



Year in Review 2024-2025
&
2025-2026 Projects Planned

June 30th, 2025

Governance

PREDA's Board of Directors is elected by the membership of the Alliance for a four-year term.

There was one change in the Board of Directors in 2024-2025. The list below will be submitted to the Alberta Corporate Registry for the annual filing of the Board of Directors. Also, 2025 is a municipal government election year; hence we anticipate the list below will change by shortly thereafter.

PREDA's most recent Annual General Meeting was held on June 06th, 2025.

(Attachment 1 – PREDA 2025 AGM Package)

PREDA 2022-2026 Board of Directors					
Member Organization		Address	Community	Postal	Phone
County of Grande Prairie	Director – Brian Peterson	100001 84 Avenue	Clairmont	T0H 0W0	780-567-4299
Town of Sexsmith	Director - Kenneth Hildebrand	9927-100 Street	Sexsmith	T0H 3C0	780-978-1820
MD of Spirit River	Director – Nick vanRootselaar	Box 389	Spirit River	T0H 3G0	780-864-3500
Northern Sunrise County	Director -Carolyn Kolebaba	Box 1300	Peace River	T8S 1Y9	780-617-2381
Village of Rycroft	Director - Joe Chelick	Box 360	Rycroft	T0H 3A0	780-765-3652
Birch Hills County	Director – Deanne Woodland	Box 157	Wanham	T0H 3P0	780-694-3793
County of Northern Lights	Director – Gary These	Box 10	Manning	T0H 2M0	780-836-3348
MD of Peace (-)	Director – Bob Willing	Box 34	Berwyn	T0H 0E0	780-338-3845
MD of Peace (+)	Director – Sandra Eastman	Box 34	Berwyn	T0H 0E0	780-338-3845

Note: The municipality is elected; the municipality designates the representative.

Operations Overview

Operational Facilities: PREDA operates under a virtual office model utilizing its website as the portal for information distribution to its membership.

Human Resources: PREDA executive and administrative duties are carried out through 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) allowance of 35 hours per week under a fee for service agreement which are allocated across: 1) Executive for high-end economic consultations and government diplomacy at .10 FTE, and 2) Administration, Book-keeping, Research, and Meeting Coordination at .90 FTE. PREDA does not contribute to medical benefits, life insurances, pensions, EI, or CPP.

Revenue Sources: In 2024-2025 PREDA realized two major revenue sources. The first is an annual general membership fee which is set at \$1per capita for municipalities and various flat rates for non-municipal members. Revenues generated from general membership fees was 82K. The second major revenue source was a grant of 125K from Alberta Ministry of Jobs, Economy, and Trade. PREDA's budget for 2024-2025 was 207K.

Year in Review 2024-2025

Activity 1: Membership Symposiums

PREDA's membership symposiums focus on collective regional issues with a variety of content experts accessed to provide information and insights. Underpinning these quarterly symposiums is a fundamental purpose to highlight how the information impacts local municipalities. Coordination, printing, venue, catering, research, and speaker fees are covered under PREDA's general membership fees and available to all members to attend at no charge. In 2024-2025 PREDA organized 4 membership symposiums.

PREDA's 2024 AGM expanded into a two-day event which focused on mid-size Value Added Forestry companies and a collection of apothecarial uses of the forest. Also, during the event, and in partnership with PREDA's Municipal Project Fund, local wood artisans were provided trade show space (at no charge) to promote and sell their products to the more than 120 attendees at the event. Local vendors were also paid a daily stipend to man their tables and promote their local artisan wood products.

PREDA's September Membership Symposium focused on recruiting and sharing municipal content experts that are required under various Government regulations. CAO's, Property Assessors, Safety Code Inspectors, and External Committee governance were discussed and highlighted for capacity building among our municipalities.

PREDA's December Membership Symposium focused on the growing demand for access to local foods, back-yard gardens, municipal by-laws that facilitate urban agriculture, mobile slaughter services, and technology enhanced local foods ordering & delivery services.

PREDA's March Membership Symposium focused on the active mega-projects occurring / proposed for the PREDA region with member municipalities providing status updates.

