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Regional Partnership kicks off with bang Province forks over \$700,00 to kickstart initiative

Darryl Mills

Calgary Country — After months of planning and discussions, the Calgary Regional Partnership became a formal entity May 14 in Okotoks. And, with an implementation grant of \$699,250 from the Government of Alberta, the entity that is using “thinking regionally...acting locally” got the running start they were looking for.

Fifteen municipalities located in and around Calgary officially joined forces to create a body that is expected to help foster an attitude of cooperation across the region, and be a shot in the arm for economic development initiatives. Mayor of Okotoks Bill McAlpine is chair of the newly-founded organization, and he compared the founding meeting to a wedding.

“We are making a formal, public declaration of our commitment to the Partnership.”

A highlight of the day was approval of a three-year business plan that keyed on municipal services, sustainable environment, and prosperity as areas of emphasis.

But, the big news was the big cheque from Alberta Municipal Affairs. Minister of Municipal Affairs Guy Boutilier has been a supporter of efforts to incorporate regional ideals throughout the province, and it is no different here. “It is becoming increasingly important for municipalities to coordiante their operations in order to oper ate effectively and efficiently,” he said. “This regional partnership will help municipalities find new and innovative ways to provide services that meet the needs of their residents.”

The 15 municipalities that make up the Calgary Regional Partnership are:

- Airdrie
- Black Diamond
- Canmore
- Calgary
- Chestermere
- Cochrane
- High River
- Okotoks
- Redwood Meadows
- Turner Valley
- Strathmore
- M.D. of Rocky View
- M.D. of Big Horn
- M.D. of Foothills
- Tsuu T'ina Nation

* - It is expected that more municipalities will join in the next couple of years.

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