

# Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee 2019 Update

February 11, 2020

Ken Lesniak, Chair EDTAC

Jerry Keller, Vice-Chair EDTAC (Outgoing)

Shane Olson, Acting Director/Manager, Commercial Development, Economic Development and Tourism

Stephen Rausch, Acting Industrial Manager, Economic Development and Tourism

# Agenda

1. Committee member introductions and acknowledgements
2. Economic Development & Tourism Committee Purpose and Duties
3. Mandate letter topics discussed in 2019
4. Business conditions in Alberta
5. Successes
6. Recommendations

# 2019 Committee Members

- Ken Lesniak- Chair
- Jerry Keller - Vice-Chair (outgoing)
- Todd Banks - Chamber of Commerce Representative
- Norm Greenwood
- Susan Haselgruber
- Liza Mae Nandlall (outgoing)
- Vincent O'Brien (incoming Vice-Chair)
- Dave Quest (outgoing)
- Michael Woldemichael
- Councillor Bill Tonita- Council Representative
- Councillor Robert Parks- Alternate Council Representative
- New Members 2020: Pam Cholak, Joshua Oviatt, Aaron Plawke

# EDTAC Purpose

- BYLAW 46-2015 The purpose of the Economic Development & Tourism Advisory Committee is to consider and recommend actions and propose policies that are in alignment with the:
  - A. Economy pillar of sustainability as set out in Council's Strategic Plan;
  - B. Economic Priority Areas and Strategic Goals as identified by Council from time to time;
  - C. The Economic Development & Tourism Advisory Committee shall assist Council and Administration with the implementation of the strategic objectives related to Economic Development and Tourism.

# Duties of Committee

- A. Provide strategic advice and information to Council and Administration on business and collaboration; product development; marketing and promotion; and investment attraction and development opportunities in advancing the strategic objectives of Economic Development and Tourism.
  - B. Review and provide advice on Administration's implementation of strategies related to Economic Development and Tourism.
- \* Note: The committee meets a minimum of four times per year.

# Topics discussed in 2019

The committee has discussed and/or provided advice on topics contained within the mandate letter provided by Council including:

- 1) Petrochemical Diversification Opportunities and Labour Study
- 2) Review and discuss opportunities for tourism product development including partnerships with Elk Island National Park to enhance visitation.
- 3) Presentation from several local hoteliers to discuss concerns and consider tactics to boost weekend hotel stays including sports tourism.

Discussions around the tourism strategy and implementation plan currently underway with Expedition Management Consulting.

# Topics discussed in 2019 cont...

- 4) Gap identification for future retail and other commercial opportunities as well as advising on creative solutions to fill current commercial and industrial office spaces
- 5) Trends and best practices for seminar development, business coaching, small business week and other matters related to small business growth, retention and expansion
- 6) Foreign Direct Investment including Edmonton Global and their mandate
- 7) Post secondary education and programming concepts

# Business Conditions in Alberta

- Minimum wage \$15.00 per hour
- Holiday pay schedule for workers
- Impact of carbon tax on delivery's for goods and services
- Workplace safety workplace committee's
- Impact of home delivery by Uber Eats, Skip the Dishes and others
- Retail rental rates and business tax impact
- Insurance costs for 2020 increasing
- New competition and different business models
- CFIB Business Barometer for Alberta December 38.3% Canada was 55.3%
- Some restaurant and hospitality businesses have closed in 2019:  
Wild Wings, Red Robin, Tony Roma's, Payless Shoes, Rona, Town Shoes



# Successes

- Discussions that led to greater emphasis by the County on tourism tactics, marketing and support for the hotel industry.
- You Can videography project (business success video's) to promote businesses of all sizes
- Board Members attended a variety of networking functions including Chamber of Commerce events.
- Participated at the Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) Conference in Edmonton (Sept. 2019) and members showcased the community and Alberta's Industrial Heartland
- Provided advice to start a new expanded large scale special event fund

# Recommendations

- That economic development help create an environment for the local hotels to succeed
- To support the implementation of the tourism strategy final report recommendations when they come forward later in 2020
- To fully enable and support the Red Tape Reduction Task Force and encourage a service standard to reduce the development approval process within the county
- Continue to focus on the success of the Alberta Industrial Heartland Association and Edmonton Global while working to advance our own interests in economic development
- Continue to explore post secondary education programming avenues and “plant seeds” both domestically and perhaps internationally

# Thank you