



**RED DEER & DISTRICT
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

**2020 / 2021
REPORT TO MEMBERS**

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



In my closing statement in last years CEO message I stated " ..we will win this battle and prove the harder the pain the greater the victory". Never would I have imagined the pandemic would press forward into its seventeenth month. There has been a lot of disruption, but we have also witnessed our members determination to adapt to the many roadblocks put before them.

Like our members, your Chamber felt the sting of lost revenue with the unfortunate cancellation of Agri-Trade felt not only by us but for the economic loss to Central Alberta. I am proud of our choices to remain unified and maintain our relevancy to our membership.

We learned to be creative in events, communicate extensively to business and advocate the many issues municipally and provincially. We are humbled by member renewals and their faith in what we do.

I do believe that we will rise quicker and more significantly provincially than any other province. As we strive for normalcy, we must learn from past experiences and have a clear directive for inevitable future crisis. It would appear we will have to live with COVID, so it is imperative that individuals remain responsible in their decision making.

I am excited over the momentum this Chamber has going into a new year and wish everyone a healthy prosperous business future.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



It's been my privilege to have chaired the Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce board for the past two years. The Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce has existed for over 125 years, and I have been lucky enough to serve for a small portion on behalf of this business community and continue to build upon our legacy.

I imagine this organization was created because one individual, or business operator, had an idea that no one would listen to. But, as soon as two, three, or twenty-five people believed in the idea and began to work together, they would see action. With some challenges, especially recently, we need the of others. This is why we build community.

That is where my heart lies with the purpose of the Chamber of Commerce. I am encouraged to be surrounded by this group of people to tackle our upcoming challenges.

Going forward, let us welcome new ideas, and challenge old ones. Let us check in with colleagues, friends, and family. And, let us continue to work hard and invest in Red Deer.

I want to thank the board of directors for their commitment to this organization. I trust that we will continue to sharpen our governance ability with our focus on growing a globally significant region and vibrant community.

CHAMBER TEAM



CHAMBER BY THE NUMBERS...

800

Total Members

70 New Members

87% Retention



10,605

Social Media Followers

200 Media Mentions

39 Events

950+ Attendees

86,265 Website Views

2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



JULY

Over the summer we delivered over twenty long-term certificates to 25+ members. After months of not being able to get out and see our members this was a great way to re-connect.



We were pleased to meet with Minister of Education, Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Finance and President of the Treasury Board, Travis Toews, and MLA for Red Deer South, Jason Stephan. The Chamber sat down with the MLAs to discuss the priorities and issues facing Central Alberta businesses such as crime, social issues, and other impediments to future economic growth. We also hosted our first in-person event in over five months with Minister Toews with more than 75 attendees!

The 2020 Business of the Year nominations closed with more than 70 nominations!

Policy Win

Thanks, in large part to Chamber Advocacy, Red Deer City Council reversed a decision allowing the former Deer Park Fire Hall to be converted to an insurance office. For several years, the Chamber has been encouraging Council to be more flexible and adaptable with business zoning requests. In her comments during the vote, Councillor Wyntjes said "This one's for you, Chamber." The Chamber hopes this decision sets a precedent for business positive decisions from City Hall.

MAY

With ongoing restrictions we created COVID-19 posters and social media assets members and businesses could use at their place of business.

In partnership with the Government of Alberta and Alberta Chambers of Commerce we started to offer businesses rapid testing kits for COVID-19.

We hosted Rachel Notley, Leader of the Opposition. Alberta for a virtual luncheon with 50 attendees.



