

CHAPTER 6

**More Than Partners:
The Calgary Stampede and the City of Calgary***

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Victoria Park neighbourhood, 1977

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No one would dispute the powerful influence of the Stampede on Calgary.¹ Every July, a ten-day celebration of heritage, cowboy culture, and western mythology transforms an energetic corporate metropolis into a relaxed, fun-loving “Cowtown.” A phenomenon unrivalled in the country in terms of global publicity, the Stampede also contributes significantly to Calgary’s identifiable, if controversial, urban image. Given this important connection, it is surprising that so little is understood about the relationship between Calgary’s civic government and the Stampede. Solid studies such as James H. Gray’s *A Brand of Its Own: The 100 Year History of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede* or more popular treatments such as Fred Kennedy’s *Calgary Stampede: The Authentic History of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, “The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth,” 1912–1964* do not analyze this relationship. Others, such as Colin Campbell’s “The Stampede: Cowtown’s Sacred Cow,” in *Stampede City: Politics and Power in the West*, reiterate a common, largely unsubstantiated view that the city is a pawn of elitist Stampede interests.² Even informed observers are unsure how the two corporate bodies actually interact.³ In 1966 a spokesman for a group of concerned citizens said the Stampede Board was “some sort of quasi public body though no one is entirely sure.”⁴ In reality, discussion of the complex relationship between the City of Calgary and the Stampede falls historically into three broad categories: the powerful ties that have always bound them; their disagreements, which are less obvious; and their cultivation of a separateness that is more apparent than real. This popular perception has prejudiced the Stampede more than the City.

Background of the Stampede

Annual fairs and exhibitions were part of the European and North American historical experience. Their continuing importance today can be seen in the serious competition for world fairs and expositions. The German corporation Frankfurt Messe, for example, organizes over one hundred trade fairs a year throughout the world. In Canada, exhibitions historically filled a variety of needs. They enabled social interaction and provided important entertainment opportunities.⁵ Through press coverage they advertised regional wealth and potential to the outside world. They also brought global products to specific audiences. Most significantly in terms of the host town or city, they were mediums for civic promotion or boosting, particularly during the early twentieth-century settlement boom.⁶ Historian Paul Voisey notes how fairs

“served the boosters’ purpose” in Alberta small towns of that period.⁷ While they varied in size and scope from blue-ribbon events such as the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto and the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver to smaller regional and local fairs such as those in Brandon, High River, or Kelowna, the various exhibitions were uniform in their desire to cultivate a close identification with the cities and towns that hosted them. The Calgary Stampede, as one of Canada’s major exhibitions, has been no exception to this rule.

Calgary’s economy was based first on livestock and later on its ability to serve as the major distributing centre for rural south and south-central Alberta. In the modern era the city has added oil and natural gas extraction, tourism, and high-technology activity to its economic portfolio. The Stampede has been the primary vehicle by which these economic priorities were promoted and consolidated, a fact duly recognized and abetted by civic government.

The Calgary Stampede is also a festival in that it exports a cultural product with roots in the past and celebrates a specific localized perception of this heritage. The conscious deployment of cultural capital and the success of some cities in utilizing it has led to emulation and the rise of a festival industry. In short, cities worldwide, large and small, now seek to “sell” themselves by the deliberate manipulation of culture via festivals to enhance their appeal to tourists, potential investment capital, business interests, and affluent residents.⁸ Successful cities have managed to brand themselves through identification with their annual festivals. To many, the names of cities such as Rio de Janeiro, New Orleans, and Munich are associated with Carnivale, Mardi Gras, and Oktoberfest, respectively. The same could be said for Calgary and the Stampede.

According to Harvey Molotch and John Logan, who studied the political economy of place, exhibitions and festivals are “growth engines.” Their promotion and advancement are facilitated by a combination of specific interest groups that see mutual advantage in the attendant economic spinoffs.⁹ In this context, civic governments continue to be particularly supportive of exhibitions and festivals, since they generate local spending, increase civic revenues, and offer employment opportunities. Mardi Gras, for example, is worth a billion dollars a year to the city of New Orleans. Japanese governments are anticipating that their focus on cultural extravaganzas such as the 1100-year-old Gion Festival in Kyoto will help boost tourist numbers to eight million by 2007. Each of the several events in Edinburgh’s International Festival brings Scottish culture to an audience twice the size of the population of the

city. In Canada, the Festival of Murals in Chemainus, British Columbia, has shown how a small town has managed to sell itself to tourists by giving the flagging lumber industry a high heritage profile. In 2003 the Calgary Stampede informed the public that for every dollar of revenue generated from Stampede activities, another \$2.60 is spent elsewhere in the city.¹⁰

The Calgary Stampede owes its survival to the City of Calgary. In 1889 the federal government sold ninety-four acres in Victoria Park for \$235 to the Calgary Agricultural Society for its Exhibition, with the stipulation that the land could not be subdivided into town lots.¹¹ The agricultural society subsequently mortgaged the land to build a race track, but in 1896, amid generally depressed conditions, it had to relinquish the mortgage to Canada Permanent Savings Company. Following a four-year hiatus in which no fall fair was held, several local businessmen formed the Inter-Western Pacific Exposition Company Limited to revive the Exhibition. Its first order of business was to petition the city to redeem the mortgage. In 1901, following negotiations with Richard Bedford Bennett acting for Canada Permanent Savings Company, the city took ownership of the exhibition grounds for the sum of \$6,500.¹² For the next nine years the City of Calgary maintained the grounds and collected entrance and rental fees. Through lease arrangements in 1911, the Exhibition, now the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Company Limited, took over the management of the grounds.¹³ In 1933 the name was changed to the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Limited. Under this new title, the company assumed expanded powers under the Companies Act of Alberta (1929), except those limited by the lease. This situation has continued to the present day.

Given the fact that the city owns the land on which the Stampede operates and the fact the latter pays no property tax on land within its lease, it is not surprising that the two enjoy a unique relationship. On the one hand, the Stampede enjoys little political interference because it operates at arm's length from the city; on the other hand, the two are indistinguishable. One Stampede president went so far as to equate the Stampede with a city utility.¹⁴ In 1965, when the Stampede was applying for city-owned land in Lincoln Park, prominent real estate man Kent Lyle wondered how the city could treat the Stampede like a private party. To Lyle, the application was misleading and even moot, since the Stampede and the city were one and the same.¹⁵

One has only to note the active presence of senior city officials within the Stampede organization. Not only the mayor and aldermen, but also the city commissioners and other high-level officials were often associate directors and/or shareholders and sometimes occupied positions on the Stampede Board

of Directors during their tenure of office. The current city manager, Owen Tobert, is both a Stampede shareholder and a senior associate. Moreover, city officials usually retained their Stampede positions after relinquishing their civic duties. Conflict of interest was not a problem for the city or Stampede; the public questioned the relationship between them only during the two expansion issues, and in both instances this was confined to the communities most affected by the expansion plans. In practical situations, neither thought it was necessary to keep at arm's length, as shown by a traffic access issue in 1960. In order for the city to "keep closely in touch with the Exhibition's plans," the Stampede agreed to make a city planner an associate director and then place him on its traffic committee. The same applied to Chief Commissioner John Steel, who was made an associate director so he could serve on the Stampede's grounds and development committee.¹⁶ To both bodies, this represented neither collusion nor conflict of interest, but simply one agent of the city co-operating with another to effect better communication.

