

North America's Energy & Agricultural Heartland: Rural Revival for the Next Generation

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History of Western Development

Early Initiatives

- ❖ Railways opened Canadian west (U.S. threat)
- ❖ Tourism – railways & Rockies
- ❖ Rural beginnings - rich agricultural resource
- ❖ European base populate prairies
- ❖ Province in 1905 – full provincial rights
1930
- ❖ Distances from Ottawa & Toronto
- ❖ Railway subsidies – economic consequences



- ❖ Oil in 1920's – southern AB

2. Becoming Alberta 30's – 60's

- ❖ **Agriculture services**
- ❖ **Relationship south begins to develop ...**
- ❖ **Leduc # 1, 1947 – big changes begin**
- ❖ **Rural support for the oil & gas sector**
- ❖ **Expansion of conventional industry**
- ❖ **Ancillary business services & opportunities**
- ❖ **Entrepreneurial**



3. "Economic (?) Development"

- ❖ 1970's - new government strong rural base
- ❖ Oil & gas era – dramatic expansion:
 - ❖ royalties, R & D, rural focus
- ❖ Decentralized services in Gov't
- ❖ Defining economic development
- ❖ Emphasis on infrastructure – give business what it needs to be successful
 - ❖ Quality of life - local needs & services
 - ❖ *Hospitals, recreation facilities, schools, highways, accessibility, parks etc.*
- ❖ Support - local business development, community development

4. Last 2 decades - “Business Development”

- ❖ In Canada – Government responsibility / lead
- ❖ Market-based market responsive & apolitical
- ❖ Regional outlook – less community-based
- ❖ ‘Fanatical’ opposition to incentives - good
- ❖ Cooperation & alliances - globalization
- ❖ Facilitated vs. structured
- ❖ Government-led business input & policy advice
- ❖ Increasingly difficult for rural development focus on R&D, advanced tech...

5. Next steps

- ❖ Regional
- ❖ Local visioning, action & resources
- ❖ Strategies
- ❖ Labour issues – it's not about creating jobs!
 - ❖ attraction, retention & training
- ❖ Planning – Land use framework (?)
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ New infrastructure - education
- ❖ Less government (?)
- ❖ Strategic investments

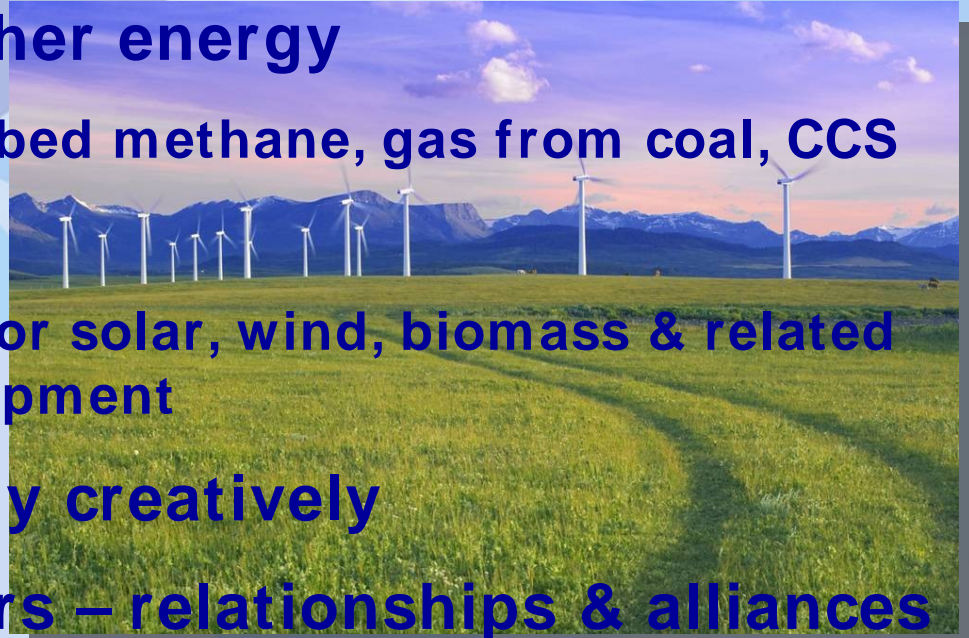


Strategy - Government - today

- **Creating a strong voice for rural Alberta**
- **Promoting economic development in rural communities**
- **Building community capacity – *key area***
- **Improving access to health care**
- **Expanding learning & skill development**
- **Sustaining and enhancing the quality of rural**
- **Opportunities for rural youth**
- **Rural economies currently strong in much of AB; there's business to do!**

Opportunity

1. **Alternative & other energy**
 - i. shale gas, coal bed methane, gas from coal, CCS
 - ii. environment
 - iii. AB conditions for solar, wind, biomass & related business development
2. **Using technology creatively**
3. **Removing borders – relationships & alliances of SME's**
4. **Agriculture – value-added smaller, locally owned**
5. **Defense – Big 3, U.V.S.**
6. **Infrastructure – community leadership (trans.)**



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