

Ambassador Program

The goal of this program is to foster local business opportunities and grow local economy.

The goal will be achieved by realising **the objectives**, which are: generating business leads; developing a network of local business leaders and recognizing their contribution to the community; recognizing individual business achievements; raising awareness of Parkland County's business and investing opportunities in its target markets; retaining existing businesses by involving them in the County's business operations.

The program has many **advantages** over typical forms of promotion, but even more if it is combined with the standard promotional activities. It is known that personal recommendation is the most powerful form of advertising, especially if it comes from respectable members of the community. The program allows integrating a personal message and experience into promotional activities. With this program, credibility will be ensured because information about Parkland County will be spread by community and business leaders.

Ambassadors are individuals who volunteer to promote business opportunities in Parkland County. They possess strong interpersonal skills and business connections inside and outside of the County. They can be business people, community leaders or residents who tend to be outgoing and enthusiastic about Parkland County as a place to do business.

There are many **benefits for the ambassadors**: they benefit from stronger relationships with Parkland County officials; they and their businesses receive enhanced exposure among the public; their networking opportunities are increased and the program allows their companies to build a stronger reputation; they are also entitled to receive recognition and awards supporting the program participation.

Influential community members and business owners will be encouraged to become ambassadors. The **ambassador duties** consist of participating in the ambassador meetings that will be held quarterly. They will also have to attend business and networking events, recruit new ambassadors and provide new leads to Economic Development & Tourism department and EDTAC.

In order **to become an ambassador**, a person needs to be nominated by themselves or by someone else by filling out the ambassador application that will be uploaded on Parkland County's website. Upon reviewing and approving the application, the ambassador will have to attend and complete the training session, which will be organised as a one-on-one or a group session, depending on the number of applicants. After successfully finishing the training session, the ambassador will receive **the ambassador package**, which will consist of promotional items, such as Locating Your Business in Parkland County brochure, Acheson Business Directory, Promotional USB and ambassador's own business card.

Since ambassador program is based on volunteering, there need to be actions conducted to thank everyone for their time and efforts. Therefore special **awards and recognition** events will take place. Each ambassador will receive an official certificate upon completion of the training. The most successful and proactive ambassadors will be recognized for their contributions at each ambassador meeting. To recognize the Ambassador of the Year, an annual awards ceremony will be organised.

In order to conduct the program, the initial annual **costs** would come up to approximately CA\$6000, when taking into consideration the number of ambassadors were 10.