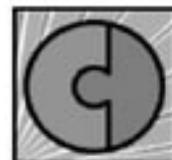


Being Alberta in 2025: Symposium Proceedings

Calgary, September 8–9, 2004



**The Alberta
Teachers' Association**



**Creating
Tomorrow
Foundation**

Preface

On September 8-9, 2004, the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Creating Tomorrow Foundation cosponsored two thought-provoking discussions on the future of Alberta and the role that learning will play in creating the next Alberta. Hosted by the Faculty of Education, University of Calgary, these two discussions were anchored by the involvement of Dr Thomas Homer-Dixon, director of the Pierre Elliot Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, associate professor of political science at the University of Toronto and the best-selling author of the Governor General's award-winning book *The Ingenuity Gap*. His keynote address at the public lecture, which drew over 350 people, was titled Learning the 21st Century: Seeing, Thinking and Living Our Future.

The following day, Dr Homer-Dixon was invited, along with 80 forward-thinking Albertans, to a symposium entitled "Being Alberta in 2025," an event that examined the question, *What kind of Alberta and Albertans do we want to be in 2025?*

Both events were part of the Association's efforts to develop its preferred future and strategic plan in the context of Alberta's entry into its second century. The issues explored in the public lecture and the symposium ranged from reconceptualizing the meaning of wealth creation to nurturing community to future scientific advances, such as nanotechnology.

Prepared by Wilson Winnitoy, with the assistance of Jean-Claude Couture, the following presents highlights from both the public lecture and the invitational symposium. On behalf of the Alberta Teachers' Association, I want to thank all of those who participated in this unique event. Alberta's teachers look forward to playing a leadership role in creating a bright future.

Frank Bruseker, President
Alberta Teachers' Association

Being Alberta in 2025

Do time capsules work in reverse? Well, yes, some do.

On September 8 and 9, 2004, several hundred Albertans participated in creating a time capsule of a different kind. This time capsule was not about little frozen bits of the present buried in a stone or placed in a vault to be unearthed many years hence. Instead, these Albertans were asked to travel forward in time, to 2025, and to envision an Alberta we all want and the kind of Albertans we want to be. Their ideas were pulled out of a time capsule of the future and brought back to today.

The time capsule was a response to a challenge and a key question put to all the participants in the ATA and Creating Tomorrow Foundation Symposium: what is the future of being Alberta?

What Is the Future of Being Alberta?

Being is a key word in the question. The symposium invited Albertans to imagine that by 2025, if not long before, Alberta will rely more on our way of being Albertans together—on our imagination and ingenuity—than it ever did in the past. The Alberta we envisioned will not simply carry us forward on a familiar and luxury-laden journey paid for by oil, grain and beef. It will not be a modern version of good old-fashioned pioneering, where hard work and long days in all kinds of weather pay off. Our deepest intentions, our imagination and our ambitions for the common good and, therefore, our values and beliefs, will be the driving forces. Given this, the sponsors of the symposium felt that it was important to begin teasing these ideas out with the help of our fellow citizens.

The Alberta Teachers' Association wants to know how Albertans think. The ATA is pondering its preferred future; that is, what kind of association of teachers the ATA must be in 2025 and what interests will be served in that time. The symposium was part of the process the ATA uses to tap into the values, beliefs and expectation of a range of Albertans. The chair and process manager of the event, Wilson Winnitoy, said in his opening remarks:

We [the ATA] talked many times about the task of imagining, thinking through and creating the next version of systems and organizations that will best serve their people, their work and their professions in the 21st century. We talked about the importance of context in that work—the context of change, trends and values—the kinds of things that the ATA and Albertans see in their future.

We talked about the possibilities of drawing Albertans together, across boundaries, with no immediate problem, issue or agenda to drive the meeting. About creating opportunities to think openly with each other about the Alberta we want and will work for.

We were sharing, I think, the conviction that change in organizations, especially those that in any way hold the lives of others in trust, should be created in light of the work of a wider community. We were also sharing the conviction that when we become more thoughtful and intentional about our common goal, or set of goals, being Alberta has greater richness and coherence, and the task of creating the next association, or care centre, or school, can also become more thoughtful and intentional.

