

Mackenzie County



'The Fundamentals of Economic Development'



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Natalie Gibson
InnoVisions and Associates



Economic Development Methodology

Primary Interviews	Business	Secondary Research
82	67	52 documents
Focus Groups	20	

Two documents:

- 1) Economic Development Officer/department strategy, goals, action plans, budget, etc.
- 2) Council's document, Strategies and SWOT.



Opportunities (Page 6)

Table 1: Opportunities and Challenges - What we Heard

Opportunities Identified	Challenges Identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value-added, agriculture products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost and availability of logistics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value-added, wood products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost and consistency of utilities: power, gas, and water
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oat processing facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent internet and cell service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic grains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance to market, movement of goods is expensive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selling more products and services within the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of recognition of First Nations (FN) as a key consumer and potential partner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited collaboration with County neighbours: High Level, First Nations, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism; eco-tourism, Aboriginal tourism, and historic tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of regional 'products' to create a tourism package, yet many think tourism is the magic bullet for economic growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Grow local talent" through expanded local trade training programs, university extension programs, etc. Build on the Zone 1 AHS and FVSD workforce attraction and retention programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with employee attraction and retention, especially in health care, education, and professional services (e.g., engineers, accountants, lawyers, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurial spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax assessment process is inhibiting new investment; in several cases it actually stopped new investment; perception of inequitable treatment and assessment for similar firms

SWOT: Page 38 to 79



Opportunities (Page 7 & 8)

Table 1: Opportunities to Link to Strategies – Challenges Identified

Opportunities Identified	Challenges Identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New provincial and federal programs, and processes to support infrastructure development, Aboriginal business, partnerships and. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No notable pending public-private partnerships (P3s) with First Nations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband research program (provincial government). Support the REDI process underway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the AHS Zones made key operational and staff decisions are made in Grande Prairie, and not made within the region. Misunderstanding and mistrust is creating additional issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomass study, provincial government looking for five communities to participate, minimal investment of \$5,000. Consider wood and agriculture fiber. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply more products and services to the ‘real north’. A market of over 80,000 people is just to the north of the County. Market products and services from Mackenzie Region as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity to extend Highway 58 through from Rainbow Lake to Fort Nelson, B.C. and link up to the Alaska Hwy. is opposed by the B.C. government.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Vermilion School Division’s (FVSD) alternative programming (FV Housing program, Rocky Lane Farm project, etc. can be expanded to support County initiatives, Streetscaping, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political jurisdictions are focused on their own mandates, not that of the trade population.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a business retention and expansion program to support County business, for example activities to increase more regional B2B (business to business) and B2C (business to consumer) transactions. Create a regional business directory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of flights to Rainbow Lake and reduction of consistent flights to/from High Level is hurting business.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider an ‘Investment Pool Marketplace’, with local investors investing in local businesses and/or projects. 	<p>Perception that the County is not ‘pro-business’. There is limited interaction with major business (tax payers), projects that did not proceed. E.g., the Grow North bio-fuel plant, or collapsed (hog barn). Unfortunate loss, more importantly makes regional investors nervous.</p>



Trade Population

Comparative - 2015 Municipal Census to Statistics Canada 2011 Census			
	MC	HL	RL
Statistics Canada - 2011 Population Count	10,927	3641	870
Statistics Canada - 2011 Dwelling Count	3056	1162	487
2015 Census Population Count	11,750	3823	938

Residents within the County: 16,511 (2015)