Another factor binding city officials to the Stampede was its high public profile. This was due in large part to its astonishing level of success in attracting wealthy and influential citizens to volunteer leadership positions. When Mayor J.W. Mitchell referred to arrangements for the 1912 Stampede as being "in the hands of our most wealthy citizens," he was articulating a pattern that was to be repeated over and over again.¹⁷ Drawn from exclusive business, ranching, social, and civic circles, the list of committee chairmen and associate directors was a who's who of Calgary and area. For example in 1966–67 its directorship and committees boasted luminaries including Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed, Senator Harry Hays, prominent businessmen Max Bell and Carl Nickle, cattlemen Angus McKinnon and Don Matthews, and Justice M.M. Porter, to name just a few. The value of associating with such high-powered figures was not lost on city spokesmen. The aldermanic appointments to the Stampede Board provide a good case in point. Considered the "plums" of all appointed committees, they were hotly contested.¹⁸ In one year the members of the committee charged with placing aldermen on committees came under attack in Council for assigning themselves to the Stampede Board.

The presence of well-known figures on the Stampede's board and committees attracted others like them. Four outcomes are discernible. In addition to elite recruitment, the Stampede moulded its leaders through its associate directorships and volunteer service, often making the point that the presidency could not be secured via influence or money. Second, these disparate but high-profile individuals were bound together through association and

time by a firm belief in the Stampede's worthiness. Third, they in turn influenced the public to volunteer. Reinforced by a friendly press, this combination of elite recruitment, focused leadership, and broad citizen participation gave civic officials a host of reasons to support the Stampede. Finally, the prestige of its management bestowed an air of independence. To the public, the Stampede appeared more as a dynamic private organization than a subsidiary of the city, as witness the fact that many today believe the Exhibition and Stampede is a private corporation.¹⁹

The Stampede's success in cultivating an image of independence aroused periodic hostility within City Council. At times, aldermen challenged the Stampede's apparent indifference and high-handedness. In August 1943 Stampede President T.A. Hornibrook referred to relations between the two as warranting "a better understanding."²⁰ Civic departments sometimes voiced their displeasure when their budgets were affected by Council decisions relative to the Stampede. On rare occasions, a civic department made adverse recommendations.

Co-operation

Co-operation between the City of Calgary and the Stampede was rooted in the belief that the latter benefited the former commercially. In 1896 the Board of Trade wanted the city to buy the Exhibition grounds because a fair would encourage and promote business interests.²¹ The impact of the Stampede on streetcar revenues in depressed times is a case in point: the Stampede pointedly informed the city that they were worth \$25,008 between 1919 and 1921 and \$1,136 during Stampede week alone in 1935. Persistent rhetoric had the same goal. According to Guy Weadick, the man behind the 1912 Stampede, the event was "a great scheme for the publicity and general welfare of Calgary."²² In 1919 Stampede Manager Ernie Richardson proudly stated that Calgary benefitted from the Exhibition "to a considerable extent without any expense."²³ Stampede President C.M Baker noted in 1935 that the Stampede was "taking a long stride forward in the development of the city,"²⁴ and in 1972 a Stampede document argued that it was "difficult to understate the importance of the Stampede to the citizens of Calgary."²⁵

City officials reciprocated with equal enthusiasm. In 1944 Mayor Andrew Davison said the Stampede had done more to advertise Calgary than any single agency. His successor three years later noted that the Stampede "has been part and parcel of the life of our city," and in 1948 referred to its value in advertising Calgary to all four corners of the continent.²⁶ The press was

equally supportive. According to Robert Konrad's article "Barren Bulls and Charging Cows: Cowboy Celebrations in Copal and Calgary," the Stampede "has a recognized status as 'sacred cow' for the media."²⁷ This ongoing adulation has contributed to a widespread opinion that the Stampede was different from other entertainment and civic events and deserving of special consideration. It mattered not that some thought the Stampede was not as good for business as popularly believed or that the tourist impact may not have been as great as the rhetoric indicated.²⁸ The city and the Stampede remained close partners in endorsing Ernie Richardson's prophetic words when in reference to the success of the 1923 Exhibition and Stampede, he said, "Calgary has found something the people want, something peculiarly appropriate to our environment, . . . and we only have to use our unique opportunities to the best advantage."²⁹

The city has been generous with its leases to the Stampede. First, it extended their tenure. The 1911, 1916, and 1921 leases were for five years; they went to ten years in 1924, to thirty-two years in 1947, and to fifty years in 1960. Second, leases were renegotiated before their expiry date. The 1921 lease was renegotiated and extended in 1924 in response to a request by the Stampede for city support regarding insurance premiums. Financial issues also motivated later negotiations. When Crown Trust expressed nervousness about lending \$500,000 to the Stampede for the construction of the Corral, the city amended its charter to allow the thirty-two year lease.³⁰ The fifty-year lease in 1960 was arranged through another amendment mainly for the same reasons. Third, lease provisions widened the powers of the Stampede. The 1960 lease is a good example, as it allowed the Stampede Board to acquire land not directly adjacent to the grounds. The purchase of the Stampede Ranch near Hanna was one result. The initial land acquisition for expansion purposes south and west was another. The 1960 lease also removed stipulations on the disbursement of surplus monies. Finally, it widened the Stampede's options with respect to sports franchises and subleasing the grounds.³¹ In the mid-1970s when the lack of expropriation power prevented Stampede officials from completing house purchases in Victoria Park, the city amended the enabling agreement and did it for them.³²

Money bylaws for capital and other projects were of inestimable value. Had the city not acquired the fairgrounds in 1901, the Inter-Western Pacific Exposition Company Limited might well have folded. Between 1902 and 1910 four money bylaws appropriated over \$75,000 for grounds improvements.³³ In 1911 another bylaw for \$55,000 was approved for a stock pavilion and horse barns. In 1914 ratepayers endorsed a substantial bylaw

for \$360,000 to construct a grandstand, barns, and sale pavilion and reconfigure the race track.³⁴ However, the largest single expenditure occurred in 1968 through a bylaw granting the Stampede Board four million dollars over twenty years for expansion purposes.

The city also furnished direct grants. Between 1908 and 1919 the Exhibition Board received over \$73,000.³⁵ Considering the fact that the Exhibition lost money in more years than not during this period, the city grants were crucial to its survival. There would have been no Exhibition in 1915 if the city had not provided money.³⁶ Manager Ernie Richardson told the Exhibition Board in 1919 that he hoped “the Calgary Exhibition has now developed to such a stage that it will not be necessary to ask the city for an annual grant,”³⁷ yet as late as 1951, when the recent construction of the Corral caused a shortfall, the Stampede Board again approached the city for financial help.³⁸

The city helped the Stampede financially in other ways. It used its favourable credit rating to secure low-interest loans and pass on substantial interest savings to the Stampede. The Dominion Works Programme on the Exhibition Grounds in 1939 was enabled by a \$46,950 loan at 2 percent interest secured by the city for the Stampede.³⁹ In 1977 the Stampede saved over \$100,000 in interest payments when the city borrowed money from the province at 8 percent and used it to defray a Stampede bank loan held at 11.25 percent. The city also set up lower interest financing for capital projects through the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation⁴⁰ and lent \$700,000 in 1976 at lower than bank interest rates so the Stampede could construct the necessary green space buffer between its expansion boundaries and the rest of Victoria Park.⁴¹ In 1978 the city secured a grant for which the Stampede was ineligible and passed it on to the board to allow the construction of the Jaycees infield park.⁴² Even when the city made the Exhibition Company pay insurance after 1921, it still provided a credit line of \$6,000 in case of default, and for a time in the 1930s re-assumed the cost of the premiums. In 1975 it contributed \$25,000 towards a study by Stanford Research Institute that ultimately led to a Stampede Master Plan.⁴³ With Stampede expansion infringing on the Victoria Park Community Centre in 1975, the city paid \$65,000 for its relocation.⁴⁴ In 1950 the city took over responsibility for erecting the street decorations. Eleven years later it was persuaded to increase its financial contribution from \$4,000 to \$5,500, and in 1979 agreed to assume half the cost of the decorations or \$100,000 over a five-year period.⁴⁵

