



Creating an Environment for Success

Quarterly Report

2021 - Q4

Prepared By:
Eve O'Leary
Executive Director
January 13th, 2022

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About Portage Regional Economic Development



Portage Regional Economic Development, known as PRED, advises and makes recommendations and actions matters that pertain to economic development. These activities include but are not limited to economic development initiatives, incentives, evaluating current business climate, business attraction, retention and expansion, community economic development, marketing opportunities, and other issues pertaining to economic development.

"ENCOURAGE AND HELP BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS TO INVEST, THRIVE AND EXPAND"

PRED assists with providing input and expertise on ways to encourage and help businesses and individuals to invest, thrive and expand in the region of Portage la Prairie. It is our goal to support businesses in creating jobs, diversifying and increasing the tax base, which ultimately leads to a better quality of life for all who work, reside and visit the region.



Who is Portage Regional Economic Development?

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Kellie Verwey joined the PRED team as Economic Development Coordinator in April of 2021 after returning to Portage from spending her university years in Winnipeg. As an Asper School of Business graduate, Kellie brings an abundance of knowledge and experience in Marketing to our organization. Kellie can be reached via email at kverwey@investinportage.ca

Eve O' Leary joined the PRED team as Executive Director in December 2019. With over 14 years of business experience working at large international companies and Municipalities. Eve is an accomplished Economic Development Professional that brings a wealth of Economic Development experience and business management knowledge to the organization. Eve can be reached via email at eoleary@investinportage.ca



Connect with PRED

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 @investinportage



**PORTAGE
LA PRAIRIE**

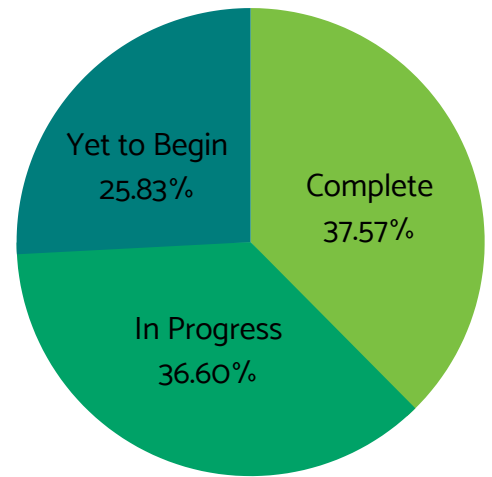
MANITOBA, CANADA

PRED Strategic Plan 03

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

The PRED organizational strategy that was published in June of 2020 is well underway to ensure that the strategic plan for PRED is action-orientated. It allows PRED to focus on the organization over the next four years. To date, of the 51 KPI's identified in the plan, we currently have 17 KPI's in progress, and 20 KPI's completed.

Since the strategy was launched, we have completed 37.57% of our strategic plan and 36.60% is in progress. Out of the 36.60% in progress, many of these initiatives are more than 50% completed. We are focusing on all four areas simultaneously and have seen some positive outcomes because of this plan. Some major changes this quarter was streamlining our Business Retention and Expansion process, focusing on completing a variety of tourism initiatives, focusing on reporting our collected data, and updating upon our current databases. We continued to implement and create initiatives with committees such as PERT & PRTC to help move the KPI's identified in this project forward. We are excited for 2022 and so see more continued growth in this Region. We do this by continuing to foster a team-based culture that strives to create positive, working relationships with all stakeholders.



FOUR STRATEGIC AREAS



This strategic plan developed for PRED has identified four strategic areas. Each of these vital areas represents a high-level view in the field of strategic importance that was identified as imperative to this organization's future. A successfully run Economic Development Agency should be in the business of making connections, being a champion for Economic Development and creating a thriving environment in the community to allow our economy to flourish. Stay connected to our website and social media platforms to keep up to date with our strategic progress. Please visit www.investinportage.ca to view a full version of the Organizational Strategy.

04 PRED Update

"PRED IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED WITH MANY POTENTIAL INVESTORS CONSIDERING OUR REGION FOR THEIR NEXT PROJECT!"