Frank Bruseker, ATA president, introduced the symposium by reminding the participants of the sweeping changes the Association will experience in the next 20 years:

In welcoming you here tonight I would like you to consider the title Learning in the 21st Century: Seeing, Thinking and Living Our Future and the leadership challenge it suggests for all of us as the province approaches its centennial debt free. Perhaps, in some ways, the future is already here. Bear in mind the following statistics as you consider the learning and leadership challenges ahead:

- Currently, Alberta's teaching force, like the rest of the province's work force, is both aging and highly mobile. Only 45.9 per cent of teachers presently teaching will still be teaching in 2009.
- Fifteen per cent of the students in urban schools are English as a second language students. This is the result of the fact that 30 per cent of the immigrants moving to Alberta are under the age of 19.
- Income disparity continues to grow: 14.1% per cent of Alberta's children are living in poverty.
- Voter participation continues to drop. Witness the growing number of school trustee elections that go uncontested.

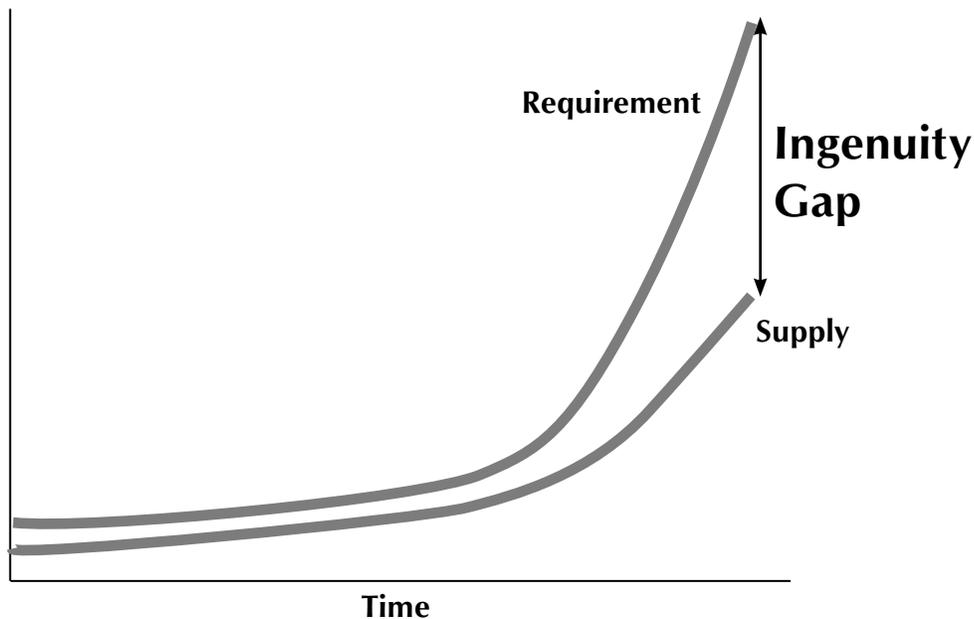
Jack Perraton, chair of the Board of Governors of the Creating Tomorrow Foundation, recognized the partnership of the University of Calgary in making the event possible. He gave an overview of the purpose of the Creating Tomorrow Foundation (CTF) and stressed that the symposium was a good example of the kind of events the CTF would like to support.

Keynote: Learning the 21st Century: Seeing, Thinking and Living Our Future

The symposium began with a presentation by Dr Thomas Homer-Dixon, the director of the Pierre Elliot Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Toronto.



Dr Homer-Dixon explored three themes in his presentation. The first was the idea of an ingenuity gap, the title and subject of his first and best-selling book, in which he explored the growing gap between the complex inventions and humanity's diminishing capacity to deal with the consequences of these inventions, which he refers to as the ingenuity gap. Homer-Dixon contends that the gap is gradually increasing and that complex systems are moving beyond our capacity to manage them and shape their outcomes.

