The Centre for Research & Innovation

Presented by:

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The CRI story – 10 years of team work

Building Community Capacity and Economic Vitality through Collaboration and Partnerships

This presentation is about what the Peace Country did to address its *Changing Rural Challenge.* It's about *What's Working*, the characteristics of the *People* that led its development and continue to lead its growth. It's about the changes in *Policy* that help make it work. It's also about, our vision of *Pathways into the Future*.

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The CRI story

The **challenge** – regional economic thinking fixated on commodities.

The **opportunity** – regional innovators with ideas that could diversify the economy.

The **problem** – no services within the region, innovators leaving the region, and Provincial policies directed away from regional services.

The **solution** – in region services – as the Centre for Research & Innovation (Building Community Capacity & Economic Vitality through Collaboration & Partnerships)

The **challenge**
regional economic thinking fixated on commodities.

Sector	**Northern Alberta**	Province of Alberta
Basic (primarily Retail & Wholesale Trade, Transportation & Warehousing, Construction, Health, Hospitality, Public Administration)	66%	67%
Resources (Agriculture, Forestry, Energy, Mining, Hunting Sectors)	**22%**	10%
Manufacturing (value-added)	**5%**	8%
New Economy (Information, Culture, Finance, Insurance, Professional, Scientific, Technical Services, Management, Arts, Entertainment, Recreation)	**7%**	15%

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The **opportunity**
regional innovators with ideas that could diversify the economy.

the Peace Country may be the most creative region within the most creative province in Canada (per capita basis).

- ✓ 153 patents were issued to Albertans or one patent for every 19,672 people vs. Ontario - one patent for every 23,583 people (2000)
- ✓ 39% patent requests from 5% of AB pop (2005)
- ✓ GP is #2 in Canada for Entrepreneurship (2010)

The **problem**
no services within the region

Peace River

• Grande Prairie

Edmonton

Calgary

• innovators leaving the region,
• Provincial policies directed away from regional services.

The **solution**
- regional services -

Centre 2000

GPRC

The **Centre for Research & Innovation** is a partnership of Grande Prairie Regional College's Integrated Research Unit and Peace Region Economic Development Alliance's The Innovation Network.

This successful model was developed after careful consideration by PREDA and the College in consultation with regional business leaders, innovators, technical experts, economic development agencies and service providers.

2002 – 2005 Start-up (FT)

Client Services
- Invention management
- New product development
- Commercialization Services

Culture of Innovation
- Innovation Awards
- Awareness

2005 – 2007 Keeping it together (PT)
- limited client services
- relocated to Grande Prairie – SMEs
- discussions with College begin

Bridging the Gap!

Coming together is a beginning / Keeping together is progress

April 2007 CRI created

New Mandate for College; AET funds "one-stop-shop" for SMEs ($110,000 per year 3-years);

'No staff', Dean ASU manages, few clients; use funds to leverage funds; NSERC eligibility established;

Innovation Ambassador program starts (Jan 2008);

RADF $ announced, GPRC, PREDA, Econ Dev, TIN consultants team-up to complete proposal.

"One-stop-shop for SMEs"

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August 2008   RADF Funds

RADF funds add zero to budget ($3.1M) ; GROWING PAINS;

CRI hires FT Director (Rutley 3-year contract); staff hired and Adjuncts Contracted; College systems changed to accommodate needs (finance; facilities; HR; IP policies)

Innovation Services expanded, start working with more capable SME clients (<$10M net worth); awareness program initiated; applied research active (AACTI; industry); IRAP $ continue;

Centre 2000

Innovation awards & innovation voucher programs ⇨ shift in clients (1st $100M company then 1st $1B 'industry', over 1000 'served'; NSERC application filed; take on more PREDA projects; entering Year 3

"Building a Culture of Innovation in Northwest AB"

Keeping together is progress.

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So . . . What is working?

