

100 Mile House Economic Development Strategy 2021 and Beyond



100 Mile House is a vibrant, resilient community set within a healthy natural environment, where people can thrive personally and economically.

Simply put – it is Miles Ahead!



This program is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.



DISTRICT OF
100 Mile House



100 Mile House

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Executive Summary

What is the purpose of the Economic Development Strategy?

The Strategy recognizes that all things being equal, 100 Mile House faces the risk of losing business and people to other towns or larger urban areas. Ultimately, the Strategy has been developed to increase opportunities, attract new investment and enhance the quality of life for 100 Mile House residents. The project researched the community's current economic situation, reviewed existing plans and strategies, engaged the community online and virtually. Then – based on 100 Mile House's strengths and challenges – six Strategic Pillars were identified for the community to focus on over the coming years.

What are the Strategy's Pillars?

There are six overarching Strategic Pillars:

1. An Inclusive and Effective Economic Development Program
2. A Modern and Comprehensive Economic Development Toolbox
3. The Cariboo Leader in Business Development and Support
4. A Desirable Community for Working and Living
5. Supporting Economic Diversity and Opportunities
6. Be Prepared for Disasters

Initial Strategies

Within each Strategic Pillar, specific strategies have been identified. While there are 43

strategies, ten are identified as short-term priorities and should be completed within 0 – 18 months. These are:

1. Economic Development Advisory Panel
2. Review and Enhance Community Transition Assistant Position
3. Create Regular Communications
4. Complete a BC Rural Dividend Fund Application
5. Create a Community Profile
6. Establish a "100 Mile House BusinessCounts" Program
7. Utilize Revitalization Tax Exemption to Encourage Development
8. Connectivity Partnership
9. Incorporate Inclusion and Respect for Cultural Diversity
10. Prepare an Economic Disaster Recovery and Resiliency Plan

What happens next?

A part of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, an implementation matrix has been developed providing the specific action steps required to complete the Short-Term Priority Strategies. The matrix is provided as a separate working document. It provides the roadmap necessary to ensure the Economic Development Strategy stays on track, is accountable and is monitored to ensure objectives are being met or adjusted depending on existing or evolving conditions at the local level and beyond. The matrix provides the action steps and identifies potential partners, budget requirements and timelines.



Introduction

A vibrant community of approximately 2,000 residents, the District of 100 Mile House offers a balance that focuses on community, resiliency, and development. Providing effective, high-quality services to the community and surrounding area of about 15,000 residents in the South Cariboo is a priority (a population that swells to 25,000 or more in the summer months). Together, Council and staff work to ensure residents, business owners and visitors enjoy a lifestyle that encourages the best of rural and urban living.

Over the past four years, the District has been challenged with several economic disruptions. In 2017, wildfires caused widespread evacuations; in 2018, extreme smoky conditions due to regional wildfires lead to sharply reduced tourism activity. In 2019, mill closures and curtailments directly impacted over 400 employees in the region. Then came 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic. Through it all, the businesses and residents have remained resilient and determined to grow back stronger.

The District recognizes the need for a plan that will provide the community's direction to transition the economy to become even more resilient, grow the economic diversification base, and transition into a community that will prepare for future economic disruptions.

This Strategy aims to make the District of 100 Mile a better place to live with a stronger economy. The Strategy will guide the District to improve and diversify the local economy. The District does not want a plan that sits on the shelf, but one that can be actively implemented because it is based on input and ideas from the community and because it identifies actions that can be led through collaboration and partnerships. By implementing this Strategy, the District will be better positioned to develop

a strong, sustainable, and vibrant economy. A plan where people want to live, visit and do business.

Process

The process for the development of this Strategy included the following phases:

- i. Project Initiation
- ii. Review and Analysis
- iii. Stakeholder Engagement
- iv. Analysis and Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)
- v. Recommendations and Reports

Building on past reports and plans

In developing the Strategy, a number of existing reports and plans were reviewed, including:

- **100 Mile House, BC CED Assessment:** A rapid need assessment for community recovery and revitalization. A study completed by SFU Community Economic Development's Mill Closure Response Team (October 2020): An assessment was completed to assist 100 Mile House in their economic strategy plan. The plan provided findings and recommendations as a starting point for further discussion on the community's economic future.
- **100 Mile House Business Walk Report (2019):** A report summarizing survey findings from the third Business Walk completed. One hundred eighteen businesses were surveyed, and the report identified challenges, current labour statistics and what assistance is required.
- **100 Mile House Visitor Guide (2019):** Tourism-focused guide providing

information on the region, including events, accommodations and history.

- **Labour Market Study (2019):** Key actions include an annual survey of employer job demand, training and retraining initiatives, marketing and recruitment campaign, and support for important supporting factors (housing, broadband, etc.).
- **Economic Development Plan (2018):** The plan priorities three strategic areas and nine goals. There were an additional two strategic areas identified but not ranked as priorities.
- **100 Mile House Business Walk Report (2017):** A report summarizing survey findings from 73 local businesses compared to the 2016 report.
- **2017 Wildfire Recovery Plan – South Cariboo (April 2018):** This report was produced to assess the impact and identify recovery recommendations after the 2017 wildfires in the South Cariboo.
- **100 Mile House Business Walk Report (2016):** A report summarizing the survey findings from local businesses, including the current state of business, labour force and challenges.
- **Economic Development Building Blocks (March 2016):** A summary report of economic development priorities and strategies identified after a day-long workshop.
- **District of 100 Mile Official Community Plan (March 2016):** The OCP provides the community vision and a set of objectives and policies to guide the orderly growth and development of the community. The plan identifies the

vision as: *“100 Mile House is a vibrant, resilient community set within a healthy natural environment, where people can thrive personally and economically. Simply put – it is Miles Ahead!”*

- **District of 100 Mile House Official Community Plan (March 2006)**

The role of the Economic Development Strategy

This Economic Development Strategy plans to provide the direction for 100 Mile House to transition the economy to become more resilient, grow the economic diversification base and transition into a community prepared for future economic disruptions.