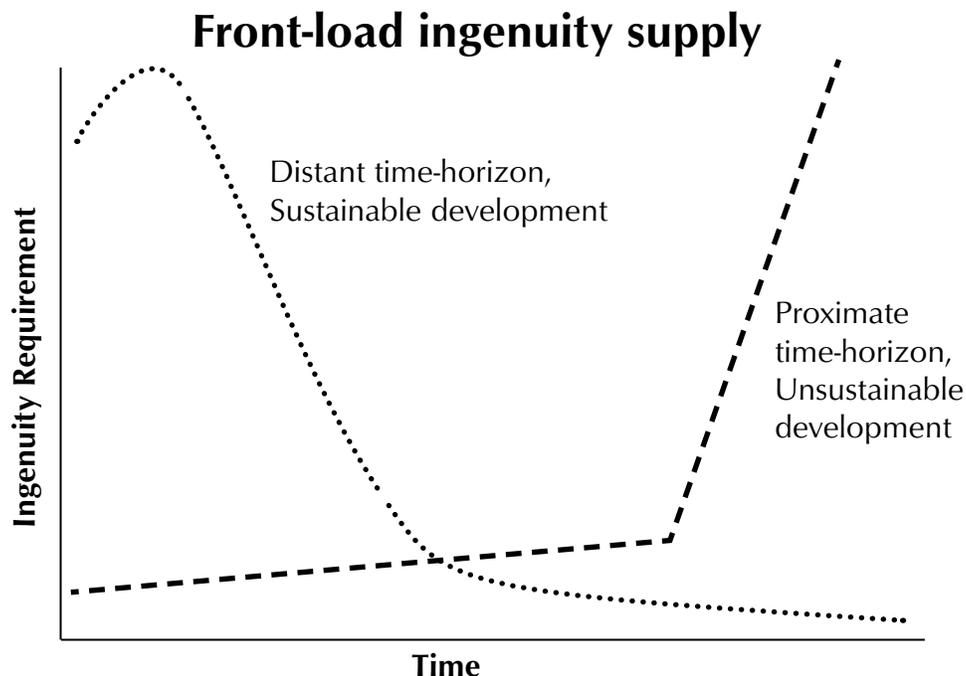


The second theme, the puzzle of ingenuity, spoke most compellingly to the educators in the symposium. What is ingenuity? How do we produce it? Is it a commodity that can be measured or is it more qualitative and subtle and not subject to being created on demand? Homer-Dixon suggested that ingenuity is closer to a tangible product than we might imagine, and he gave some examples of the kind of thinking we should cultivate to increase ingenuity. He emphasized the need for boundary-crossers—people who cannot be confined to a single discipline or line of thinking. He also spoke about the need for divergent and inventive thinkers, people of character and courage who will challenge conventional thinking in any discipline or system and force us to look at new possibilities.

Four things to do in this new world

1. Recognize complexity of problems and solutions
2. Focus on increasing resilience
3. Use decentralized experimentation to search for possible solutions
3. Front-load ingenuity supply

The third theme addressed the challenges that call for the timely and successful applications of ingenuity – a challenge that we may fail. Homer-Dixon cited climate change and terrorism as examples of major challenges. He suggested that, before we look at applying new knowledge and processes, we should stop doing things that worsen the situation such as concentrating computing power and business intelligence in single locations creating a node that, if lost, could destroy a system or network. We need to make systems more diffuse and create layers of back up so that one moderately successful terrorist attack cannot bring down, for example, a country's banking system. We need fewer vulnerable and brittle systems. Homer-Dixon also stressed the urgency of deepening our understanding of the enormously complex systems on which our future depends. We cannot afford to waste time and energy being distracted by the toys and baubles of a consumer culture. We need focus and discipline.



Reflections on Keynote Address

After this address, participants were given two tasks. Each table was asked to create a poster that captured the most important theme or lesson arising from the presentation. The second task was to pose a question to Dr Homer-Dixon. In spite of the large number of people and the paucity of time, attendees created many thoughtful and creative posters, which were hung on the wall in the meeting room. Some addressed specific issues, such as sustainable development or security vulnerabilities; some addressed more general issues of healthy systems and increasing the capacity to apply ingenuity with foresight. Following are some examples of most important lessons.

One group noted that it is vital to create an understanding among all Albertans of the complexities of the global system and our role in it.

One group stated: “We lack the flexibility to generate complex solutions to rapidly increasing complex macroproblems.” This group provided a graphic showing many potential solutions filtering out into clouds of lost ideas.

One group, building on Homer-Dixon’s ideas about networks and nodes, took aim at how the room had organized itself at tables. “This room is the antilesson. Most people have seated themselves with friends and colleagues; that is, they have created a hub that is not resilient because it insulates us from creativity. Therefore, we need to look inside ourselves and challenge our values and comfort zones.”

According to another group, “There is a tremendous need to address the gap between ...the rate of change and people’s capacity to (want to) cope.”

“Learn how to think. Challenge assumptions, scenario building, interpretive thinking, exploration,” were the suggestions of another group.

