


A photograph of the St. Elias Russo Greek Church, a white building with two prominent onion domes topped with crosses. The church is situated on a green lawn under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

What we Heard Report

Victoria District
Economic Development
Strategy

St. Elias Russo Greek Church by
Steve Ricketts

A photograph of a wood chopping event. In the foreground, a man in a green shirt and sunglasses is on the left, and a woman in a striped shirt and sunglasses is on the right, both holding axes and looking towards a large log being chopped. A third person in a red hat is visible behind the log. In the background, there are white tents and a blue sky with clouds.

**Town & County of
Smoky Lake
June 24, 2020**

Métis Crossing



• TOWN OF •

SMOKY LAKE

Public Participation Report

Over the month of June 2020, the Town and County of Smoky Lake implemented a Public Participation Plan to obtain feedback on the proposed Victoria District Economic Development Strategy.

01 **Our region already benefits from the visitor economy.**

Tourism is an Opportunity

Overwhelmingly, we heard that residents support smart and responsible tourism in our region. And, as one of the current top five economic drivers in this area, there is an opportunity to grow this sector.

02 **As a concept, the Strategy is a good move.**

The Strategy is a good start

Generally, the Strategy was well-received, and sets a positive direction for as to how the municipalities may proceed. However, if the Strategy is adopted and implemented, more details such as corporate structure, business planning, and financing, etc. is certainly required

03 **The details matter.**

Implementation will require ongoing engagement

Moving beyond this strategic concept and into implementation will require accountability, close cooperation, empowerment, and integration with community.

Any future implementation bylaws which are brought forward, will also need to be subject to meaningful public participation.

04 **Money talks.**

Concerns about Financing

Of any aspect of the Strategy, the question of how or if a Levy/Tax/License figures into the financing caused the most questions and concerns.

>83 **Unique Engagements**

This report is intended to convey the findings of the many conversations, meetings, tele-town halls, which have taken place so far, so that in addition to the Joint Virtual Public Hearing of June 26, Town and County Councils are fully informed in their consideration of the Bylaw.

Table of Engagements

GROUP	FEEDBACK
Non-Profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suggestions for strategy additions and how the trail contributes to the success of the tourism industry in our Region. - Strategy is a positive initiative for the community. - Desiring to assist with the educational/awareness components. - County/Town should be applauded for this initiative; however, they should not lose focus on other economic development opportunities. - Concerned about increased traffic along Victoria Trail. - How is "Region" defined? Would like to see more information provided regarding how the municipally controlled corporation would operate/what it would fund. - If a levy/business licence fee is instituted, who/what would it apply to? - Likes the idea of local artisans developing operations but would like to know who funds these (County or Corp?). - Would new accommodations be built or purchase of existing stock? - More detail on the risk analysis portion of the Strategy is required to better understand where the risk lies (County or Corp?). Strategy should undergo a socio-economic impact assessment (i.e. will policing/emergency services needs increase, etc.). - Suggested edits need to be made to the proposed Bylaw (i.e. typos, grammatical changes, too many pictures, too much colour). - Would like to see more of a focus on agritourism and promotion of Ukrainian culture/heritage in the Strategy. Wants to see an educational component to bring awareness to the history and heritage in the Region. Public engagement and consultation period was too short. - Objects to the title of the Strategy referencing the Victoria District as the Strategy contemplates a much larger geographical area and also objects to the comparison to Ille d'Orleans. - How does COVID affect the development and implementation of the Strategy? Concerned about the use of tax dollars being used to implement the Strategy. - Wanted to know if there were plans to develop a secondary trail system to accommodate the expected increases in various forms of transportation along the Victoria Trail. If so, would land and/or easements need to be acquired? - Asked what the specific role the municipally-controlled corporation would play. Asked how the \$90 million figure was arrived at and what the money would be spent on.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signage/interpretive plaques along the Victoria Trail is a project that the Board would be interested in spearheading. - Asked about how the Strategy would be affected by COVID (fewer people travelling right now) and whether the Strategy contemplated this challenge.
Local Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall, very positive on having a Regional plan. - Positive content we are creating with the Strategy. - Keep it simple - support the strategy but not any tax on travellers or business to fund strategy implementation or maintenance. - Interested to know more about trade opportunities. - Levy issues, support for the strategy and what it will do for Vilna including maintaining main street improvements. -
Tourism Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keen to discuss opportunities for their businesses "Tourism Works in Smoky Lake" - Positive response to the summary of the May 29th Joint Town and County Council - Excited to hear about the Strategy and offered potential support of Indigenous-run SMEs and experience development. - Travel Alberta was excited to hear about the Strategy and offered advice on who the County and Town should connect with and indicated they may be able to assist with marketing efforts. - Western Economic Diversification Canada, as well as Alberta Economic Development, Trade, and Tourism are interested in hearing about the Strategy and indicated that they may be able to support certain elements of the Strategy in the future, however, they will only provide funding assistance to specific, shovel-ready projects which need to be developed further before they would be able to get involved.
Community Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall supportive, ideas for engaging businesses and residents
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive on tourism plan and our approach. Seeking regional coordination with all our different groups. - Very interested and excited about the Strategy AND sees a need for some of the advisory services to engage to assist the County and Town in the financial due diligence and business planning.
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sent Public Engagement pamphlet to 1,100 mailing addresses - Recently moved to town; interested in investing in real estate; supportive of the Strategy in general and excited to hear more.

