), CALGARY SUN

Calgary outstripped the nation in residential and commercial construction growth last year, according to new figures released yesterday by the city.

Building and development across Calgary skyrocketed to a record \$4.76 billion in 2006 -- a 32% increase over the 2005 construction record of \$3.6 billion.

Last year's new construction was evenly split between the residential and commercial sectors, with each funding \$2.38 billion in building permits.

Mayor Dave Bronconnier said the figures are "staggering."

"We've gone from overdrive into turbo charge," he said.

"It's impressive that Calgary is leading Canada -- I think it highlights the importance of Calgary to the country."

Calgary's residential construction in 2006 added up to about 16,000 new residential units built across the city -- or about 45 new homes being constructed each day, said Bronconnier.

That meant 97 new residents each day began calling Calgary home last year, he added.

"I think it really is attributable to job growth, opportunity, high quality of life -- and that's what we need to preserve," he said about the attraction to Calgary.

One in every five jobs in Canada was created in Calgary last year, he said.

Bronconnier said the figures highlight the need for increased funding from the provincial and federal governments, to ensure Calgary can continue to offer the same quality of life.

"They (the province and federal government) are benefiting from growth that Calgary is trying to deal with on a day-to-day basis -- they need to share some of those new revenues with us," he said.

Calgary's construction costs last year more than doubled Edmonton's \$2.3 billion, and also beat Toronto's \$3.7 billion and Vancouver's \$2.04 billion.

Gary Klassen, director of the city's development and building approvals, said Calgary's downtown was a hub for redevelopment last year, as many new commercial and residential projects were brought to the inner city.

Klassen also pointed to impressive construction growth in the city's new outlying

communities.

GROWING LIST

Total construction in major Canadian cities for 2006. Calgary: \$4.76 billion Toronto: \$3.7 billion Edmonton: \$2.3 billion Vancouver: \$2.04 billion Ottawa: \$1.63 billion Winnipeg: \$0.849 billion

Total construction in Alberta cities for 2006. Calgary: \$4.76 billion Edmonton: \$2.3 billion Fort McMurray: \$1.51 billion Red Deer: \$0.282 billion