The Strategy:

- Identifies the challenges and opportunities the community is facing
- Identifies 100 Mile House’s economic value proposition and the likely drivers of growth
- Proposes several objectives and actions that will positively affect economic drivers

An example of how the Economic Development Strategy relates to other strategies

The Strategy was developed in coordination with previous plans and studies undertaken by 100 Mile House. The CED Assessment study completed by SFU Community Economic Development’s Mill Closure Response Team in October 2020 identified 49 specific action items. These items were reviewed and evaluated and, together with 100 Mile House Council, were prioritized. There are several action items from that study reflected in the completion of this Strategy. This alignment recognizes that economic development efforts must be coordinated to positively affect the quality of life and economy of 100 Mile House.

Partnership

Key economic partners and stakeholders within 100 Mile House and the surrounding region have been involved in completing this Strategy. Specific partners have been identified to assist in implementing the Strategy. In contrast, other partners will be instrumental in providing additional support or financial resources. Throughout this Strategy, we have identified areas where economic development can work with industries, investors, individual businesses, and residents to increase the community's economic potential.

100 Mile House Council

The 100 Mile House Council can help encourage local economic prosperity through:

- Helping create a community that is attractive to visit and live in
- Investing in new and existing infrastructure
- Balancing the need for regulation with a business-friendly attitude
- Supporting business development
- Helping to promote the community to current and potential investors, skilled workforce and others with access to resources
- Working to ensure the community's economy is resilient to future economic disruptions, events/change

Cariboo Regional District

The Cariboo Regional District (CRD) supports economic growth and stability throughout the Cariboo Chilcotin by:

- Working to facilitate connections between regional stakeholders (member municipalities, community groups, First Nations, small business, and industry

- Providing capacity support to community-led initiatives focused on ensuring the Cariboo Region remains a desirable place to live, work and invest.

The CRD's community economic development services are delivered through the Economic/Community Development Officer.

Cariboo Chilcotin Community Futures

The Community Futures Cariboo Chilcotin provides loans, training, coaching and information services to entrepreneurs. It will use its local, provincial and national reputation as an organization with proven results to support entrepreneurship, promote opportunities and various projects identified in this Strategy.

South Cariboo Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber acts as a forum through which businesses can speak, providing opportunities to network and allowing members to share ideas and solutions to business challenges. The Chamber has been going through some staffing changes, however, continues to run different programs to support local businesses. Chambers of Commerce can play a role in Business Retention programs, Shop Local initiatives, and more.

Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CCCTA)

The CCCTA is a non-profit, stakeholder-based Regional Destination Management Organization that leads tourism in development and marketing in conjunction with provincial ministries and industry partners in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Region to help foster responsible growth of tourism and empowering a resilient visitor economy.

Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT)

NDIT is a regionally operated economic development funding corporation for central and northern BC. NDIT operates independently from government and provides the funding and ability to identify and pursue new opportunities for stimulating economic growth and job creation within the region.

The business community

It is businesses that innovate, export, grow, create jobs and generate higher incomes for residents. All of the Strategy's objectives and actions aim to make 100 Mile House a better place to do business. Businesses play a key role in ensuring that this Strategy is successful by

supporting the specific actions identified to increase opportunities and expand and enhance businesses.

Provincial government

It is important to have various provincial ministries as Strategy partners. The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, Ministry of Forests, Land, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD), and Ministry of Municipal Affairs, will add value to the individual objectives and actions by providing additional support and may have the financial programs to further implementation.

Demographic Snapshot

The following provides a quick demographic snapshot of 100 Mile House. It is one of the first steps to understand the assets, opportunities and challenges in the community. It begins to provide insights into the residents and local economy. A more detailed demographic review is attached as Appendix A.

POPULATION

100 Mile House population has increased 5.0% during the last census periods (2011 - 2016). The population is ageing and is older than the regional and provincial averages. The median age is 51.2, and the average age is 47.4



EDUCATION

Close to one-third of the population does not have any certificate, diploma, or degree. Another third has a minimum of a high school diploma or degree, and the remaining third has post-secondary education.



LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

The top three sectors by employment are Retail (22.3%), Manufacturing (16.0%) and Accommodation and Food Services (13.2%).



INCOME

Median total income in 100 Mile House for 2015 was \$25,941. Median income in the CRD was 18% higher and 27% higher in BC than 100 Mile House.



BUSINESS

Of the total of 1,074 businesses, 85% have less than 20 employees.



HOUSING

Housing values are increasing but are significantly more affordable than larger communities. Average value of dwellings (2016) was \$204,231 - a 20% increase from 2011.



Source: Census Canada 2011 and 2016

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Community Engagement

This summary represents a glimpse into the thinking of 100 Mile House and area business and community members surrounding the concept of economic development and their opinions about what should be done to further economic development in the region.

The development of the Economic Development Strategy included a stakeholder engagement process involving interviews, zoom meetings with Council, focus groups and a comprehensive online survey. The goal was to develop an economic development strategy supported by both the business sector and the broader community. The engagement process was somewhat limited due to COVID19 restrictions, which were beyond the control of the District or the Consultant. The engagement was intended to create the foundation of support for a targeted economic development strategy and direction to guide economic development actions over the coming years. Despite the restrictions, the Consultant believes that the information collected as part of the First

Impressions Assessment Report, the online survey, the Zoom focus groups and discussions, along with the review of various studies and reports, have provided ample information to develop a strategy that stakeholders can support and implement.

The following summary provides a compilation of findings, analysis, and conclusions used to support this economic development strategy development. From the beginning of this process, it was evident that there is broad support for economic development within the project's geographic areas. It is clear, though, that it must be well managed, focused, new partnerships developed, and that increased engagement with the business community is necessary.

Based on the information collected, the items below are identified as high priority issues that need to be addressed to encourage and support economic development moving forward:

- Increase partnerships throughout the region, including those with Indigenous communities, CRD and other economic development agencies
- In terms of opportunities, the region recognized that forestry, while still needing to be supported, is not the economic generator that it once was, and new opportunities need to be pursued
- There is a need to attract new residents to the region, including remote workers
- Broadband infrastructure needs to be expanded to support the local economy
- Perceived lack of services and amenities affects the communities (including healthcare)
- Seasonal residents are seen as a challenge for sustainable, year-round business in some sectors
- Agriculture is an important sector to engage and work with
- Seniors are a large percentage of the population base and require enhanced available support services
- Increasing awareness of what economic development does
- Tourism is seen as the most important industry sector for the area



Online Survey Results

100 Mile House and Area

An online survey was developed for this project that asked questions of both residents and businesses. In addition to quantitative analysis, the survey included open-ended questions. The qualitative responses were analyzed, enabling exploration of stakeholders' perspectives at a deeper level on key issues and topics and are included in the key findings. The survey collected 414 responses, of which 89 were business owners.