Metis Settlements + First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils to determine opportunities in the plan of mutual benefit.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representative from the Office of the Member of Parliament will be attending the Public Hearing
District Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many of the residents of the Victoria District are also members of the Smoky Lake County Regional Heritage Board and/or the Victoria Home Guard Historical Society, both of which have provided feedback.

Written Submissions

06/09/2020

Response to the Victoria District Economic Development Strategy

Appendix "A" to SMOKY LAKE COUNTY BYLAW 1372-20

TOWN OF SMOKY LAKE BYLAW 006-2020 (proposed)

Erya Inc. is a burgeoning development company, with a focus on creating combined commercial and residential spaces that are specific to the community. We are particularly concerned with our commercial properties in Waskatenau, as this Economic Development Strategy will have a direct impact on our plans with our current properties, as well as any others that we develop in the area.

Objectives of this plan are as follows, and are supported by Erya Inc.

1. Arrest the declining population to protect municipal core services including hospitals and schools
2. See property values gradually return to a positive-growth pattern
3. Reduce the unemployment in the area
4. Facilitate career opportunities for young people so they do not have to leave the area
5. Ensure wealth generation is shared around the region

Any reasonable resident or area business owner would wholeheartedly agree with these guiding principles.

Response:

This plan is focused heavily on attracting international and 'premium' style tourism in a new age when international travel is grounded, and even provincial tourism is likely to take several years to rebound. The future economic impacts of COVID-19 cannot be ignored, and I do not believe that such a singular focus on serving the tourism market will benefit Smoky Lake County or the communities within. I am convinced that the natural and cultural assets are an important part of what draws both residents and visitors to the area, and feel that drawing back this plan, and redirecting services, goods and marketing to appeal to local, provincial and national markets would have a greater impact, and serve to benefit the local community more effectively. Private investors in a p3 model will require that a current strategic plan include a COVID-19 response, and while it is apparent that there was much discussion and planning around the proposed ideas, it's also apparent that the discussion concluded before these new circumstances were in play and that no attention was given to the matter in the context of this strategy.

There does not seem to be much reference to staff accommodations, however the first guiding principle is to arrest declining populations... a plan as ambitious as this should also consider that hiring workers from outside the municipality will only drive revenue out of the municipal area. Serious consideration should be given to whether there is enough existing bed space to accommodate a growth in work force, not only in customer traffic. If there are not enough affordable staff accommodations, this will also drive business overhead higher, and lead to labour shortages. There must be an appropriate balance between ensuring affordable housing for workers vs. converting spaces for tourism. Smoky Lake County is relatively isolated from the larger cities, and it is less likely that workers will come from larger centres without available housing as well as community supports for workers and their families. Without healthy growth in that area, other industries cannot be sustained. I acknowledge the need to balance supply and demand, and request that this sector also be seriously considered as part of that planning process.

We are genuinely concerned with the intent to implement a 6% 'levy' on tourism related activities. There are numerous questions that this raises:

This planned surcharge would not be considered a levy but rather a sales tax in its current format.

