

2	Thriving Local Food
2	Industrial Commercial Business Listing Project
3	M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport Construction
4	Business Support Partners
7	Facts and Figures



Joint Chamber Business Showcase Opportunity

After witnessing the success of the Oilmen's Room at the Bonnyville Oil & Gas Show and receiving feedback from their members and from rural businesses through the M.D.'s Business Visitation Program, the Cold Lake and Bonnyville and District Chambers of Commerce came together to create Fast Lane Connections.

To be held in June, Fast Lane Connections is reminiscent of speed dating. *The unique approach will help break conventional barriers and facilitate swift, but impactful, interactions between industry leaders and a diverse array of smaller service providers.*

Small businesses will get to showcase their capabilities, providing the opportunity to explore the potential for future project collaborations according to Bonnyville and District Chamber of Commerce executive director, Serina Parsons.

Key highlights of Fast Lane Connections include meticulously curated introductions, dynamic networking with engaging one-on-one sessions that foster genuine connections, and future contract opportunities strategically designed to serve as a catalyst for collaborations.

This event is an opportunity to showcase the region, welcome new companies to the area, and work towards continued growth and success of the region. This is an event that will bring businesses together to help increase the economic vitality of our area.

Registration will be available on the Bonnyville and Cold Lake chamber websites in the coming weeks. For further information please contact Sherri Buckle at executivedirector@coldlakechamber.ca or Serina Parsons at executivedirector@bonnyvillechamber.com.

Thriving Local Food - Connect for Food Symposium



On April 15, 2024, local food industry stakeholders will be able to participate in the Connect for Food Symposium being held at the Vermilion Regional Centre.

The event will provide a day of learning, networking, and connecting with food industry contributors.

The morning will include breakfast and keynote speakers, while the afternoon will include showcase tables and guided discussions.

Participants will gain insights on how our region can play a part in the complex food system. The aim is to engage, empower, and enable stakeholders. The symposium challenges your way of thinking and behaviours associated with the food industry.

Attending the Connect for Food Symposium will feature industry trends, explore the possibilities for participating in the food economy, create new connections, showcase regional assets, and exchange ideas.

Attendees can be part of creating the foundation for a long-term initiative that supports the development and growth of our region's food economy. To learn more about the Connect for Food Symposium contact info@connectforfood.ca.

New Initiative - Regional Industrial/Commercial Business Listing

The industrial/commercial business listing project aspires to identify and generate awareness of all private and MLS properties within the Alberta Hub region. This project will lead potential buyers and their site selector agents and chief financial officers to properties and buildings by individual community. The listing will provide in-depth information about properties such as offices, warehouses, manufacturing spaces, and utility servicing

creating a narrative to help build a business case for the property sale.

Industrial and commercial listings are a priority identified in the M.D. of Bonnyville Business and Industry Growth Strategy (BIGS).

The project is being funded through an Alberta Community Partnership grant.

The objective of the program is to improve the viability and long-term sustainability of municipalities. Key program outcomes include new or enhanced regional municipal services, improved municipal capacity to respond to priorities, and effective intermunicipal relations.

The need for an industrial/commercial business listing was identified both by individual communities and a regional competitiveness study that listed a lack of solid property listings as a barrier to business growth.

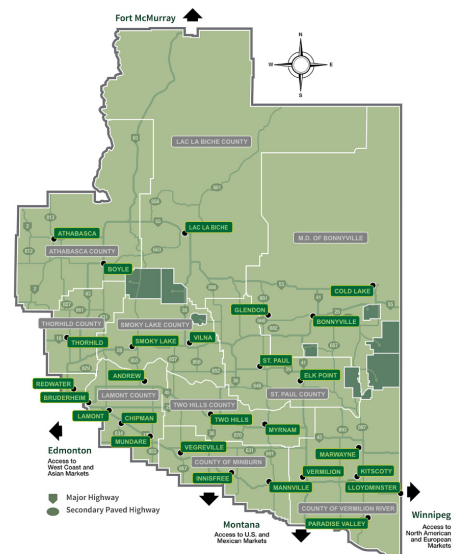
The grant was a perfect fit as the regional industrial commercial property listing brings communities together to provide a service that is needed to respond to and support economic development activities focused on community growth and long-term sustainability.