38%

of respondents are aged 50 - 64



43%

have lived in the community for more than 15 years



66%

have a positive image of the community



51%

think existing companies staying and expanding in the area should be the number one goal for economic development



39%

think better lifestyle amenities in the area should be the number two goal for economic development



36%

think retaining and attracting young professionals to the area should be the number three goal for economic development



21%

own a business in 100 Mile House



41%

of businesses are home-based



34%

have thought about starting a business but lack start-up funds

Two separate documents (Survey – 100 Mile House and Area Responses and Survey – 100 Mile House Responses) has been provided to the District. These documents present the responses to the resident and business survey questions.

SWOT Analysis

An important phase of the strategic planning process is looking at the 100 Mile House economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The information is gained through various methods, including stakeholder and community engagement. A SWOT analysis provides an inventory of a community's strengths and weaknesses combined with their opportunities and threats to assess the degree to which each economic factor supports future growth.

The overall goal of the SWOT is to have a clear understanding of strengths and areas of potential that can be built upon and better marketed. The findings of this analysis, combined with other research, are used to develop recommendations for inclusion in the overall strategic economic development plan.

The SWOT was developed through stakeholder discussions, survey information, and consultant observations. We do not intend for this analysis of issues to be all-inclusive. Rather, we focus on those areas that will directly impact specific components of future economic development efforts in the community and region. We define the four aspects of "SWOT" in terms of:

- **Strengths:** Issues or characteristics that can be built upon to advance current and future economic growth opportunities
- **Weaknesses:** Issues or characteristics that, if not addressed effectively, could limit current or future growth opportunities
- **Opportunities:** Assets, events, or trends that offer the potential for economic growth and attraction of new industry and retention and expansion of what you already have
- **Threats:** Obstacles, events or trends that could threaten the economic potential and its ability to attract, expand and start up new employers. These are typically items that are beyond the ability of the community to control

Observations in this report are based on consultation collected from local citizens, businesses, council and staff through focus groups, interviews and online survey methods. Analyzing the perception that residents and businesses in 100 Mile House and area have is an important step in how well the community conveys its strengths or tells its economic development story. The District of 100 Mile House can examine their strengths and challenges within two key factors, which are important economic development topics:

- Community and surrounding area
- Business and economic development climate

Those looking to locate or expand will analyze these factors to determine how well a community ranks compared to other communities. 100 Mile House needs to be aware of its strengths and opportunities to expand upon them. At the same time, the community needs to be aware of its threats and weaknesses. It is only through understanding the SWOT of a community or region that programs can be developed to adjust and proactively work towards a resolution that will increase opportunities.

Overall, it has been determined that 100 Mile House has some significant strengths. However, it is important to address identified weaknesses to capitalize on the strengths. Failure to recognize and work

towards improvement will make it difficult to achieve the community's goal towards a sustainable and prosperous economy.

The following overview is not a list of priorities but rather a combination of comments received and observations from the consultants. Appendix B provides additional details on each of the factors identified in the graphic below.





Price
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The Roadmap

The goals, strategies and actions in this plan were developed during various stages in the project, including engagement with community members and stakeholders. As previously mentioned, the engagement process was somewhat limited due to COVID19 restrictions, which were beyond the control of the District or the Consultant.

The overall plan identifies six key themes, including some foundational items that will set the District up for long-term economic development success.

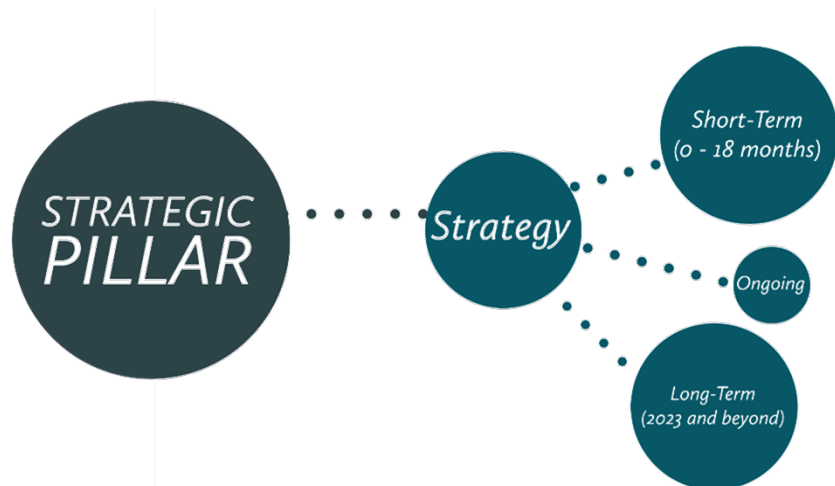
- An Inclusive and Effective Economic Development Program
- A Modern and Comprehensive Economic Development Toolbox
- The Cariboo Leader in Business Development and Support
- A Desirable Community for Working and Living
- Supporting Economic Diversity and Opportunities
- Be Prepared for Disasters

There are 43 strategies identified for implementation within the six key themes over the next three to five years. The successful

execution of the strategies identified on the following pages will need the support of all organizations, companies, entities, and individuals interested in the development of 100 Mile House's economy and prosperity.

Of the 43 strategies, ten are identified as Short-Term Priorities (0 – 18 months). These strategies represent the priorities and the foundational actions that need to be implemented before other actions can be executed. Though there are a number of strategies to be implemented with the first 18 months of the plan, we have taken into consideration the current economic development capacity – one half-time manager and one full-time assistant. We have also taken into account the annual budget, and many of the strategies identified require only staff time or limited financial resources. We have also identified other potential funding streams when possible. For example, one strategy is to apply for funding through the Rural Dividend Fund, which will provide additional funding support for implementation.

