



**Chamber of
Commerce
Executives
of Alberta**

**Assoc. des cadres
des chambres
de commerce
de l'Alberta**

SUMMIT 2025

Join us for Summit 2025 - the professional development conference for Chamber professionals in Alberta! You can expect to learn best practices from your peers, explore trends impacting Chambers, and have lots of opportunities to strengthen relationships across the Alberta Chamber Network.

Day 1: July 9, 2025

**Conference Venue: Lacombe Best Western Hotel
4751 63 Street, Lacombe, AB**

12:00pm - 1:00pm: Networking Lunch

1:00pm - 1:30pm: Conference Opening Remarks

- Marilyn Aalhus - President of CCEA and Summit MC
- Dani Ducross - Chair of Lacombe Chamber of Commerce
- City of Lacombe Mayor - Grant Creasey
- Lacombe County Reeve - Barb Sheperd

1:30pm - 2:15pm: Chamber Bingo

Mingle with your Chamber peers to fill out your Chamber Bingo card to win a prize!

2:15pm - 2:30pm TBD

2:30pm - 2:45pm Health Break

2:45pm - 3:45pm: Membership Recruitment and Retention - Melina Santoro

In today's evolving business landscape, Chambers must be more intentional than ever about how they attract, engage, and retain members. This session explores practical strategies to grow your membership base while deepening the value for existing members. Learn how to showcase your Chamber's impact, foster long-term engagement, and build a membership experience that keeps your business community connected and invested.

4:45pm: Bus Departs from Hotel

5:00pm: Catered Dinner - Evolution Catering

Dinner venue: Lacombe Memorial Centre: 5214 50th Avenue

6:30pm-8:00pm Music in the Park

Venue: Lacombe Memorial Centre: 5214 50th Avenue. There is a designated seating area for CCEA attendees



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Get ready for an unforgettable evening of live music as Lacombe's beloved summer tradition, *Music in the Park* featuring the soulful sounds of Central Alberta's own Randi Boulton. A seasoned performer known for her powerful voice and heartfelt songwriting, Randi brings a blend of folk, rock, and blues that resonates deeply with audiences. Her authentic performances have earned her a dedicated following across the region, and she's set to captivate the crowd once again.

For more information, visit the [Summer Concert Series webpage](#).

8:00pm-9:30pm Explore Lacombe

Optional shopping in Lacombe's downtown district or kick up your feet at one of our pubs or restaurants.

8:00pm-9:30pm Bus Departs Lacombe Memorial Center back to hotel

The bus will depart the Lacombe Memorial Centre (5214 50th Avenue Parking Lot) every 30 minutes to head back to the hotel

Day 2: July 10, 2025

8:00am - 9:00am: Networking Breakfast

9:00am - 9:15am Opening Remarks

- Marilyne Aalhus - President of CCEA and Summit MC
- Dr. Lucious Michel - Professor/Associate Dean Burman University Representative

9:15am - 10:00am: Content with Purpose: Elevating Member Value Through Strategic Social Media - Joe Whitbread

In a noisy digital world, how can chambers of commerce stand out and truly serve their members online? This session dives into building a social media strategy that goes beyond likes and shares—it's about delivering real value.

Learn how to create purposeful content that reflects your chamber's mission, showcases your members, drives engagement, and strengthens community ties. We'll explore practical content pillars, tools for planning and consistency, and tactics to highlight local businesses while maintaining a strong, professional voice.

Whether you're working with a full team or juggling social media solo, you'll walk away with a clear framework to make your online presence more intentional, impactful, and aligned with your chamber's goals.

10:00am - 10:15am TBD

10:15am - 10:30am Health Break



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10:30am - 11:30am Table Talks - Membership, Chamber Management, Technology Systems

Table Talks Session Leader: Dawn LeMaistre - Okotoks & District Chamber of Commerce

In small groups, you'll have 45 minutes to discuss 3 topics - membership, Chamber management, and technology and operational systems. We'll spend the final 30 minutes sharing ideas and best practices as a group.

11:30am - 11:45am TBD

11:45am - 12:00pm The ACC Team & The Services They Provide to Alberta Chambers

Meet the team from the Alberta Chambers of Commerce and learn about the services they provide to Chambers across the province.

12:00pm - 1:00pm: Networking Lunch

1:00pm - 2:00pm: Boost Your Bottom Line: The Power of Chambers Plan

Join your Chamber Relations Manager for an interactive session sponsored by Chambers Plan - the only employee group benefits program that generates non-dues revenue for Chambers each month! During this session you'll gain valuable insights about the program, explore best practices and success stories from your peers, and put your knowledge to the test in a **game show-style** challenge to win great prizes!

