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## Initiative banks on cooperation

### Funds are forthcoming for regional partnership

Anne Beaty  
Echo Editor

**Airdrie Echo** — Initiated five years ago as a collaborative effort of 15 municipalities in the region, the Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) officially received the province's stamp of approval last week.

At the official launch of the partnership in Okotoks Friday, Alberta Municipal Affairs Minister Guy Boutilier presented the CRP with a cheque for nearly \$700,000 – money which will be used to continue the development of intermunicipal projects in the region.

"It is becoming increasingly important for municipalities to coordinate their operations in order to operate effectively and efficiently," Boutilier said in a news release. "This regional partnership will help municipalities find new and innovative ways to provide services that meet the needs of their residents." Over the past five years, the CRP has been doing just that. One of the initial projects has been the creation of a regional mapping system, said Linda Bruce, Airdrie alderman and CRP vice-chairman.

"That's primarily for emergency services, so that we can go back and forth into each others' areas," Bruce said, adding that the project includes all roads and addresses in the region.

As well, the CRP has been working on a watershed information map system, a project which focuses on "quantity, not quality," Bruce said.

Another project for the partnership involves waste management studies, an exercise which has proved enlightening.

"When we did that, we found huge data gaps," Bruce said. "The municipalities don't record that information in the same way."

Looking ahead, the partnership members are eager to continue their work and the government funding is just the ticket.

"These funds will help advance many important projects that support our goals of prosperity, environmental sustainability and municipal services," said CRP chairman and Okotoks Mayor Bill McAlpine.

As for Bruce, who has watched the partnership evolve from the beginning, Friday's event was just icing on the cake.

"It was kind of cool," she said. "You could feel the excitement."

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