



REGIONAL ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



# 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

*Defining the Regina region's economy*

## **Regina Regional Economic Development Authority's (RREDA) Mandate**

*RREDA has a mandate to encourage economic growth and diversification, to bring together business ideas and opportunities, and to promote a positive image of Regina as an attractive place to live, to work and to do business.*

*The Authority actively promotes economic initiatives to help create investment opportunities and employment in Regina. This is done by retaining and promoting growth of existing businesses, and encouraging new companies to start up or become resident here. In doing so, it also recognizes the significance of the regional economy and the policies and activities within that economy that may have an impact on Regina. The Authority also works to promote ways to improve innovation, productivity, and economic capacity within the region.*

*In fulfilling this mandate, the Authority: develops, maintains and implements an economic development strategy for the Regina Region; provides market information for business, industry and investors; undertakes research; provides site location assistance; participates in trade missions; liaises with federal and provincial economic development and trade offices; and liaises with local municipal departments affecting business.*

## ABOUT RREDA

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of RREDA within this context is to conduct strategic economic development in the Regina region.

### **VISION**

The Regina region is a competitive and business friendly environment rich in opportunities for business, personal, family and economic growth. Successful businesses operating on the leading edge at world-class levels abound, creating new sustainable jobs that contribute to the enhancement of a quality of life its residents cherish and others envy.

### **MISSION**

To grow and maintain our economy through cooperation and collaboration, building on strengths, resources and talents of partners and communities. We accomplish this by:

- Energizing the community with positive attitude
- Building on effective partnerships with business, education, and government
- Developing an innovation network that transfers and integrates knowledge, business opportunities, research, and new technologies with industry, business, and entrepreneurs
- Strategically promoting the Regina region as an attractive place to live, learn, work, do business, and visit

### **VALUES**

#### *We believe...*

- Partnerships and linkages between stakeholders will allow us to achieve better results than we can on our own. We seek out and incorporate partnerships into our activities whenever feasible.

#### *We will...*

- Be responsive to our stakeholders and results driven in our efforts to serve them
- Take a holistic approach to economic development, by considering the implications of our actions on all stakeholders
- Embrace the concept of a representative workforce and incorporate this into all of our activities
- Take an abundance approach to economic development. We believe that growth of our economy is not just possible, but mandatory
- Behave in a non-partisan manner in all our activities
- Create and promote a "Can Do" attitude around promotion and communication of economic growth and wealth creation

## YEAR IN REVIEW

### 2007 KEY PRIORITY AREAS

1. Ensuring the abundance of talent in the Regina region
2. Energy and environmental sustainability
3. Aboriginal participation in the economy
4. Increased goods production
5. Partnering business and government to grow the economy

### 2007 OBJECTIVES

As a result of community consultation and research, RREDA developed a strategy for our economy to become:

- Competitive in attracting and building talent to invest and locate in the Regina region
- Adept at earning income from implementing and commercializing sustainable technology
- Effective at ensuring the economic participation of all peoples
- Highly productive and innovative in goods production and value added processing
- Successful at partnering business and government towards economic growth

### 2007 STRATEGIC CHOICES

To ensure careful focus and successful execution, RREDA managed its activities as projects and initiatives.

In 2007, the innovative ventures that we pursued are outlined in the seven strategies below:

- Establish new ventures based on sustainable technologies
- Develop transport infrastructure that supports export growth
- Promote and support the development of entrepreneurialism
- Increased Aboriginal participation
- Capture Investors
- Engage public sectors
- Community opportunity and success

RREDA achieved success by working towards the development and implementation for many of the above strategies with multiple initiatives. The progress of these initiatives is outlined in the Economic Highlights section.

### *Economic Measures*

- Real GDP growth of 3.8%\*
- Consumer spending remains strong - retail sales grew by 7.4%\*
- A stable goods sector growth of 4.5%\*
- Personal income per capita rose by 3.6%\*
- Unemployment rate was 5.0%
- Population up by 1.3%
- Housing starts up 41.8%

#### **All-time high!**

- 3,935 homes sold (MLS listings) with an all-time average housing price of \$165,725 (up 25.7% over 2006)
- Total value for residential and commercial construction was \$338M (surpassing last year's record of \$277M)

\*Source: Conference Board's Metropolitan Outlook Winter 2008 Report

## ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

### 2007 ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS (AIDED BY RREDA)

The following highlights reflect the strategies, initiatives and the activities that have contributed to RREDA's success in 2007. In many cases, they also provide the groundwork for ongoing and future efforts.