For the implementation of this plan, the specific strategies are presented in the following manner:





An Inclusive and Effective Economic Development Program

Some believe that all a community needs to do is focus on being a great place to live (quality of life) and the economic part will take care of itself. In economic development, the concept of “quality of life” includes a complex balance of indicators from jobs and education to healthcare and housing. It includes arts and culture and infrastructure too. For 100 Mile House to strengthen and diversify the economy and build a community with a great quality of life, all those pieces need to be in place. They need to be working in harmony with each other, and they need to grow together. But first, there needs to be a strong economic development program that has the capacity and is supported by the local Council, the business community and residents. It needs to have an overall framework to develop and pursue appropriate investments, opportunities and projects strategically.

1. Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP)



An economic development advisory panel is different than a committee and a more informal process. It does not require “official” appointments. The members are there to exchange current information within their organization and hear from the District what is occurring from an economic development perspective. A panel like this is easier to manage and leaves no expectations that participants are expected to carry out specific tasks. It is a good way to exchange information with a broad range of industry and business stakeholders. Typically, these meetings are held quarterly and chaired by the Economic Development Manager or Officer. Senior District staff can attend and can include other District representatives as well as industry stakeholders. We would recommend the panel include representatives from the following:

- Council
- Cariboo Regional District
- Community Futures
- Tourism/Visitors Information Centre
- Large business/Industry representation
- Small business/downtown representation
- Real estate/land development
- Other business/industry/agency

The panel could help in several areas of implementing this plan and help identify future strategies or projects. Engaging key industry stakeholders is a critical component of any economic development program, including investment attraction and business retention efforts.

2. Economic Development Advisory Panel Training



With the creation of the Economic Development Advisory Panel, it is important to make sure that every new member is informed of economic development's role in supporting and expanding the local economy. Committee members need to understand their role right from the start and know the expectations and responsibilities. A priority of the new EDAP should be to host an Economic Development for Local Leaders workshop. The workshop is supported by an Economic Development Primer and Manual to help guide new and future members.

3. Review and Enhance Community Transition Assistant Position



100 Mile House recently received funding for a Community Transition Assistant. The position is temporary and was funded for two years. For the community to successfully implement the plan and move forward in its long-term economic development efforts, it is recommended that the position be extended beyond two years. The position's duties and responsibilities can be reviewed to ensure they are aligned with the plan's implementation, and an application for additional funding can be made. The Community Transition Assistant job description should include the following capabilities:

- Identify, plan and implement strategic initiatives that will effectively position the District of 100 Mile House as a key and desired location for business and new investment
- Establish and maintain an up-to-date, comprehensive inventory of all real estate options, vacant lands, buildings and related opportunities
- Provide current information to new prospective businesses and residents seeking materials and data about 100 Mile House while confidentially and expeditiously responding to site selection requests in a thorough and complete manner
- Manage and maintain an up-to-date information database, including confidential, demographic and market research materials, in both electronic and hardcopy format
- Assist with implementing economic development marketing programs in alignment with overall marketing and branding direction
- Assist with managing the District's economic development promotional materials, including multimedia tools, print and electronic advertising campaigns, publications, promotional items, information packages, and other resources materials designed to meet the District marketing initiatives
- Develop, maintain and support content and creative development for social media channels

4. Create Regular Communications

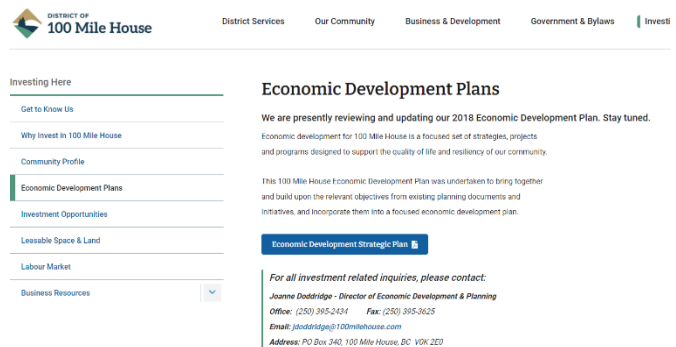


The implementation of this plan and the key changes that will take place for economic development in 100 Mile House must be communicated to the business community, residents, and stakeholders to ensure everyone is aware of what is happening, the successes and the accomplishments. Small wins are an important aspect of economic development. Communicating your economic development successes (small or large) helps build support and understanding of what you are trying to accomplish. Communication has various audiences – internal (i.e. local businesses) and external (i.e. potential investors or residents). There is a need for 100 Mile House to address both audiences. Below are some suggestions for implementation to improve internal and external communications. Keeping in mind existing resources (i.e. staff), it is understood that not all suggestions can be completed within the short-term. Discussions should take place between the economic development manager and the assistant to determine which should take priority. It is recommended that communication with Council be a priority while the other suggestions become long-term enhancements when staff and financial resources allow.

Internal Communication:

- *Quarterly written report to Council* – providing high-level information on what has happened within the department, including the number and broad description of inquiries, activities implemented from plan including successes and any risks associated, number and broad description of meetings, etc. The report is only a short overview and should not include details or confidential information of any kind.
- *Annual presentation to Council* – the presentation should include a high-level overview of the previous year’s work focusing on completions and successes. The presentation should include a summary of a proposed work plan for the coming year.
- *Newsletter* – the online survey indicates residents and businesses do not have a clear understanding of what economic development is or what goals, projects and successes are in the community. 100 Mile House has demonstrated

excellence in communicating the Economic Development Strategy steps, including releasing online survey results, project updates, etc. There is an opportunity for the District to increase the promotion of economic development, including Strategy implementation and current projects and successes. Many communities have smaller newsletters, such as Coffee Talk, that get distributed throughout the community. Alternatively, the economic development department can develop an electronic newsletter. The newsletter can report on council meeting outcomes and next meetings, business opportunities, public notices, etc. The newsletter could also include a specific section highlighting individual businesses, new residents, or returning youth.



- *Social Media* – with the recent redesign and economic development-focused website, there is an opportunity to incorporate and increase social media platforms to communicate with residents and local businesses. The newly approved Community Transition Assistant position can incorporate a skill set to create a strong social media campaign. A well-structured campaign would include ongoing content and ways to grow the District’s social media presence, including local businesses, new investment, and the attraction of workers and new residents.

External Communication

- *Investment database* – economic development needs to focus on building its investment database, including potential investors, levels of government, supply chain, developers, real estate, new residents etc. This database will be utilized to distribute specific

investment news, successes and opportunities. Coordination with the Visitors Information Centre could help to collect contact information for the database.