Co-operation occurred in less significant areas. In 1956 the city acquired the Sunshine Auto Court east of the Elbow River for the reasonable sum of \$45,000 and then passed it on to the Stampede at the same price.⁴⁶ A potential

buyer and member of the Stampede Board backed off so as not to prejudice the transaction.⁴⁷ Whether it be oiling thoroughfares and installing fire alarm boxes inside the grounds, erecting bandstands or supplying building materials, buying advertising space in a promotional brochure, allowing paid public parking on recreation areas during Stampede, lending fowl from the zoo for poultry exhibitions, or even tolerating construction “non-conformities,” the City of Calgary was a ubiquitous presence in Stampede activities.⁴⁸

The Stampede reciprocated, generally making its buildings, equipment, and manager available upon request by the city. In the First World War the grounds housed Canadian troops. Stampede buildings served as an isolation hospital in 1921, and a shelter and kitchen for the unemployed in 1932 and the On-to-Ottawa trekkers in 1935. During the Second World War, the Provincial Institute of Technology and Art relocated some of its classrooms there. In the early years, the Exhibition acted as the city’s agent in preparing civic exhibits for other fairs in western Canada. Over the years, the Stampede became a focal point for organized sports, and it was a pioneer in encouraging competitive hockey in the city. Currently, the Stampede Foundation supports several local community youth and education groups.

Tensions

Despite their generally positive relationship, the city and the Stampede have had their issues. First, the elitist nature of the Stampede Board rankled aldermen whose frequent requests for financial statistics indicated critical interest. Sometimes these questions amounted to direct challenges. Furthermore, the presence of city-operated facilities on the Exhibition grounds was contentious and ultimately of financial cost to the Stampede. The most serious issue, however, was related to Lincoln Park.

The assumption that what was good for the Stampede was also good for the city aroused periodic hostility. Some aldermen and certainly segments of the public in proposed Stampede expansion areas saw the Stampede Board as an elitist, inconsiderate group indifferent to alternative opinion and not averse to browbeating the city. For example, in spite of a public vote endorsing another name for the Corral in 1951, the Stampede Board stood firm.⁴⁹ In 1932 a labour newspaper called for a campaign to “get the parasites [Stampede] off taxpayers’ property.”⁵⁰ Accusations of connivance were not uncommon.⁵¹ The notion of an “Old Boys Club” wielding enormous and indiscriminate leverage was exacerbated in City Council by the Stampede Board’s admitted secrecy and lack of community consultation. For example,

during the Lincoln Park issue one alderman felt that "the Board was controlled by a group of influential rich men who moved in exclusive circles." Another thought the board was not close enough to the people.⁵² Mayor Rodney Sykes' executive secretary wrote in 1974 that the Stampede Board "was inclined to do as it wants."⁵³ This perceived elitism polarized Council on sensitive issues. The Lincoln Park and Victoria Park expansion controversies are excellent cases in point.

An early confrontation set the stage for future dialogue. In 1911 the city audited the Exhibition Company's books as a condition of its annual \$5,000 grant. The subsequent report documented laxity and improper accounting procedures. Some aldermen on City Council were incensed and called the Exhibition's management practices into question. In angrily refuting these allegations, General Manager Ernie Richardson attacked his accusers for their lack of experience or knowledge about running an Exhibition.⁵⁴ The critics fell silent and a precedent was set. Henceforth, the Exhibition and Stampede was to broach little interference by the city.

Another civic attack on the Stampede in 1943 was linked to projected spending on an artificial ice rink operation that had been sublet in the arena on the grounds. On August 12 Stampede General Manager Charles Yule approached Council requesting a ten-year extension on the current lease, which was due to expire in November. Yule argued that additional security of tenure was warranted before \$6,000 was expended on improving the heating facilities in the arena where the ice rink was located.⁵⁵ A day later the city commissioners endorsed Yule's request. On August 16, when the issue was brought to Council, Alderman W.G. Southern, a former Council representative on the Stampede Board, requested an audit of the Stampede books. Furthermore, by querying the city's right to negotiate a lease at all, let alone at a nominal cost, Southern essentially called the Stampede's right to exist into question.⁵⁶ Southern likely was incensed that the Stampede intended to profit by subleasing what was essentially city property, yet according to a fellow alderman, Southern had little knowledge of Stampede activities and had attended only two meetings in four years.⁵⁷ A stunned Council complied by ordering a complete external audit and asked the city solicitor to advise it on the legal questions.

On August 20 the city solicitor upheld the existing leasing arrangements but cautioned that under its present terms the lease could not be terminated before expiry except by mutual consent.⁵⁸ A week later an extensive audit revealed no irregularities in the Stampede's books.⁵⁹ Southern then countered with a suggestion that the Stampede pay \$20,000 a year rent, an amount

roughly commensurate with the annual interest the city was paying on the capital debt on the Stampede buildings.⁶⁰ Matters came to a head on September 8 during a meeting between the Stampede Board and City Council's Legislative Committee. The board had complied willingly with the audit request but balked at paying a \$20,000 annual levy on a new lease. Threatening to abandon the Stampede altogether, President T.A. Hornibrook informed the committee, "Our board has reached a stage where it is prepared to quit right now and you can have it like that if you wish."⁶¹

Faced with this ultimatum, Council opted to save face. Though it agreed in principle to renewing the lease under existing arrangements, it also insisted on some modifications. In a new ten-year lease approved by a narrow 6 to 4 vote on December 20, 1943, the Stampede Board agreed to an increase in Council representation on its executive board from one to two, and to a clause that specified conditions by which a lease could be terminated before its expiry date. In the Stampede Finance Committee's annual report released in November, E.D. Adams adopted a familiar refrain in censuring the city:

It is to be hoped that City Council while conducting the affairs of the city will allow the directors of the Stampede to continue their efforts without undue hindrance bearing in mind that the Stampede is only a voluntary company and that all its shareholders have but one thought in mind – to work for the good of the community, and spend what money they are fortunate to earn to be of benefit to the City of Calgary and the community at large.⁶²

Self-righteousness and the emphasis on its voluntary and therefore unimpeachable intentions were the Stampede Board's main weapons whenever its motives were called into question.