- **How does Smoky Lake (or the Company) plan on implementing a local sales tax without collecting revenue and income tax information from either the province or the individual businesses?** This is considered private information, and it is irregular for a municipality to have access to it. There is no accommodation in the Municipal Government Act allowing municipalities to collect this information in order to implement local sales taxes, business taxes or special levies (that I am aware of.) These are all based on property values, square footage or other property-based assessment tools typically, which would be easier if all businesses in the municipality were serving a single industry and concentrated in a smaller district (such as Whistler - as per your comparable example.) As a developer, a property-based levy would induce Erya Inc. to develop so that it would not apply by ensuring that businesses on our properties would not be tourism oriented, to avoid reporting hassles and extra cost as a property owner.
- **How does this extra taxation incentivize entrepreneurs to establish tourism related businesses?** This would not be any easy sell to customers, especially since it is so irregular in the province. A large quantity of travellers use the area's highways, and this local taxation would drive that existing customer base to spend their money in neighboring municipalities, where they won't have to pay additional sales taxes on their truck-stop meal or campsite fees.
- **How will this levy be enforced, and who will enforce it?** There are also restrictions as per the FOIP Act regarding access to income tax/revenue information. Asking businesses to provide this excessive access to their private information comes with major ramifications: there will likely be numerous businesses that are unwilling to comply and would litigate the matter- a legal battle on privacy grounds would not be beneficial to the municipality or the taxpayers within.

- **How will exemptions be applied to rental tenants, temporary residents, younger family members or long-term (non-paying) guests of households?** Most of the data that municipalities work with concerns property owners, and not other types of residents such as those listed above. How will this plan ensure that all eligible members have quick, easy access to their exemptions without other tenant data? I feel that this will cause undue inconvenience for area residents, and result in higher costs for incoming temporary or seasonal workers.
- **How will participation for hotel/accommodations businesses be ensured in an era of online booking agencies, and how will reporting accuracy be ensured without accessing private information?** This is an issue province wide, and forcing providers to implement extra taxation for their accommodations (over and above the provincial 4% hotel tax) - as well as requiring additional commissions and a percentage of business revenue will only drive them further to other, cheaper booking and marketing options... which are plentiful, and harder to track and control. This extra taxation will also make it difficult for providers to compete with neighboring/competing markets, which customers can easily access (unlike Whistler.)
- **Where does the taxation end?** In the Project Brief portion of this plan, it is stated that around 50% of the SLTC investments will be made toward infrastructure – however, it is apparent in the Organisational and Investment Chart that numerous additional levies and fees are planned to raise those funds in addition to a 6% ‘Tourism Activity’ levy.
- **What infrastructure investments are planned for the funds raised specifically by a Tourism Levy?** This is not made clear in this plan; however, ‘infrastructure’ seems to be a major reason for raising this tax and should be substantiated.

Additionally, I have questions regarding the option of using private investment and a joint public/private corporation as a critical part of this plan – this is again, not a typical arrangement for municipal government. As I understand it, p3’s are used primarily for specific projects (usually infrastructure) rather than for this sort of ongoing corporate model. I have not been successful in finding any examples of any municipalities in Alberta that do so. If the municipality elects to go this route, they will be building a framework from scratch and would then assume a great deal of liability/risk – this would need to be handled very carefully to remain above reproach, avoid legal jeopardy and not put tax payers at risk.

- **How will this new corporation ensure full transparency and accountability, while continuing an ongoing business partnership with private investors?** This would be a publicly funded corporation regardless of any private investment and would be subject to that regulatory framework. Any publicly held asset is subject to public oversight, and no part of this corporation would be exempt.
- **How will FOIP access and other public rights be ensured?**

- **How will this new company ensure that there is ongoing public access, engagement and a voice on matters pertaining to economic development in the region, when the entire portfolio has moved to this new corporation?**
- **The Victoria District Economic Development Strategy is relying on an unnamed private investor – the public has the right to know and understand the entity that will control 49% of the corporation, as well as 49% of the entire economic development portfolio for the municipality. How and when will the public get this information, and will that specific aspect be subject to public input?**
- **The unnamed private investor will retain a 49% share in this corporation, while the three public entities each share 51%. This gives an effective majority to a single private entity regarding public moneys, expenditures and operations.**
- **What type of shares will these be?**
- **How much capital is this private investor putting into the corporation, and how much public funds will be invested in this scheme?**
- **What percentage of the Municipal Economic Development portfolio will be controlled by this corporation?** This is an important question to address, as there does not appear to be any other industries or markets addressed in this plan - which hinges wholly on an unreliable and severely depressed tourism industry. Are there other municipal resources being planned for or directed to non-tourism related businesses or industries?
- **What other options were presented to, researched or considered by Council?** Considering that this strategy was developed over the course of a year or more, were other fundraising or development strategies considered during this period? It concerns me that there are no other options presented – the public has been presented with this corporation/private investment as being the *only* feasible option.
- **What control/oversight will the public have over the ‘sub-companies’ within the corporation’s umbrella?**
- **What level of control will the corporation expect to have over the ‘sub-companies’ within the corporation, or in private businesses that public moneys have been invested into?**
- **How does the ‘planning system’ intend to exercise a ‘degree of control’ over the types of businesses, goods and services offered in the area? Does the corporation plan to exercise this control, or demand that the municipality do so?** This part of the strategy is not clearly defined, and aside from usual restrictions a municipality will not be able to force specific types of businesses to form or operate under such extraordinary regulations/demands. There are several neighboring municipalities that would not do so, and they would become more attractive places to operate businesses from. Further, this ‘system’ would disincentivize tourism operators, as