- ✓ Continued to create an environment for success.
- ✓ Streamlined processes for collecting, aggregating, analyzing and reporting data that allows council to make informed decisions.
- ✓ Continued working with investment attraction inquiries.
- ✓ Continued to work with local organizations to provide expertise and an Economic Development lens on various projects.
- ✓ Promote the Portage la Prairie region as one of Manitoba's premier destinations through Travel Manitoba campaigns.
- ✓ Finalized and presented a 5-year strategy for the Portage Regional Tourism Committee.
- ✓ Visited 64 businesses during the Q4 Business walks in December 2021 to identify the pulse of the business community.
- ✓ Hired Urban Systems to complete the Economic Baseline project that is set to be released in Q1 2022.
- ✓ Continued to work on communicating with the Business Community and responding to requests for service.
- ✓ Provided support and advice on Economic Development to the Municipalities.
- ✓ Launched Phase One of the newly developed Business Retention and Expansion program.
- ✓ Worked with PCRC on the affordable housing needs assessment and strategy
- ✓ Increased awareness of PRED to the community and stakeholders across a variety of platforms.
- ✓ Continue to work with the Portage Regional Tourism Committee to implement a variety of initiatives.
- ✓ Continue to develop promotional campaigns and features for the Portage Regional Tourism Committee intended to reach internal residents and external visitors.
- ✓ Continued referrals and navigation for business startups and expansion projects.
- ✓ Increased awareness with the Investment Attraction Portfolio and working closely with local industries.
- ✓ Continued conversations with provincial and federal government agencies to enhance and leverage the assets in the Portage la Prairie region.
- ✓ Developed a streamlined process for Investment Attraction clients.
- ✓ Updated the Business Registries to ensure there is access to reliable data.
- ✓ Continued efforts on developing policies and processes to ensure that PRED has strong governance and will be a long-standing organization in the community.
- ✓ Successful implementation of a new Investment Attraction process that is focused on marketing industrial land such as Poplar Bluff Industrial Park and McMillan Industrial Park.
- ✓ Navigating increased inquiries from Residential, Commercial, and Industrial investors who are choosing to invest in the Portage la Prairie region.
- ✓ Applied for a variety of provincial and federal grants for fiscal year 2022

Portage Economic Response Team 05



It doesn't matter what type of business you run; we are ready to help you navigate this challenging business environment. We have collaborated with our teams as your one-stop shop to help you find the resources you need! Now more than ever, we need to work together.

COVID-19 is impacting and affecting our local community and economy. We are ready to focus on exactly who and what we are moving forward and help mitigate the impact of COVID – 19 on our economy.

In addition to the above projects, the committee has also supported and worked on the following:

- Connecting each month with PLP Economic Development stakeholders and communicating what each organization is working on.
- Supporting the new business incubator services at Southport.
- Developing an Economic Baseline to set benchmarks used for investment attraction and measuring the success of the region.

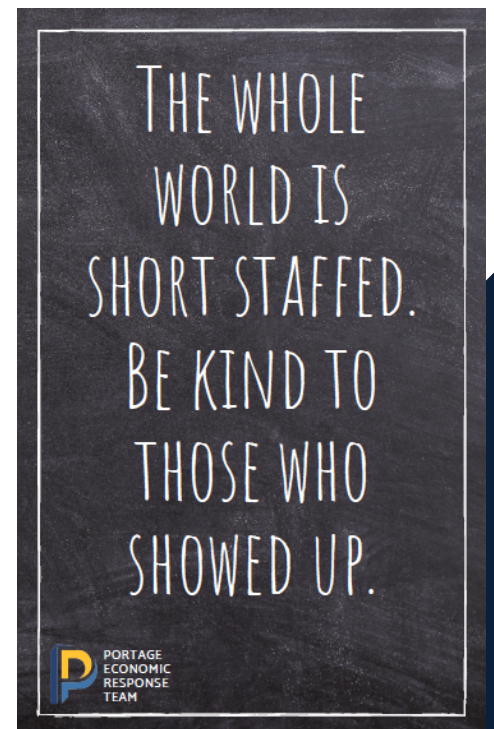
Be kind, get social & support local!

We continued to combat Covid-19 in quarter 4 of 2021 and the challenges that our local business face continued to change. PERT has developed a series of 3 posters that will be distributed to the restaurants in our region as a reminder to patrons that everyone is doing their best given the current circumstances and it is our duty as customers to be respectful of those who are simply doing their job.

If you or a business you know would like to receive a poster, please reach out to us at PRED.

#plproadtorecovery #bekind #loyaltolocal

www.plproadtorecovery.ca



"WE ARE TEAMING UP TO BRING ALL OF OUR RESOURCES TOGETHER TO HELP OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES DURING THIS PANDEMIC."



Portage Regional Tourism Committee

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The Portage Regional Tourism Committee (PRTC) was formally re-established in 2020 to assist with managing the Island on the Prairies regional tourism brand for the Portage la Prairie region. The PRTC consists of representatives from the major tourism stakeholders in the region, each with distinct specializations in different tourism categories:

- Heritage and Historic Destinations
- Outdoor Recreation
- Indoor Recreation
- Community-Wide Events and Festivals
- Amenities and Businesses
- Local Government Bodies
- Hospitality
- Indigenous Tourism



PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE
& DISTRICT CHAMBER

Our Mandate

The Portage Regional Tourism Committee exists to enhance, grow and promote the entire region as a Tourist destination, enticing visitors and residents to explore, stay and experience the Island on the Prairies.

Our Mission

Our mission is to increase the economic benefits that flow from tourism and market the region of Portage la Prairie as one of Manitoba's premier destinations.