(Attachment 2 - PREDA Membership Symposiums)

Activity 2: Municipal Project Fund

Recognizing the challenges small urban and rural municipalities have in initiating projects due to financial and human resource constraints, PREDA established the Municipal Project Fund to create the opportunity for its municipal members to access funds to support / activate local economic development projects within their local municipalities. Funds from the MPF can also be used as leverage towards government grants. Economic Developments Officers, (appointed by their municipality at the PREDA AGM), Community Futures Grande Prairie, Community Futures Peace Country, and an appointed member of the PREDA Board of Directors form the MPF Committee. The MPF Committee has a Terms of Reference which guides their decision making in grant allocation to PREDA's municipal members. The MPF raises ~23K per year. All PREDA municipal members are required to be members of the PREDA MPF.

PREDA provides administrative & financial services (at no charge) to the MPF Committee with invoicing services, template updates, calls for grants, committee meetings, grant agreements, and grant dispersal. There were four MPF projects funded in 2024-2025.

(Attachment 3 – MPF Grant Agreements)

Activity 3: Northern Transportation Advocacy Bureau



NTAB is an advocacy / research initiative housed under PREDA as a sub-committee.

NTAB focuses on higher-level national & global issues that impact local rail, roads, air, ports, pipelines infrastructure. NTAB advocates for all levels of Government to work together to build trade & utility corridors in a cohesive and comprehensive development of the North. Membership in NTAB is voluntary; however PREDA membership is mandatory to access this sub-committee. In 2024-2025 two full day sessions were organized on behalf of the members of NTAB. One focused on regional roads / airports & the launching of the GOA Prince Rupert corridor initiative; the other focused on activity in the Arctic Circle and Canada's icebreakers. **(Attachment 4–NTAB Agendas)**

Activity 4: Learning Circles

Background: Originally created in early 2023 by PREDA to coordinate self-teaching & peer assistance on the integrated mega-database “Lightcast. PREDA had secured a 1-year license under a regional NRED grant partnership. The monthly sessions were open to Economic Development Officers, Post-secondary internal researchers, and regional GOA Workforce Consultants. The demand from users for the “Lightcast” subscription slowly diminished as the GOA Dashboard was refreshed and enhanced.

Follow-up: Participants identified other economic development related topics that would be of interest to them using the local learning circle model. Note that there are very few EDOs hired under a municipality in the PREDA region and that those that do exist are typically “lone wolf”. Also, PREDA EDO’s are invited to all PREDA quarterly membership symposiums and can access PREDA one-on-one assistance throughout the year. In 2024-2025 PREDA has identified a list of topics of interest and will be coordinating the development of learning circles in greater detail with participants as the service evolves. Currently the focus is primarily on integrating technical skills & data analysis into business feasibility proposals, grant writing, investor attraction portfolios, and site-locator engagements. Note: Learning circles also facilitates EDO leadership for PREDA’s Municipal Project Fund.

Activity 5: Recruitment Promotion

In 2024-2025 PREDA facilitated the development of a promotional consumer internet link / email PDF download in partnership with Digital Nomads. This link is available to all PREDA members to embed in their social media resources, job advertisements, and/or community level marketing materials. PREDA partnered with Mighty Peace Tourism and the MoveUp magazine which provided substantial use of their combined promotional and branding expertise. Embedded into the consumer download are all PREDA member websites, and relocater resources typically researched (e.g. real estate, schools, flights). The link to this resource is <https://www.yolonomads.com/peacecountry>.

Activity 6: Regional Networking

Throughout the year PREDA has participated in numerous offerings from regional partners:

- a) Growing the North (Presenter & Sponsorship)
- b) Various Small Business Sessions
- c) Various Chambers of Commerce events
- d) Various Labour Market Information Sessions
- e) PREDA maintains an annual membership in both provincial associations representing urban and rural municipalities.

Activity 7: Information Access and Subscriptions

PREDA provides its membership access to information and services frequently required for the development of economic development projects such as investor portfolios and business feasibility studies. PREDA's links to these datasets/subscriptions are regularly refreshed and accessible to all members. If requested PREDA can assist a member with data downloads and schematic interpretations. Links/ subscriptions available through PREDA's Virtual Office include:

- 1) GOA economic dashboards; local traffic counts; local community health, local education data.
- 2) Statistics Canada - Community Profiles, Census of Agriculture, Population Census; Labour.
- 3) PREDA maintains subscriptions to *Statista*, *Marine Traffic*, *Flight Radar*, and *The World Diplomat*. These subscriptions provide access to global data and trends. PREDA members can access for free. PREDA can assist a member with data searches, downloads and analysis.
- 4) PREDA maintains a subscription to *Survey Monkey*. PREDA can assist a member with survey design, data collection & analysis, and report writing.