Finally, one group exhorted everyone to embrace responsibility, complexity, resources, unconventional solutions, resilience, change, and noted that we must change as the world changes.

In general, the groups took up Homer-Dixon’s challenge to acknowledge the complexities of our time, meet them with courage and competence, and be aware of how our values and beliefs influence our actions and connections with others.

Homer-Dixon responded to a great number of the questions and complimented people on the quality of their enquiries. He expressed a great deal of pleasure in having his ideas explored in this way and the chance to respond to some of the challenges and interpretations arising from his talk.

The public segment of the symposium adjourned, and the symposium resumed the next morning with about 70 invited participants. The day began with presentations from three Albertans offering distinctly different perspectives on the Alberta they would like to see in 2025.

Panel Comments: Being Alberta in 2025: The Alberta We Want and Will Work For

Colin Jackson: How Albertan Do Albertans Really Want to Be in 2025?

President, EPCOR Centre for the Performing Arts, Calgary

We live in an extraordinary time in this province yet we are continually challenged by a preoccupation with reductive thinking. We need leaders who are centrifugal not centripetal thinkers. Centrifugal thinkers can be recognized by their rejection of boosterism, comparisons, ranking and ordering. They are leaders who display a deep kindness. They are the sorts of leaders we need for a province like ours: three million people on the edge of the world. Without leaders who find creative ways to link public policy needs with private business, the arts and education, community will not be possible.

At the end of the day, Albertans must recognize that learning and innovation are the most important qualities for building the kind of Alberta we want.

What to learn? Now, while our economy is strong is the time for a renewed spirit of civic engagement. This renewed engagement may not be a revolution, but it will also not be without pain. The great philosopher—and even better musician—Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead, said “Something [has] to be done, and it’s incredibly pathetic that it [has] to be us to do it.” A list of actions might include (with thanks to the Memphis Manifesto, written at the Memphis Summit in April 2003 by 100 young people from across North America, including seven from Calgary) the following: policy that links business, education, arts, social, spiritual and environmental organizations to create the future, not just solve problems; capturing the hopes and dreams of recent immigrants; investing in the creative ecosystem, which includes education, arts, culture, nightlife, the music scene, restaurants, artists and designers, innovators, entrepreneurs, affordable spaces, lively neighbourhoods, spirituality, population density, public spaces; intolerance of intolerance, whether it is aimed at women, immigrants, gays or First Nations people.

The following version of Colin Jackson's presentation was published in the Calgary Herald on September 26, 2003.

Frederick Morton wrote that all great places have one thing in common: They have one foot in memory and one foot in prophecy.

Calgary is at a crossroad. In one direction lies Phoenix, a city of wealth, efficient highways, low taxes, sprawl, little distinctiveness and less soul. In the other direction is Calgary as a successful city for the 21st century, true to its roots, a community of neighbourliness, diversity of ideas and contagious creativity.

It is a joy and a privilege to live in Calgary. But with opportunities come obligations to the future. It is time for a big, bold vision of Calgary as a city of prosperity, meaning and influence, distinctive in look, diverse in attitudes, energized by ideas.

Continued success is not assured. Consider the cities in neighbouring Saskatchewan. Fifty years ago, it had the third most vibrant economy of Canada's provinces. Today it bleeds its energetic educated youth—its future—to Calgary. Will they and the other immigrants and their children stay or will they move on when the oil is exhausted, leaving Calgary another boom town that went bust?

There are already signs of drift. Boosterism is drowning out debate. Generic chain restaurants and chain stores are replacing distinctive, local enterprises. Major transportation corridors such as McLeod Trail have become indistinguishable from anywhere else in North America.

It is widely accepted that wealth in North America derives from human innovation. New products, better processes, new markets and great design all flow from the imagination of inspired people.

A smart, innovative population attracts capital, entrepreneurs and established companies. The quality of the place and the energy of the culture attracts—and retains—a smart, innovative population.

Some cities look good and are places of energy and imagination. Others are bland, efficient in the delivery of goods and services, uninspiring, even deadening to the heart and the mind. Major centres such as London and Paris, smaller cities such as Edinburgh and Florence, used the wealth of their golden age to build an enduring community that prospered well past their boom period.

What is the barrier to greatness? We are. Not our elected leaders, not the naysayers and do nothings so ready to squelch initiative. It is we Calgarians. Too often we default to narrow spheres of interest and, with that narrowing, isolation increases. Our public debate is trapped in traffic, taxes and other issues of management. We do not share an inspiring dream that demands huge effort and years to achieve.