Credible industrial and commercial listings are crucial to successful relationships between the M.D. of Bonnyville and potential investors.

The project lead is the County of Vermilion River, while the Alberta Hub regional economic development agency will provide project management support. Project development will include input from a working group represented by Hub membership including a city, town, village, and rural municipality.

The ultimate goal of the project is to create a system that will identify and elevate properties and provide access to commercial listings to support sales related to opportunities for business growth.

The County of Vermilion River and Hub members have two years to complete the project.



M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport Construction

The M.D. of Bonnyville sought feedback from local industry starting in 2020 to identify and accommodate increased demand for future airport servicing.

The M.D. hopes to start construction of a new terminal building at the M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport as early as this spring.

The M.D. airport has recently seen upgrades including runway lighting for \$334,206, taxiway for \$837,352, and wildlife fencing for \$188,227.

The terminal building currently receives eight to 10 charter flights a week. The M.D. of Bonnyville Regional Airport anticipates traffic will increase as the economy grows over the next several years.

The terminal building construction Request for Proposals calls for the design build of a bright and open 2,800 sq. ft. facility which will have a comfortable atmosphere with increased seating capacity for up to 50 passengers, and a new car rental counter. Along with the construction of a new terminal building, the airport will more than double its parking capacity.



Business Support Partners

Below, you will find links to business support agencies available to local companies and descriptions of the programs and services they offer including workshops and seminars.

NEW LISTING!

PRAIRIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CANADA

Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan) is the department that diversifies the economy across the Canadian Prairies. PrairiesCan leads in building a strong, competitive Canadian economy by supporting business, innovation, and community economic development unique to Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Tourism Growth Program

The Tourism Growth Program provides \$108 million over three years to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, small and medium-sized businesses, and not-for-profit organizations in developing local tourism products and experiences. The program also complements other federal, provincial, and territorial supports for the tourism industry.

Eligible applicants include incorporated small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the tourism industry, Indigenous-owned businesses (including Indigenous sole proprietors), Indigenous tourism organizations, not-for-profit organizations (including tourism associations and organizations), post-secondary institutions, and governments (municipal/provincial/territorial and related entities).

Eligible projects should provide added value to existing activities in the tourism industry and focus on business and economic growth. Priority may be given to projects that increase tourism benefits for communities by driving visitation from urban centres to rural areas, support active outdoor experiences (projects that provide more opportunities for physically active tourism offerings such as rock climbing, running/cycling/hiking trail development, downhill/cross-country skiing, watersports, etc.), extend the tourism season (projects which promote and/or develop product, services, or experiences with an aim to increase tourism activity outside the traditional high season or to extend their services year-round), complement supports provided through provincial/territorial programs, support the Indigenous tourism industry, and support economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability.

email: wd.ab-ab.deo@prairiescan.gc.ca

COMMUNITY FUTURES LAKELAND

Community Futures Lakeland (CFL) provides training, guidance, and financial support for small business owners.

CFL offers a wide selection of business coaching and training services and has flexible business loans for small start-up businesses that need help getting their ideas off the ground.

CFL is proud to support the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program, a Local Business Beautification Loan, and the Digital Squad which assists small businesses with ecommerce.

lakeland.albertacf.com

BUSINESS LINK

Supporting Alberta small businesses for more than 25 years by offering free one-on-one business advice, market research, business plan reviews, workshops and presentations, Indigenous services, immigrant entrepreneur services, and access to free small business resource tools.