Activity 8: Operational Review

Background: PREDA is one of 9 Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) originally created / managed by the Alberta Government. PREDA was registered as an Alberta Corporation in October 2000. Originally housed in the Grande Prairie Provincial building with 5 full-time staff and all operational costs covered by the Government of Alberta, Canada Revenue classified PREDA as a Public Service Body. For more than a decade, the GOA directed ~250K to ~400K annually to PREDA to initiate projects focused on economic development (e.g. Dinosaur Museum, Beaverlodge Bee Diagnostics Center; Center for Research & Innovation, Branding the Peace Country).

In 2014 the Government discontinued management of all REDAs and were moved out of the provincial government buildings. Operational / project funding fluctuated across the next ten years.

Current: All REDAs were notified of discontinuance of all government funding by March 31, 2027. The GOA operational funding is ratioed based upon each REDAs membership fees and required percentages to be contributed to regional project(s). In response PREDA undertook an organizational review: 1) to clarify its legal governance model from a public service body to a private non-profit company under the Alberta Companies Act; 2) revise its Articles of Association; 3) to clarify its CRA category for GST / Income Tax, and 4) to begin a staffing succession plan. In 2024-2025 PREDA also utilized the review services of Qatalyst Consulting that was provided through the GOA.

Role of the Board of Directors

PREDA's membership elects the Board of Directors. The Board meets quarterly, to review and adjust as needed the operational budget; to review/direct Executive and Administrative activities; to identify regional issues, to pass motions that guide the governance and operations of the Alliance, and to oversee GOA reporting requirements. (Attachment 5 – PREDA Board of Directors Agendas).

Year in Review 2024-2025 – Attachments

- 1) AGM Package – Agenda, Minutes, Year End Financial Preparation; Articles of Association
- 2) Membership Symposium Agendas
- 3) Municipal Project Fund – Grant Agreements
- 4) NTAB Agendas
- 5) Board of Directors – Agendas

2025-2026

Projects Planned = 56.25K

PROJECT 1 31.25K

(GOA Required Funding Allocation)

Phase A Housing Assessment – Regional Inventory

Phase B Housing Construction – Action Plan

PROJECT 2 20K Min - 25K Max

Regional Airport Management – Business Case

PROJECT 1

Project Name	Phase A Housing Assessment – Regional Inventory \$ 7,750	
Description	Municipal scan of types of homes/costings	
Key deliverables and outcomes	Overview, barriers/ solutions identified. Information collected will feed into Phase B below.	
Alignment with region priorities and REDA plan	This project will provide regional information on current housing status of all PREDA municipalities. Data collection will primarily be third level focused on currently available local, provincial, and federal reports relevant to housing. First level data collection incorporates direct feedback requests to all PREDA municipalities.	
Start	April 1st, 2025	End March 31, 2026
Proposed Budget	Project Coordination / Researcher \$7,750	
Project Name	Phase B Housing Construction – Action Plan \$23,500	
Description	Leveraging from Phase A; Three key priorities will be detailed: 1) target recruitments; 2) skilled trades needed to build homes & alternative access to certifications; and 3) municipal financial capacity to commit to residential developers.	
Key deliverables and outcomes	Overview, barriers/ solutions identified, action plan created. At the end of this project an action plan will be created which will be founded upon feedback from municipalities, industry, developers, and community organizations.	
Alignment with region priorities	<u>Recruitment Congruency:</u> Many PREDA members focus their direct recruitment efforts on skilled professionals; as such housing offerings need to be aligned with these targeted recruitment efforts - single-family home neighborhoods with back-yards OR on small residential acreages (2-5 acres). Yet, small urbans may be more inclined to focus on apartments and or multi-unit housing. There is no one answer fits every community. <u>Unleash Certified Locations for Apprenticeship Training:</u> In July 2022 the Alberta Government launched the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act (STAE) which opens opportunities for significant changes to how apprentices will be trained. There is no unified, under one roof post-secondary focus that trains a team of individuals to collectively “build a home”. PREDA will explore delivery models such as utilizing the business expertise of residential construction project managers who DO collectively bring all skills under one “outcome – to build a home”. Is there a mechanism for these project management companies to be Certified training locations with Alberta Apprentice. <u>Regional Developer Capacity:</u> Small urbans and limited linear assessment rurals in the PREDA region do not have the financial or development capacity to attract residential home development contractors. An option to be investigated by PREDA is the merging of small urbans and rurals to create a larger “Request for Development” that would be more attractive to potential residential home construction companies. Also, Alberta Health, Education, RCMP, other community services, and major employers will be brought into this project to contribute to the PREDA region housing needs in partnership with municipalities.	
Start	April 1st, 2025	End March 31, 2026
Proposed Budget - \$23,500	Project Coordination / Researcher	\$10,000
	Stakeholder Input: municipalities, industry, developers community organizations	\$1000
	Action Plan Drafted: All Stakeholders Working Symposium	\$5000* (PREDA Leveraged)
	Action Plan – Revised / Reviewed / distributed	\$2,500
	Stakeholders Next Steps Symposium	\$5,000* (PREDA Leveraged)
NOTE: PREDA Membership Symposiums September 2025, Dec 2025; and March 2026 will be used to provide available dates for stakeholders and municipal leaders. Increased venue/catering/ travel due to external invitees.		