their businesses would be targeted for extra permitting, regulatory and financial burdens over any other types of businesses.

- **How does the municipality/corporation intend to operate a central booking agency that will be competitive with online providers, and provide value to the businesses that are forced (or strongly required) to use/pay for it?** Whistler was given as an example of how this is done... additionally, there are central booking departments for most major hotel chains. These central booking agencies are becoming less useful as online booking is streamlined. As well, customers are still able to contact the individual hotels directly- this often results in lower pricing, upgrades and special requests being met. Additionally, Air BnB continues to offer lower pricing and a wider array of options, as well as being a simple and easy platform for marketing and booking.
- **This strategy states that the 'costs to create the Corporation are borne by the Corporation', but this corporation will use a great deal of public funds according to the rest of the strategy. How will this be reconciled?**
- **What other area historic sites/monuments will be included for refurbishment, restoration or improvements as part of this plan?** Considering the emphasis on the municipality's historic assets, I am interested to know of other sites that will be protected under this strategy. The Victoria Settlement and Metis Crossing sites are certainly a jewel in the crown, but the strategy should include other assets in the plan.
- **What improvements are planned for the Smoky Lake 'Ring'?** It seems to be (mostly) existing and/or on/near existing established road networks. What is the estimated cost of this project?
- **What natural assets are being promoted, improved, protected or designated in this strategy (aside from the river?)** The strategy is correct in identifying the municipality's natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities but has not specified plans to utilize or invest in those assets. Many of these assets are already existing and providing destinations for campers and day-trippers. If there is not a comprehensive plan to address these assets, the municipality is in danger of losing their existing tourism market while reaching for a 'premier' market that does not yet exist and cannot yet be accommodated.

In summary, I believe that this plan has successfully identified many of the strengths and opportunities within the region but has neglected entire sectors in having a singular focus on travel and tourism. I feel that the planned structure of the public/private corporation could be legally tenuous, as well as would be implementing a local sales tax.

One of the additional assets that is not being considered is the 'travel' portion of the travel and tourism markets. There are several major transportation routes funneling into the district, with large volumes of traffic flowing between Fort McMurray, Lac La Biche, Lloydminster and major centres. The

region is well-located between major centres along these transportation corridors and have many potential repeat customers passing through. One weakness is the lack of 'curb appeal' along the region's provincial and secondary highways – there is very little impactful promotion or advertising of area hot spots along these routes, and very little incentive for potential area providers to switch gears and operate a tourism based business in a region where there is still considerable risk and less reward in this type of business model. A focus on attracting those types of businesses will be key.

Another significant drawback to area businesses is that there is a limited labour pool, and staff shortages are common. In many parts of the region, there is little affordable accommodations for staff, forcing businesses to hire from outside the region at a higher rate to balance staff commuting costs. This is not feasible for many small business operators. Any increase in commercial activity will need to be balanced with a corresponding increase in affordable housing.

Main Points:

- I do not support the forming of a corporation, nor do I support a public-private partnership that would entail the ongoing management of public portfolios.
- I do not support an industry specific and area-wide local sales tax.
- I support the promotion of the region's historic, natural and tangible assets.
- I support the County's eagerness to improve the local economy and provide opportunities for the region's residents.