1. Clarity of Purpose

Applied Research
- Led by GPRC
- Client projects
- Regional Researchers
- Student integrated

Innovation Services
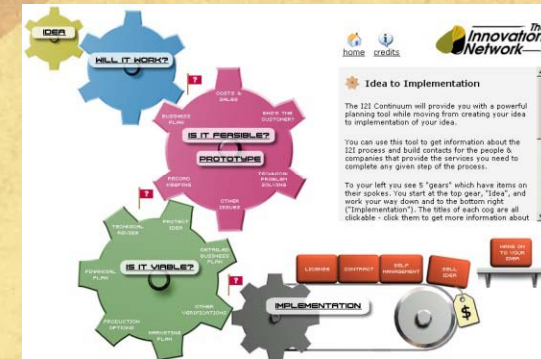(tech com & organizational)
- Client services
- IP protection
- Marketing
- Design/Prototypes
- Access to capital inc.
- Innovation vouchers
- Workshops
- Programs (Productivity, PeRMA, IRAP Marketing)

Projects
- Awareness
- Culture of Innovation
- Recognition
- Expertise database
- Website

"The Centre of a Network of Regional Researchers & Innovators"

Working together is success

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So . . . What is working?

2. Partnerships

Peace Region Economic Development Alliance:

Rural Alberta's Development Fund: major expansion funds

Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures: regional innovation network; vouchers

Community Futures:

Grande Prairie   www.cfofgp.com

Peace Country   www.peacecountry-cfdc.com

IRAP - clients in common; projects (marketing competitive intelligence 2009-2010)

AACTI – Innovation: alliance of AB Colleges and Technical Institutes

Industry Partners: Forestry/ Manufacturing/ Engineering /

Community Partners: City and County; Community Groups

So . . . What is working?

3. Operational Strategies:

a.Mixed Model approach to staffing
- College staff – dedicated and seconded
- Adjunct Staff - contract consultants
- 3rd Party Service Providers – Innovation Services
- Volunteer Ambassadors (14) – EDO, Ind., PREDA

b.Mixed Model approach to Governance
- Line function of GRPC (Director => VP Academic)
- GPRC – PREDA Steering Committee (Operations)
- Advisory Committee (Strategic)
  - Community (7) ; GPRC (4); PREDA (3)

"The Centre of a Network of Regional Researchers & Innovators"

Working together is success

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So . . . What is working?

4. Rural Service Model – service first

GPRC: Fairview College Campus

GPRC: Grande Prairie Campus

Centre 2000 Chamber of Commerce

Peace River Community Futures Peace Country

"One-stop-shop for SMEs"

Working together is success

So . . . What is working?

5. Momentum & enthusiasm for future

Support from PREDA partner remains strong

Innovation: Provincial Government will fund as the NWAB node for its Regional Innovation Network;
- industry support, innovation clients, innovation voucher services all continue to mature.

Applied Research: Federal NSERC $ for P2P research program (5-years), industry partnerships mature; GPRC partnership with AAFC-Beaverlodge for AR matures

Projects: will remain a major source of operational funds

"Applied Research & Innovation: Transforming teaching and learning at GPRC"

Working together is success

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The CRI story – is about:

~ **Good Practices and flexibility**

- Formed a **multi-agency multi-community strategic representative** Steering Committee
    - Steering Committee members actively involved in meetings & lobbying
- **Excellent Start-up Consulting Group**
    - External (Prov. & Nat. connections) and an In-Region Partner (experienced in R&D and organizational development with strong regional connections
- **Clearly focused** on outcome – but started with **minimal preconceptions**
- **Transition of 'helpers' and 'governance'** – evolving organization
    - PREDA: Steering Committee (May 2001 – June 2002); Transition Team (June 2002 to Sept 2002); TIN Board (2002-2007);
    - College: Dean held file (Apr 2007 – Aug 2008); Director & Steering Team (Sept 2008 - Sept 2009); Steering Team (operations) & Advisory Group (strategic) (Sept 2009 – current).

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The CRI story – is about:

~ 10 years of team work; people and relationships

~ focusing on regional strengths &
shared vision (research & innovation)

~ diversifying our regional economy

The Centre for Research & Innovation

~ 10 years of team work ~
Peace Region's perspective on Rural Development

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www.thecri.ca