

COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor and Council

From: Administration

Date: January 12, 2026

Subject: Resolution of Support – NDIT – Labour Market Research Plans

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council supports the District of Mackenzie’s application to Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) under the Labour Market Research Plans (LMR) program for up to \$50,000 to undertake a Workforce, Business Landscape & Service Gap Assessment.

BACKGROUND:

Northern Development Initiative Trust administers the Rural and Remote Employment Initiatives Fund (RREIF), funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia. The fund aims to support rural and remote communities in navigating economic impacts such as tariffs, supply chain delays, and increased raw material costs.

The Labour Market Research Plans (LMR) program provides up to \$50,000 in grant funding, covering up to 90% of eligible project costs, to local governments for community-specific labour market research. Applicants must contribute a minimum of 10% of the project budget through cash or other eligible sources.

PROJECT SCOPE:

Our community faces ongoing labour market challenges, including workforce shortages, skills gaps, economic pressures and supply chain disruptions. Conducting a Workforce, Business Landscape & Service Gap Assessment will enable us to:

- Assess Current Workforce
- Analyze Business Landscape
- Identify Opportunities and Gaps

The selected consulting firm for this project will deliver a comprehensive study with the following components:

- Detailed Review of the Current Workforce
- Review of the Current Business Landscape
- Current and Predicted Employment Opportunities
- Business and Service Gap Analysis
- Recommendations and Final Report

This research will provide critical, timely, and relevant information to guide immediate action and long-term strategies for workforce development, supporting sustainable economic growth. It will also position our community to access future funding opportunities under the Rural and Remote Employment Initiatives Fund.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING INITIATIVES:

The Workforce, Business Landscape & Service Gap Assessment will complement and strengthen the District's Marketing Plan and Invest in Mackenzie project by:

- **Informing Marketing Strategies:** Reliable labour market and business insights will support the development of targeted campaigns that highlight Mackenzie's competitive advantages and growth potential.
- **Supporting Community Branding:** Demonstrating proactive planning reinforces Mackenzie's image as a business-friendly, forward-thinking community.
- **Identifying Investment Opportunities:** The Business and Service Gap Analysis will reveal sectors with unmet demand, creating clear opportunities for new businesses and investors.
- **Strengthening Strategic Positioning:** Recommendations will guide investment attraction initiatives and future economic development projects.

By aligning with these initiatives, the Workforce, Business Landscape & Service Gap Assessment will serve as a foundational tool for marketing, investment attraction, and long-term economic sustainability.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The District's required contribution, representing the remaining 10% of project costs (up to \$5,600), will be funded through the General Government Operating Budget.



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:

Rachelle Richman, Economic Development Coordinator

Reviewed By: Corporate and Financial Services

Approved By: Chief Administrative Officer