Suggestions:

- Form an industry specific, self supporting Co-Operative with voting shares for member business operators as well as public members. This would allow all stakeholders a democratic voice, as well as allow for more public oversight where public funds are contributed. It would also allow for private investment in the Co-Operative or individual businesses, and a local industry that is operating toward a common goal. It could benefit individual business by providing group insurance coverage (accessed via a Chamber Plan or similar) and provide cost effective, effective collective marketing power for that specific market. Other incentives can be co-ordinated within the Co-Op as well: in ski towns it is customary to give front-line workers (front desk, cashiers, servers, etc.) free tours, passes, rental equipment, etc. ... this incentivizes that worker to recommend your service to their customers. Within the local market, customers will always accept a word-of-mouth recommendation over the guidebooks, and that recommendation will be more likely if the worker has experienced the goods and services. This cross-promotion is much less costly than traditional marketing tools such as magazine, internet or television advertising, and has a much higher return for participating businesses.
- Raise *project-specific* revenue/funds using p3 agreements as an addition to local improvement levies, provincial/federal grants, property tax rate hikes, and other available resources. Utilize the existing/reinstated provincial framework as a guide.

- Additional revenue could be generated from the formation of a municipal public utility company – there is a significant need for improved broadband networks, and the municipality could place themselves to meet that demand and generate revenue simultaneously. This could also be an effective use of the p3 model.
- Be proactive on requiring the province to maintain area provincial highways in order to effect safe and easy transportation on these routes – this benefits existing travel markets and is crucial to improvements in other areas of the local economy ... for example, even international travellers coming for a premium destination experience will expect to get from the airport to their hotel safely and comfortably. These routes are a major asset to the region and should be consistently maintained and under municipal review.
- Other additional revenue could be generated through effective taxation/public ownership/management of other non-tourism assets, such as aggregate operations, campgrounds, historic/sightseeing areas, recreation areas, highway accommodations, housing units, attractions and more.
- Incentivize small business start-ups in a variety of industries/markets to encourage a diverse population base, and an authentic community. This will also benefit other industries and help to provide a more diverse workforce in the region. It would also balance some of the risk of depending on a single industry/market and give added benefit to residents by allowing better access to goods and services.
- Encourage and support individual community efforts to create home-based markets using online social networking platforms, providing and improving public spaces for farmer's markets/artisanal markets, 'tool-kits' for home-based businesses to help them navigate the local market as well as local community regulations, and encouraging non-traditional business formats to thrive (such as young entrepreneurs, day-homes, home-based esthetics, artisans, home bakers/canners, direct sales, etc.)
- Encourage acreage/farm-based alternative businesses using tax incentives, effective P&D, and other regional and community-based grassroots support. -This could help business owners mitigate staffing issues, transportation/logistics and costs related to remote locations, and be an incentive for property investors/home buyers.
- Promote and encourage diverse attractions and activities – no tourism centre relies on a single or seasonal market. Get weird, crazy, artistic, musical and fun... allow and encourage vendors/operators to as well. People are looking for something 'new', and while many enjoying the traditional dogsledding and such, they would also enjoy coming for new and

different experiences... not all need to be historical or culturally based as long as there is healthy participation from those sectors as well.

- Once public health concerns abate, host large festivals and events. Every theme may not be everyone's cup of tea, but many of these festivals command audiences in the thousands who would all need to camp or stay in hotels/hostels, eat local food and partake in local attractions. Permit fees and other additional revenue could also be generated, as well as additional markets for local artisans and vendors. These one-off events would also be an excellent marketing tool for area attractions, as they will encourage return visitors and sightseers.
- Utilize online platforms more effectively for outreach, marketing and communications, and ensure that current online pages and platforms are/continue to be user-friendly and contain plentiful accurate data. Establish and moderate community social network pages to encourage local markets/commerce and engagement.
- Streamline and modernize where possible and cost-effective.
- Encourage and create a framework for (reasonable) alternative land uses using ample community engagement and participation, considering local and regional interests, and with careful consideration to the core principles of the proposed strategy – this-* would encourage private investment in the area, and cause Smoky Lake region to stand out among competing municipalities. It would also encourage diversity in commercial and residential sectors.

Kyle Schole

From: Jason Boykiw [REDACTED]
Sent: June 22, 2020 8:15 AM
To: Kyle Schole
Subject: A written submission from Home Guard Board Member Don Klem.

Hi Kyle. Here is a written submission from Don. Also where does one find the dial in numbers for the June 26 meeting?

Jason

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Noreen & Don [REDACTED]
Date: June 15, 2020 at 3:55:56 PM MDT
To: Jason Boykiw [REDACTED]
Subject: Summary

Hi Jason,

Hope the bee season is going well for you. I wasn't planning to be deeply involved with this, but did look at the documents briefly. So the following is very cursory and the comments are random. You can bring these up at the meeting if you'd like.

