

2015 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Okotoks Economic Development

INITIATIVES

Investment Attraction
Economic Development attended 7 tradeshows throughout the region as well as over 25 business networking events.

Government Funding
Economic Development secured \$70,000 in government funding on behalf of Cool Little Towns.

Types of Inquiries
Over **105** serious inquiries were responded to and tracked in 2015 including businesses in the manufacturing, light industrial, health & wellness, medical, retail and commercial industries. Of these, **30** were business expansion related inquires (customers), **72** prospective business inquiries (leads/suspects/prospects)

JOB GROWTH

393

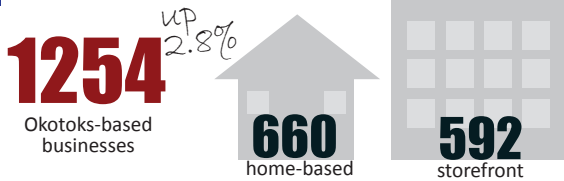
393 new full and part-time jobs were added to the local economy in 2015.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Economic Development collaborates regularly with key stakeholders to identify strategic opportunities:

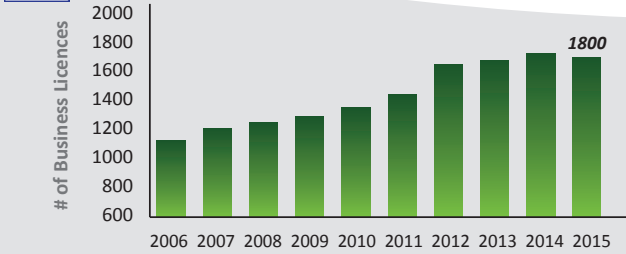
- Calgary Regional Partnership • Olde Towne Okotoks
- Calgary Real Estate Board • Cool Little Towns • Travel Alberta
- Okotoks District Chamber of Commerce • Chinook Country Tourism
- Tourism Calgary • RISE • McBride Career Group
- Okotoks Physician Attraction & Retention Committee

BUSINESS LICENSE SNAPSHOT



In 2015, there were 181 new business openings. Of those 127 were home-based and 54 were Commercial/Industrial Storefronts.

BUSINESS LICENSE SUMMARY



MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

2015 witnessed several new developments in our targetted sectors.



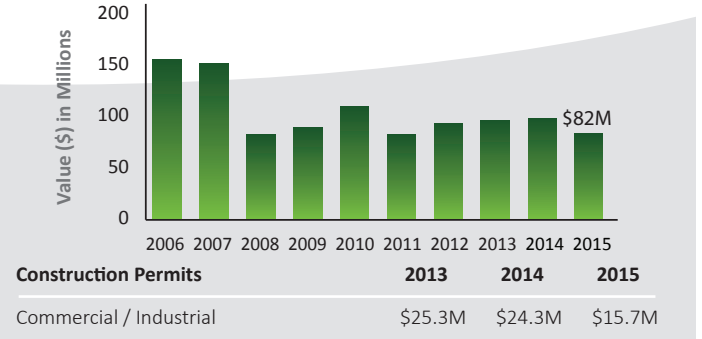
The Canadian Brewhouse | Westmount Commercial | Brown's Social House
North Railway Industrial | Southbank Industrial | Good Time Party Rentals

MAJOR LOCAL EXPANSION

Est. Const. Cost	Bldg#	Muni. Address	Project Name
\$10,000,000	1118	N RAILWAY ST	Town of Okotoks Operations Administration, Fleet and Mechanics Buildings 62,711 Sq. Feet
\$5,000,000	106	SOUTHBANK RD	Big Horn Place, 3 storey 43,238 sq. ft
\$6,663,917	100	SOUTHBANK BLVD	Save On Foods 42,000 sq. ft.
\$1,201,015	100	SOUTHBANK BLVD	3 Comm. Retail Units 8,000 sq. ft
\$2,430,000	158	SOUTHBANK ST	Southbank Medical 16,000 sq feet (2 stories)
\$1,600,000	231	DON SEAMAN WAY (Industrial Building)	Good Time Party Rentals 8,500 sq. ft
\$5,490,800	200	SOUTHRIDGE DR	Halcor Developments, 5 Commercial Buildings (Office and Retail) 51,505 square feet
\$3,050,000	1125	N RAILWAY ST	Halcor Developments, Industrial Building 32,000 sq. ft.