- *Newsletter* - an investment-focused newsletter that can be distributed electronically to those in the investment database. The newsletter should be short and designed in keeping with the 100 Mile House brand but needs to be eye-catching. The newsletter should be quarterly and include opportunities and successes. It should be focused on “selling” the community to new residents, entrepreneurs, investors, businesses, etc. A typical newsletter could feature a specific property, provide a business success/testimonial, specific investment programs (local or provincial), highlight an advantage and include a “fun fact” on 100 Mile House or surrounding area. There could be a newsletter sign-up page on the economic development website.
- *Provincial Partnerships* – having relationships with Provincial agencies involved in attracting and supporting business in BC is critical. It is important that the community build relationships with key staff and educate them on the opportunities available in 100 Mile House. Whether it is the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, Ministry of Forests, Land, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Ministry of Municipal Affairs (Provincial Nominee Program) or any other Ministry working with businesses.

5. Leverage Resources and Capacity through Partnerships

One of the most effective ways to encourage economic growth is to establish cooperative partnerships. Successful communities will be the first to admit they don’t do it alone. Economic development needs to maintain existing partnerships and work to align new, broad-based partnerships that increase the community’s identity, build on strengths, and address barriers to growth and the mobilization of resources.

- *Meeting(s) with First Nations (Canim Lake)* – Municipalities and First Nations want to, and need to, collaborate as neighbours. It is recommended that 100 Mile House initiate regular bi-annual meetings with the Canim Lake Band to address regional issues, identify mutually beneficial projects and work together to build a more sustainable economy. Discussions with Canim Lake Band should include hosting a Community to Community (C2C) Forum. Since 1999, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Indigenous Services Canada have provided funding for the C2C program. The C2C program can contribute a maximum of 100% of the costs of eligible activities – to a maximum of \$5,000.00. C2C Forums must include direct dialogue between elected officials and/or senior staff of neighbouring First Nations and local government and work toward one or more of the following objectives:
 - Strengthening relationships and fostering future co-operative action by building stronger links between First Nation and local government elected officials and senior staff

- Advancing First Nations and local governments to more formal relationships through protocols, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), service agreements and/or collaboration on plans or projects
- Supporting local reconciliation efforts, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and shared capacity building
- Developing or improving coordinated approaches to emergency preparation, mitigation, response and recovery, including recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

Funding and guidelines for hosting a C2C program can be found through Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). Applications will be accepted between March 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022.

- *Cariboo Regional District* – the CRD has expressed an interest in engaging in working together more on economic development issues and projects. There are various strategies recommended in this plan that are regional in focus, including Tourism Inventory, Agriculture Growth Strategy and Economic Disaster Recovery and Resiliency Planning. It is also recommended that a representative from the CRD (i.e. economic development) be asked to sit on the Economic Development Advisory Panel. CRD participation on the panel, will help identify specific initiatives that could be a partnership between the CRD and 100 Mile House. This type of cooperation will strengthen the economic development working relationship between CRD and 100 Mile House.
- *Provincial* – 100 Mile House has good relationships with the provincial government, particularly at the regional level. Several meetings and roundtables with the provincial government focused on assisting with the mill closure labour market assessment. This relationship needs to continue and maintain strong ties. An offer could be made to the Regional Manager to sit at the Economic Development Advisory Panel.

6. Raise 100 Mile House's Profile

The primary purpose of traditional economic development marketing is to generate interest from companies with expansion or relocation plans. However, given the current environment in which many skilled professionals are selecting place first and job second, the marketing campaign should also attract individuals to the region. Several strategies identified in this economic development strategy are designed to attract new residents, businesses and workers to the community. To achieve success in each of these efforts, the District must identify ways to differentiate the 100 Mile House Area from its competitors and focus on the community's efforts.

The area's well-known lakes, trails, and other aspects of the tourism industry is an exceptional asset for talent-attraction marketing. Not only is the area a popular destination among domestic tourists, but it is also a popular getaway for families to vacation and/or buy second homes.

To the extent that the area already boasts a positive reputation, the community has an exceptional platform for engaging visitors, whether in town for business or pleasure. Engagement should occur to have a conversation about the benefits of doing business in the area. Every opportunity must be taken to engage or educate talented professionals in a conversation about how they can pursue their careers, start a company, or relocate an existing business, to the area. Once issues like infrastructure (broadband), housing developments, and others are well underway, work should be done to establish a complimentary theme for tourism, business recruitment and talent attraction. These efforts can be combined with new Facebook and other Social media sites and using accommodation providers as a “starting point” to guests exploring investment and living opportunities. Well placed information sources and call-to-action cards in rooms and other strategic locations throughout the region can encourage visitors to take the time to discover all the benefits of the area.

7. Complete a BC Rural Dividend Application



The Rural Dividend Program has \$25 million a year to assist rural communities with a population of 25,000 or less to reinvigorate and diversify their local economy. The program has been suspended for this year but not cancelled. Staff are working with colleagues across other ministries to identify options for alternative funding, emphasizing community economic development diversification. It is recommended 100 Mile House keep in close contact with FLNRORD Ministry representatives (Regional Manager) to be kept aware of when the program will be reactivated. There are several strategies in this plan that could be applicable for a program application, including:

- Strategy 2: Economic Development Advisory Panel Training
- Strategy 9: Create a Community Profile
- Strategy 10: Land and Building Inventory
- Strategy 11: New Resident and Relocation Package
- Strategy 12: Business and Resource Directory
- Strategy 22: Resident and Remote Worker Attraction
- Strategy 30: Wayfinding
- Strategy 32: Tourism Inventory
- Strategy 33: Agriculture Sector Growth Strategy
- Strategy 43: Prepare an Economic Disaster Recovery and Resiliency Plan

A Modern and Comprehensive Economic Development Toolbox

Effective and comprehensive information is an essential economic development tool. Primary economic development practice is collecting, creating, and disseminating demographic, economic, sector, and other socio-community information to help improve planning and decision-making activities. It is critical to successful economic development to inform partnerships, stakeholders, investors, businesses and residents. The information collected is used to attract new businesses or residents, marketing the community to an external market, and targeting specific sectors. While materials exist these need to be updated to reflect the current information available and increased methods used to distribute the information to a wider audience.