#### **Strategy: Establish new ventures based on sustainable technologies**

- TransCanada Energy's multi-billion dollar polygeneration plant moved one step closer to construction with the announcement of up to \$26M in provincial pre-feasibility funding.
- RREDA provided strategic support to a local development company in planning an advanced green subdivision on Last Mountain Lake. This included a joint application to Communities of Tomorrow for marketing studies which confirmed that the opportunity for success in sustainable or green subdivisions has increased markedly.
- RREDA has been working with City officials to develop an effluent irrigation project as an alternative to a conventional system upgrade. The current focus of this work is on effluent irrigation in Regina's southeast without requiring a major sewage pipeline around the south and west of the City. Land can be found east of Regina suitable for irrigation and some nearby community sewage challenges might be incorporated in time within such a system's expansion.
- With Communities of Tomorrow, RREDA led the development of a joint initiative between the cities of Saskatoon and Regina and Saskatchewan Highways to establish a multi-year development and innovation strategy for six projects focused on leading "road science". This is currently the only joint provincial/local infrastructure road science collaboration in Canada. The Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina are expected to become active members of this collaborative in 2008.

#### **Strategy: Develop transport infrastructure that supports export growth**

- RREDA continued to plan for development of a new multimodal container facility. A research report was completed examining factors for multimodal park success based on nine North American cases. In December CPRail and the Federal government jointly announced their commitments to implement the multimodal park. The Province and City governments are actively finalizing their plans for announcement in early 2008.

#### **Strategy: Promote and support the development of entrepreneurialism**

- After several years of planning and development, Saskatchewan's first innovation centre, SpringBoard West Innovations Inc., was launched in July of 2007. The centre, located at Regina Research Park is now actively assisting clients with the development and commercialization of new technologies.
- The Second Annual Progress2Capital Business Planning Competition took place between January and June 2007. The competition continued to support the goals of promoting entrepreneurialism and increasing the number of successful start-ups within the region. The winning business in 2007 has already received significant local investor capital and is now up and running. Other prize winning competitors are off to early start-up success.
- RREDA continued its work to support the development of SAINT as it mobilizes angel capital in the Regina region.

#### **Strategy: Increased Aboriginal participation**

- RREDA continued work with the Treaty 4 First Nations through the RREDA - Treaty 4 Task Force. The focus of the work is on the creation of jobs, promotion of entrepreneurship and investment in the economy by and for aboriginal people.

## ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

### Strategy: Capture investors

- The RREDA Economic Development Incentive Program was introduced in 2006. Compliance was successfully monitored by RREDA along with the City of Regina Assessment Office and a formal set of compliance guidelines were created. RREDA continues to look for new applications to bring forward.

### Strategy: Engage public sectors

- The Federal Government announced in their 2007 budget the allocation of \$10 million for the relocation of the Canadian Police Research Centre (CPRC) to Regina. The RREDA led CPRC Team Regina continued its work connecting the CPRC with stakeholders and created a community plan for the CPRC to show how they can quickly get established in Regina.
- RREDA worked with our twin city of Jinan, China to negotiate a MOU regarding the establishment of reciprocal business development offices in each city. A business plan was developed for the office in Jinan, and while funding for 50% was approved by the City, RREDA is still seeking funding for the balance of the costs of the office.

