

ALBERTA PLANNING EXCHANGE

The
Newsletter of the Community Planning Association of Alberta

March 2003

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The Community Planning Association of Alberta CHAIR'S REPORT

The Alberta Annual Planning Conference 2003 is quickly approaching and we hope you have registered, or are planning to register, for this exciting event.

This year's Conference has been put together under the excellent leadership of Conference Chair Armin Preiksaitis. Armin has been able to confirm a number of very good speakers that will address a wide variety of topics related to the Conference theme: *Sustainability... Planning For The Next Generation*. It is interesting to note that this year's Conference will include speakers from British Columbia, Newfoundland & Labrador and Ontario. If you have not done so already, please take the time to register for the Conference.

Coupled with the Conference, is the annual Education Session. Gloria Wilkinson and Don Schultz have been working hard on the organization of this popular session. This year, the Education Session will look at planning education in your community. Participants will gain insight into the importance of planning education - who needs it and how is it effectively undertaken. We encourage you to register for the Education Session and take part in this interactive "Partners In Planning" workshop.

The Association's Board of Directors met with the University of Calgary's Environmental Design Program students. It was a productive meeting in many ways. The student turnout was very good. They had many interesting questions about the organization, community planning and related topics. Director Allison Kolody and Student Director Lisa Kahn did a first class job of organizing the event.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the passing of a planning colleague and friend. George duCloux passed away after a valiant fight with cancer. George was the Association's Vice-President: North and a member of its Board of Directors for many years. He was a strong supporter of the need for community planning and for an organization like the Association. George brought many excellent qualities to his work as an Association Director, including a wealth of expertise, good insight and, most of all, a wonderful sense of humour. George will be dearly missed by family, friends and his fellow Association Directors.

Tom Baldwin,
Chair,
Community Planning Association of Alberta

**ALBERTA ANNUAL PLANNING
CONFERENCE
Year 2003**

**April 7 to 9, 2003
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta**

**ALBERTA TO HOST
NATIONAL PLANNERS' CONFERENCE**

The Alberta Association, Canadian Institute of Planners will be hosting the Canadian Institute of Planners National Conference in the Year 2005. The event will be held from July 17-20, 2005 in the City of Calgary. Richard Parker and Gary Klassen, both with the City of Calgary, are the Co-Chairs of the Conference.

**CANADIAN INSTITUTE
OF PLANNERS - 2003
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

“Building Communities” will be the theme for the 2003 edition of the Canadian Institute of Planners’ Annual Conference. The Conference will be held from July 6-9, 2003 in Halifax. The Conference sub-themes will include building capacity, building connections, building infrastructure and building character. The keynote speaker will be Judith Maxwell, the President and Founder of Canadian Policy Research Networks, an organization whose mission is to create knowledge and lead public debate in order to help make Canada a more just, prosperous and caring society.

**MACKENZIE MUNICIPAL SERVICE AGENCY -
20 YEARS OLD!!**

The Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency will be celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year. The Agency is the successor organization to the Mackenzie Regional Planning Commission. The organization was formed in 1983 as a result of the splitting of the Peace River Regional Planning Commission into the Mackenzie and South Peace Regional Planning Commissions.

The Agency’s current Chair is Veronica Bliska, a Councillor with the Municipal District of Peace No. 135 and a strong supporter of the Community Planning Association of Alberta. Dr. Sam Afolayan is the current Executive Director of the Agency. Karen Diebert (Paul) is the Agency’s longest serving employee having joined the Commission in 1983 after Gerald Thomas had been hired as its Executive Director. The Agency continues to be a strong presence in the Mackenzie Region, having built an excellent reputation over the years.

Plans are underway to celebrate this special occasion. Details of the celebrations will be announced in the near future.

CHALLENGE NORTH 2003 CONFERENCE

The Northern Alberta Development Council will be holding its major *Challenge North 2003 Conference* from April 9-11, 2003 in Fort McMurray. This Conference is held once every three years by the Council for the purpose of addressing northern development opportunities, issues and challenges.

The Conference will feature a number of excellent speakers who

will address subjects that will be of interest to anyone involved in the development of the North. In fact, this is a Conference that should be attended by those living in the central and southern parts of the Province and country due to the importance of northern development. Guest speakers will include: the Honourable Joe Handley, Minister of Finance, Government of the Northwest Territories; Priscilla Wohl, Executive Director, The Northern

Forum; Mayor Bill Smith of the City of Edmonton; Eric Newell, President and Chief Executive Officer, Syncrude Canada; and Audrey Poitras, President, Metis Nation of Alberta.