An ongoing area of contention between the Stampede Board and the City of Calgary concerned the location of non-exhibition facilities on the fairgrounds. Over time, the city had appropriated about seven acres in the designated exhibition grounds for storage, a power house, and streetcar barns. The Exhibition had sought a legal opinion on this non-exhibition use in 1912 but was informed by Richard Bedford Bennett that the city's actions were within its power even though they might be "contrary to the spirit of the patent."⁶³ By the 1940s the Stampede had a facility-space problem. Following extensive and not always progressive dialogue, the city agreed to give up the space, but not without a price. It cost the Stampede \$50,000 to move the streetcar barns

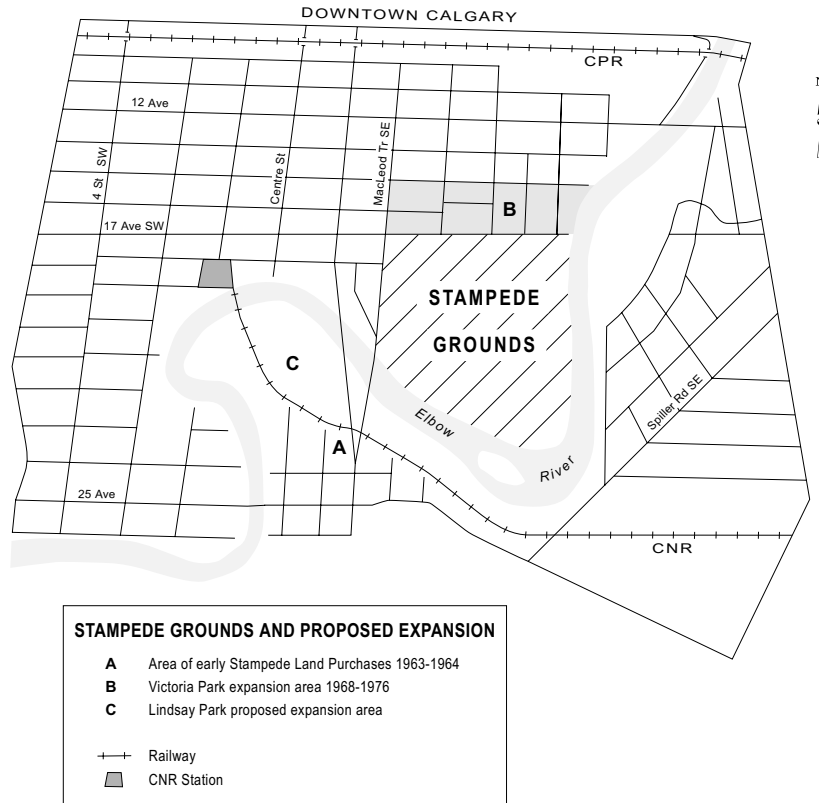
to Eau Claire in 1948.⁶⁴ Ten years later the Stampede had to agree to pay the city a further \$100,000 to free up the remaining space.⁶⁵ The idea of making the Stampede pay for land that was originally part of the lease runs counter to the usual co-operation extended by the city. In all likelihood, the civic departments affected wanted to offset the costs of replacing the facilities.

The Lincoln Park Issue

The failure of the Stampede's Lincoln Park expansion proposal in 1964–65 was its greatest setback at the hands of the city. The extension of the Stampede from seven to nine days in 1966 and to ten days a year later was a direct response to this failure and to the need to accommodate more people on the grounds. For the city, it was a matter of weighing economic, financial, and political odds. In this balancing act, the Stampede emerged as a minor player. Also, by this time, the city also had other relocation ideas for its favourite child.

In December 1963 federal Minister of Defence Paul Hellyer announced in the House of Commons that the government was downsizing its Royal Canadian Air Force facilities across the country. Calgary's Lincoln Park was one of the casualties. By July 1964 Council had decided to accept the federal government's offer of first choice on the 426 acres located in the Lakeview district in the city's southwest. Originally, the city wanted to maintain the facility as a municipal airport. In September, after the Department of Transport declined to operate the proposed airport, the city entertained vague notions of converting the land into a residential area and light industrial complex.⁶⁶ When Mayor Grant MacEwan and Chief Commissioner John Steel negotiated a price of \$750,000 for the purchase of the land, the Stampede seized what it thought was a golden opportunity.⁶⁷ On October 23 it gave notice that it was prepared to buy Lincoln Park for the city and relocate its operations there. It even enclosed a \$75,000 cheque as a down payment.⁶⁸

Though this move was sudden and unexpected, the Stampede had already been influenced by prior civic action. By the 1950s the most serious problem facing the Stampede was a lack of space on the grounds.⁶⁹ Correspondence between the board and commissioners indicated clearly that the former expected the city to furnish a solution either by providing a new site elsewhere or by allowing expansion in its present location. It was also equally obvious by 1960 that the city preferred the second solution. Commissioner Steel made this quite clear during a meeting in March with Stampede officials.⁷⁰

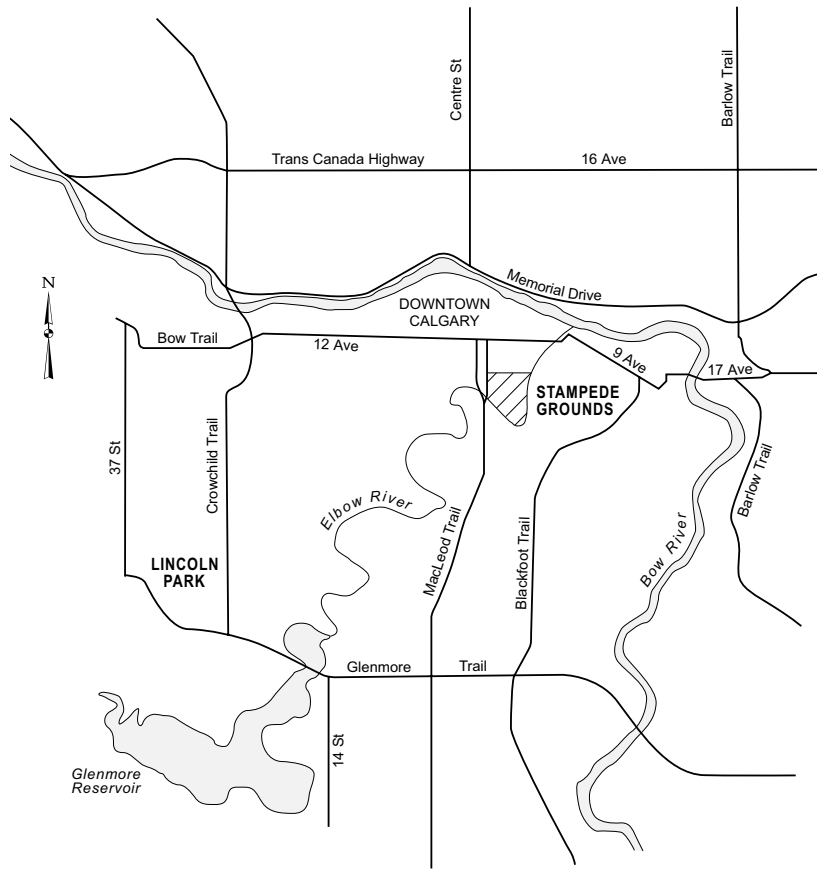


Using its expanded powers under the 1960 lease agreement and a half-million dollar bank loan, the Stampede began acquiring properties in nearby Lindsay Park to the south and west of the grounds in the spring of 1963.⁷¹ This program stalled for three reasons. One was the high price asked by the largest landowner, Canadian National Railway. Difficulties also arose over the feasibility of diverting the Elbow River that snaked through the area. However, the most formidable obstacle was raised when John Steel told the Stampede Board the city was not prepared to consolidate the land parcel by effecting the necessary street closures.⁷² Only hours after hearing this news the Stampede opted for Lincoln Park.

The Stampede's offer was received favourably by the city commissioners, who recommended the purchase of Lincoln Park to Council.⁷³ The aldermen,

however, were not so sanguine. Instead, Council took the prudent route and ordered its Planning Department to undertake a study on the future of Lincoln Park. The \$75,000 cheque was returned.⁷⁴ The Stampede took its own precautions by hiring a consultant to prepare its brief to Council and to assess the feasibility of other sites.⁷⁵

Public reaction was quick and vehement. The October 26 meeting of City Council faced an audience of 150 unhappy Lakeview residents whose noisy interjections almost caused Mayor Grant MacEwan to clear the chamber.⁷⁶ In addition to threatening legal action if the Stampede were allowed to relocate



**OUTLINE OF SUBURBAN CALGARY
1964 -1965**
Distance from Lincoln Park to Stampede Grounds - 5 kilometres

in Lincoln Park, the Lakeview Community Association protested everything from odours and traffic congestion to water problems and falling land prices. Also, other parties soon expressed their interest. ATCO Industries was prepared to pay \$750,000 for only one hundred acres. Robin-Nodwell wanted thirty-seven acres for a tracked-vehicle plant. Developers interested in a shopping complex offered over two million dollars. Mount Royal Community College saw Lincoln Park as a possible site for its relocation. In all, twenty-three applications were received for property parcels including two museums and a Bible college.

