



**NEWS RELEASE
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South Saskatchewan Regional Plan is an opportunity to improve the regulatory process and encourage sustainable economic growth

(Calgary, AB) – The Calgary Chamber of Commerce urged the Government of Alberta to prioritize economic development in the region, while balancing environmental and social factors, and seize the opportunity to improve the regulatory regime. It also emphasized the energy sector's importance to the region's prosperity and encouraged responsible development of the Eastern Slopes, in response to the first phase of consultation to create a southern Alberta regional plan.

"High quality social and environmental outcomes can only be achieved through a strong economy," said Heather Douglas, President & CEO of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. "Economic growth allows companies to invest in technology and innovation for environmental improvements."

The Chamber views the Land Use Framework as a chance to improve the regulatory process while achieving sustainable development.

"Alberta's regulatory regime is one of the most comprehensive in the world," remarked Douglas. "The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan can be a catalyst for regulatory competitiveness, by increasing certainty on permitted land uses, streamlining approvals and eliminating conflicts between regulatory agencies."

Improvement of the regulatory environment would be positive for the oil & gas sector, the most critical industry to the province's economy. In the South Saskatchewan Region, oil & gas activities provide \$1.5 billion in provincial royalties and taxes, and the region's energy future is bright with significant unconventional resources such as coal bed methane and shale gas still largely untapped. A proper fiscal and regulatory regime will be critical to maximizing this potential.

"This regional planning process is a chance for sustainable oil and gas development in the Eastern Slopes, as well as unconventional resource development in northeast area of the region," said Douglas.

In an additional recommendation, the Chamber suggested the establishment of environmental thresholds as triggers to direct industry to prioritize R & D resources in response.

"The creation of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan is ultimately a forum for determining economic, social and environmental outcomes, leading to less confrontational land use discussions," stated Douglas. "The Calgary Chamber of Commerce looks forward to the dialogue and encourages all residents to learn more and become involved in the discussions."

The Chamber's full submission is available at www.calgarychamber.com



About the Chamber

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven, sustainable organization whose mission is to connect, serve and champion the Calgary business community in its quest to excel.

The Public & Government Affairs Department measurably contributes to the Chamber's profile and effectiveness. We are the leading edge business advocate and forum for debate, and a credible source for policy analysis and issue commentary. We advocate new and innovative solutions to improve the business climate on behalf of our members.

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