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## **REPORT NAME**

Economic Development Monthly Report - May 2024

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Governance and Priorities Committee receives the Economic Development Monthly Report - May 2024 as information.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Reason:** Administration is updating Council on Leduc County's Economic Development activities for April 2024

**Authority:** (MGA section/bylaw/policy number): 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

**Amount of funding required:** n/a

**Funding source:** n/a

## **BACKGROUND**

Leduc County's Economic Development activities align with Council's strategic vision and expectations through the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and Leduc County Investment Strategy.

## **ACTIVITIES AND CONNECTIONS**

In April, on behalf of Leduc County, the Economic Development group accepted two prestigious awards from the Economic Developers Alberta (EDA) Community Awards. Both awards were recognized for the renewal project for the Leduc County Business and Entrepreneur Centre (BEC).

- AWARD *The Alex Metcalf*: Best In Show - Small Community
- AWARD *Economic Development Renewal Project* - Small Community

During the Easter weekend, a business event was held at the Business and Entrepreneur Centre (BEC), where over 400 people attended the business centre and local marketplace.

During the weekend of April 20-21, the Chamber's 2024 Expo and Job Fair was held. Economic Development attended on behalf of Leduc County with a booth presence and connected with several local businesses, which have created new business visitation opportunities and potential partnerships.

### **Business and Entrepreneur Centre (BEC) Events and Meetings**

The BEC continues to see more visitor traffic and awareness for Alternate Route Coffee Shop, Mother Bakery by Chartier, and additional lunchtime pop-ups with new regional food vendors. Two new small businesses are now operating out of the business centre; Master Blendz Spices and Bebs Bagels are having products produced within the business centre.

We continue seeing the local business community come into the BEC to work remotely and have business

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**Submitted by:** Brad White, Manager, Economic Development

**Reviewed by:** Alan Grayston, General Manager, Community and Development Services

**Date:** 04/30/24

meetings and other resident visitors using the space. Several new workshops, training, business retreats, and new events continue out of the BEC and with the Economic Development Team.

### **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

**May 6-10** is Economic Development Week with events scheduled (below).

**May 8** *Career Connector Symposium* continuation (part 2), focusing on *Business Attraction, Retention and Culture Strategies*. This topic was chosen based on feedback from the initial Symposium event in November 2023 and aligns with the County's investment strategy. This will support regional businesses with workforce challenges. This event will be from 11 am to 1 pm, May 8, 2024, at the Business and Entrepreneur Center (BEC). This will feature a business panel and Michelle Devlin from *Creating People Power* as a keynote speaker. Tickets are available through the Chamber's website.

**May 10:** *A Celebration of Economic Development at Century Mile Racetrack*

Collaborating with the Edmonton International Airport (YEG), Leduc County will celebrate the economic community with the greater regional economic development municipalities and groups. The event will encourage business networking and celebration of our region and support the kick-off of the horse racing season.

**May 15** Biz Exchange: (business mentorship program) meeting is planning an "open house" to encourage new local business members to join ongoing fall sessions.

### **Business Retention and Expansion program**

We continue to work with Leduc County businesses, grow the programs and add support on an ongoing basis based on inquiries and feedback from our business community. These connections form part of the analysis of how the existing businesses see expansion opportunities.

### **Creating Connections**

Leduc County attended the grand opening of Blackjack's first commercial Hydrogen refuelling station in Canada, and economic staff also worked shifts at the Edmonton Global booth at the Canadian Hydrogen event in Edmonton on April 23-25, 2024. These nationally reported events are part of the ongoing business relationships within the hydrogen sector, and the team and other County departments are engaged in exploring those opportunities.

The Leduc County's Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program and its ongoing business visits continue to be valuable from the perspectives of existing businesses within Leduc County.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

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