You can register to attend this exciting event by contacting the Northern Alberta Development Council at 780-624-6274. You can use the Government Rite-Line (310-0000) to contact the Council. Plan to attend and take part in the

MEET THE NORTH - MAKIN' IT WORK CONFERENCE

The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and the City of Edmonton will be hosting its third *Meet The North Conference* on May 12-14, 2003. The theme of the Conference is a timely and relevant one: Best Practices for Business Success in the North. The presentations will address subjects such as:

- , northern workforce practices - educating, attracting, developing and retaining employees in the North;
- , regionaleconomicdevelopment;
- , planning and developing infrastructure; and
- , building strong and effective relationships with northern Aboriginal communities.

There will also be a *Northern Investment Symposium* that will showcase numerous pre-qualified northern projects looking for investment capital. The Symposium will bring together project proponents with possible investors - an exciting opportunity for northern regions.

Information regarding the *Meet The North 2003 Conference* can be obtained by contacting the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce at 780-426-4620.

MANITOBA SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

The Government of Manitoba's Throne Speech made a number of references to community planning related subjects. These included the following:

- T The revitalization of commercial centres like the Keystone Centre redevelopment in the City of Brandon and the new college centre in the City of Winnipeg;
- T The renewal of central neighbourhoods, including provincial support for home building and renovation of homes;

T The diversification of the rural economy and ensuring a sustainable quality of life for rural residents;

T The provision of clarity in land use planning - both for local communities and investors. The use of a community-based approach to land use decision-making; and

T Improvements to provincial land use designations based on improved resource mapping.

These were a few of the planning-related references in the Government of Manitoba's Speech From The Throne.

DON'T MISS THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL PLANNING CONFERENCE REGISTER NOW!!

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF
ALBERTA
2003 ANNUAL PLANNING
CONFERENCE

Sustainability...
Planning for the Next Generation

April 7, 8 and 9, 2003
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta

THE ALBERTA ANNUAL PLANNING CONFERENCE 2003

April 7 - 9, 2003 - Capri Centre - Red Deer, Alberta

SUSTAINABILITY... PLANNING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

It is anticipated that Alberta's population is going to grow by almost one million people over the next 20 years, placing a strain on a finite land base by competing and, many times, conflicting land uses. The challenge we have as planners, elected officials, administrators and Albertans is to ensure the decisions we make today are physically, environmentally and economically sustainable as we plan for the next generation.

SOME OF THE INVITED SPEAKERS

The Honourable Shirley
McClellan,
Deputy Premier,
Government of Alberta

Dr. Michael Percy,
Dean of Business,
University of Alberta

John Waller,
Director, Long Range and
Strategic Planning,
The Regional Municipality of
York

Stephen Lamphier,
President,

Lambridge Capital Partners Inc.

Graham Kedgley,
Executive Director,
Northwest Corridor
Development Corporation

Peter Nichols,
President,
Nichols Applied Management

The Honourable Mark Norris,
Minister of Economic
Development,
Government of Canada

Vern Hartwell,

Conference Agenda Topics

- T Economic and Environmental Sustainability
- T The Oak Ridges Moraine - A Model For Sustainable Development
- T Regional Cooperation
- T Watershed Planning
- T Financing Infrastructure
- T Urban Intensification: Growing Inwards
- T Farm Friendly Land Use Planning
- T Green Development

PARTNERS IN PLANNING - EDUCATION SESSION 2003

Are you a municipal councillor? A member of a municipality's staff team or planning-related board? A land use planner? A development officer or a safety codes officer for a municipality? A planning or municipal government consultant? A land or building developer? A person interested in the details of community planning? If you are, you will want to attend the Community Planning Association of Alberta's *Education Session 2003*.

