

Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce Media Release
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Rural Community Growth Focus of Provincial Chamber's Newest Initiative

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, the "Voice of Business in Saskatchewan", is pleased to announce the release of its *Community Growth Tool Kit*. The Tool Kit will help Saskatchewan's smaller communities benefit from the province's increasing population by enhancing their planning and development processes.

The Tool Kit, which utilized the expertise of the Chamber's Growth Strategy Task Force and the University of Regina, was developed to support the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce's "*Sustainable Growth Strategy for a New Saskatchewan*". The Growth Strategy has projected that by 2030 Saskatchewan should have 32 communities with a population over 2500. This means thirteen of Saskatchewan's smaller communities need to make a significant population leap.

Communities with a population over 2500 are hubs of activity in rural Saskatchewan where the population becomes its own economic driver. Centers with this population base are also a more attractive place to establish businesses.

"The purpose of the tool kit is simple; to help communities determine the right questions to ask themselves and their neighbors to plan for the strategic and sustainable growth of their community," said Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO Steve McLellan. "This tool kit is easy to use and provides processes that, when completed will result in a Growth Plan for the community."

"At first glance the Growth Strategy target may seem ambitious, particularly if you compare it to the historical trend where no communities have made the leap from under 2500 to over in four years," continued McLellan. "However, Saskatchewan has a growing population and we believe that with a bit of planning, communities from outside of our major centers can benefit from new people and opportunities as well."

The Saskatchewan Chamber has utilized the power of the chamber network to spread the Tool Kit across Saskatchewan. Thus far approximately 80 local chambers, in communities of varying size, have received the Tool Kit.

"Ideally we would like to see local chambers working with municipal governments and enterprise regions to create a growth plan for their community," concluded McLellan. "New people and new jobs benefit us all, but everyone has to be onside to get them there."

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of our members from throughout the province by advocating for expanded opportunities and regulatory simplification. The Chamber launched a Growth Strategy in October of 2007 to encourage and help facilitate strategic growth, it can be found at www.saskchamber.com.

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