Now, while our economy is strong, is the time for a renewed spirit of civic engagement.

This renewed engagement may not be a revolution, but it will not be without pain. No longer will it be enough to blame bureaucrats and elected politicians, to whine about the East, to endlessly harp on about tax cuts and efficiency without dealing with effectiveness.

The great philosopher—and even better musician—Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead said "Something [has] to be done, and it's incredibly pathetic that it [has] to be us to do it."

My hope is that Calgary become a "City of Ideas," a community with many visionary and creative people and organizations, where it is easy for outsiders to come inside, where strong civic leadership is encouraged, and links and networks are built within the city and between cities. Such a community would be a place of great meaning and of deep kindness; it would have a culture that values and rewards curiosity, learning, creativity and diversity. It would be a community with a strong sense of destiny, where we applaud our elected and appointed public figures when they take the risk of dreaming big and thinking long term

From the Stampede to the Olympics, we have proven we know how to work together. So, let us start a Calgary Tomorrow, an Olympics-style consortium, bringing together the corporate, political and civil sectors to galvanize a dream for the future of our city.

The truth is that cities, big and small, never stand still. The truth is that cities can grow, adapt, be creative and prosper, or not be creative and decline and decay. There is no other choice.

Together, let us choose greatness.

Christine Silverberg

Former Chief of Police, Calgary

Anyone who spends anytime working in institutions recognizes that the greatest challenge to learning is recognizing the demise of the linear world. The gap between personal individual knowledge and institutional knowledge grows exponentially as our institutions become larger and more complex. The *9/11 Commission Report* is a strong testimony to this reality. As the report reminds us, good people were overwhelmed by a few simple interventions that undercut the best technology and most sophisticated systems in the world.

Complexity calls to us to focus our definition of learning on how to foster creativity and imagination. There really is not much else to do in a world and a province where political disengagement is growing and democratic institutions are being taken for granted by growing numbers of people.

Stephen Murgatroyd

Executive Director of External Relations, Athabasca University

Alberta stands on the brink of being a living laboratory: we are free and are second to none in the world with respect to our capacity to carry on research and development. Ironically, though, we continue to devalue learning in the professions, including medicine and education. Consider the fact that only 12 per cent of the new jobs created in health care in the last decade were doctors. We need to take a systematic approach to knowledge creation and capacity in our institutions by developing the right people: professionals are those people.

In the Alberta of 2025 we need to create a network of innovation and innovators who will offer improved access to education and health care. Alongside these networks we will need the physical and social conditions that will make the next Alberta possible: a rail link from Edmonton to Calgary that costs \$50 for the 30-minute trip; an Alberta where all Aboriginal land claims have been settled and where homelessness is a thing of the past and seniors are cared for at no cost. We have the resources to accomplish these goals. Only our lack of vision will stop us.

Symposium Response

Following the presentations, the symposium participants were asked to respond to the following question:

What are the essential characteristics of the Alberta we want and the Albertans we want to be in 2025? What are the synergies? The tensions?

I Citizen engagement

Alberta in 2025 will have an active citizenry and a sophisticated and effective capacity to engage citizens in the formation of public policy. We know we have achieved this vision because we will have

- created a safe and civil society,
- enfranchised diverse groups (for example, First Nations),
- achieved a broad dialogue,
- embraced diversity in our cities and rural communities, and
- made evident participatory democracy and community governance.

II Values and Ethics

Alberta in 2025 will have a culture that embodies and reflects upon deeply held values and beliefs about our place in the world and the ways we live and work with each other. We demonstrate these values through

- a sense of community linked to values rather than expediency;
- our core values, which drive solutions to challenges;
- measuring what we value, not what is easy to count;
- a government driven by humanist values;
- being a fair and caring society; and
- moving past the marketplace metanarrative.

III Effective Stewardship

Alberta in 2025 will recognize the interdependence of citizens both with each other and with the critical systems that support and nurture society. Effective stewardship is achieved by

- recognizing that we are all in this world alone, yet together;
- creating truly adaptive systems that respond to emerging challenges;
- recognizing urban and rural interdependencies;
- using our wealth and privilege for shared purposes;
- seeing Alberta as a holistic system; and
- accepting that there are no easy or quick solutions to social and environmental problems.