The Stampede's cause was not helped by a bitter controversy within Council. Since all four aldermen on the Stampede Board had voted in favour of the proposal, they were excluded from voting or even discussing the issue in Council. George Ho Lem and Ernie Starr sought a judicial declaration that they were not disqualified under the City Act from voting on "questions affecting a company of which they are directors." Under an injunction granted on May 17, 1965, Council debate on the subject was suspended pending a decision. The issue went to trial after the city tried unsuccessfully to challenge the injunction. The judge's ruling on June 10 upholding the city's decision to exclude the aldermen from voting came just a few days before the release of the Lincoln Park study.⁷⁷ The Stampede Board could not have been happy with the publicity; the trial proceedings revealed that both aldermen had been shareholders as well as directors.

Nevertheless, the Stampede pressed its case in a spirited campaign. In a brief to City Council in late March it unveiled detailed and grandiose plans for the new facilities at Lincoln Park. It also lobbied heavily for public support. The \$45,000 spent on advertising was accompanied by radio broadcasts and the first phone-in television show in Calgary.⁷⁸ President Don Matthews and several directors toured the affected communities in an effort to make their case personally.⁷⁹ These measures, however, were countered by mounting public opposition and demonstrations. With the tide turning, the Stampede tried to convince Mount Royal College of the advantages of relocating in Victoria Park rather than in Lincoln Park. During a series of secret meetings, Stampede officials focused on the college's interest in remaining in the downtown area and intimated that the province might be willing to provide 90 percent of the cost or \$5.4 million to relocate the college there.⁸⁰

The Lincoln Park Report was released on June 16. Of the four proposals considered, the Stampede's was ranked last.⁸¹ The report recommended that the land be given over to housing, high-rise apartments, ATCO Industries, Mount Royal College, and other public facilities. As for the Stampede, the

report noted, “It is the least compatible. It yields much less direct benefit to the city than all the other alternatives and carries with it the smallest economic benefit to the city at large.” Also revealed was the city’s preference for future Stampede expansion. According to the report, Stampede needs would be best served through expansion “in contiguous areas – perhaps in conjunction with pending urban renewal plans.”⁸²

Why did the Stampede lose Lincoln Park? To many civic administrators, moving the Stampede there seemed like a logical solution to a vexatious problem. City engineers thought the site was suitable in terms of access and discounted claims that water contamination was a possibility. Despite all its promotion, the Stampede must take a share of the blame. Perhaps its greatest mistake was in expecting recompense from the city. Estimating that a successful bid would mean abandoning land and facilities in Victoria Park worth six million dollars, the Stampede Board unwisely suggested that the city provide the money. Some aldermen, not understanding the Lindsay Park situation, thought the Stampede’s bid was too sudden. Others saw it as self-serving and arrogant. Lakeview residents resented “rich men flexing their muscles.” Knowing the importance of the issue, the Stampede Board should have avoided all taint by excusing the aldermen from discussions. It also did little to counter suggestions for alternative sites. No clear case was laid before the public giving the reasons why other possibilities had already been considered and rejected.

But even considering the above, politics and the lure of potential revenue worked against the Stampede. It made little political sense to anger a well-organized, articulate, middle-class neighbourhood. More likely, however, financial considerations doomed the Stampede’s proposal. Set against the Stampede’s bid of \$750,000 for tax-free land, the prospect of receiving three million dollars in land sales and substantial annual taxes was simply too much to resist.

For the first time, the Stampede had failed to advance its interests with the city on a major issue. It was a bitter blow, as evidenced by its president, Don Matthews, who equated the Planning Department’s report with the end of the Stampede. The board of directors met on June 20 to consider a response. Amid practical comments such as “We should bow out gracefully” and “It would be futile to continue,” the Stampede Board decided to abandon its interest in Lincoln Park.⁸³ This was seen by the press as a generous gesture since, in effect, it reinstated the voting powers of the four aldermen and enabled a truly representative Council to adopt the Planning Department’s recommendation.⁸⁴

The failure to secure Lincoln Park necessitated a change in the Stampede's strategy. Given its consultant's report that Lincoln Park was the only suitable outside site, the Stampede redirected its focus to its existing premises.⁸⁵ In the fall of 1965 the Stampede reopened negotiations on a Lindsay Park site but was thwarted by city traffic plans that effectively isolated it from the existing grounds. In December 1965 the Stampede Sites Committee reported to the Executive Committee that the only viable solution lay in rapid transit from outlying parking reserves.⁸⁶ But when it also mentioned that expansion north was "a partial solution," the focus began to shift to an entirely new debate.

Victoria Park

Between 1968 and 1976 the Stampede acquired eight blocks in residential Victoria Park directly north of the grounds. This marked the beginning of the end for this older working-class neighbourhood. The intrusion into a deteriorating yet well-established community aroused spirited opposition from residents who did not want to leave. The Victoria Park expansion issue provides the best single example of the complex relationship between the Stampede and the city. Co-operation, antagonism, and distance were all observable in this emotional and protracted public issue.

Following the Lincoln Park setback, the Stampede began pressuring the city for a solution to its space problems. By 1967 expansion on the existing site was an accepted fact. In an astounding move in March 1968, the city commissioners asked the four aldermen on the Stampede Board to settle the future of the area "for once and for all."⁸⁷ Their subsequent recommendation to allow the Stampede to expand into residential Victoria Park was accepted by the commissioners and endorsed by Council. Under an agreement reached in July 1968, the city provided four million dollars at \$400,000 a year to the Stampede to enable the purchase of eight blocks east of Macleod Trail between Seventeenth Avenue and Fourteenth Avenue in Victoria Park.⁸⁸ The agreement also contained alternative accommodation provisions for displaced tenants who were allowed to remain in the purchased houses until they were ready for demolition, which was to occur by block and not until most of the land was in the hands of the Stampede. The city was to approve all purchases and retain the title to all acquired lands. Later, when a few stalwart residents refused to sell, the 1968 agreement was amended to allow the city to use expropriation where necessary.⁸⁹

Land acquisition was a protracted and painful process. It took over seven years for the 229 properties to be acquired. In 1976 the former home to

twelve hundred people was a jumble of ruined empty spaces interspersed with dilapidated houses awaiting demolition. Across Fourteenth Avenue to the north the deterioration extended to the rest of Victoria Park.⁹⁰ Most residents were convinced that it was only a matter of time before the same fate awaited them.⁹¹ Caught in the limbo of uncertainty, many sold out to speculators who offered low rent and little maintenance. All in all, it was grim evidence of a partnership process dedicated solely to property acquisition.