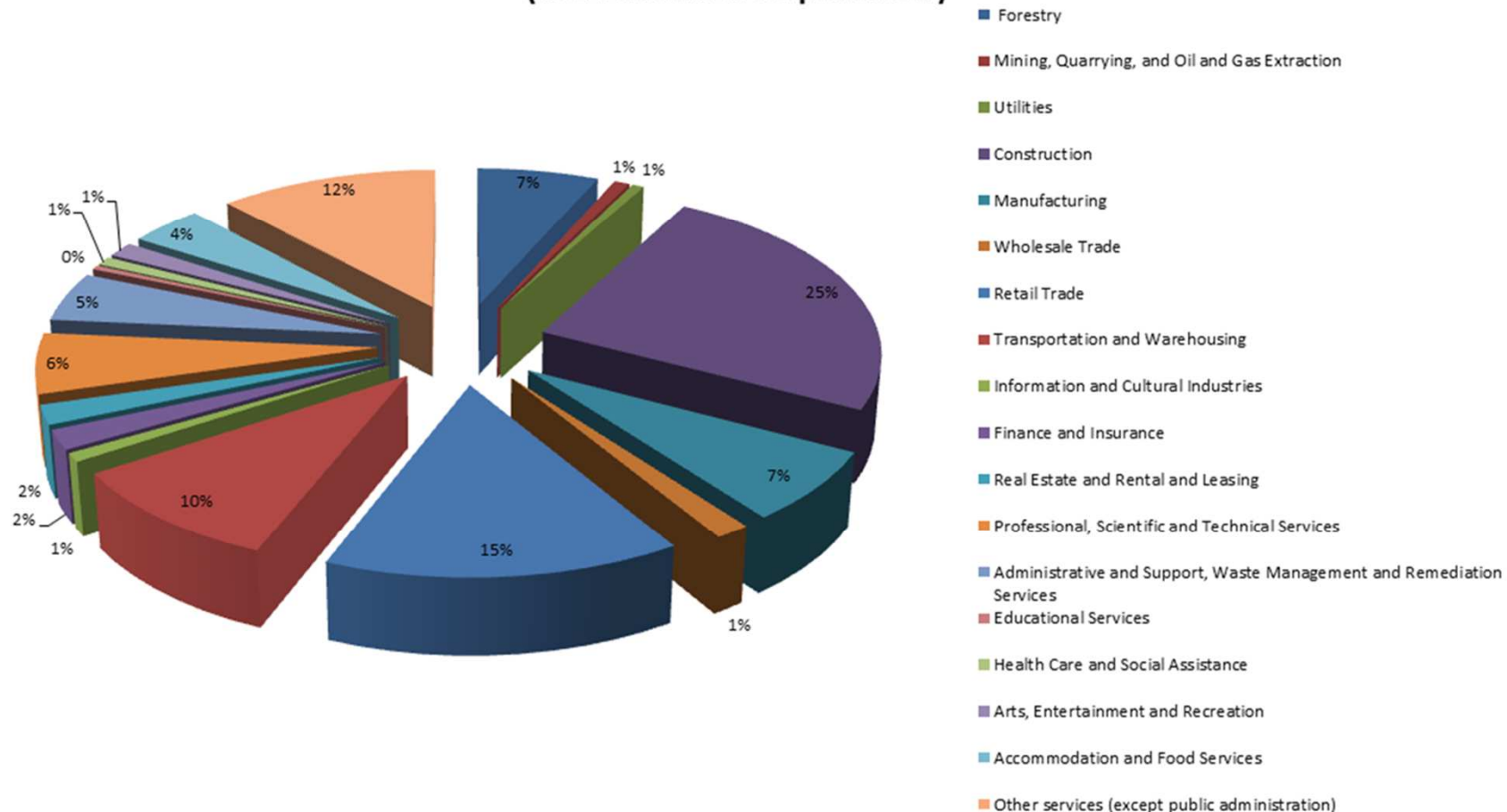
Four First Nations: 7,858 (2015)

Total Trade Population 24,369 (2015)



Economic Development Methodology

**Mackenzie County Business License Breakdown
(471 Businesses respondents)**





Advocate – Champion and Team-up

1) Advocate: In the role of advocate, the County can leverage their collective voice and resources for various project champions to be more effective, expand participation, draw new investment, reach new partners, access provincial and/or federal dollars, etc.

- REDI – Broadband project
- FVSD – House Building Project, Rocky Lane Farms, Seniors Lodge
- Review the tax assessment process
- Advocate for Aboriginals



A.C.T. (Page 9-10)

2) *Champion:* In the role of ‘champion’ the County will lead with strategic direction and provide resources (people, time and budget) to implement projects or processes.

- Champion infrastructure for business development
- Champion a regional buyer, supplier network, a regional business directory
- Champion an investment marketplace of local investors, business and projects.
- Champion a BR&E program, business visits



A.C.T. (Page 11-12)

Team Up: The County can collaboratively team up with other organizations' projects and processes. Especially get involved with those which support business retention and new investment, or lessen challenges such as businesses' access to employees, to profitability and/or to market.

- Talk with regional organizations about their projects – have a monthly inventory for Council.
- Team-up with organizations caught in the bureaucracy or which need a collective voice. AHS, FVSD
- Provincial and federal funding programs.



Economic Development Strategy (Pg. 12-34)

The goals are to:

1. Foster an environment that supports existing businesses with a focused business retention and expansion program;
2. Establish an entrepreneurial spirit in the community with an Investment Opportunity Marketplace that supports local new businesses and community projects, utilizing local investor funds; and
3. Focus the energy around Tourism Development to first understand the markets you have and then work on the attraction of those markets.



The Role of Staff