*Includes projects announced and/or under construction in 2015

CONSTRUCTION VALUES



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Okotoks Economic Development

*Growth is never by mere chance;
it is the result of forces working together.*

-James Cash Penny

MARKETING

Economic Development undertook a progressive marketing campaign for both investment attraction/entrepreneurship promotion and tourism. Various online and print publications were utilized to promote the community including the Tourism Calgary Visitor Guide, Travel Alberta Publications, Invest in Alberta and Alberta Venture Magazines as well as the local newspaper, radio and Okotoks Living Magazine to name a few. Okotoks was also featured in the Financial Post in October 2015 as a place to invest and do business

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2015, Economic Development sent out sixteen issues of Venture, our electronic newsletter. Two issues were for special purpose distribution (eg. Roger Brooks presentation). Issues are also posted on the ED website and featured over 999 additional newsletter views. Last year, tourism and economic development content was well read on-line. Our *Discover Okotoks* section drew over **190,000** page visits. Our *Doing Business* section had **38,800** visits. The Town's Twitter account saw approximately 185,000 mentions of our Calgary Transit advertising.

AWARDS



Economic Development won a national Marketing Canada Award from the Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) for the 2015 Okotoks Visitor & Activities Guide. The Town of Okotoks was also honoured with the 2015 Southwest Alberta Service & Tourism award for *Municipality of the Year*.

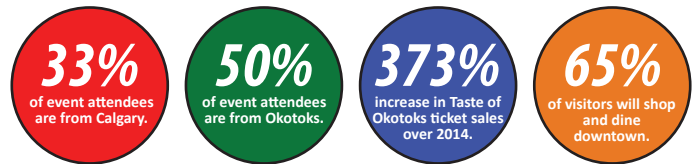
RANKINGS

Okotoks as a community was ranked by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) in their 2015 Entrepreneurial Communities Report. We ranked as the 4th most Entrepreneurial City in the country for the Smaller Cities Category.

In addition, overall between the Major Cities and Smaller Cities categories Okotoks placed 6th most entrepreneurial city in all of Canada and the "Calgary Periphery" placed 1st in the country.

TOURISM SURVEY

Economic Development conducted a tourism survey this past summer interviewing 165 visitors at three of the Town's major events. Results showed:



EVENTS

Okotoks continues to attract large numbers of local residents and tourists to our many special events. Of the 30+ events held in Okotoks in 2015, some of our larger draws included:

- Foothills Highland Games
- Parade and Children's Festival
- Okotoks Show & Shine
- HarvestFest
- Taste of Okotoks
- Annual Collector Car Auction
- Canada Day Celebrations
- Okotoks Pro Rodeo
- Light Up
- BuskerFest

WORKSHOPS & ACTIVITIES

- Business Revitalization Zones sessions with Olde Towne Okotoks
- Career & Employment Expo with McBride Career Group
- Tourism Entrepreneurial Workshops with Alberta Tourism
- *Getting to Know Your Best Customer* workshop series
- Sidewalk Patios and bladesigns open house
- Doug Griffith's *13 Ways to Kill Your Community* workshop
- Roger Brooks branding sessions and stakeholder interviews
- Welcomed and hosted Japanese student tourism delegations
- Installation of electric car charging stations (tourism spinoffs)
- Downtown Action Plan created
- Post-Secondary Education Committee vision created and presented to Council
- Two industrial lot land sales in 2015
- Broadband (fibre optics) research completed, work with Calgary Regional Partnership commenced

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

Together We Can

Increase employment

Grow the municipal tax base

Improve government process

Attract and retain business investment

Enhance capacity for community development