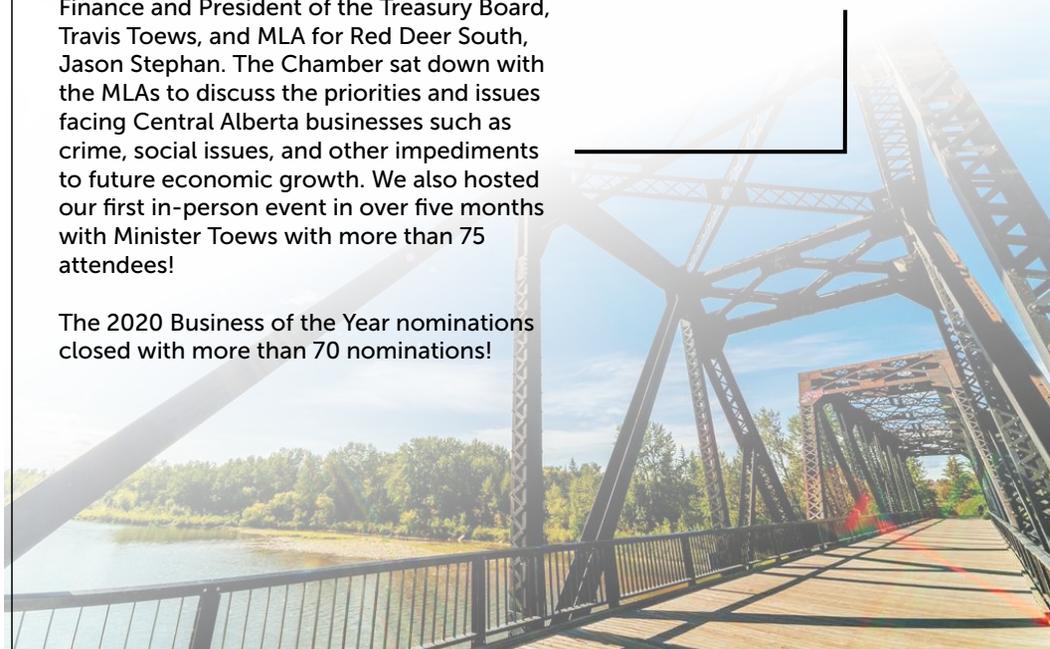
Policy Win

Representing 24,000 Alberta businesses, the Alberta Chambers of Commerce (ACC) is the largest and most influential business association in the province. The Red Deer Chamber is a major contributor to shaping the policy agenda of the ACC and this year was no different. Through the grassroots policy process, the Red Deer Chamber had five policies adopted by the ACC at the 83rd Annual General Meeting and Policy Plenary. These policies will now be advocated with the full weight and influence of the ACC on behalf of Central Alberta businesses.

AUGUST

JUNE

We hosted Mayor Tara Veer for a virtual luncheon where we were updated on the Red Deer Regional hospital expansion, the Red Deer Justice Centre construction, Westerner Park, Capstone and Michener North lands.



MARCH

More than 60 people attended our Economic Panel webinar with Angus Watt, National Bank Financial Wealth Management, Todd Hirsch, ATB Financial and Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation. We also hosted a webinar with Perrin Beatty, President and CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Our Red Deer Design contest closed and the top three designs were chosen by the public.



1st Place



2nd Place



3rd Place



SEPTEMBER

In September we hosted our first ever Chamber Chase which led 20 teams around the city to 12 participating member businesses for an Amazing Race style event. We also hosted Education Minister, Adriana LaGrange on the future of public education.

Unfortunately, due to reasons stemming from COVID-19 the 2020 Agri-Trade Expo was cancelled. Agri-Trade Equipment Expo is considered to be one of the best Farm Equipment Shows in North America and is a joint venture of the Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce and Westerner Park that provides an estimated annual economic impact of \$300 million.



APRIL

We hosted local MPs, Earl Dreeshen and Blaine Calkins along with Pierre Poillievre, Conservative Finance Shadow Minister for our Annual Coffee Break with the MPs, as well hosted Premier Jason Kenney and Prasad Panda, Minister of Infrastructure with more than 250 attendees combined.

“On a local level, we are continuing discussions with the City of Red Deer and pressing the urgency of measures they can take to alleviate the financial stress and help our local businesses.”

