

Dear Community Council,

It concerns me that photos depicted in the March issue of the Inside Edge (page 17) are intended to advertise and promote the LEAF model (Scenic Acres green grass medians) but in actuality the photos illustrate an initiative that is outdated and does not complement an environmental perspective. When we see lush green grass growing in dry arid Calgary, our thoughts should go to the fuel for the power mowers, the toxic emissions, the fertilizers and pesticides and the high amounts of water consumption. In these present times of climate change which includes water rationing due to droughts (1); extreme weather; mass die-offs of bee colonies (2) and toxins showing up in the blood streams of fetuses (3), there needs to be more conversation and education about the high cost of traditional gardening. Green luscious grass and pretty annual flowers no longer serve a community in a positive way but demonstrate an antiquated perspective that requires a new modern way of thinking. We should not be comparing ourselves to communities like Scenic Acres and The Hamptons as they demonstrate a growing concern from environmentalists and scientists that we need to change the ways we treat our land.

I think it is wonderful that our community is taking time for an initiative to bring back more beauty to our neighborhood and I sincerely applaud the volunteers who have invested so much time and energy with the hope of bettering their community. Such spirit for community is so needed in these complicated times of economic transition. However, I truly believe that we need to change the current conversation and focus on how we can be BETTER than our neighboring communities.

We could set an example for other communities in Calgary by:

Developing sustainable gardening techniques with the planting of zone hardy perennials that do not require extra watering or synthetic herbicides or fertilizers.

Developing alternative methods than grass to fill in boulevards such as: zone hardy decorative grasses and low lying bushes, tree mulch and/or rocks.

Seeking assistance from a professional permaculturist offering insight to sustainable eco-friendly design: setting our community apart and offering a model for other communities.

This type of progressive earth-friendly attitude could help our community to stand out in the eyes of communities around us and the entire city. This is 2016, not 1995; let's start thinking and talking about the environmental implications of an old fashioned notion of developing expensive resource needy weather sensitive gardening over functional, eco-modern and sustainable design.

Let's change the conversation!

I would be proud to volunteer my time for earth conscious community initiatives.

Jennifer Wiebe (5-year home owner in Edgemont)

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.” Chief Seattle

<http://globalnews.ca/news/2020512/water-use-restrictions-implemented-in-capital-region/>

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0070182#authcontrib>

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/weed-whacking-herbicide-p/>

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