



PRINCE ALBERT AND DISTRICT
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Prince Albert is a name to be proud of, says Scarrow

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Mayor of Prince Albert Jim Scarrow expressed confidence in the city's future in his fifth state of the city address Thursday.

Scarrow began with some of the numbers that have been seen over the past year, including record-breaking housing and commercial construction as well as business licences issued.

He pointed at recent growth as well including the West Hill infrastructure, water treatment plant upgrades and the completion of the Alfred Jenkins Field House.

Scarrow made no apologies for the cost of this growth, quoting an external debt of more than \$19 million but noting that only \$7.2 million of that will be paid for with tax dollars, the rest being covered by utility bills and development levies. In five years, he said, that debt will be down to just under \$13 million and added that the debt is essential to maintain clean drinking water and sanitation.

"Investment builds cities and no city can afford not to grow," he said, adding that he is confident in city staff to make the "hard decision" to come through with a budget that is acceptable by council and good for the city.

As for the future of the city, he was clear. "It is my confident prediction that 2011 will be Prince Albert's year."

To back up the statement, he used examples — from every large industrial sector, from agriculture to oil to mining to forestry — where pending decisions like the Fort la Corne diamond mine and a possible sale of the pulp mill could be a major boon to the local economy.

He also spoke of the city as a major tourism attraction and introduced Coun. Jayne Remenda as the newly appointed executive director of the Prince Albert Destination Marketing Inc.

As for First Nations relations, Scarrow pointed to the October 2010 announcement of new management of the Forest Management Agreement that includes a substantial partnership with First Nations groups as a positive sign for future co-operation.

The speech was closed with a "eureka" moment, as Scarrow called it. He recalled thinking the term "P.A." for the city held negative connotations. But has since had a change of perspective.

"I am very proud to be called P.A. because of what it stands for," he said.

For more details, including comments on crime and social issues, see Friday's Herald.