The election in 1969 of an antagonistic mayor inflamed the conflicts between the Stampede and the city, causing delays and internecine strife. Rodney Sykes blamed the Stampede Board for its cavalier attitude towards powerless residents and City Council for its endorsement. Noting that he got little support from Council, Sykes aligned himself with the Victoria Park citizens' group in an attempt to halt the land purchases. His failure to influence any change was due in large part to a confrontational style and abrasive personality that alienated many aldermen and civic administrators.⁹² The Planning Department also opposed the expansion. A study released in 1971 recommended abandoning the entire expansion project in favour of other options,⁹³ but Council ignored that study and a subsequent report in 1974 that recommended extensive rehabilitation outside the expansion zone as a way of preserving Victoria Park from further encroachment by the Stampede.⁹⁴

Unarguably, the Stampede was partly responsible for the destruction of Victoria Park. It could have gone elsewhere. Lincoln Park was not the only outside solution. In 1967, for example, the board of directors gave scant consideration to a proposal to relocate in the recreational area of Happy Valley on the western fringe of the city.⁹⁵ The lack of a master plan meant that the Stampede had moved to destroy a community without forethought. The fact that expansion was linked primarily to parking was a major irritant.⁹⁶ As it was, the present grounds were largely empty except during the Stampede and the board had to defend the validity of turning a residential neighbourhood into a parking lot while already possessing abundant underutilized parking space. According to the citizens' committee formed to fight the expansion, the Stampede had acted pre-emptively and was unconcerned about offering market prices for the houses instead of replacement value. The committee described the Stampede Board as confrontational and accused it of using "block busting" and intimidation tactics to force residents from their homes.⁹⁷ It also alleged that acquired houses were poorly maintained and allowed to deteriorate so people would be encouraged to move.⁹⁸

However, the city was more responsible than the Stampede for the fate of Victoria Park. It had favoured a northerly expansion as early as 1960. In a

meeting with the Stampede, Commissioner John Steel referred to Victoria Park as “a depressed residential area” and suggested a northerly expansion from Seventeenth Avenue all the way to Twelfth Avenue.⁹⁹ By 1965 the city was clearly bent on amalgamating the Stampede expansion plans with large-scale redevelopment of Victoria Park under urban renewal. A 1965 land-use map of the city slated all of Victoria Park for redevelopment. The Stampede did not mention Victoria Park as a possible expansion area until late 1965, and even then referred specifically to this as a city decision. It was only when the federal and provincial governments proved less than enthusiastic about urban renewal for Victoria Park that the city forced its hurried solution.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, the city’s lack of a consistent long-range vision for Victoria Park made it virtually impossible to protect the rest of the community in the post-expansion phase. The city’s first general plan in 1963 made no provision for the central area. The 1970 plan implicitly recognized the Stampede Board’s encroachment.¹⁰¹ An updated plan released in 1973 specifically stated that expansion would not be allowed north of Fourteenth Avenue,¹⁰² yet in a map accompanying a further update in 1977, the whole of Victoria Park had been given over to the Stampede.¹⁰³ The area’s integrity was threatened by other civic policies that included a commitment to redevelopment rather than rehabilitation in spite of contrary recommendations.¹⁰⁴ The proposed light-rail transit system through the community was another potential dividing influence.

The Victoria Park issue concerned the reversion of private land to the city and a civic decision to deploy it in the Stampede’s interests. In short, it was an initiative conceived and sanctioned by the city but executed by the Stampede, and the bulk of the public criticism fell on the latter. The Stampede, rather than the city, was generally perceived as the architect of residential ruin. That the city had had plans for a northerly expansion since 1960 did not figure in the public debate. Neither did the city’s original proposal to absorb the entire community. The public was not aware of the haphazard decision-making process nor of the dereliction of duty by the city commissioners. As with Lincoln Park, the city was quite prepared to treat the Stampede as a private body instead of a junior partner. Interestingly, the Stampede made no effort to shift the burden of blame to the city. Given its elitist nature, it probably preferred “to take the heat” rather than admit chattel status.

Though not acknowledged at the time, the Stampede’s expansion into Victoria Park also sealed the future of the rest of the neighbourhood. By 1998 the rest of Victoria Park up to Twelfth Avenue had fallen into the Stampede’s hands. Despite an effort to rehabilitate the area in the late 1970s, the city’s

reversal of policy in allowing the Olympic Saddledome to be constructed there in 1982 marked the beginning of the end for this small low-rent community. The city's subsequent indecisiveness, combined with the Stampede's aggressive (and secret) \$12 million land purchase program in 1987–88 allowed the area to lapse to the Stampede almost by default. In August 2004 the Stampede announced a \$500 million plan to “transform Stampede Park into a 193 acre multi use community park zoned with entertainment, educational, discovery, exhibition and agricultural facilities.”¹⁰⁵ There was no mention of housing. Though a few people still occupy crumbling dwellings and small apartments, East Victoria Park now awaits demolition.¹⁰⁶ The presence of a few neat, well-kept, attractive houses is a poignant reminder of what might have been.

Conclusions

Several broad conclusions follow from this discussion. First, it is undeniable that the Stampede's huge success in “selling” the city was due in large part to the co-operation it received from city hall. However, the fact that the Stampede was able to operate at arm's length from the city when it came to policy making allowed it freedom and flexibility not enjoyed by similar institutions. For example, the structure of the Edmonton Exhibition made it far more susceptible to political interference.

Though it could easily have done so through lease provisions, the city has never used its position to change Stampede priorities or practices, especially with respect to minority groups. Does the Stampede consciously freeze First Nations in time in the interests of tourists?¹⁰⁷ First Nations participants were asked not to wear glasses during the 1968 parade.¹⁰⁸ Do ethnic groups and women have restricted access to the portals of power within the Stampede? The first time a woman was elected to the board of directors or invited to the annual Stampede president's luncheon was in 1979.¹⁰⁹ As late as 1995, only one woman sat on the board of directors. Did the interests of property and the Stampede count more than those of the poor and disadvantaged in Victoria Park? Though it could be argued that the Stampede is now responding to criticism, the city's silence speaks volumes.

Calgary's “Cowtown” image, for good or bad, is closely linked to the Stampede. Through its support, the city has consciously endorsed this image. During the years of rapid growth between 1950 and 1970, Mayor Don Mackay was the Stampede's best publicity agent. His folksy correspondence with mayors and politicians in Canada and the United States

was full of Stampede and western allusions. Other mayors in this period, such as Harry Hays, cattleman and founder of the popular Hays Stampede breakfast; Grant MacEwan, agriculturalist and widely-read western author; and home-grown Jack Leslie, grew up with horses and publicly advertised their strong identification with the western spirit. The civic support behind business participation in Stampede activities, the half-day civic holiday, and the willingness to adopt western civic symbols were all linked to a desire to support not only the Stampede, but also the image it was trying to promote.

The Stampede's board of directors and its associate directors are an impressive aggregation of local business and social elites. Their ongoing interaction has produced a powerful coalition of interests, influence, and ideology that has advertised and even branded the city. The ideological dimension has particular relevance to the ranching and oil and gas industries. Each has always been interested in the other. Ranchers have been inveterate investors in the oil and gas industry, while the oilmen have always nurtured an ongoing fascination with ranching and the outdoor western ethos it embodies. The Stampede provides an urban forum in which these two ideologically compatible groups can work together and with the city to serve the "common interest." In this sense, the civic emblem of the white Stetson hat may have more validity than popularly imagined, although it is not the cowboy who is wearing it – it is the rancher, and by extension his ideological counterpart, the oilman.