IV Prosperity and Well-Being

Alberta in 2025 will successfully balance wealth generation with a high quality of life for all Albertans. We will have achieved this balance in the following ways:

- Adopting broader definitions of success (for example, inclusion of the arts)
- Ensuring conscientious prosperity
- Eliminating child poverty
- Renewing our commitment to family structures (for example, support for parental leaves, comprehensive child care)
- Recognizing the nonprofit sector as a critical part of civil society

V Sustainability through Individual Choice

Alberta in 2025 will have achieved sustainability in health care, education and the environment through systems that support wise choices by individual citizens rather than through government as perpetual fixer of problems. Evidence of our progress includes

- recognizing the meaning of individual lifestyle and economic choices and their consequences; for example, recognizing the total cost of our water usage, the implications to the environment of driving SUVs, subsidizing inefficient industries;
- providing adequate funding for health care, education and research;
- focusing on wellness and prevention; and
- providing resources to fund agreed-upon societal goals (for example, spending on public infrastructure, such as a high-speed Edmonton–Calgary rail link)

VI Leadership

Alberta in 2025 will be known for the courage and character of its leaders and will have grown to play a leadership role in Canada and the world by

- using its privileged position to strike out as a leader in a variety of sectors,
- embracing transformative leadership and allowing for creative failure and risk taking,
- moving beyond provincial tribalism to find Alberta's role in the world,
- viewing young people as elders-in-training and
- being a leader in sustainable energy development and nanotechnology.

VII Learning

Alberta in 2025 will have a learning system that is regarded as the bridge that connects the values of Albertans with the society they desire. To do so, we will have an education sector that has the following characteristics:

- The right metrics: one cannot measure creativity and resilience using standardized tests
- A community of lifelong learners
- Substantial funding by government for research and development (for example, a foundation for future studies)
- Front-loaded ingenuity in the education system by earmarking one year's worth of government surplus into a scholarship fund

VIII Some Synergies

- Access to information/knowledge and technology enablement (for example, SuperNet)
- Tradition of risk taking and entrepreneurship (for example, a can-do attitude and the collective will to make things better)
- Tradition of social responsibility, community building, commitment to children/youth, reflectiveness

- Community building through a multicultural orientation
- Economy of surplus through education and recognition that we can take risks
- Attractiveness to young people

IX Some Tensions

- Our culture is full of distractions
- Linear leadership: lack of vision that engages all Albertans
- Organizational inertia (for example, power structure; rigid systems; restrictive mandates and outcomes; passions versus systems)
- Oversimplification and a tendency for either/or thinking
- Individualism versus common good (reduction to the lowest common denominator versus ambition and vision; cult of individualism)
- Future citystates and decline of rural Alberta

There was a upbeat tone to the comments from the small groups. Alberta is certainly not seen as coming to the future from a disadvantaged position. The overwhelming assumption is that Albertans are a cohesive, can-do people who know what to do with freedom and opportunity.

There was a very strong emphasis on an inclusive and civil society, though the concept of inclusion came out more fully in the comments than did civil society. The responses point to the need to embrace diversity and deepen our understanding of difference, rather than trying to resist change. Based on the responses, *civil* likely refers to the ability of citizens to encounter, as Hanna Arendt puts it, “the reality of the public realm” as a sum total of “the simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives and aspects in which the common world presents itself.” In other words, *civil* means safe and inviting spaces in society for the sharing and debate of ideas and issues central to our lives and our future.

The capacity to celebrate and learn from distinctive cultures and beliefs was emphasized as central to a future that reflects humanistic values and supports innovative thinking.

Albertans seem willing to gamble that their tradition of rugged individualism can drive change as long as no one group is left behind or systematically excluded. This implies a caring and principled rugged individualism. This interpretation of tradition perhaps responds to Homer-Dixon’s contention that we are deeply interconnected and will do best when many good minds focus on important issues.

When we do well, we handle complexity and opportunity very well. Albertans can “punch above their weight” and offer leadership on the national and global stage.

When asked about synergies, participants expressed faith that we can be values driven, ethical and caring, because Albertans are that way and see generosity of spirit as part of the good life. Emphasis was placed on a balance between risk taking and social responsibility. When asked about tensions, participants documented ways that carelessness can erode our essential character as a province. Emphasis was placed on organizational inertia and systemic rigidity.

In the next round of discussion, symposium participants were asked to respond to the following question.

