



COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE No. 1

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County of Grande Prairie to Host One of a Kind Community Economic Development Conference

The County of Grande Prairie, along with its partners, the Northern Alberta Development Council, Farm Credit Canada and the Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce will host *Growing the North – A Community Economic Development Conference*, January 21 and 22, 2010 at the TEC Centre in the County of Grande Prairie, Alberta.

The conference comes as a result of northern businesses and municipalities asking for more guidance on economic development. More specifically, stakeholders want to learn about how communities relate to economic growth and how to build and sustain profitable business while keeping important community values strong.

"I encourage anyone interested in regional economic development to attend this informative conference," says County of Grande Prairie Economic Development Officer Walter Paszkowski. "In hosting this event, we hope to ignite flames that will fuel future economic growth among neighboring communities."

The conference will include several keynote speakers as well as three panel discussions on topics like innovation and local business sector updates. Grande Prairie's own, David Emerson, will speak at the evening banquet and offer insight into economic growth and trade opportunities. Other speakers will include: John Deputter, Agriculture Consultant; Mike Cory VP for Western Region, CN Rail; John Vickerman, Global Transportation; Dan Gardner, Author and Risk Evaluator; Dan Turner, Hovertrans International Inc.; Jim Dinning, Canadian Export Federation; Arlene Dickinson, Dragon's Den; Rob Merrifield, Minister of State of Transport; and Iris Evans, Minister of Finance and Enterprise. A complete agenda can be found at www.countygp.ab.ca.

"The conference will provide a great atmosphere to forge strong regional alliances that will be required to successfully overcome challenges in growing local economic development efforts," stated County of Grande Prairie Reeve Everett McDonald. "These ideas and resources can be taken back home and implemented to enhance northern communities."





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A northern economic development toolkit will be unveiled at the conference. “The economic toolkit is a web based tool that will provide users with all the basics in community economic development and allow a user friendly search tool to access other links to any topic relating to economic development,” explains Northern Alberta Development Council Executive Director Dan Dibbelt. “The toolkit will provide users the ability to educate themselves on all topics relating to economic development. Think of it as Funk and Wagnall's meets Wikipedia”

Farm Credit Canada is hosting a pre-conference bonus workshop on Wednesday, January 19 at the Grande Prairie Inn. Mark Hemmes will talk about transporting grain via rail in the Peace district and John Deputter will focus on the grain and livestock Market outlook for 2010.

Participants must pre-register for this conference and can do so by visiting www.countygp.ab.ca or by calling 780-532-9722. Early registration deadline is December 15 and is \$90 per person. Registration after December 15 is \$110 per person. For more information about this conference or to view the full agenda, please visit www.countygp.ab.ca.

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