Our Vision

We aspire To be recognized as one of Manitoba's most desirable tourist locations.

www.islandontheprairies.ca



**PORTAGE
LA PRAIRIE**

07 PRTC Projects

- ✔ Continue to promote our region as one of Manitoba's premier destinations.
- ✔ Continue marketing the area through various digital campaigns.
- ✔ Finalized and presented to council, our 5-year Strategic Plan.
- ✔ Developed and printed a list of 100 things to do in the region of Portage la Prairie.
- ✔ Hosted an all-season photo contest to further develop our regional image inventory.
- ✔ Collaborated with PCI Carpentry Class to develop 2 outdoor kiosk that will provide 24/7 tourist information to visitors.
- ✔ Developing signage and pathfinding tourism assets.
- ✔ Secured a 3-year advertisement agreement for an IOTP billboard in the large Stride Place arena.
- ✔ Began developing attraction signage to denote major regional attractions
- ✔ Finalized a 2022 partnership agreement with Travel Manitoba for 15 marketing campaigns.
- ✔ Secured a booth at the Red River Valley Sportsmen's Show in Fargo, ND to promote regional tourism.
- ✔ Drafted IOTP merchandise that will be launched in Q1 2022. Work is still being done to finalize design and pricing.

Left to right: Ian Miller (student), Kellie Verwey (PRTC Member), Dennis Giesbrecht (instructor)



NEW TOURIST KIOSKS

In November of 2021 the PRTC partnered with the PCI Carpentry class to construct two information kiosks. Four short weeks later, the class invited us to view the beautiful structure that they had completed. Sheltered by a rustic cedar roof and constructed with brown treated lumber, these kiosks are made to last and will be great features in our community for many years. The kiosks will display helpful tourist information such as a detailed street map, accommodation and restaurant lists, as well as QR codes linking to virtual tourist resources. The exact location of both kiosks has yet to be determined, however, it is known that they will be placed in locations that are accessible 24/7 and installation is set to take place in Q2 of 2022. PRTC thanks the PCI Carpentry class for their dedication to this project, their workmanship and time efficiencies are unmatched!

"PROJECTS LIKE THIS OFFER STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN NEW SKILLS IN A MEANINGFUL WAY. IT IS EXCITING FOR THEM TO SEE THE WORK THAT THEY DO DISPLAYED IN THE COMMUNITY!"

Champions of Economic Development

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Community & Stakeholder Engagement

PRED has continued to focus its efforts on being the 'quarterback' for continued success in the community. We have been very productive and have been engaged in **100 + stakeholder meetings** over the past three months. PRED brings the lens of Economic Development when working with community stakeholders throughout the region. We are proud to be involved with over 15 committees in the region and two regional/provincial associations.

Business Retention & Expansion

PRED focuses on business retention and expansion, which is an essential element for any Economic Development agency. BRE is not a one-time collection of data gathered by surveying the business community, but rather, an organizational foundation based on forming strong relationships with regional businesses. BRE is about consistently collecting data, updating, and having a robust business registry to help PRED make decisions about where we can position the organization and what we need to focus on to best suit the needs of the community. Over the 4th quarter of 2021, we have seen a few business expansions and met with business owners in our region that continue to grow.

PRED Visits 64 Businesses in December 2021

In the fourth quarter, PRED officially kicked off the new BRE program with a 4-day Blitz. Between November 29th and December 2nd, **64** regional businesses were visited with the intent to make a connection and gain contact information for future engagement.

PRED has been working hard on delivering this program and will continue to do so. If you are looking to know more about BRE, or set up a business visit do not hesitate to connect with us.



Investment Attraction

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Another area of service that PRED offers is Investment Attraction, and we continue to receive many queries on investment opportunities. In 2021 we have seen great investment in our community and heightened interest from potential investors. Our main focus is to ensure that we have access to relevant, accurate data that we can leverage to encourage new investment.

ECONOMIC BASELINE PROJECT

In Q4, PRED undertook a complex project in developing an Economic Baseline of regional data. An Economic Baseline is a fixed point of reference that is used for comparison purposes. It will provide strong, up-to-date data that will be useful for both Business Development and Investment Attraction. This Baseline will also act as a foundation for future projects such as an Investment Readiness Assessment, developing a Community Profile, and benchmarking critical economic factors such as, population, demographic, industry, business, labor, real estate, all of which will further assist in identifying economic gaps.

This project will provide PRED with consistent baseline assumptions that can be used in various types of analyses. It will also provide an important understanding of our region's economic drivers and industry mix, based on the latest data. These benchmarks will allow our community to identify the roles and functions within the Region of Portage la Prairie and where possible, allow us to develop comparisons against other regions.

This project is being completed by Urban Systems who was chosen following a RFP process completed in September. Urban Systems is presenting the Baseline on January 27th, 2022 and PRED is hopeful that the report will be released to the public in Q1 of 2022.

