



THE REDI REVIEW

Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwest Alberta

Summer 2009

Who receives our Newsletter?

- Project partners
- Other REDA's.
- REDI Members
- Industry Partners

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Productivity Assessment

The Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwest Alberta (REDI) decided in April 2009 that as the Mackenzie Region (and the rest of the world) was facing an economic recession, productivity in the economy should be improved upon. As the province moves forward in developing programs and services to help industry be more productive and competitive, close collaboration with regional economic development agencies is critical in ensuring that the needs of all industry are met. In order to appropriately understand what the productivity needs are of industry across the province and within regions of Alberta, assessments are being undertaken to provide an indication of where each of the regions are with respect to productivity improvement opportunities and to assist in providing direction for initiatives on a regional and sectoral level.

The purpose of the REDI Region Productivity Assessment is to provide valuable intelligence for economic development or-

ganizations such as REDI, surrounding municipalities, and settlements, as they look to connect more closely with the needs of industry within the Mackenzie region. It will also provide necessary direction to the Productivity Enhancement Unit, Alberta Finance and Enterprise as it works towards developing projects and tools to help companies province wide. A consultant is expected to be chosen to undertake the project by September 15th, 2009. A presentation to industry by the consultant, as well as ‘Lean Manufacturing’, and a keynote

speaker are expected to take place in November 2009. Those who participated in the survey process will receive 2 free tickets to attend. RE this event.



2009 Annual Operations Plan

REDI’s 2009 Annual Operations is in full swing. Initiatives for this year were chosen based on discussion from the 2008 Board Retreat. Projects include developing a promotional video for the region, holding a computer literacy course, conducting a regional productivity assessment, and hosting an economic development symposium. The REDI organization is always looking for people who are interested in joining our committees. For more information on REDI Committees, please email info@rediregion.ca, or call 780-926-7314.

Our Mission:

To promote, support and enhance economic growth and diversification in Northwest Alberta through regional cooperation and partnerships

Our Members:

Town of High Level, Town of Rainbow Lake, Mackenzie County, Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement, La Crete Chamber of Commerce, Fort Vermilion & Area Board of Trade, High Level and District Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures Northwest Alberta, and Northern Lakes College.

Regional Infrastructure Needs Study

Members of REDI are happy to announce that the Regional Infrastructure Needs Study is complete. This 'Phase 1' report was developed because REDI partners recognized a lack of comprehensive information on regional infrastructure and related challenges facing the region's economic development stakeholders. This project aimed to examine and assess regional infrastructure elements critical to the region's economic development. Examples include: transportation corridors (rail and highway), recreation facilities, air service, telecommunications (high speed internet and phone), energy, water (potable and for processing), sewage treatment capacity, availability of accommodations, and available land zoned for commercial, residential and industrial use.

With continued economic growth expected over the coming decades, the project's ultimate goals were to:

- Report on the future demand for residential, recreation, commercial and industrial land in the REDI region; and
- Identify areas that will accommodate the future residential, commercial and industrial growth over the next 20 years

Activation Analysis Group was hired in January 2009 to develop this study. Recommendations included:

- REDI support Mackenzie County and key stakeholders in the development of a strategic plan to encourage the Government of Alberta to expand the sustainable agricultural land base in the region
- REDI take a leadership role in

promoting the extension of Highway 58 from Rainbow Lake to the British Columbia border.

- REDI provide collaborative guidance in assembling and supporting a coalition of partners to form a Highway Association. Its mission would be to pursue a provincial commitment to pave the remaining 220km of Highway 88 in a timely fashion.

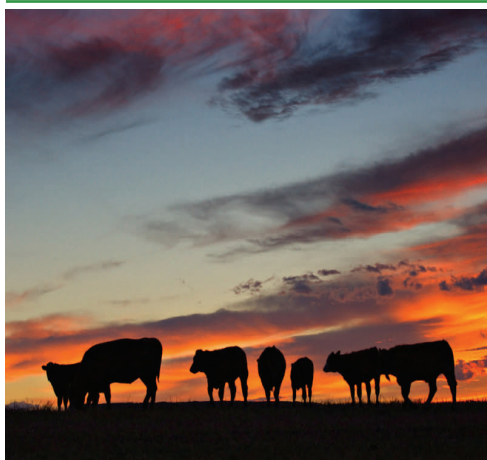
- REDI work with rail shippers and consignees in the REDI and Peace regions to form a coalition or partnership.

Phase 2 of this study is scheduled to begin in 2010. It is anticipated that Phase 2 will focus more specifically at

the recommendations made in Phase 1. REDI would like to thank the committee members for all of their hard work, namely Dicky Driedger, Jerry Chomiak, Peter Braun, Maarten Braat, and Mike Osborn. For a full copy of the report, please contact the REDI office.



REDI Members-April 2009 Board Meeting



Upcoming Events!

