



SouthGrow

Regional Initiative

Creating Opportunities...

We Are...

- City of Lethbridge
- Town of Cardston
- Town of Claresholm
- Town of Coaldale
- Town of Coalhurst
- Town of Magrath
- Town of Milk River
- Town of Picture Butte
- Town of Raymond
- Town of Taber
- Town of Vauxhall
- Town of Vulcan
- Village of Barons
- Village of Carmangay
- Village of Coutts
- Village of Champion
- Village of Milo
- Village of Nobleford
- Village of Stirling
- Village of Warner
- Cardston County
- County of Lethbridge
- MD of Taber
- Vulcan County
- County of Warner
- Blood Tribe

Strategically SouthGrow

SouthGrow Regional Initiative is about creating opportunities ... for and with the twenty-six member communities in south-central Alberta. The region includes the City of Lethbridge, a regional hub and a key centre on the north/south corridor with air, rail and highway service. In addition to three major highways (3, 4 and 5) that run through the region, the Alberta portion of the CanaMEX corridor which is a twinned highway system that starts in Mexico City and will eventually end in Anchorage, Alaska also runs through the region. Most communities are within an hour of the U.S. border and major 24 hour port of entry Sweetgrass/Coutts, allowing access to all markets. Calgary and Edmonton are 235 km and 514 km, respectively from the centre of the SouthGrow region.



The SouthGrowN Difference

The SouthGrow Region has unique characteristics that provide the people that live, work and do business in the region with many advantages. We have:

- A strong education and research cluster.
- An entrepreneurial orientation with many successful established companies.
- A varied landscape providing opportunities in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and other industries.
- A strong economic base that allows businesses, employees, residents and investors to grow and flourish in the region.
- Varied cultural assets providing a quality of life and opportunity enriched through diversity second to none.
- A young population and high quality of life creating opportunities for investors in a variety of industries.
- Trust, respect, and a spirit of collaboration and partnership amongst our members that contributes to the success and sustainability in the region.

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SouthGrowN
People, Products, Pride



SouthGrow Specifics

- Population: 136,300 in 2005 (an increase of 11.08% over 2001).
- Time Zone: Mountain Standard Time Zone
- Climate: Mild winters and warm summers, with close to 2,400 hours of sunshine per year; 140 crop days annually.
- Commercial Airport: Lethbridge County Airport
- U.S. Border Crossings: Coutts/SweetGrass (24 hour, 7-day, Commercial), Carway/Peigan, Del Bonita, Chief Mountain.
- Rail Access: Canadian Pacific Railway with main line and trackage in all four directions at Lethbridge.
- Major Highways: #'s 2, 3, 4, and 5
- Major Source of Water: Oldman River Sub Basin
- Air Quality: Air Quality Index was rated "Good" over 96% of the time (2006).
- Waste Management: Five waste management commissions/authorities in the region.
- Primary/Secondary Education: Numerous school divisions providing public, private, and separate (francophone, catholic and alternative) education.
- Post-Secondary Education: Lethbridge College and University of Lethbridge.
- Health Care: Chinook Health and Calgary Health Region oversees the health care needs of the region's residents.

Doing Business in SouthGrow

The SouthGrow Region is known for its reasonable cost of doing business. In a recent KPMG Competitive Alternatives Study of International Business Costs (2006), the City of Lethbridge was rated among the top five of 50 communities studied in Western Canada and Midwest and Pacific US and in the top ten among 97 communities studied in North America for being cost competitive. When compared to other cities in Alberta, Lethbridge consistently shows the advantages of doing business in the SouthGrow Region:



Key Industry Sectors



Agriculture

Agriculture is the main industry in southern Alberta and SouthGrow has the oldest agriculture area in the province with extensive ranching and farming activities. Some of the largest ranches in Canada are operated in the region. There are over 3,200 farms in the area, showing breadth and stability of farm production in the area. The total land assessed for irrigation is 578,705 hectares, encompassing seven of the province's thirteen irrigation districts and enabling the region to produce 224,587

acres of specialty crops and over 60 percent of the province's vegetable crops. Supported by the strong agriculture economy, SouthGrow has a large number of processing plants that distribute their value added products around the globe. This cluster is supported by a number of medium and small scale operations in the region as well.



Manufacturing

Low cost land, highly trained people, affordable operating and utility costs, good proximity to markets and many choices for plant sites in the SouthGrow Region provides many opportunities in the manufacturing sector. SouthGrow is home to many large plants thriving and producing major products such as architectural aluminum extrusions, sheet metal products, ferrous castings, waste disposal equipment, and truck box and trailer fabrication. A study conducted by KPMG in 2006 identified the

City of Lethbridge as one of the top ten competitive cities in the world out of 129 cities. This sector generates more than 1.2 billion in annual sales to the region.



Tourism

Tourism is strong in the region given the varied natural landscapes and exceptional natural attractions. The region attracts an average of 550,000 visitors annually. Seventy percent of those visitors are Albertans. In 2003, tourism generated more than \$287 million in consumer spending in the Alberta South region over a one-year period. International visitors come to view the varied landscapes, cultural assets, and warm climate. Tourism interests include farm and ranch vacations, mountains for hiking

and skiing, various lakes and reservoirs for fishing, boating and swimming. The attributes of small communities, friendly, safe, secure, high quality, clean, low-cost, easy to travel and western authentic product are all reasons people come to SouthGrow.



Alternative Energy

SouthGrow's geography, climate and research strengths are well suited to a sustainable energy economy, with municipalities already participating in various solar, wind and bio-energy initiatives. The region is home to the Climate Change Central's OnFarm Energy Audit Pilot Project that provides options to improve energy efficiency on farms, reducing costs, enhancing competitiveness and advance environmental performance through increased energy efficiency of operations. The region has also

been chosen for the location of an assembly plant building biodiesel fuel processing equipment by a European leader in alternative energy production.

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About SouthGrow Regional Initiative

Our Vision

SouthGrow is a region that is unified, prosperous and sustainable.

Our Mission

Creating Opportunities ... to accelerate and enhance quality of life, development and sustainability for the communities of the SouthGrow Region of Alberta.

Goals

- Shared Vision for Economic Development
- Create New Economic Development Opportunities
- Cooperate and Share Services
- Unified Voice on Regional Priorities

About SouthGrow Regional Initiative

SouthGrow Regional Initiative is about creating opportunities ... for and with the twenty-six member communities in south-central Alberta. SouthGrow Regional Initiative is a member-driven, non-profit regional economic development alliance in south central Alberta. Voting representatives among member communities consist of one elected and one designated community member from each municipality. Our focus is on working with member communities, industry/business, government and others to achieve common purpose of area economic development and shared services opportunities.



Core Businesses

Based on the regional economic development alliance's goals, SouthGrow Regional Initiative's core businesses are:

Strategic Collaboration

We work with member communities, industry/business, government and others to build economic development capacity by providing training, to foster a south central Alberta shared vision for regional economic development and shared services opportunities and to provide south central Alberta with a unified voice on regional economic development priorities.

Marketing and Communications

We promote SouthGrow Regional Initiative as an effective regional alliance for economic development positioning the region as an excellent place to live and do business.

Economic Development and Innovation

SouthGrow Regional Initiative works with member communities, regional businesses/industry and government to facilitate and create new and existing economic development opportunities in the region by targeting regional, provincial, national and international markets.

Contact SouthGrow Regional Initiative for detailed Site Selector/Investment Attraction information as well as key industry and opportunity profiles that showcase exciting possibilities for business in the SouthGrow region.
www.southgrow.com



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