Notes

1. In the interests of brevity, the word “Stampede” is used throughout this discussion to refer to the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede. It also the most common term used to identify the Exhibition and Stampede. Indeed, the word “Exhibition” was recently dropped from the Stampede’s logo.
2. See Colin S. Campbell, “The Stampede: Cowtown’s Sacred Cow,” in *Stampede City: Power and Politics in the West*, ed. Chuck Reasons (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1984), 103–20.
3. Rebecca Aizenman, a vociferous opponent of Stampede expansion in Victoria Park, wrote a long letter to the city asking for clarification on the relationship between the two.
4. Notes of Citizens’ Meeting, Victoria Park, 4 December 1966, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 262, file folder 7200, City of Calgary Archives (CCA).
5. See Faye Reineberg Holt, *Awed, Amused and Alarmed: Fairs, Rodeos and Regattas in Western Canada* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 2003).
6. Alan F.J. Artibise, “Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871–1913,” in *Town and City: Aspects of Western Canadian Urban Development*, ed. Alan F.J. Artibise (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1981), 209–35.
7. Paul Voisey, “Boosting the Small Prairie Town, 1904–1933: An Example from Southern Alberta,” in *Town and City: Aspects of Western Canadian Urban Development*, ed. Alan F.J. Artibise (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1981), 154–55.
8. Gerry Kearns and Chris Philo, eds., *Selling Places: The City as Cultural Capital, Past and Present* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1993); Philip Kotler, Donald H. Haider, and Irving Rein, *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations* (Toronto: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1993).
9. John R. Logan and Harvey Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
10. See Calgary Stampede’s *2003 Report to the Community*. Tourist spending in Calgary in 2003 was estimated at around \$900 million. In 2003 the Stampede’s 1,500 permanent and part-time employees and 2,000 volunteers managed 450 events in Stampede Park and participated in numerous other community programs.
11. For good treatment of the early years, see Linda Christine English, “The Calgary Exhibition and Stampedes: Culture, Context and Controversy, 1884–1920,” (M.A. thesis, Department of History, University of Calgary, 1999).

12. City Clerk's Correspondence, box 3, file folder 27; box 4, file folder 36, CCA.
13. Ernie Richardson to City Commissioners, 12 November 1910, City Clerk's Correspondence, box 35, file folder 272.
14. Stampede President to City Commissioners, 8 October 1946, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 48, file folder E-1.
15. Lincoln Park Expansion, Board Submissions, correspondence dated 30 April 1965, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 84, file folder 4100.1.
16. Minutes of a Meeting Held at City Hall, 14 March 1960, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 22, file folder 175.
17. Mayor J.W. Mitchell to E.A. Cruickshank, Commander Military District #13, 26 June 1912, City Clerk's Correspondence, box 50, file folder 403.
18. "Stampede Board Postings Spark First Bitterness on New Council," *Calgary Herald*, 20 October 1964.
19. Private poll taken by author in the summer of 2004. Well over one-third of those polled believed that the Stampede was a private operation.
20. T.A. Hornibrook to Mayor Andrew Davison, 20 August 1943, City of Calgary Papers, box 8, file folder 44, CCA.
21. City of Calgary Papers, box 15, file folder 19.
22. Guy Weadick to Mayor J. Mitchell, 13 June 1912, City Clerk's Correspondence, box 50, file folder 403.
23. Ernie Richardson to Mayor R.C. Marshall, 18 August 1919, Board of Commissioners Papers, series I, box 89, file folder M-S, April–December 1919.
24. C.M. Baker, President, to E.A. Hookway, City Comptroller, 26 February 1935, City of Calgary Papers, box 29, file folder 277.
25. "Stampede: A Proposal for Long Range Development," Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 71, file folder Calgary Exhibition Board 1972, file 1 of 2.
26. Board of Commissioners Papers, series III, box 13, file folder E-1, Stampede 1945–49.
27. Robert Konrad, "Barren Bulls and Charging Cows: Cowboy Celebrations in Copal and Calgary," in *The Celebration of Society: Perspectives on Contemporary Performance*, ed. Frank Manning (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Press, 1983), 161.
28. Letter to Mayor, 17 July 1928, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 2, file folder 5, Glenbow Museum Archives (hereafter cited as GMA).
29. Minutes of the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Co. Ltd., 26 September 1923, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 1, GMA. To be fair to Richardson, it should be added that he always equated the value of the Stampede with its success in advertising and coalescing the agriculture and livestock industries.

30. Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 21, file folder 1 of 2, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede 1953–59.
31. City Solicitor's Office to Commissioner Dudley E. Batchelor, 23 May 1958, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 21, file folder 1 of 2, Calgary Exhibition Board 1953–59.
32. Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 72, file folder Calgary Exhibition Board 1975. The 1968 expansion agreement with the city was amended to allow the city to assume the direct responsibility for securing the remaining land in the area effective 5 October 1975.
33. Board of Commissioners Papers, series I, box 18, file folder General Correspondence, Jan.–June, A-D, 1911.
34. Minutes of the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Co. Ltd., Discussion on the Exhibition Bylaw 1632, 28 August 1913, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 1, GMA. Due to wartime conditions the first bonds on the bylaw could not be sold until after the war.
35. "Stampede Limited, Examination of Accounts to Mayor and Council of the Corporation of the City of Calgary," Henderson, Teare and Waines, Chartered Accountants, 26 August 1943, City Clerk Files, box 339, file folder 2207, CCA.
36. Minutes of the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Co. Ltd., 22 January 1915, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 1, GMA.
37. *Ibid.*, 20 October 1919.
38. Charles Yule, Managing Director, to Mayor Don Mackay, 2 June 1951, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 48, file folder E-1.
39. Annual Report, 1939, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 2.
40. Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 73, file folder Stampede Board 1980.
41. Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 72, file folder Stampede Board 1976.
42. *Ibid.*, file folder Stampede Board 1978.
43. Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 73, file folder Calgary Exhibition Board 1978.
44. City Council Motion, 17 December 1975, City Planning and Building Department, series VIII, box 17413, file folder Victoria Park 1976, CCA.
45. Correspondence dated 26 May 1961, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 22, file folder 175; City Council Minutes, 5 April 1979, Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 73, file folder Stampede Board 1979.
46. Correspondence dated 2 May 1955, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 48, file folder E-1 1954–55.
47. Correspondence dated 9 March 1955, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 48, file folder E-1 1954–55.

48. The “non-conformities” concerned extensions to the grandstand in 1967. See correspondence of L.S. Walker, Chief Building Inspector, to Commissioner Ivor Strong, 9 November 1967, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 22, file folder 125.
49. Maurice Brown to J.B. Cross, President, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, 11 January 1951; Mayor Don Mackay to Maurice L. Brown, 18 January 1951, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 48, file folder E-1.
50. “Exhibition-Stampede Racket Flourishes at Expense of Taxpayers,” *Spokesman* (Calgary), 13 July 1932.
51. Correspondence dated 21 March 1947, Board of Commissioners Papers, series III, box 13, file folder E-1.
52. Civic and Stampede Dinner Meeting, Fort Calgary House, 10 November 1964, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 84, file folder 4100.1.
53. Correspondence by Andrew Marshall, 20 August 1974, Rod Sykes Fonds RG 2 33.20, file folder 406, CCA.
54. Minutes of the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Co. Ltd., 26, 27 November 1911, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 1, GMA; also *Morning Albertan*, 27 November 1911.
55. Charles Yule to Mayor Andrew Davison, 12 August 1943, City of Calgary Papers, box 8, file folder 45.
56. City Council Minutes, 16 August 1943, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 84, file folder 4100.1, CCA.
57. “Suggest \$20,000 Fair Board Lease,” *Calgary Herald*, 31 August 1943.
58. City Solicitor T.W. Collings to Mayor and Council, 20 August 1943, City of Calgary Papers, box 8, file folder 45.
59. “Stampede Limited. Report on Examination of Accounts to Mayor and Council of the Corporation of the City of Calgary,” Henderson Teares and Waines, 26 August 1943, City Clerk Files, box 339, file folder 2207.
60. “Aldermen Probing Fair Board Rink,” *Calgary Herald*, 17 August 1943; “Suggests \$20,000 Fair Board Lease,” *Calgary Herald*, 31 August 1943.
61. “Fair Directors Ready to Quit,” *Calgary Herald*, 8 September 1943.
62. Finance Director’s Report, Annual Report, 1943. Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 2.
63. R.B. Bennett to Ernie Richardson, 25 September 1912, Minutes of the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Co. Ltd., Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 1, GMA.
64. Annual Report, 1948, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Fonds, box 2.
65. Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 21, file folder 1 of 2, Calgary Exhibition Board 1953–59.
66. For negotiations, see Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 84, file folder 4100.1. Claims that Agriculture Minister Harry Hays initiated

the whole Lincoln Park sale in Ottawa on behalf of the Stampede are not supported by evidence. In the summer of 1964, Hays was pushing for the municipal airport.