PROJECT 2

Project Name	Regional Airport Management – Business Case								
Description	This project will result in a business case supporting / not supporting the creation of a regional shared service to assist municipalities in the maintenance and management of their community airports.								
Key deliverables and outcomes	This project will result in a business case supporting / not supporting the creation of a regional shared service to assist municipalities in the maintenance and management of their community airports. If determined to be feasible the recommended model & financial contributors to create such a service will be action planned.								
Alignment with region priorities and REDA business plan	In 2024 PREDA completed an over-view report of 13 airports in the PREDA region. Eleven of these airports are considered “small community / municipal airports” which play a critical role in providing landing-strips for forest fire services, medical emergencies, recreational flyers, and industry charters. A common challenge identified through this over-view was the lack of content expertise in the PREDA region to maintain, service, and manage these critical “small community / municipal airports”. Also, in 2024 the September PREDA membership symposium focused on <i>Regional Sharing of Content Experts</i>. This symposium identified various sharing models already in place in the region. Examples are: 1) Mackenzie Municipal Services is a membership-based planning organization providing a full range of professional, high quality land use planning, subdivision services, GIS, and related services. MMSA offers these services through a handful of master-level planners and technologists recruited under MMSA; being able to offer market value employment contracts to these skilled professionals. 2) The County of Grande Prairie is building a team of Safety Code Inspectors. Safe Code Inspections; required under AB legislation; are conducted by the highest level of skilled professions - engineers, architects, electricians, gasfitters, etc. To off-set the costs of recruiting & retaining high value professionals the County of Grande Prairie is investigating to offer project-based fee-for-services to other municipalities. 3) Non-profit Committees are administratively intensive which frequently require municipal & community members appointments. Community groups with similar mandates governed under one advisory can help alleviate the demands placed on a limited volunteer base. 4) More than 90% of all businesses in the PREDA region are small-enterprise self-employed entrepreneurs selling a “specific” skill – IT services, Human Resources, Oil Field Matting, Forestry Reclamations, etc. With various sharing & business models to draw from, PREDA will investigate the potential of creating a similar approach to the maintenance and management of community airports.								
Start: April 1 st , 2025 End: March 31 st , 2026									
Proposed Budget \$20K (Not Feasible) \$25K (Feasible) <table> <tr> <td>Project Coordination / Researcher</td><td>\$15,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Stakeholder Input: municipalities, private & public airport users, approval boards</td><td>\$2,500</td></tr> <tr> <td>Business Plan Drafted: Not Feasible? OR Feasible?</td><td>\$2,500</td></tr> <tr> <td>Feasible? Next Steps Action Plan</td><td>\$5,000</td></tr> </table>		Project Coordination / Researcher	\$15,000	Stakeholder Input: municipalities, private & public airport users, approval boards	\$2,500	Business Plan Drafted: Not Feasible? OR Feasible?	\$2,500	Feasible? Next Steps Action Plan	\$5,000
Project Coordination / Researcher	\$15,000								
Stakeholder Input: municipalities, private & public airport users, approval boards	\$2,500								
Business Plan Drafted: Not Feasible? OR Feasible?	\$2,500								
Feasible? Next Steps Action Plan	\$5,000								