

## **COUNCIL REPORT**

**To:** Mayor and Council

**From:** Administration

**Date:** June 16, 2025

**Subject:** Economic Development Staffing – Grant Application Update

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council receives this report for information.

### **BACKGROUND:**

This report is to inform Council that the District's application to the South Peace Mackenzie Trust for the "Invest in Mackenzie – Pilot Program" to increase capacity within the economic development service area was approved. The following outlines the proposed workplan and key deliverables that will follow from the 2-year project.

### **Purpose and Sustainability Considerations:**

The project has been designed to result in key deliverables and data that will help the organization assess increasing capacity within the department long-term. It is intended to accelerate current workplans as well as provide recommendations for an expanded service offering if the position was to be funded long-term or provide new insights to adjust current service offerings.

**Project Summary:** A two-year pilot program to increase investment attraction efforts for the District. This will include hiring an Economic Development Coordinator that will work in collaboration with current staff on District initiatives, however, also will have projects and assignments with a core focus on investment attraction and industrial relations activities.

**Project Timeline:** January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027

### **Project Deliverables include:**

- Hire a second Economic Development Coordinator to focus on investment attraction
- Development of investment marketing materials
- Attend strategic industrial, resource management, and green tech conferences and tradeshows to meet industry players and spread the word about the opportunities in Mackenzie

- Conduct year-long online marketing campaign
- Improve local communication and relationships with industrial sector businesses in Mackenzie by:
  - Meeting regularly and conducting one-on-one interviews with industrial businesses to better understand the current operating environment, the challenges and opportunities they face.
  - Use this information to research where the District can play a role in helping their businesses grow and thrive, and, at the end of the two years, develop a series of recommendations specific to developing those sectors.
  - Connect current service providers with large projects and share information about what is on the horizon and how our businesses can prepare for these opportunities in advance.
  - Attend and present at the Mackenzie Chamber of Commerce Monthly Luncheons
  - Work with the Mackenzie Chamber of Commerce to share resources.
- Prepare a final report on the marketing campaign, interview findings, research/policy development and share recommendations for next steps for investment attraction activities for the District.

**BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

The District has allocated \$48,900 from the McLeod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest dividends to fund this project.

**COUNCIL PRIORITIES:**

**Economic Vitality**

- The District is a leader on efforts aimed at diversifying the community's economy, supporting local businesses, and attracting new investment to the community. Diversification, a strong business sector and new investment are key to our economic vitality.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Emily Kaehn, Director of Corporate Services

**Reviewed By:** Corporate and Financial Services

**Approved By:** Chief Administrative Officer