"Partners In Planning" is the theme of *Education Session 2003*. The session will focus on a training program for community planners and will address subjects such as:

- effective public participation in the planning process;
- the meaning of community planning;
- theories and philosophies behind land use bylaws and statutory plans;
- basics of implementation planning; and
- the development of land use policies and regulations

Education Session 2003 will provide excellent insight into community planning, involving the public and the implementation approaches. It will be an inter-active workshop with numerous opportunities to learn,

**HOW TO REGISTER FOR
ALBERTA PLANNING CONFERENCE 2003
and
EDUCATION SESSION 2003**

CONFERENCE & EDUCATION SESSION REGISTRATION FEES

Education Session (April 7, 2003):

Includes lunch and coffee breaks. Workbook included \$195.00

Conference (April 7 - 9, 2003):

Includes reception, lunch, banquet and coffee breaks \$240.00

Students \$50.00

Extra lunch & banquet tickets will be available at the Registration Desk.

There will be **NO REFUNDS**, however any registration is transferable to another delegate.

Make fees payable to the Community Planning Association of Alberta or request to bill/invoice your organization.

Forward registrations by phone/fax (780-597-2428); e-mail (cpaa@telus.net); or regular mail to:

Community Planning Association of Alberta

c/o Sue Sych,

P.O. Box 176

Brownvale, Alberta T0H 0L0

Display space is available - \$100 (includes one banquet ticket). Tables are available if necessary.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

The Capri Centre,

3310 - 50th Avenue,

Red Deer, Alberta T4N 3X9

Reservations: **1-800-662-7197 (TOLL FREE)**

Room Rates:

Standard \$89.00

Superior \$109.00

Deluxe \$129.00

..... (plus provincial tax & G.S.T.)

SILENT AUCTION

Also at the Conference,
The Annual Community Planning Association of Alberta's Silent Auction - Don't Miss It!

THE MACKENZIE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

By Dr. Samuel Afolayan, ACP, MCIP, Executive Director, Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency

Introduction

In September 2000, Alberta Municipal Affairs (AMA) introduced the Regional Partnerships Initiative to promote regional cooperation and collaboration. The underpinning philosophy of this initiative was that inter-municipal cooperation and collaboration would lead to more efficient and effective management and use of resources. It would enhance the sustainability of individual communities and the quality of life of all inhabitants in the region.

Alberta Municipal Affairs defines regional partnership as an arrangement among three or more municipalities that are prepared to explore a wide range of regional issues. A study by the University of Colorado suggests that emerging approaches to regionalism exhibit characteristics such as focus on process rather than structure, acceptance of open boundaries, emphasis on collaboration, trust among the municipal players, shared vision, goals and policy, and a holistic view that assumes all parties gain by working together (Wallis 2000). Regionalism is not synonymous with regional government.

The goal of regional partnership is to serve as a catalyst for building on existing strong municipal cooperation by encouraging municipalities to work together to

improve the sustainability of their respective municipalities and the region. Partnerships contribute to a better quality of life for the people living in the region and position municipalities to plan, deliver services, and communicate more effectively with one another, and with businesses and industries.

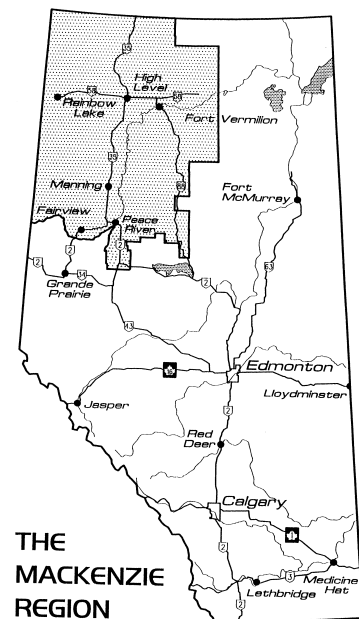
Alberta Municipal Affairs provides an exploratory grant of \$75,000 to assist partnerships to explore a range of municipal issues such as disaster and safety services, growth management, joint service delivery, economic development, and infrastructure planning. A subsequent implementation grant of \$150,000 is available under the program, to be cost-shared at the rate of 75%/25% between AMA and each successful partnership. The purpose of this grant is to assist partnerships in the implementation of identified projects. Application guidelines include the identification of the model of partnership, providing reason for adopting the partnership approach, and the objectives to be achieved through the partnership.

Challenges Faced by the Mackenzie Region

The Mackenzie Region is in northwest Alberta (*see map of the region – Figure 1*). The region is confronted with daunting development challenges such as, declining population due to low birth rate and the inability to attract

and retain new immigrants; pockets of growing population characterized by seasonal workforce and transient families; young population in the areas experiencing some population growth; aging population in most parts of the region; struggling businesses and industries; and dwindling economic opportunities.

