

Small Communities Newsletter

Contact

Please feel free to contact any of the following people with questions or comments about the newsletter or the Small Communities Committee.

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JEDI Shows how Partnerships can Succeed!

How can small communities effectively direct their own futures?

Attend the Small Communities Symposium at the AUMA Convention this fall to explore this topic with those who best know and appreciate the challenges—colleagues and peers from small communities!

The symposium, October 1 from 4:30 to 6 p.m., will focus on strategies to help towns, villages and summer villages not only survive but thrive through the ups and downs of Alberta's dynamic economy.

The key presentation will feature the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI), www.jedialberta.com an award-winning "one-of-a-kind" partnership of the City of Wetaskiwin, Town of Millet and County of Wetaskiwin. It will include information on how the partnership was formed, how it is funded and the issues it faced in becoming established.

"There will be a lot of real-life examples," promises presenter Richard Horncastle, JEDI's Director of Economic Development. "It should be of interest to anyone who is looking to form a regional partnership."

The presentation will include details on the innovative



approach JEDI used to establish the Railside Business Park, which recently received the 2008 Alex Metcalfe Award from Economic Developers Alberta. The park, just east of the Town of Millet, was subdivided into more than 100 lots of varying sizes. The project will create between 1,400 and 3,600 jobs and is expected to generate nearly \$4 million in industrial assessments when fully paid.

Information will be shared on the master cost- and revenue-sharing agreement that forms the basis of the JEDI partnership. "It shows how new industrial assessment is shared among the partners, and eliminates the need for annexation," says Horncastle.

The symposium will also feature an open discussion facilitated by Bruce Rowe, Chair, Small Communities Committee, where small communities will be encouraged to share ideas and solutions. "This is one of the few

times all of the small communities get together," he says. "It's an excellent opportunity to share economic development ideas, such as revenue development, shared service initiatives, and other new ideas and partnership models."

See you October 1! (Room location will be announced closer to the date.)

Message from the Chair

The Small Communities is setting a strategic focus on economic development. A key theme municipalities raised during the last Small Communities Conference, economic development covers a number of issues. Economic diversification, transportation corridors and access to programs and grants are just some of the topics the committee will cover in its ongoing work.

The Small Communities Symposium during this year's AUMA convention presents an opportunity for members to share ideas on economic development. The Symposium will kick off with municipalities sharing their success stories, followed by time for attendees to raise issues and suggest solutions. We look forward to seeing you all in October.

Bruce Rowe, Chair



Showcase Your Community: Host the Next Small Communities Conference

If you are from a community with a population of 2500 or less, you really should consider hosting the next Small Communities Conference. It will provide you with an opportunity to showcase your community, to build community spirit, and to provide an important platform for discussing the issues most relevant to small communities.

Established in 2000, the conference has fulfilled its vision as it has developed a reputation for being "the most interactive, networked conference that I have ever seen," according to Barb Sjoquist, Mayor, Village of Edgerton and founder of the conference.

Hosting the conference requires the commitment of your entire council and support of the broader community. Your planning committee establishes the theme, the format and the

agenda for the conference.

Sjoquist suggests that a good starting point is asking, "What are the issues we're dealing with... what are we struggling with? Knowing that others are facing the same challenges or have already dealt with the problem" opens the door for sharing experiences and ideas.

Though the task may seem daunting for a small municipality, support and resources are available. Past conference leaders have developed various tools to assist with the planning process, and they are available to provide guidance, sharing key learnings from past events. Alberta Community Development is also a great support to conference organizers by assisting with a number of activities including the coordination of speakers.

Looking back at the success of previous conferences, Sjoquist suggests that host communities "may choose to engage neighbouring communities. The local Chamber of Commerce, businesses, associations, organizations, service groups, schools, and parent groups can all get involved as well." This involvement "makes them look at their community in a totally different way, it opens people's eyes to see what is possible."

Previous host communities include: Edgerton, Swan Hills,

Black Diamond / Turner Valley, Legal, and Forestburg. In making the decision to host the next conference, please note that the timing of the event falls into the spring of 2009 and that your community should be able to accommodate approximately 175 delegates (within a 30 minute drive.)

If you are interested in hosting the next Small Communities Conference or if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact

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Are You Tuned In?

Events Calendar

The AUMA and other organizations host a number of conferences and events throughout the year that are of interest to small communities. To find out about events that are key to your community, [click here to visit the AUMA web site calendar](#).

Weekly Digest

Each week the AUMA and AMSC release a Digest that covers information on advocacy efforts, AMSC services and other topics of interest to municipal politicians and administrators. Make sure that you are in the know by subscribing via the AUMA web site. [Click here to subscribe](#).

