



Creating Opportunities

SouthGrow Newsletter

February 2015

REGISTER EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

In partnership with **Community Futures Lethbridge**, please save March 5, 2015 for a great speaker, a seminar on Effective Meetings, and a dialogue on various aspects of the local economy. Table discussions include Broadband Internet, Renewable Energy, Agriculture and Agri-Food Processing, and Potential New Business Opportunities. Cost for the entire day \$95 including lunch and refreshments Lunch and speaker only \$35. 9:30—4:30 Lethbridge Lodge. Contact the SouthGrow office to register for:

“If you try to put social and cultural development ahead of economic development, it doesn’t work. You have to do it all together.”

- Aga Khan IV

1ST ANNUAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT



LIEUTENANT GENERAL ANDREW LESLIE—GUEST SPEAKER



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Profiles Update

We are a bit behind in getting this project underway as we have been waiting the results of an application to Municipal Affairs under their Collaboration Grant program. Rather than delay it any further, we will be using a grant under the Invest Canada Community Initiatives program. It funds 50% of the project and we will be using reserves to fund the other half. This avenue of funding was approved in our last year budget as the outcome of grant programs are never certain. The project is going ahead with a search for a consulting firm.

As part of this program, we have been updating our community profiles under a project known as Fast Facts. We are still waiting for information from some members. This information is critical to assist in the development of each multi-page profile. Please ensure that this information has been submitted to the SouthGrow office as we move ahead on this project..

Our aim is to build each of these Profiles into one large profile for the region and to house all that information on our website. Remember, a well developed profile is a good advertising tool for your community and is important as we proceed to market the region to potential business interests.

SouthGrow is committed to working with member communities to target prospective businesses that would be a good fit within our region.

Did you know that SouthGrow was one of the founding members of SAAEP or the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership. Along with Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance and Economic Development Lethbridge, this coalition worked towards building the potential in our regions for Alternative Energy development and expansion projects.



Broadband update

We have been working diligently advocating for better broadband access in our region. As part of this, SouthGrow corresponded with Minister Stephen Khan and Minister Verlyn Olson. As a result, SouthGrow and Alberta SouthWest Alliances attended a meeting with both and members of their staffs, to discuss the SuperNet and ask where the government was in the process to provide better access to broadband services.

We were well received and feel that they appreciated that we were not there to ask for funds at this point. They do understand that the SuperNet is not functioning as it was intended.

They were open to the concept of us being at the table to discuss the next contract of the SuperNet, and specifically what would serve rural communities best. We asked if we could be included and enter into dialogue with the province to help them formulate plans and policies, to which they agreed.

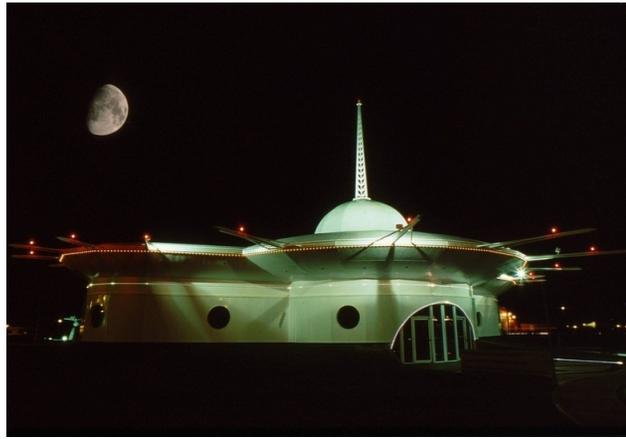
Also, they were impressed to which the degree of work that has been done to date on this topic. This definitely aided our joint cause and have asked for more information on the studies done to date.

Our next steps will be to send a proposal on what specifically we could help with, and to seek a commitment from them on any role that we can collectively play.



Tourism Investment

The Business Development Arm of Culture and Tourism is doing a study in the footprint of the SouthGrow region to develop a list of potential tourism businesses that would have a good chance of success. So far, we have held stakeholder meetings in Lethbridge, Vulcan, Taber, and Raymond to meet with a mix of people that could give some insight into the region's assets. The next step will be a survey sent out to Tourism Operators to gain further information. On the afternoon of **March 3**, we will again meet at the Lethbridge Lodge with the consulting team and as many stakeholders as we can to finalize the information gathering phase.



Coming Events

- **Feb 13, 2015** - SouthGrow executive board meets
- **Mar 3, 2015** - 1 p.m. Lethbridge Lodge—Tourism Investment Information Meeting
- **Mar 5, 2015**—Economic Summit—9:30 a.m. at Lethbridge Lodge. See Page 1 for details

Contact Us

Give **Pete Lovering** a call for more information about our services

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Visit us on the web at www.southgrow.com