

Action Swift Current Taking Action

Many Swift Current businesses are looking at ways to stay viable and strong. With Saskatchewan's population slowly decreasing many businesses are worried about the future.

A group of business and community leaders have formed a new organization called Action Swift Current. The purpose of this organization is to implement a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program for the City of Swift Current and the surrounding area.

According to Pat Parrott, Chairperson of Action Swift Current, the focus of the organization is to build a positive business environment for the success of the local businesses and ultimately the success of the community. The BR&E program is a community economic development initiative designed to stimulate growth by assisting businesses to become more competitive and by developing community support local business.

"Helping develop our existing businesses, creating wealth and jobs is critical to the health and vitality of any community," says Parrott. "Many communities in Canada and USA have had very good results with the BR&E program."

This program will help identify the business' needs, concerns, problems and

opportunities. Local volunteers will visit businesses and gather information and then local leaders will engage the community to solve the problems or better meet those needs identified by the businesses.

Over the past few weeks, many businesses received a survey in the mail. Approximately 275 businesses were randomly chosen from the city and rural municipalities. The survey questions the future plans and needs of the local businesses as well as their view of the community as a place to do business. In turn, this survey will be used to plan future economic development activities.

All input on the surveys are kept confidential as all volunteers, visitors, and leadership teams sign a confidentiality agreement. Businesses are urged to take the appropriate time and thought when going through the survey, as the results will help shape the future community.

"We are extremely happy with the interest our local businesses and community as a whole have shown towards this initiative," says Parrott. "To date, there are approximately 175 individuals who have volunteered to be part of the survey team."

A summary of the survey results and recommendations for the future development will be announced at a public meeting at the end of the project.

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