Assuming that it's 2025 and we have truly arrived, what did we do to get here?

The following questions designed to stimulate discussion were provided at each table:

- 1. What were the key events from 2004 to 2025?**
- 2. What were the critical roles that individuals, communities and organizations played?**
- 3. What features of social and physical infrastructure did we need?**

The following represents the summary notes of the posters prepared by each table.

1. What were the key events from 2004 to 2025?

Aboriginal

- Resolution of aboriginal land claims (2010)
- Reconciliation of our past – acceptance of aboriginal sovereignty
- Alberta has largest aboriginal youth population in 2016 – a positive event

Communities

- Multidisciplinary and community-based centres (health, education, social services) abound
- Development of a sense of community that respects differences and promotes holistic healing
- Effective community support systems are in place
- Cultural assets of all communities recognized

Economy

- Plan for agriculture sector diversification
- Broken link between CO₂ and economic activity
- Alberta effectively survives drop in oil prices

Education

- Restructure of education system and curriculum infrastructure
- Education system is restructured to be more multidisciplinary, broad-based, problem solving and innovative.
- Facilitation of lifelong learning
- Alberta has nine world class universities and an expanded community college base

Energy

- Conscious investment in more integrated energy sector
- LNG under way (2007)
- Sources of conventional oil and gas have been depleted
- An asteroid hits the tar sands

Environment

- Environmental integrity assured (2010–2020)
- Full costing of water

Family and Work

- Extended parental leave
- More flexible and shorter work week

Federal/International

- From NAFTA to AFTA
- We are committed to working with less-developed countries to raise their quality of living.

Government

- More disciplined and changing government
- Use privilege of wealth to introduce incentives; focus on repeatability, sustainability
- We have governments moving to more participatory (engaging) structures. Leadership reflects the demographics of community
- Political leaders have announced their support for regional and national solutions.
- Community validation and revision of Alberta Strategic Plan
- Development of a long-term plan for use of surpluses (2006)
- Alberta government assumes responsibility for immigration
- Streamlined accreditation process for foreign professionals

Health and Health Care

- Reconfigured time management of the health care system
- Health is sustainable and adaptable within realistic boundaries
- Prevention a key focus

Leadership/Ideas

- Centennial launch conference (2005–2006)
- ATC “Alberta Transformation Corps” (2006) – Key transformations
 - illness → wellness
 - education → lifelong learning
 - government → governance
 - environmental exploitation → environmental stewardship
 - financial prosperity → societal prosperity
- Creating a plan/framework for institutional risk taking (2006)
- Developed a council for innovation that promotes social and economic change
- Earmark one year of surplus for international scholarship fund to bring the world to Alberta

Society

- An inclusion model
- Global capacity of Albertans
- Reviewed roles and responsibilities of professionals
- Reclaiming the public sphere/wealth
 - Reform of governance – proportional representation – charters for municipalities and school boards, etc – revenue sharing
 - Rights of corporate bodies are constrained (including unions, churches – limitations on intellectual property
 - Civil service reform

Technology

- Alberta fully connected to the SuperNet – benefits roll out (for example, distance education)
- Support system to capitalize on SuperNet (2005)
- Artificial intelligence (2010-2020)

Transportation

- High-speed rail Edmonton–Calgary corridor (2010)

2. What were the critical roles that individuals, communities and organizations played?

Cities/communities

- Mechanisms for smart urban growth
- Communities both powered up and empowered

Collaborative

- Education departments, community organizations, other government and business departments invest in transforming educational initiatives.
- Business, government collaborate to secure new policy (parental leave and flexible work week)
- Community, institutions, government commitments to work with other countries, joint ventures (quality of living)

Economy

- Innovative economic diversification – global exports
- Major growth in oil sands production and upgraded petroleum, petrochemical products

Education

- Development of character/morals
- 24-7 anywhere access to education

Federal/International

- New model for relations between states and cultures
- Achieving national political stability

Health Care

- New model of innovative health care with an emphasis on wellness
- Health care turns into wellness centres
- New monies for prevention, community-based initiatives. Multidisciplinary approach to educating. Organizational focus on health versus training dollars.