There has been a continuous decline in the region's population since 1991 (*see Table 1 and Figure 2*), in spite of its potentials as the major source of Alberta's natural resources (especially, oil and gas, forestry, and agricultural resources). The significance of these resources to the overall wealth of Alberta cannot be over-stated. Unfortunately, demographic and economic forecasts and trend analysis show further deterioration if no remedial action is taken.



THE MACKENZIE REGION
Figure 1: Map of the Mackenzie Region

The remoteness of the region from major urban centres in Alberta such as Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, and the southern transportation corridor, coupled with the net decline in its population over the past ten years have contributed to the region's economic dilemma. Some of the services and facilities, which have been lost in the past few years include: the grain elevators; crucial railway lines; affordable air service; schools; acute care sections of some regional hospitals; struggling emergency medical services units. This has resulted in a continuous out-flow of young and vibrant workforce to other regions within and outside the province.

The challenges to planning and municipal administration in the region are as varied as the number of constituent municipalities. In some, the challenges include preparing a reliable forecast of needs premised on volatile demographic figures, provision of adequate and affordable housing for seniors, obtaining funds for the expansion of municipal services, capacity determination and forecast for water, sewage, and refuse removal. In others, the challenges are those of providing and maintaining adequately affordable housing, maintaining municipal facilities, and expanding social and educational services to cope with the needs of both resident and transient families.

The challenges to planning and municipal administration

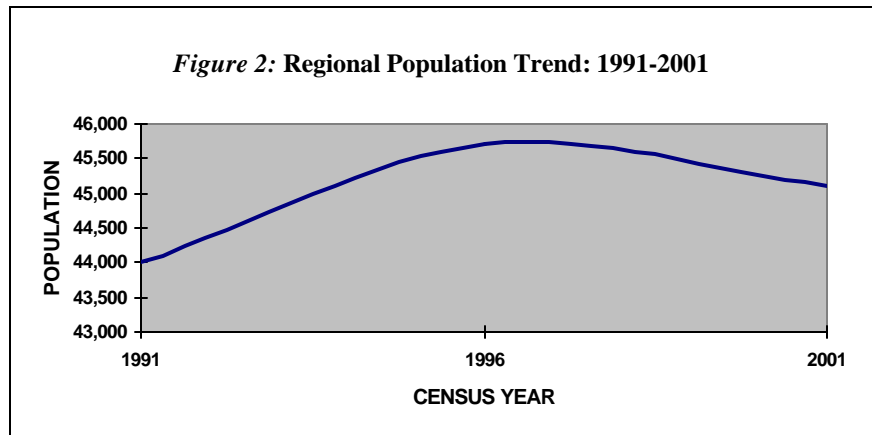
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determination and forecast for water, sewage, and refuse removal. In others, the challenges are those of providing and maintaining adequately affordable housing, maintaining municipal facilities, and expanding social and educational services to cope with the needs of both resident and transient families.

Table 1: Regional Population Figures: 1991-2001

Municipality	1991	1996	2001
Berwyn	610	606	546
Clear Hills No. 21	2,903	2,886	2,772
Donnelly	421	375	377
Northern Sunrise County	1809	2264	2123
Fairview	3,023	3,316	3,150
Fairview No. 136	1,812	1,829	1,806
Falher	1,183	1,149	1,109
Girouxville	349	332	306
Grimshaw	2,812	2,661	2,435
High Level	2,849	3,093	3,444
Hines Creek	423	437	437
Mackenzie No. 23	7,260	7,980	8,829
Manning	1,139	1,295	1,293
McLennan	1,020	867	804
Nampa	496	427	372
Northern Lights No. 22	4,259	4,462	4,217
Peace No. 135	1,481	1,562	1,496
Peace River	6,720	6,536	6,240
Rainbow Lake	817	1,138	976

