

Proof to the Swift Current Advantage

Swift Current – The year 2003 has been good in the news department for Swift Current and area. There have been many announcements that will spur economic growth for the city and region.

The major ones for 2003 have been the announcement by the governments Health Minister John Nilson that there will be a new regional hospital built in the city to the tune somewhere between \$25 and \$30 million dollars. As well starting possibly as early as the fall of 2003 a new South West Credit Union building in downtown Swift Current at a price tag of \$8 million.

Throw in the renovations that will take place at the Southwest Credit Unions Trailview branch to become the new home of the Cities museum.

There is also the expansion to the Civic Centre that will see more seating and corporate box suites along with a new concourse lobby, which connects the new curling rink to the Civic Centre.

Put all that together with the soon to be proposed, \$14 million Casino and Performing Arts Centre by the File Hills Tribal Council, Swift Current will see a great economic boom in the next two to three years.

But is the country listening...you bet they are!

In the recent economic outlook by BMO's Chief Economist, Tim O'Neill, Swift Current leads the country in cities over 10,000 and under 100,000 in small combined enterprises (with and without payrolls) Per Capita Rankings. Our friendly Alberta city to the west, Medicine Hat came in 8th while our nearest neighbour to the east, Moose Jaw came in 80th.

That's quite an accomplishment, and it is only going to get better.

And how important are small businesses in Canada?

Among the nearly one million enterprises that maintained payrolls during 2002, 95% were small businesses, defined as firms with less than 50 employees. Indeed, the very smallest businesses – those with only 1 to 4 employees on the payroll accounted for more than 60% of all enterprises. Although small firms individually hire fewer workers, in aggregate they generate 32% of total payroll employment in Canada.

And Swift Current is the front-runner in Canada per capita, again the "Swift Current Advantage."

And to increase the advantage, Swift Current sits 4th in Payroll Enterprises (per 1000 pop.) and 2nd in 1-4 Employee Payrolls (per 1000 pop.) and 9th in 5-49 Employee Payroll (per 1000 pop.). Other Saskatchewan cities include Estevan, 13th, Yorkton 25th, North Battleford 44th, Prince Albert 79th and Moose Jaw 85th.

The fact that smaller areas have proportionately more small businesses should not be surprising; given that these areas' population densities might only support smaller-sized enterprises in many cases.

Swift Current and the southwest region has a lot to be proud of and it is only going to get better over the next five years. BMO stats show Swift Current region is the top ranked hotbed for small business, which again goes to show the Swift Current Advantage is #1 in Canada.

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**Exhibit 7: Small Businesses in the CAs
Combined Enterprises (with and without payrolls),
Per Capita Rankings**



CA	Province	Combined Enterprises		Non-Payroll Enterprises	
		(per 1000 pop.)	Rank	(per 1000 pop.)	Rank
Swift Current	SK	105.6	1	60.3	1
Whitehorse	YK	91.6	2	41.7	5
Fort St. John	BC	87.4	3	41.6	6
Estevan	SK	85.4	4	45.4	2
Grande Prairie	AB	85.2	5	37.1	14
Williams Lake	BC	82.7	6	41.0	8
Grand Centre	AB	82.7	7	41.6	7
Medicine Hat	AB	82.6	8	43.3	4
Yorkton	SK	81.7	9	44.0	3
Lloydminster	AB	80.0	10	34.8	23
Kelowna	BC	78.6	11	39.7	9
Campbell River	BC	76.8	12	38.1	11
Camrose	AB	75.9	13	36.0	16
Saint-Georges	QC	75.8	14	39.3	10
Red Deer	AB	75.3	15	36.9	15
Vernon	BC	74.8	16	35.5	18
Victoriaville	QC	73.7	17	37.2	13
Duncan	BC	73.7	18	35.4	19
Penticton	BC	73.1	19	32.8	28
Collingwood	ON	71.6	20	37.9	12
Haileybury	ON	71.4	21	34.9	21
Quesnel	BC	71.3	22	33.8	26
Terrace	BC	70.9	23	29.0	50
Yellowknife	NT	69.6	24	28.8	52
Saint-Hyacinthe	QC	69.2	25	35.0	20
Rivière-du-Loup	QC	69.0	26	28.1	56
Joliette	QC	68.8	27	30.5	43
North Battleford	SK	67.9	28	34.2	24
Magog	QC	67.8	29	35.7	17
Dawson Creek	BC	67.3	30	32.1	31
Courtenay	BC	67.0	31	32.8	29
Val-d'Or	QC	66.5	32	33.9	25
Charlottetown	PE	66.4	33	25.6	77
Kamloops	BC	66.3	34	30.8	40
Prince George	BC	66.3	35	30.9	38
Matane	QC	66.3	36	27.4	63
Lethbridge	QB	65.8	37	31.3	36
Cranbrook	BC	65.7	38	27.8	60
Nanaimo	BC	65.5	39	34.8	22
Brandon	MN	64.6	40	30.9	39
Thetford Mines	QC	64.6	41	30.1	45
Dolbeau	QC	63.1	42	26.9	67
Kenora	ON	62.7	43	26.6	70
Chilliwack	BC	62.0	44	31.9	33
Abbotsford	BC	61.9	45	31.8	34
Granby	QC	61.5	46	32.1	32
Wetaskiwin	AB	61.5	47	26.8	68
Rimouski	QC	61.4	48	26.0	74
Fredericton	NB	61.1	49	30.1	44
Drummondville	QC	60.7	50	29.8	47
Rouyn-Noranda	QC	60.0	51	29.6	48
Owen Sound	ON	59.7	52	31.3	35
Cowansville	QC	59.7	53	28.1	57
Powell River	BC	59.4	54	26.7	69
Pembroke	ON/QC	59.3	55	28.9	51