businesslink.ca

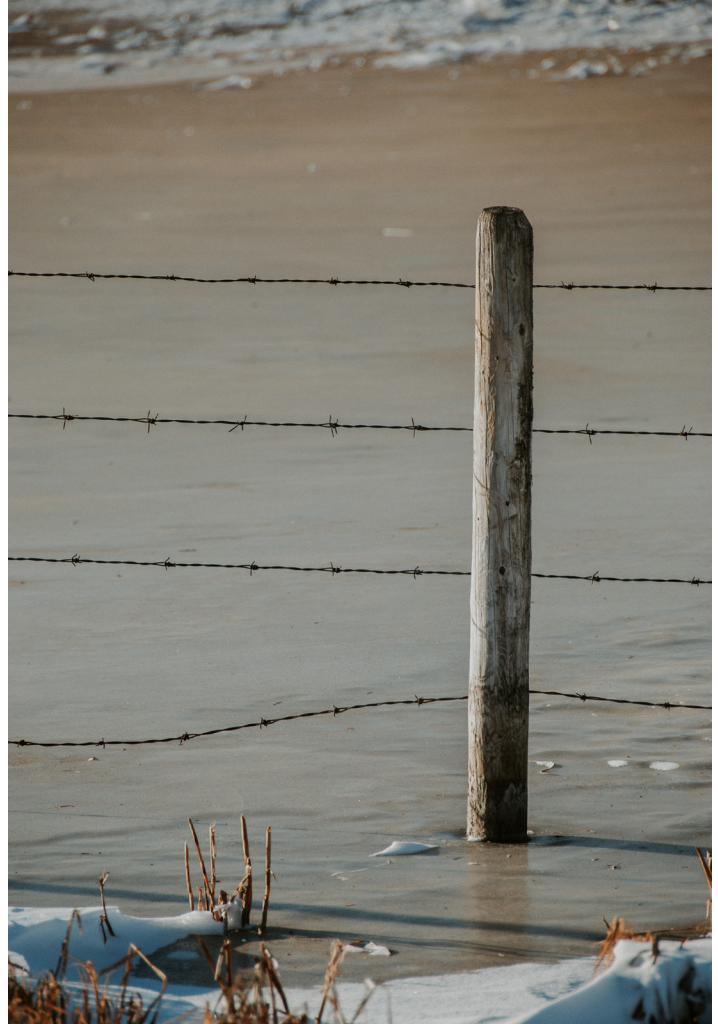
ALBERTA INNOVATES

Alberta Innovates helps Alberta entrepreneurs and industry with coaching, funding and grants, workshops and events, and programs. The focus is on applied research, Agriculture Forestry and Food, Clean Resources, Emerging Technologies, Entrepreneurial Investments, Health Innovation and Platforms and Post Secondary Investments.

Alberta Innovates has funding streams which include, Agri Food Innovation, Alberta Bio Future, and the Export Readiness Micro Voucher. Coaching is also available.

Alberta Innovates supports Regional Innovation Networks across the province. In East Central Alberta, visit Start Up Lloydminster Regional Innovation Network.

albertainnovates.ca
eastcentralrin.com



ALBERTA WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Alberta Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) builds capacity and helps entrepreneurial women build connections with other entrepreneurs and experts with seminars, events, training sessions, and conferences.

AWE has four core programs — Start Up, Bold Leadership, Business Beyond Borders, and Strengthening Partnerships.

AWE also has several loan programs including Growth Loan and Capital Growth Loan Initiative.

AWE provides free advising services to women entrepreneurs in Alberta. An AWE Business Advisor can help with your business strategy, delivery model, and how to manage cash flow.

awebusiness.com

AFSC

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) offers a variety of loans for primary agricultural producers.

AFSC finances the purchase of land and equipment, production quotas, succession planning, breeding livestock, working capital, debt reduction and more by offering long-term competitive interest rates, no annual fees, and payment schedule to fit cash flow.

The Next Generation Loan Program provides young producers a consistent fixed-rate term to establish farming operations.

The Developing Producer Loan Program provides emerging producers with a consistent fixed-rate term loan to acquire assets to expand their operations.

The Alberta Producer Loan Program provides an alternative source of fixed-rate loan terms to acquire assets needed to maintain and grow operations.

Revolving Loan Program providing easy and immediate access to working capital when required for those involved in primary agriculture.

afsc.ca

FARM CREDIT CANADA (FCC)

FCC builds strong relationships and shares knowledge and expertise with thousands of customers across the country. When you succeed, they succeed. FCC is here to support entrepreneurs and believe in the future of agriculture and food. They are a partner, a catalyst, and a champion of the industry as the only lender 100% invested in Canadian agriculture and food. They help clients dream, grow, thrive, and support the success of the industry.