Figure 2: Regional Population Trend: 1991-2001



The Regional Partnership Application Process

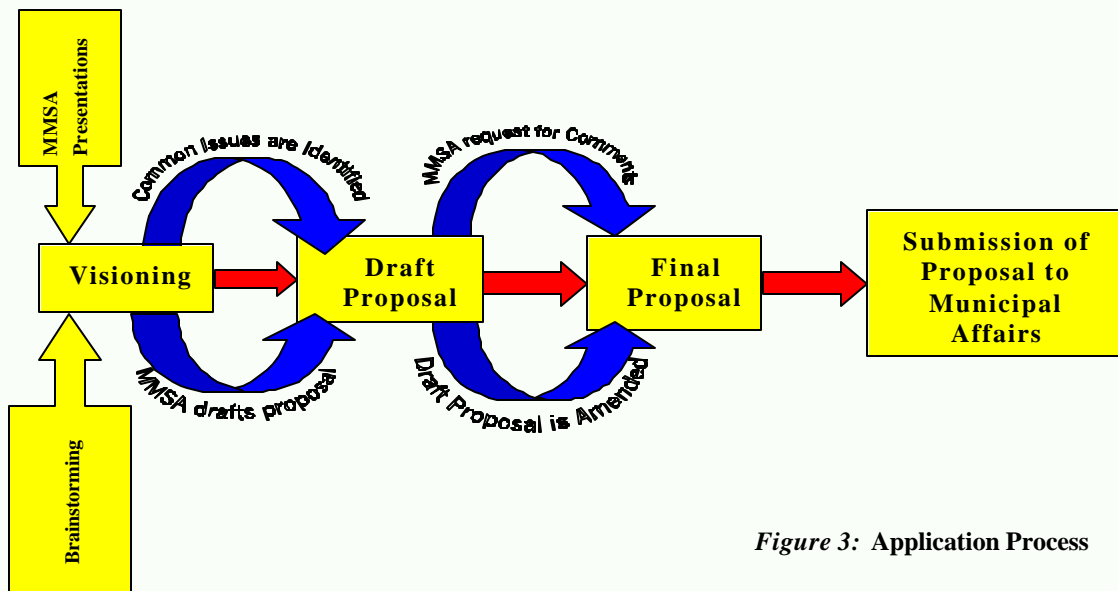


Figure 3: Application Process

The Process

An application was made to Alberta Municipal Affairs for a grant under the Regional Partnership Initiative. The partnership envisions the development of a holistic model of cooperation that involves all municipalities, First Nations Reserves and Metis Settlements in the region. Six regional issues were addressed in the application. They include the development of an integrated resource and infrastructure management strategy, developing a concise vision for the development of the region, expanding membership beyond current members of the Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency, developing a regional communications strategy, developing a seniors and affordable housing strategy, and preparing a 3-year business plan that will set out

operational models and provide a financial outlook for the partnership.

Prior to submitting the application, the Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency (MMSA) had requested a presentation to its members by Alberta Municipal Affairs' Regional Partnership Team. Following the presentation, the Agency requested MMSA staff to explore the preparation of an application for the exploratory grant under the Regional Partnership Initiative. MMSA's regional partnership team was then formed to strategize on how to effectively present the message to all municipalities in the region. The team decided, after consulting with potential members that, given the peculiarities of the region, the partnership would succeed better if the model focussed on political-level cooperation for joint municipal service delivery rather than regional

government.

The MMSA team therefore suggested making presentation to all partner councils on the goal of the partnership, and to generate input on municipal issues that could be addressed at the exploration stage. A guideline was prepared for obtaining and addressing municipal input. Timelines were also set for the three phases of this initiative.

The next step involved actual presentation of goals, objectives and guidelines for convening the partnership to the 20 partner councils. Issues and comments generated from councils were compiled into a database of regional issues. The database was prepared to assist the partnership in future deliberations and used to prepare the draft application, which was forwarded to partners for comment.

A copy of the draft application was also forwarded to AMA for comments regarding compliance with provincial guidelines. The final application was a distillation of municipal inputs and provincial comments to the draft application (see Figure 3: Application Process).

Status of the Partnership

At the time of writing this article, the working committee of the Mackenzie Regional Partnership was in the process of deliberating on the comments provided on its draft application by Alberta Municipal Affairs. It is hoped that the final application will be submitted to the department by the end of March 2003.

The Partnership Application – Issues and Challenges

The first challenge faced by MMSA's team was the geographic spread of the region and the logistics of meeting with all councils before preparing a draft application. The commitment of the team to the provincial vision of "strengthening the province by supporting municipalities to explore and develop partnerships that benefit their operations and residents," reinforced its determination to ensure the success of the partnership.