REDI AGM

September 9th, 2009

High Level and District Chamber of Commerce Trade Show

September 18-19, 2009

2009 EDAC/EDABC Joint Conference

September 19-22, 2009

Tourism

REDI recently formed a Tourism Committee that will take on a Tourism Business Development Plan. In 2007 REDI completed a Tourism S.W.O.T report. Members of the region gathered to discuss the tourism strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the regional tourism potential. From this, in 2008 REDI conducted

'Tourism Strategy' workshops in each municipality to determine tourism interest. In recent REDI Board meetings, members discussed the value in facilitating a study that would produce a detailed sector analysis of current and future tourism opportunities in the Mackenzie Region. This committee is working on developing a Tour-

ism Business Development Plan which will help the Mackenzie Region address future tourism priorities. It is expected that this report will give the committee the tools needed to become a separate non-profit Tourism Association. Tourism Committee Chair, Michael Thompson says "This project will assist the region to expand in identifying

existing and future regional tourism opportunities". This report is being completed by The Studio Group, thanks to funds provided by the Alberta Finance and Enterprise Community Development Trust Fund.

How to Sell to Government Seminars

On June 16th, 2009 REDI hosted two “How to Sell to Government” seminars, one in High Level, and one in La Crete. David Wasiuta from The Federal Government visited to provide this seminar to interested Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs). This seminar included a presentation describing how each government makes purchasing decisions, and a brief overview of the various policies, regulations and trade agreements which determine how government buyers procure their goods, services and construction requirements. The seminar also informed participants how to access bid opportunities through MERXTM and the Alberta Purchasing Connection, electronic tendering systems. Participants were able to learn how they could sell, and also buy from the Federal and Provincial Government.

The seminar aimed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) gain information on military procurement opportunities at Department of National Defence bases at Wainwright, Cold Lake, Suffield and Edmonton; and other government sectors in Alberta and across Canada.

For more information visit www.merx.com or www.purchasingconnections.ca

Building Northern Economies & Relationships

Alberta’s northern communities and regions are in a period of transition, especially those reliant on agriculture and forestry. The Regional Economic Development Initiative is taking a proactive role to meet with community and business leaders and potential partners to engage and raise awareness of economic development initiatives, and opportunities, in Northern Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. REDI would like to hold the event in February 2010. An event coordinator will be hired to ensure maximum conference attendance. Key note speakers and discussion panelists will ensure this conference offers attendees a wealth of knowledge as well as partnership building opportunities. REDI Manager Crystal Draper says “This event will be a step in bridging the gap between the different communities in the region. Having the chance to share similar priorities will be very important”.



REDI would like to develop a video that will promote the

region as an excellent place to live, work, and do business! The project is expected to begin in August 2009, with filming being done in September, and November. The video will showcase the summer and winter recreation/tourism opportunities. It is expected that this video will be used at regional trade shows, marketing events, and as a tool in attracting future investment.

More details to follow in the next REDI Review.



2009/10 REDI Board Members and Staff

Secretary-Treasurer: Ryan Lacey

**Chair: Jerry Chomiak
Dicky Driedger**

Kevin Delorey (designate Candace Parsons)

**REDI Staff: Crystal Draper
Peter F. Braun
Barry Gladders**

**Vice Chair: Walter Sarapuk
Mike Osborn
Maarten Braat
Michael Thompson**

**Missing:
Kelly Drover**



www.rediregion.ca “Work Here” Website Feature

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The Mackenzie Region Ambassador Program

**You Know It,
You Promote It.**



SIGN UP NOW!

REDI has been working hard on promoting this beautiful region. Our Ambassador Program was launched in September 2008. If you are interested in becoming an Ambassador, please visit www.rediregion.ca/ambassadors.

In 2007/08 REDI undertook a website project entitled “Move Here”. This project was developed as part of an immigration tool kit, which provides access to detailed information on the processes required to immigrate to Canada, and on how to relocate to the Mackenzie Region. A follow up “Work Here” project was completed in March 2009 due to the current instability in the job market. The REDI Board identified a need for a tool kit specifically targeted at working in the

Mackenzie Region. This will be a resource for persons looking to relocate to the Mackenzie Region, those who need employees in the region, and those who are currently unemployed in the region. A future addition to the website will include a “Play Here” website link, which will list all of the recreational activities that the region has to offer. According to REDI Chair, Jerry Chomiak, “When people are

looking to relocate to the region, they need to be sure of the quality of life they can expect, and giving them as much information as possible will make their transition much smoother”. This project was intended to promote labour force attraction, and partnership building throughout the REDI Region. Visit www.rediregion.ca/Movehere for more details.

ARED Conference

In May, REDI members attended the Alberta Regional Economic Development Conference (ARED) in Sherwood Park, Alberta. It was hosted by Alberta Finance & Enterprise. The conference was attended by economic development practitioners, community, business and industry leaders. Topics at ARED included:

- Provincial Strategies (energy, land use framework, competitiveness and productivity strategy)
- Agri-Food Industry
- Green Building Projects
- Alternative Energy
- Rural Manufacturing
- Rural Revitalization
- Attributes of Successful Communities
- Technology Commercialization
- Tourism Product Development
- Rural Canada in a Transitioning Economy



Shown Above: REDI Chair, Jerry Chomiak and AFE Regional Manager, Michael Cheeks.

Computer Literacy Workshop

Do you know anyone that is a little lost when it comes to using a computer? In today’s marketplace, being able to use a computer effectively can provide access to job information, create resumes, conduct banking, buy personal goods etc. Using a computer can be a very frustrating experience if you were never taught the basic applications. REDI has planned to provide a course in partnership with Northern Lakes College in the region this winter that will help persons become more comfortable with basic computer functions. More details to follow shortly.