Rick More, CEO
Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce

Policy Win

Throughout the Spring the Chamber's advocacy was focused on supporting businesses most affected by COVID-19 restrictions. This included several letters to the Premier and Emergency Cabinet Committee advocating for a reopening plan and working with businesses and the City to simplify and expedite the patio application process.

OCTOBER

On October 21st we held our annual Business of the Year Awards in-person with more than 250 attendees, we were the only Alberta Chamber to have an in-person awards ceremony in 2020!

We also held two other in-person events, our Annual General Meeting and Business After Hours.

With rising COVID-19 cases we spoke out on our concern about a potential second lockdown and the effects on businesses.



“After what businesses have battled through, it would be like getting kicked when you are laying down.”

Rick More, CEO
Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce

NOVEMBER

Responding to a long-time recommendation of the Chamber, the City of Red Deer passed a two-year Operating Budget with a 0% tax increase for both 2021 and 2022.

We participated in the local Giving Tuesday initiative by donating needed items to local non-profits.



Undoubtedly, this move by the city will require some tough decisions to be made and we commend their willingness to undertake this task. We have been advocating this position for the past four years on behalf of our members encouraging Council to pursue efficiencies and reduce spending. We're thankful they are going in this direction and look forward to the opportunity to work with them to make this a reality.



Rick More, CEO
Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce

We launched our Red Deer Design contest looking for submissions that captured the spirit, essence and character of Red Deer with prizes totaling \$1800. The winning designs will be used on apparel that will be for sale with proceeds going back into the community.

With new health measures enacted to fight COVID-19 we spoke out to encourage shopping local and supporting our businesses.

This pandemic is the greatest challenge facing the local business community and is resulting in a distressing number of business closures, while online-based mega-businesses like Amazon are seeing record sales. We are encouraging the public to shop and order local whenever possible. If you want to find a silver lining in all this, the pandemic has truly demonstrated just how important the small business is to a vibrant and thriving community.

Rick More, CEO
Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce

DESIGN • SUBMIT • JUDGE • VOTE

Entries close on February 26th

DESIGN CONTEST

Grand Prize valued at \$1000

DECEMBER

FEBRUARY

JANUARY

In partnership with Tourism Red Deer we brought a "Bob Ross inspired" paint night to the players of Canada's World Junior selection camp then auctioned off the paintings. Bidders across North America helped us raise over \$10,000 which was giving to local organizations.

We hosted Dr. Jack Mintz for a Lunch N' Learn webinar on "Building Back & Federal Spending".



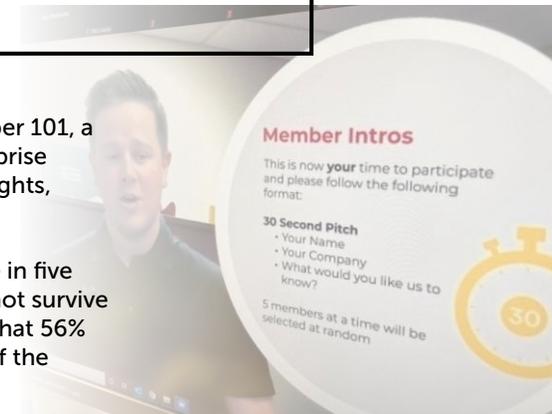
We hosted multiple virtual events, Member 101, a webinar on the Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch grant and a webinar on legal rights, accounting and taxes with COVID-19.

A survey we distributed showed that one in five businesses we worried that they would not survive with the current health restrictions and that 56% had substantially less revenue because of the restrictions.



Part of our advocacy efforts has been to ensure government truly understands the impact this crisis and the measures designed to contain it are having on small business and those they employ.

Rick More, CEO
Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce



Member Intros

This is now your time to participate and please follow the following format:

30 Second Pitch

- Your Name
- Your Company
- What would you like us to know?

5 members at a time will be selected at random