The second challenge was to convince its region-focused, albeit sometimes disparate and often cynical, municipal councils that cooperation would not lead to domination by larger municipalities. Disappointments from failures of past collaborations have translated

into deep-seated distrust, and to surmount this hurdle would require using a neutral regional body such as MMSA to help midwife and manage the partnership.

In addition to the geographic and human challenges, another hurdle was to convince provincial grant administrators that the goal, objectives, and issues presented in the application reflected the needs of the entire region. It is hoped that this hurdle has been scaled through constant interactions with the Province, and the fine-tuning of the application to address regional issues, which to the partners and to Alberta Municipal Affairs, are pertinent to the development of the region.

Conclusion

Northern communities are behind their urban counterparts in physical development and economic opportunities. Provincial policies have been partly responsible for this disparity. Urban Alberta (especially those to the south of the 55th parallel) often perceives its rural counterparts as a source of continuous drain to the province's resources. Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality of the situation is that resources from rural Alberta help to sustain human, economic, and physical development in the urban centres.

It has been argued that *access to resources* should be included as a major component of national and provincial revenue allocation (NCDC 2002). Northern Alberta is the major source of the Province's natural resources such as, forestry, oil, and

water. Including this major component in provincial revenue formula will ensure a fairer and more judicious revenue allocation model. Its dividends will serve as a catalyst for re-growing the region by translating into the improvement and upgrading of valuable infrastructure and/or helping to fund new economic projects.

Economic growth and population growth, especially in the work-age cohorts, have a direct correlation. No region or nation can enjoy vibrant growth if it invests its resources on building its manpower and have them migrate to other regions for employment. Purposeful and dynamic economic development stems from effective harnessing of human ingenuity. From the beginning of time, the appropriate use of this invaluable resource has, for the most parts, accounted for the difference between rich and poor regions of the world.

Finally, for meaningful development to occur in rural northern Alberta, the Province has to reappraise current policies to accommodate the unique realities of the region. A new north-sensitive policy direction is needed from the Province. This new direction should filter down the hierarchy of government departments by way of separate guidelines for assessing and attending to northern and non-northern needs. It should be based on the uniqueness of the north's locational, demographic, and economic circumstances.

THE COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA REPORT

Partners In Planning

At the recent meeting of the Community Planning Association of Alberta's Board of Directors, the persons who will be making the presentations at the upcoming *Education Session 2003* provided insight into the coordination of the Session. Based on our meeting, the Education Session will be a very informative and interesting one. Partners In Planning have developed an excellent program that will underline the importance of and need for effective community planning education.

Education Session 2003 will be of interest to anyone involved in and/or affected by community planning processes. It is an opportunity you will not want to miss.

A Thank You To Matthew MacNeil

Due to current workload challenges, Matthew MacNeil has resigned from the Association's Board of Directors. Matthew's resignation was accepted, with regret, by the Board of Directors at their recent meeting in Calgary.

Matthew brought a lot of energy and new ideas to the Association. The Directors wish him every success in his future endeavours as a Principal of Housing Strategies Inc.

New Student Director

The Association is pleased to have Lisa Kahn as its new Student Director on the Association's Board of Directors. Lisa is a student in the University of Calgary's Environmental Design Program.

Lisa did an outstanding job of organizing the Association's recent reception with the Environmental Design students at the University of Calgary. We are looking forward to working with Lisa and to benefiting from her insight into community planning. Welcome to the Board of Directors Lisa!

Become a Director

There will be a few vacancies on the Association's Board of Directors this year. Please consider letting your name stand for election to the Board of Directors. The election takes place as part of the Association's annual general meeting during the *Alberta Annual Planning Conference*. If you are interested, please contact the Association.

Silent Auction

Please consider providing the Association with an item for its annual fund-raising Silent Auction. This annual event is held as part of the *Alberta Annual Planning Conference*.

The Community Planning Association of Alberta ??? How To Reach Us ???

Do you want to become a member of the Community Planning Association of Alberta? Do you need information regarding the Alberta Annual Planning Conference? Are you interested in community planning in Alberta? Please contact Sue Sych, the Association's Secretary-Treasurer, at:

Community Planning Association of Alberta
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Brownvale, Alberta T0H 0L0
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