8. Create a Community Profile



A community profile is usually the first piece of information that an investor, business or resident will look at when considering a community's potential suitability or other decision-making. The existing profile does provide some good information that should be incorporated into a more comprehensive profile that tells the story of the community. The new profile needs to have a high degree of visual content that supports the story and is missing from the existing profile. The following information (at minimum) should be included in the community profile:

- Regional overview – includes a map and community-specific information
- Demographics
- Labour
- Major employers
- Cost of doing business – taxation, utilities, etc.
- Transportation
- Quality of life factors – education, recreation, healthcare, housing

The profile should be developed in a user-friendly format and allow for future updates as information changes, including results from the 2021 Census. The profile should be made available electronically and only printed on demand. The CRD could partner on this project by providing data and other support. However, it is suggested the development of the profile should be contracted out to a firm with experience in design and economic development profile content.

9. Investment Attraction and Economic Development Activities

The redesign of the economic development-focused website is a good start in building a comprehensive toolbox, and the new community profile will be a great addition. By expanding and enhancing some of the tools already in place, 100 Mile House can develop a stronger marketing focus. The toolbox will need to have clear and concise materials focused on doing business in the community, the competitive advantages and on select targeted sectors (i.e. agriculture, virtual workers/entrepreneurs, retail, etc.). The development of these materials will address the short timelines investors typically have when searching out specific information on potential locations. Key information on labour, transportation, zoning, municipal fees, and utilities must be readily available and scaled to a specific opportunity in a format through easily available tools. Any printing of materials should be done in-house and printed at the time an

investor may be visiting. All of the tools should be available online. Some of the materials that could be developed include:

- Quick facts – one sheet that quickly outlines the “top 10” information investors are looking for
- Property sheets – one sheet “flyer” that promotes a specific property (land or building), including the specifics (zoning, size, services, price, etc.)
- Community profile
- Sector profiles – one-page profile on targeted economic sectors. The profiles could include agriculture, virtual workers/entrepreneurs, retail and other opportunities
- Business support or what economic development will do – this is a one-sheet on the services and “hand-holding” that economic development offers

10. Land and Building Inventory

One of the most critical pieces of information required to respond to inquiries (both internal and external) is the inventory of available land and buildings. While a community may meet the criteria regarding labour and other key decision-making issues, the required land needs to be available to attract new investment or satisfy local expansion needs. The development of a land inventory can benefit the District in several ways. It demonstrates the ability of the community to accommodate a company’s needs. At the same time, the information can be used to provide local government with a rationale for new zoning or OCP changes.

A detailed land and building inventory would include those owned by the District and the private sector (if listed with a realtor). Ideally, the inventory would include the following details on each parcel of land and building:

- Community infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.)
- Utilities
- Property Survey
- Zoning and OCP designations (city and regional district)
- Size (dimensions/acreage) of land
- Size of the building (if applicable)
- Access (road, rail)
- Assessments completed or necessary (i.e., Environmental, Archaeological, Environmental)
- Map
- Ownership status

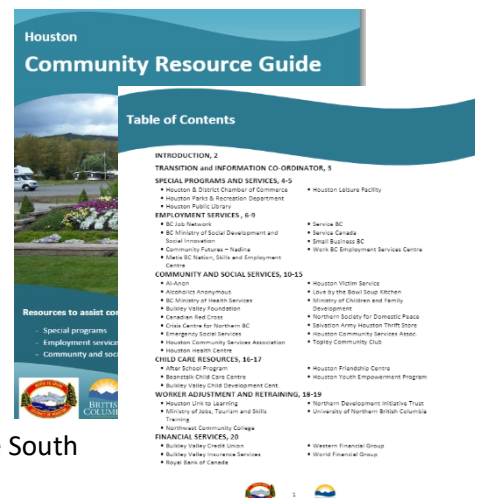
Once the inventory is finalized, a detailed analysis should be completed to see if the zoning and OCP designations support the potential best use of the property. Those properties identified for potential zoning and OCP amendments should not be included in any marketing until changes have been made. The final inventory should be published and used to attract investment and promote opportunities.

11. New Resident and Relocation Package

The Visitors Information Centre (VIC) provides a package of information. The package includes the existing community profile, 100 Mile House and South Cariboo Visitor Guide, real estate information, maps, childcare, things to do, etc. The information is useful to visitors or new residents; however, some of the information is dated and repetitive. The package would benefit from a redesign and update. A thorough review needs to be completed to ensure the package is the best it can be. 100 Mile House, along with the VIC, should meet to review the package and determine what materials should be included. We recommend less printed information and instead information directing individuals to the economic development website for additional information. For example, instead of the full community profile, the Quick Facts (above strategy) sheet be provided with a clear link to the economic development website for more detailed community information.

12. Business and Resource Directory

There was significant interest in having a business and resource directory for the District during the public consultation. The directory would include a list of businesses and the various services and other resources that existing residents and potential residents are looking for. The District of Houston Community Resource Guide is one example for 100 Mile House to use. Houston's guide only provides service resources and does not list businesses, but it does provide a good starting point to design the directory that will fit the needs of 100 Mile House. There may be potential to partner with the CRD and expand the directory to include listings for the South Cariboo.



The Cariboo Leader in Business Development and Support

Over the past several years, the District of 100 Mile House and the adjacent areas, like so many other communities, has been impacted by industry consolidation or closure of sawmilling facilities. While we can all hope to attract “the next big one,” the reality is that business attraction can, and often is, a zero-sum game. We can choose to put all our efforts into attracting a new industry or work towards building an environment where existing businesses thrive, entrepreneurs launch new businesses, and where every sector, regardless of size, sees the community as a viable place to invest. This approach can define the future of 100 Mile House – the “Cariboo” leader in Business Development and Support.

Through the implementation of various initiatives, the District of 100 Mile House can be seen as the leader in supporting existing businesses and new entrepreneurs. By taking this step, the community will start to be seen as a progressive community where business is supported and not hindered and where new investments and inward business relocations can occur.

The following measures will help secure a long-term future for the community where business feels supported and encouraged.

13. Establish a “100 Mile House BusinessCounts” Program

Although new business recruitment is often a priority of economic development strategies, Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) should be the most important economic development policy to discover the health of existing businesses in a community – and do something to support them. The residents and businesses of the 100 Mile area identified that working to ensure local businesses stay and expand in the community should be a number one priority.