2:00pm - 3:00pm: Thrive with AI: Save Time, Amplify Impact, And Get Things Done - Alberta Chambers of Commerce

Chambers of commerce will gain practical tools to boost efficiency and impact. Attendees will leave with a prompt-building cheat sheet, ready-to-use chamber-specific prompts, sample outputs, and access to a shared collaboration hub.

Key benefits include saving time on routine tasks, enhancing advocacy messaging, and empowering small teams to do more with less. This session is all about giving chambers resources they can put to work immediately.

3:00pm - 3:15pm Health Break

3:15pm - 4:15pm Operational Excellence Unlocked: Harnessing Policies & Procedures for Chamber Growth - Roxanne Gray

Strong governance and effective operations are supported by clear policies and procedures. In this session, Roxane Gray, creator of the ClearWork™ System and founder of Clirico - The Workplace Clarity Company, will explore how Chambers of Commerce can strengthen accountability, consistency, and clarity across both Board governance and day-to-day management by treating policies and procedures as essential tools for operational excellence and member trust. The session will also highlight how Executive Directors can ethically leverage AI as a practical assistant in drafting, organizing, and modernizing these foundational tools.



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5:00pm - 7:30pm

Dinner & White Elephant Gift Exchange

Dinner venue: Tollers Bistro: 4801 63rd Street, Bay 2, 3

Don't forget to bring a gift from your community for the white elephant gift exchange!

7:30pm:

Ghost and Mural Tours with the Lacombe Historic Society

Meet at 5005 50th Avenue

8:45pm-9:45pm

Cheers at Blindman Brewing

Head to Blindman Brewing to use your certificate for a free 8 oz pour

Day 3: July 11, 2025

8:00am - 9:00am:

Networking Breakfast

9:00am - 9:15am:

Opening Remarks

- Marilyne Aalhus - President of CCEA and Summit MC
- Wendy Buyar - Executive Director of Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce

9:15am - 10:00am:

Working Effectively with your Municipality

Strong relationships between Chambers of Commerce and municipal governments are essential for fostering local economic growth, shaping policy and advocating for the needs of businesses. This panel brings together experienced Chamber leaders from across the province to share practical insights, success stories and lessons learned.

Moderator: Scott Robinson - Red Deer

Panelist: Marilyne Aalhus - Airdrie Regional Chamber of Commerce

Panelist: Jennifer Garries - Leduc, Nisku and Wetaskiwin Regional Chamber of Commerce

Panelist: TBD

10:00am - 10:15am:

A City That Connects: Business, People, and Possibility - City of Lacombe

10:15-10:30:

Health Break

10:30am - 11:15am:

The Future-Ready Chamber: How to Modernize Visibility, Drive Member Success, and Become the Hub Your Business Community Can't Live Without - Kelly Sinclair

Chambers are at a crossroads—businesses are changing, expectations are shifting, and the old model of events and newsletters isn't enough anymore.

In this dynamic session, former Chamber President and Visibility Strategist Kelly Sinclair explores what it takes to become an essential driver of business growth in your region. You'll learn how to shift from being



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seen as “nice to have” to absolutely **non-negotiable**—by offering real value, fostering strategic collaboration, and leveraging modern tools to amplify your members’ success.

This talk offers a fresh, forward-thinking perspective to help Chamber leaders confidently evolve and lead in today’s business landscape.

11:15am - 12:15pm

The Power and Possibility of Influence: Leading through Relationship - Margaret Palmer

Leadership is not a skill, a set of inspiring words, or a great speech. It is more fundamental, more basic, and more permanent than that. It is a way of being, and it is not reserved only for those who carry titles or sit in the corner office. Real leadership relies on relationships. In this inspiring keynote, Margaret challenges the audience to focus on influence rather than impression, celebrate character over credentials, and embrace the importance of communicating to connect by engaging with people in a way that makes them feel valued and appreciated. Be prepared to let go of the traditional paradigms of leadership, to question what it truly means to lead, and to consider the great possibility that lies within each of us.

12:15pm: Conference Closing Remarks & Lunch To-Go

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Best Western Plus Lacombe Inn & Suites

4751 63 St, Lacombe, AB T4L 0H8

\$159 + 9% = \$173.31 per night We have rooms blocked. Standard two queens or King with pull out. Rooms will be released 4 weeks prior.

Reservations can be made by calling (403) 782-3535 and requesting the CCEA Summit 2025 Room Block. This will not be available online.