- We must applaud the County and Town for taking this initiative as it's been years of many attempts for economic stimuli and this holds some promise. But, we should not be distracted from other economic development opportunities, such as agri-business. Generally, the biggest challenge will be dealing with the "chicken/egg" dilemma – it takes considerable time to gain a reputation for tourism, so how much to invest before payback.
- The Trail as part of the Ring needs further consideration. Mix of regular traffic with off-highway transportation could be a challenge. The transportation part of the strategy talks about the river – is this an option to the Trail? It's been brought many times over the years that the Trail should be paved (to attract more tourism). Is this part of the infrastructure cost? Who pays?
- Is the "region" roughly defined? This could be important insofar as competing interests with other similar initiatives.
- What is the \$90 investment by the investor? A typo?
- I'm not clear on investment apportionment. The Corporation will invest 50% for infrastructure; what about the other 50% ? It states funding "attraction operators" on page 23 – is this it?
- To whom or what specifically does the levy apply?
- I'm not sure "arts and culture and food and drink" are strong strengths in the strategic analysis. We have Ukrainian and Metis culture predominantly and possibly waning (could be opportunity) and Ukrainian restaurants around Edmonton have never gained a significant market share (just my opinion).
- The idea of Artisans is great. But, they may need subsidy. Is this where the Corporation comes in? Or the County?

- Under the Accommodations discussion it states purchase of several small hotels – is this existing or building new ones?
- It's difficult to follow the Risk Assessment. After trying to understand the risks, I'm still not clear on if the County and taxpayers are on the hook. It states the Corporation will borne startup costs but yet a moderate risk to the County.
- Lastly, but not leastly, any such endeavor should undergo a socio-economic impact assessment, at least at a screening level. For example, will policing and emergency services needs increase? I'm sure there are other spinoff issues.

Thanks and good luck,
Don

June 21, 2020

Mayor and Town Council
Town of Smoky Lake
56 Wheatland Avenue, Smoky Lake
Alberta, T0A 3C0

RE: Victoria District Economic Development Plan Strategy – Your Local Tourism Conversation

Esteemed Council Members;

I was excited to learn about the work being done to further understand the importance and impact of tourism on your local community being completed. Tourism is an important industry for Alberta's future – and Smoky Lake can be an important player.

As a marketing and communications agency owner I am someone that is directly affected by a thriving tourism economy – though you would not immediately associate me with the tourism industry. My colleagues and I are not ticket-takers or groundskeepers, we do not own a tourism destination or provide accommodations, but we assist these businesses in getting the word out, providing strategic support, and building out innovative and dynamic campaigns to ensure tourism operators – and those ticket-takers – are busy.

As you move towards pursuing tourism planning in Smoky Lake and the Victoria District think about the spin off and the ripple effect of tourism. So many people benefit; your local tourism destinations and accommodators – but also your gas stations, your retailers, your courier, your event planners, your restaurants, your farmers, and your vendors at the farmers market ... the list goes on. A thriving tourism economy ensures more jobs in your region which gives opportunities to your current population to be successful and to make long term plans to stay and build a life in the region. Tourism gives those families options for careers and gives their children potential jobs as they grow up.


Travel Alberta has reported year after year that the full impact of the visitor economy is felt when the multiplier effect of tourist spending ripples throughout the whole economy. Investing in tourism supports job creation, infrastructure upgrades (and development), and plays a huge role in community building. When you support the tourism industry it ensures the community continues to benefit from a vibrant visitor economy well into the future.

Travel Alberta provides an [interesting summary](#) of statistics around the visitor economy; surprisingly the visitor economy in Alberta is largely based on attracting other Canadians to our destinations – “Canadians are Alberta's biggest fans”. Smoky Lake can provide a true Albertan experience and be an added destination on itineraries for those visiting Alberta.

CIPR Communications Inc.
8339 33 Avenue NW, Calgary, Alberta, T3B 1L5
Strategy-First – Marketing and Communications Solutions

The impact that tourism has in your region is already evident. Working towards a tourism plan, and dedicating resources towards telling your tourism story ensures Smoky Lake can thrive well into the future – not only because of the tourism destinations but because of the visitor economy’s ripple effects.

Sincerely,



Christina Pilarski
CEO, CIPR Communications
Agency on record for Métis Crossing



3 Deer by Bruce T. Smith



Farmstead by Bill Trout