67. Crown Assets Disposal Corporation, the federal government's agency for disposing of unneeded assets, initially wanted one million dollars for the site. Deciding on the actual boundaries of the area and the need for provincial approval delayed the sale until November 1964.
68. Maurice Hartnett to City Commissioners, 23 October 1964. Hartnett urged haste and indicated that the board wanted to have the new site available by centennial year, 1967. Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 84, file folder 4100.1.
69. Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, box 48, file folder E-1, file 1 of 3. In 1951 General Manager Charles Yule told the city that the Stampede had reached its saturation point with respect to numbers.
70. Meeting between Calgary and Stampede Officials, 14 March 1960. Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 22, file folder 175. Steel suggested that the expansion should go as far north as Twelfth Avenue.
71. Board of Directors Meeting, 26 February 1963, Minutes of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Board, 1961–76 (hereafter cited as Stampede Minute Book), Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Archives, CS.99.106, box 2.
72. Executive Committee Meeting, 16 October 1964, Stampede Minute Book. The Canadian National Railway (CNR) wanted \$690,000 for 20.63 acres. By this time the Stampede had expended about \$145,000 to purchase ten properties.
73. Board of Commissioners Papers, box 84, file folder 4100.1.
74. City Council Minutes, 26 October 1964.
75. Board of Directors Meeting, 23 December 1964, Stampede Minute Book.
76. "City Holds Back on Stampede Bid," *Calgary Herald*, 27 October 1964.
77. Board of Commissioners Papers, box 84, file folder 4001.1.
78. Due to the influence of one of the directors, the radio and television broadcasts were free. See Executive Committee Meeting, 7 May 1965, Stampede Minute Book. James H. Gray, *A Brand of Its Own: The 100 Year History of the Stampede* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1985), 152.
79. Gray, *Brand of Its Own*, 152.
80. Reports of meetings with Mount Royal College officials, Executive Committee Meetings, 23 April and 5 May 1965, Stampede Minute Book.
81. "Report Picks ATCO for Lincoln Park"; "Stampede Bid For Lincoln Park Led Only In Intangible Benefits," *Calgary Herald*, 18 June 1965.
82. Commissioners' Report to Council, 16 June 1965, City Commissioners Papers, box 84, file folder 4001.1.

83. Special Board of Directors Meeting, 20 June 1965, Stampede Minute Book.
84. "Stampede Drops Lincoln Park Bid," *Calgary Herald*, 22 June 1965.
85. In March 1965 the Stampede Board issued a press release to the effect that its consultant, Gaylord Perry of Findlay, Ohio, had visited all the sites and had determined that Lincoln Park was the most suitable. Although details of these other sites were not given, mention had been made of a site in the northeast near Sixteenth Avenue North and Highway 2, a site near the Burns feedlot in south Calgary, and a site in the vicinity of Ogden.
86. Sites Planning Committee Meeting, 10 December 1965, Stampede Minute Book.
87. City Council Minutes, 25 March 1968; Commissioners' Report, 17 April 1968, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 262, file folder 7200.
88. Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 23, file folder 175.
89. Board of Commissioners Papers, series VI, box 72, file folder Stampede Board 1976. The 1968 agreement was amended effective 5 October 1975 to give the city direct responsibility for acquiring land in the expansion area.
90. "Cockroaches Found in City's Suites," *Calgary Herald*, 6 March 1972.
91. Their fears were well founded. The construction of the Saddledome on Stampede property combined with further expansion plans effectively sealed the fate of Victoria Park.
92. Secretary's correspondence dated 4 December 1973. Rod Sykes Fonds, RG 2 33.20, file folder 406. One wonders what a more persuasive approach might have achieved.
93. "The Future of Victoria Park," City of Calgary Planning Department, August 1971, Planning and Building Department, series VIII, box 17413, file folder V2.
94. Correspondence from Director of Planning George Steber to Commissioner George Cornish, 21 March 1974, Rod Sykes Fonds, RG 2 33.20, file folder 406.
95. Board of Commissioners Papers, box 22, file folder 175. See proposal by S. Flock and Company, 29 June 1967.
96. C. Kennedy to Mayor Jack Leslie, 30 May 1968, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 227, file folder Calgary Exhibition and Stampede No. 3, 1968; C. Kennedy to Mayor and Commissioners, 1 January 1968, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 262, file folder 7200.
97. Rebecca Aizenman, presentation to workshop on citizens' participation, Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, Quebec City, 24 May 1972, Board of Commissioners Papers, series IV, file folder Stampede 1972, file 2 of 2. Aizenman castigated both the Stampede Board and the city as middle-class business elitists, and the Stampede as "a middle class drunk

- or an anything-goes celebration”; Andrew Marshall, executive assistant to Rod Sykes, to R.J. Benoche, chairman, Victoria Park Family Centre Board, 4 December 1973, Rod Sykes Fonds, file folder 406.
98. Confidential Memo, 7 December 1973, Stampede Minute Book.
 99. Meeting between City and Stampede officials, 14 March 1960, Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 22, file folder Calgary Exhibition Board 1960.
 100. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) was already cutting back on urban renewal funding while the province wanted a lengthy and costly city-wide study to see if Victoria Park was the best choice for urban renewal.
 101. City of Calgary Planning Department, *The Calgary Plan*, March 1970, page 10.7.
 102. City of Calgary Planning Department, *The Calgary Plan*, May 1973, page 10.7.
 103. City of Calgary Planning Department, *The Calgary Plan*, June 1977.
 104. Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 262, file folder 7200. See comments by both the Medical Board of Health and the Chief Building Inspector, 21 and 31 May 1965.
 105. “Stampede Park. Calgary Exhibition & Stampede Expansion & Development,” August 2004.
 106. The community of Victoria Park was merged into the Beltline community. Ironically, West Victoria Park, which had lost most of its houses years earlier to commercial activity, is in the process of being rejuvenated with a high-end residential component.
 107. This point is argued in Marilyn Burgess, “Canadian ‘Range Wars’: Struggles Over Indian Cowboys,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 18 (1993): 351–64.
 108. Board of Commissioners Papers, series V, box 23, file folder 125.
 109. Cheryl Cornacchia, “A Lady Among the Men,” *Calgary Sun*, 12 July 1982. Alderman Naomi Whelan brought pressure to bear to change the rules for the President’s luncheon. See correspondence between Naomi Whelan and Mayor Ross Alger, 30 and 31 May, 7 June, and 23 July 1979, Ross Alger Fonds, RG 2, no. 1061, CCA. It was a banner breakthrough year for women; 1979 also saw the first female outrider in the Chuckwagon races.