FCC lends money and provides other services to agribusinesses that provide inputs or add value to agriculture. If your business is looking to grow or expand, FCC wants to help you find new opportunities through their networks and financing expertise.

They have a portfolio that tops \$44 billion, and over 100,000 customers.

FCC provides the following types of financing — real property, equipment and inventory, expansion, and construction, start-up, diversification, stretch debt and cash flow requirements, mergers and acquisitions, syndicated lending, and venture capital.

fcc-fac.ca

BONNYVILLE AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Bonnyville and District Chamber of Commerce exists to help businesses flourish in the Bonnyville region and is the voice of business in the area.

The chamber provides value to the community and membership through advocacy, support, and promotion.

bonnyvillechamber.com

COLD LAKE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Cold Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce is an advocacy agency first. The chamber works to grow relationships with all levels of government to strengthen the voice of local business owners.

The Cold Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce believes a strong local economy starts with a well-connected business community.

Members have access to exclusive workshops, webinars, programs, and seminars. Events are affordable and useful. Learn more about social media, SEO, video marketing, and countless other start-up focused topics.

The Chamber offers businesses access to Canada's number one group benefit plans for business. The Chamber of Commerce Group Insurance Plan administered through BPGS protects you and your team and gives your business a competitive edge when looking to hire the best people.

coldlakechamber.ca

FUTURPRENEUR

Futurpreneur has been fueling the entrepreneurial passions of Canada's young enterprise for over 25 years. They are the only national, non-profit organization that provides financing, mentoring, and support tools to aspiring business owners between the ages of 18 to 39.

Futurpreneur and RBC Future present Rock My Business, a free, virtual, three-part workshop series that will help you develop your idea, get started on your business plan and create a viable cashflow for your business. You could win \$10,000 to help launch your start-up! with the Futurpreneur/RBC Rock My Business Startup Awards.

Futurpreneur and SpinMaster present the Growth Accelerator, an existing opportunity for entrepreneurs in business 18 months to three and a half years to create a new updated business strategy helping pivot and grow. The workshop will culminate in a pitch competition with a cash award of \$10,000 to the entrepreneur that best articulates their vision for growth.

futurpreneur.ca

TRAVEL ALBERTA

Travel Alberta supports the tourism sector via the Travel Alberta Industry Hub, providing operators with information regarding programs and tools, training and events, visitor and marketing insights, and news and media.

The Alberta Tourism Information Service (ATIS) is a free digital marketing platform designed by Travel Alberta to help Alberta tourism businesses amplify marketing efforts. Add content to be shared across multiple marketing channels as a destination of choice for visitors around the world.

Travel Alberta's Learning Portal is a resource that connects tourism businesses with insights, expertise, and best practices such as a brand tool kit and research and business solutions to help guide marketing and business activities.

Travel Alberta supports tourism development through the Sign-Up Alberta program, the Export Ready Checklist, and the Product Development and Cooperative Investment Fund. There are three grant streams now open.

Travel Alberta supports operators by providing Visitor Profiles which identifies visitor origin, length of stay, trip purpose, accommodation, and spending in Alberta.

industry.travelalberta.com



Facts & Figures

2023 M.D. DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS

Q1	\$1,885,500
Q2	\$6,095,300
Q3	\$6,355,029
Q4	\$2,815,239
2023 Total	\$17,151,068

BUILDING PERMIT CATEGORY

Agriculture	1
Commercial	6
Industrial	6
Recreational	14
Residential	116
Institutional	1
2023 Total	144

CANADIAN SMALL BUSINESS CONFIDENCE INCREASING

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business produces a small business barometer. The monthly barometer surveys and tracks small business confidence, expectations, and operating conditions in Canada.

December 2023 results

12-month Small Business Confidence Index	47
Change + 1.6	
3-month Small Business Confidence Index	39.8
Change + 2.4	

Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador are the only provinces to see increases in long-term optimism.

For complete article, see link below.

cfib-fcei.ca



SCOTT KOVATCH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Email: skovatch@md.bonnyville.ab.ca
Website: md.bonnyville.ab.ca
Phone: 780-826-3171