



SAMDA Region Rolls Out The Welcome Mat **\$500,000 project will draw people back to rural life**

Oyen, AB... Alberta's rural communities are ready for their renaissance. Return to Rural (R2R) is an exciting project aimed at attracting and retaining early and mid-career families to rural areas. The provincial government has granted \$400,000 to the project, through the Rural Community Adaptation Grant. This funding will allow SAMDA Economic Partnership to demonstrate the quality of life in rural Alberta, and take advantage of the opportunities created by new technology. This project will expose opportunities for anyone dreaming of living a life in rural Alberta.

"The quality of life in rural Alberta is so good, it's a wonderful place to raise a family, its safe, its fresh air, its wonderful opportunities," says Julie Friesen, a Community Development Officer with the Province and a supporter of the project. "Rural

communities have so much potential and people have to realize you can establish a successful venture of any kind in our world today if you have access to technology."

R2R includes networking opportunities between rural and urban residents, technology to further advance business opportunities and communication in rural areas, and community planning to ensure welcoming regions can offer a great quality of life to people who choose to "Return to Rural".

"It's about connecting people," says Jay Slep, Chairman of the Special Areas Board. "For a long time people have sold rural Alberta short, but the city is not the only place for opportunity... living in rural Alberta is a very good opportunity for a lot of people."

The two-year project is set to begin immediately.

For more information:

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of Alberta** ■