Over time, BRE programs build stronger ties with businesses and goodwill among the public and private sectors in the community. Successful BRE programs can encourage businesses to continue to invest in the community they are in and resist those opportunities that come along for them to relocate. These programs also can inspire local businesses to promote the community to their business networks, vendors, and others as an ideal location in which to invest. A business walk is not a complete business retention and expansion program and should not be the only tool used to engage your businesses. While it is great to do a business walk, it does not delve into those issues that need to be discussed to identify challenges clearly and capitalize on potential opportunities. An annual business walk could, and should, be part of the overall 100 Mile House BusinessCounts Program. The walk can help you establish your targets for the following year's broader engagement efforts.

A 100 Mile House Business Counts program should be developed to regularly engage with existing businesses through a mix of one-on-one interviews (set a realistic target of number of visits based on staff resources) and business focus groups to work on specific mutual issues and challenges. Through the business interviews, the community will identify the current state of the existing businesses, including any challenges or opportunities. Due to this item's high priority, we have included additional details in Appendix C on the steps to take to establish this program.

It is recommended the BRE program begin with a “Kickstart”. This is where a consultant is brought into the community to conduct a series of one-on-one interviews with local businesses to get a baseline of information to build upon. A well-structured kickstart program will provide basic training on CRM, interview, enter data, complete referrals, and identify trends.

14. Supportive Local Government Policies

Local governments play an important role in developing the regulations and policies needed to support the success of economic development initiatives. Providing a regulatory environment that eases the burden on businesses can have just as much impact as providing financial incentives to companies. Time is money, and businesses appreciate locating or expanding in communities with minimal government delays and bureaucracy. The survey of the area demonstrated a strong desire to establish business-friendly regulations (54%), yet only 23.4% indicated that local government was a “challenge” for the local economic growth. However, there is a perception that local government policies may be a challenge. While every indication is that the local government is business-friendly and policies are not restrictive, perceptions can hurt a community's ability to succeed. A Bylaw and Policy Task Force could be established to review existing bylaws, policies and approval processes and then make recommendations on where they can be improved. This review will help address the perceptions and demonstrate to the business community that the local government is committed to helping businesses be successful.

15. 100 Mile BusinessCounts Workshop Series

A well-rounded business retention program should include developing different programs and services to demonstrate that the community is a leader in supporting existing businesses. One potential initiative identified in the survey is hosting a series of workshops on topics designed to help them overcome different challenges. These workshops could also help expand the partnerships with Community Futures, the South Cariboo Chamber of Commerce, and the newly created Downtown Business Alliance. During the workshops, it will be a good opportunity for both Community Futures and the local government to discuss what they are doing to support business and encourage more economic development. The following are some of the most referred to workshops that businesses expressed interest in attending.

- Funding or grant programs
- Marketing your business
- Social media for business
- Business planning (including management and leadership training)
- Accounting and finance

In addition to the above workshops, the community could partner with other community and regional organizations to fund a speaker series as part of workshops or social events where various service providers can share information about their services and programs with the business community.

16. Create a Vibrant and Lively Downtown by Creating a Downtown Business Alliance

Downtowns in many communities have experienced neglect, abuse and abandonment. Fortunately, over the last number of years, this trend has slowly begun to shift. Today,

communities recognize the value of downtowns and have implemented plans to revitalize, re-grow and reinvent.

Downtowns have an important and unique role in economic development and investment attraction. Generally, downtowns create a critical mass of activities where commercial, cultural, and civic activities are concentrated. This concentration facilitates business, investment, and cultural exchange. Creating a Downtown Business Alliance would create a partnership of stakeholders committed to improving the downtown in the District of 100 Mile House through initiatives and events.

Building a sense of place and a vibrancy to any community cannot be done overnight. But, small things can be initiated to help move a downtown towards creating a livelier and more vibrant place where the community wants to gather. Some of these initiatives are part of this economic development strategy, and others will be created as the Alliance begins working together on developing additional ones. Some ideas that the Alliance may want to consider as part of creating a culturally diverse downtown, are:

Music: One simple idea is to pipe music throughout the downtown during the summer. Port Alberni implemented this initiative in their downtown and instantly experienced an improved sense of place. People have remarked how much more enjoyable walking downtown is with the music playing, how coffee shops set up outdoor seating to enjoy the music, and the feeling of safety it provided after hours. This is a quick and easy win for communities to implement.

Art in Empty Buildings: Nothing portrays decline and defeat like empty storefronts. Even one empty building and make downtown look empty and feels in decline. What entrepreneur is going to be able to visualize themselves creating a successful business there? What visitor is going to stop long enough for even a bite to eat? What future resident is going to decide that this is the place we want to be? Changing perceptions is one of the first steps to turning around a small town.

While it is important to let people know that space is available, it does not mean that you have to show the space to everyone walking by. Using art is an excellent way to “dress up” a building in a cost-effective way and at the same time highlight the work of local artists.

Wi-Fi in the Downtown: With a potential partnership with Starlink, the community could meet the expectation of visitors of available and free wi-fi in the downtown core. The availability of Wi-Fi downtown offers people a reason to congregate to the area and stay a little longer. It demonstrates to visitors that the community is technologically connected – encouraging a creative and innovative community.

17. Create an Environment that Encourages Entrepreneurship

Moving beyond business retention (see “Establish a “100 Mile House BusinessCounts” Program”), the District should encourage the development and growth of local start-ups. Successful entrepreneurial development involves a strategic, organized and regionwide support system that provides the physical and social infrastructure entrepreneurs need. Such programs also connect entrepreneurs to capital, training, and technical assistance needed to start and grow their businesses. Ensuring that entrepreneurs feel valued – by helping them establish

relationships and recognizing their successes, for example – contributes to a community’s entrepreneurial climate. While economic development is often seen as difficult and resource-intensive, the benefits a community reaps from a successful entrepreneurship program can be immense. Fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem can help a community retain local innovation and talent, build and keep wealth in the area, and contribute to the community’s character. The District of 100 Mile House is fortunate to be served by one of the top-rated Community Futures in Western Canada. Community Futures Cariboo Chilcotin provides loans, training, coaching and information services to entrepreneurs.