Leadership/Ideas

- All individuals/communities, organizations taking real steps to transform democracy.
- Individual (and organizational) examples
- Moral responsibility demonstrated by all; we leave a wonderful legacy for our children.
- The champions came forth
- Government – visionary leadership – effective, consultative

Society

- New metrics for measuring wealth and performance
- Reconceptualizing the bottom line
 - new metrics for assessing quality of life
 - internalizing externalities (free riders eliminated)
 - deep accountability
 - qualitative measures
- Partnership with the aboriginal community
- Humility: we have much to share and much to learn

Technology

- Universal access to Internet

3. What features of social and physical infrastructure did we need?

Community

- Built community capacity to make key decisions in sectors such as health care, education. Decision making at the right level.

Business

- Increased incentives to do business and research and development in Alberta to create the best regime in North America
- Embraced a culture of innovation with an emphasis on small to medium enterprises

Education

- New school (lifelong learning) curriculum

Energy

- Diversified energy sector – zero emissions, alternative power
- Refinery, petrochemical, oil sands and pipelines

Environment

- Environmental management

Economy

- The Alberta economic advantage sustained through
 - effective diversification,
 - stepping from natural gas/conventional oil base to oil sands in a responsible manner and
 - overlaid high-tech industries on our natural resource base
- New “currencies” (for example, carbon credits)
- Diversified agriculture sector

Government

- Constitutional change
- Revised federal–provincial relationship

Industry

- Integrated industrial sectors

Leadership/Ideas

- Research foundation(s) for future studies

Social

- We gave the empowerment and Albertans engaged
- Broad social base – no more petty rivalries
- Power of immigration harnessed to build our base. We embraced diversity.
- New relationship with aboriginal communities

Technology

- Leader in nanotechnology infrastructure
- Knowledge dissemination through SuperNet

Reflections

There is much overlap between the three categories, but the ideas remain. The emphases that emerge have been organized under fairly traditional headings that might do a disservice to the boundary crossing intended in many of the responses. Clearly people see much that can be and should be done. The trick in reviewing these responses is to identify the “strange attractors” that put action into meaningful patterns.

One important feature that jumps out fairly quickly is that, outside of reforming itself and striking out in some bold new directions, government is not being asked to do a lot. Some key words are *disciplined*, *change*, *participatory* and *incentives*. The only specific suggestion was for the provincial government to take over immigration. Far more emphasis is placed on the new qualities and capacities of Albertans that are to be grown, nurtured and encouraged at the individual and grassroots levels.

The exciting news is the major work that is staked out for all of us as leaders and as citizens of an Alberta caught up in a drive to make purposeful change. As leaders, we are invited to lead by example and subscribe to exciting new projects that teach us about the future we are co-creating. And as citizens, we are invited to create a more inclusive, open and innovative society. We are invited to set the stage for the emergence of the kind of learners and thinkers the new century will need.

There is a strong emphasis on participative democracy and grassroots change. Albertans respect what government can do, but this symposium drove home the idea that effective change is about personal commitment and responsibility. This fits with the strong emphasis on open and accessible education available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and on fostering lifelong learning.

The bread-and-butter issues are economic diversification and innovation. The symposium attendees, however, had a strong sense that the next Alberta won't be more of the same done better. It will be inclusive and democratic, will launch many small projects locally and will seek ways to knit them together.

Next Steps: Laying Our Path

The final question of the day invited the audience to ponder what should happen next. The responses were very brief, as it was late in the day and time was running very short. In summary, most people felt that meetings of this type should be held again. They expressed appreciation for the opportunity and the format that allowed for maximum discussion time and input to change. They also expressed readiness to address the kinds of challenges identified in the symposium, recognizing that many others would have to be included in the decision making and recruited to the process of designing implementation.

David Tyack and Larry Cuban entitled their book, *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge: 1996). The same could be said about creating preferred futures.

There is a temptation to tinker toward utopia, if for no other reason than to ensure that nothing of significance happens. Or, that we improve yesterday, but avoid dealing with tomorrow. This is slippery ground. One person's tinkering may be another's grand design. The message from this symposium was clear. Certainly, there are things on the lists that some might call tinkering. The overriding message, however, is that at this time in our history and with the resources at hand, Albertans have a great opportunity to do something of enduring significance for our children, for the future and for the planet. It's as though we are heeding Ronald Wright's warning in his recent Massey Lecture, *A Short History of Progress* (Anansi, 2004 25):

Experts in a range of fields have begun to see the same closing door of opportunity, begun to warn that these years may be the last when civilization still has the wealth and political cohesion to steer itself toward caution, conservation and social justice.

Albertans see doors opening and are ready to step through them.

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