### Strategy: Community opportunity and success

- Two very successful events took place in February and September 2007 in Regina, with Linda Duxbury speaking to over 150 and 1,200 people respectively, over the course of the two events. Duxbury spoke on the topic of the importance of attraction and retention of workforce talent.
- A series of articles on 'building talent' were commissioned by RREDA and published in the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce ChamberLink magazine.
- *Think Regina* took place in Calgary in May 2007 and was deemed a huge success. Over 40 businesses and organizations traveled for the one-day mission to recruit talent and business investment opportunities. From that event, over 20 families were successfully recruited from Calgary to Regina.
- The community "hub" website [www.thinkregina.com](http://www.thinkregina.com) was officially launched along with the *Think Regina* initiative. Management of this site has since been turned over to Tourism Regina.
- The Future Leaders Group (FLG) played a major role in the 2007 *Think Regina* event and are fully engaged in planning for the next *Think Regina* event which will be held in Edmonton on April 23, 2008.
- Regular presentations have been conducted (two per month) to approximately 300 immigrants. A majority of the immigrants coming under the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP) are Chinese or Korean, although 2007 saw increased interest from all over the world including Iran, Pakistan, India, and the UK to name just a few. Most of these foreign citizens were focused on small business opportunities.
- In April of 2007, RREDA sponsored the Economic Outlook Forum which invited the Conference Board's Mario Lefebvre to speak on the metropolitan outlook for Regina. At the time, the Conference Board was predicting 2.1% GDP growth for 2007. The Regina metropolitan area dramatically exceeded this projection with a GDP growth rate of 3.8%.

## 2008 KEY STRATEGIES

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1. Increase start-ups by supporting firms crossing the commercialization gap, including technology firms, and especially young and aboriginal firms
2. Improve regional logistics through expanded container system infrastructure, development of industry vision, and attraction of distribution/assembly centres
3. Increase strategic investment by responding to prospective investors, administering the property tax exemption program, and attracting distribution and assembly investments
4. Attract and retain talent by enticing people and businesses to relocate, live or invest in the Regina region
5. Develop environment and energy sector by promoting opportunities, supporting proponents, and facilitating collaboration

Under each strategy are multiple projects or initiatives. It should be noted that each project or initiative often supports more than one of the five main strategic choices. Many of the strategies from 2007 will be carried forward into 2008 as further work is necessary in order to implement them.



## 2007 REGINA REGION ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

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#### New Construction

Regina had a stellar year in construction activity. The value of building permits in 2007 came in at \$337.7 million and was an increase of 21.9% over the previous year. Both residential and commercial/industrial construction had excellent increases from 2006.

- Residential Construction: \$145.5 million, up 22.8% from 2006
- Commercial and Industrial Construction: \$191.9 million, up 21.8% from 2006
  - Of note, the commercial increases were fuelled by the \$53.8 million investment in Innovation Place Regina resulting from the construction of new buildings at #2 & #5 Research Drive.
  - Also, work began on Broad Street Crossing on the site of the old Army & Navy building and will open in 2008, housing the world's largest Tim Hortons.

#### New Investment Announcements

Regina's economy was hot in 2007 and will continue to perform well in 2008. This is, in part, driven by ongoing construction and development of a number of major projects announced in 2007 for the Regina region.

- Consumers Cooperative Refineries Ltd. (\$1.9 billion)
- Harbour Landing (\$1 billion)
- Ipsco Place (\$172 million additions and upgrades)
- Ipsco (\$61 million)
- Multimodal Facility (\$27 million – Federal Government)
- Polygeneration (\$26 million – Province of Saskatchewan)
- Former Superstore Site (\$20 million redevelopment)
- Canadian Police Research Centre (\$10 million – Federal Government)
- Kohl & Frisch (\$2.5 million)

#### Community Development

Investment in the community – not just in a strict capital sense – also propels economic development. The creation of new events and institutions which contribute to the social value of the city help make Regina a 'Community of Choice.' Several major announcements occurred in 2007 that will contribute to the growth of Regina as both a commerce hub in Western Canada as well as a cultural and socially-relevant city.

- The RCMP Heritage Centre opened its doors.
- Springboard West Innovations Inc., also opened and began accepting clients.
- The Second Annual Progress2Capital Business Planning Competition took place and contributed to the growth of entrepreneurship in the Regina region.
- The Canadian National Arabian and Half-Arabian Championship Horse Show (The Royal Red) renewed its agreement to hold the show in Regina for another five years.
- The Canadian Country Music Awards and the Gemini Awards were held in Regina in 2007.
- It was announced in 2007 that the 2008 Canadian Comedy Festival and Awards will be held in Regina.

*Source: City of Regina 2007 Highlights & RREDA Research*

## 2007 RREDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

### 2007 RREDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Complete 2007 financial statements are provided in a separate document.**

**We welcome any questions or information  
requests you may have - please direct them to...**

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