



Bulletin – April 2016 from pete.lovering@southgrow.com

Broadband

The presentation at the EDA conference was well received. I believe we were able to engage some communities in Alberta. Many voices will result in more action. I see that Service Alberta made a presentation to the AUMA Small Communities Committee recently. We will keep you informed about any news that flows from that source. The Manager was also able to connect at the EDA conference with David Migadel of Innovation Science and Economic Development. We are hoping to have an in depth meeting with him soon about his departments priorities with Broadband service.

South Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership - SAAEP

Not much has been happening on this front during the month. We have been invited to participate in some potential tours in our region to raise awareness with international investors. Our partnership is also meeting on May 11 to discuss a strategy moving forward as the Provincial Government makes some future decisions on Climate Change Alberta.

Economic Summit

The Economic Summit took place recently and we had about 30 people present with participants and facilitators. There was a lot of good discussion and some great ideas for SouthGrow to incorporate into future plans. Our thanks to our sponsor RINSA and to David Hill, who gave an enlightening talk about agriculture in our region and the world and where we can play a part. David is working with both the College and the University on their agriculture programs. Some of the highlights include:

- Potential new business opportunities utilizing the strengths of the region in renewable energy, food and agricultural products like hemp and growing medical crops.
- Because there is still a gap in broadband services, SouthGrow could play a role in education and encouraging communities to share best practices. This is a provincial issue and we need to do our part to encourage buy-in by all levels of government into bridging the gap.
- Due to the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan, there will be policies coming out and SouthGrow should position the region to be investment ready for the developments that will come. There is an education piece in Renewable Energy as well to help members understand not only areas of potential investment, but areas of energy efficiency as well as understanding land use issues.
- SouthGrow is well-positioned to take advantage of many natural strengths of the region. Education and collaboration are the keys to garnering some success in alternative crops, precision agriculture, technology, and green products, just to name a few.

Some of the other comments included whether we should change up the table topics to more specific areas and utilizing the local expertise from organizations like the College to provide a more in-depth discussion.

Recognition Event

The same evening of the Summit (returning after a 5 year break) we also recognized some businesses and organizations in the region that were doing good things. We honoured 8 nominees for their contributions to our region. Innovation nominees included Vulcan Television (vTV) and the Vulcan Business Development Society. Collaboration nominees include Magrath South Alberta Education Partnership, Lethbridge Sport Council, Milo Business Centre, and Vulcan County Health and Wellness Foundation. Business nominees include Intercontinental Truck Body (ITB) from Coaldale and Sandstone Motel, Restaurant and Gas Station from Milk River. It was a great evening and members learned of some of the innovative things that are happening in our region. We are already looking forward to our next event.

Annual General Meeting

This is scheduled for May 26, 2016 starting at 5:30 pm. Member organizations receive complimentary tickets to the event. We will have a time for networking, enjoying good food from locally grown businesses, an engaging guest speaker, and our AGM. It promises to be a great event. Contact Pete Lovering to register to attend. Reminders will go out shortly but please save the date.

The AGM is also the time to decide if you would like to let your name stand as a participant on our Management Board. Meetings are usually each month. We are looking for nominations from Towns, Villages, MDs/Counties, and one at large.