Several initiatives in this strategy will encourage and support an entrepreneurial ecosystem; however, specific District-led initiatives will help it be known that the community supports and encourage start-ups. For example:

- Promote the services of Community Futures Cariboo Chilcotin
- Develop a guide on programs and services for entrepreneurs on the different assistance programs and agencies available to the business community and how they can help
- Work with Community Futures to increase its presence in the District of 100 Mile House by providing complimentary office space
- Make formal announcements and press releases at Council meetings on new entrepreneurs
- Waive business license fees for the first year of operations
- Develop a “pop-up” shop policy that encourages entrepreneurs to set up downtown during the summer in a designated area

18. Utilize Revitalization Tax Exemption to Encourage Development

Through Section 226 of the Community Charter, the Province of British Columbia provides local governments with authority to exempt property from municipal property value taxes (municipal tax portion). To use this authority, a Council must establish a revitalization program (with defined reasons for and objectives of the program), enter into agreements with property owners, and then exempt their property from taxation once all specified conditions of the program and the agreement have been met. Exemptions may apply to the value of land or improvements or both. Councils are free to specify, within their revitalization programs, the amounts and extent of tax exemptions available.



The District of 100 Mile House could consider making the entire community a Revitalization Tax Exemption Zone, allowing residential, commercial, and industrial developments to apply. These projects do not require new buildings but could be redevelopment or major modifications of existing buildings. Alternatively, the District could create several different zones, including:

- Birch Avenue (from 1st Street to 4th Street.)
- Red Coach Inn
- All of Exeter Station Road
- Hwy 97 Frontage Roads (Alder, Alpine, Taylor)

19. Further Enhancement of the Façade Improvement Program

A pleasant community appearance increases the first impression of a community as seen by a visitor or potential new resident. It increases home values, encourages new business

investment, and demonstrates vibrancy. To encourage businesses to enhance facades, the District of 100 Mile House participates in the Northern Development Initiative Trust Business Facade Improvement program. This program helps cover business costs associated with the Facade Improvement, and several 100 Mile House Businesses have taken advantage of the program. It is strongly encouraged that this program is continued and, if possible expanded. It can be combined with the Revitalization Tax Exemption incentive, and new partners sought to increase the number of facades that could be completed every year. New partners may include local construction companies, hardware stores (discounts on paint, lumber, etc.), or even a partnership with the School District to utilize students to paint and do minor repairs as part of work experience programs.

20. Continue to Support Immigrant Business Attraction

The District of 100 Mile House took the pro-active step to become a pilot community as part of the BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration (EI) Program. The EI Regional Pilot was introduced in March 2019 to support economic growth in smaller regional centres of B.C. On March 23, 2021, the Province of BC announced that this program is being extended for three years. With COVID19, it has been hard to implement this program due to travel limitations. With this recent extension, the District should remain as part of this program and develop the tools and resources to enable them to respond adequately and host and attract new immigrant investors to the community.

A Desirable Community for Working and Living

Where to live when you can work from anywhere is what many people are trying to answer now that remote working is a viable option. Remote working has been at the forefront since early 2020 as the pandemic dramatically shifted how many people work and where they work from. Many people have realized that life in the big city isn't what it was all cracked up to be – expensive rent, excessive traffic, no parking, crowded, etc. With video meetings over Zoom becoming an accepted practice, smaller communities are now able to attract new residents and workforce than ever before. While attracting new residents is an important component for successful communities, retaining your existing residents is an important factor, too. Many community aspects that attract new residents are the same ones that retain residents. These include good housing options, local services and amenities, and now more important than ever before, strong, reliable connectivity.

21. Connectivity Partnership

To attract workers who can work anywhere, 100 Mile House needs to ensure connectivity is strong, reliable and fast. The high cost of providing infrastructure for residents in and around rural and remote communities in B.C. has been identified by municipal governments, First Nations, regional districts, regional internet service providers, and community advocates as one of the key barriers to expanding internet services. NDIT administers the "Connecting British Columbia" program. This program helps to pay for the infrastructure required to deliver high-speed Internet connectivity to rural and remote areas of the province. Most recently, both the provincial and federal governments have committed financial resources to ensure all communities across Canada have the same connectivity regardless of location or size.



In 100 Mile House, several residents have opted to take advantage of the opportunity to pilot Starlink. The service appears to be providing a stable and reliable way to connect and work remotely. Starlink has recently partnered with a rural community in Northern Ontario (Pikangikum First Nation) to bring the internet to the entire community. In addition, other service providers like Telus and ABC Communications (ABC) are making significant investments in improving services through new funds made available from senior levels of government as they focus on making connectivity a priority for rural communities. A partnership between the CRD, the Canim Lake Indian Band, and the District of 100 Mile House should be explored to develop a pilot project between the area and SpaceX/Starlink, Telus, ABC or others, to provide additional connectivity. The expansion of the internet to the entire area can attract remote workers and supply current residents with reliable high-speed broadband internet.

22. Resident and Remote Worker Attraction

With new forms of communications (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.) and the dramatic shift to remote working, we live in a different environment today than we did pre-COVID. The pandemic has accelerated the realization for many industries that there is no need to be in bricks and mortar of a corporate head office. More and more individuals are working from home (virtual workers), and there is a large percentage of individuals who want to continue to work from home even after they can return to their company office. A recent poll by global staffing firm Robert Half shows that about one in three professionals (33 percent) currently working from home due to the pandemic would look for a new job if required to be in the office full time.

Remote workers come from a diverse sector base and can range from lawyers, graphic designers, HR support, and financial advisors to virtual assistants, researchers, marketers and sales roles. The diversity in this sector alone can change the economic make-up of any community. In short, remote work is expanding, increasingly popular, and it is a realistic opportunity for resident and business attraction. With affordable real estate, combined with a good selection of services and amenities, recreational activities and proximity to larger markets, virtual workers are a realistic target for 100 Mile House to pursue.

Typically attracting these types of people to the community would form part of a resident attraction program. Best practices that 100 Mile House can incorporate in a resident and remote worker attraction program include:

- Local government becoming the remote working leader by implementing flexible work policies internally
- Branding the community as supportive of remote work or being a “zoom” community
- Development of a focused “remote worker” promotional material(s) including comparative cost information with other cities/communities
- Development of “Living and Working in 100 Mile House” testimonial videos (30-60 seconds)
- A dedicated website and remote worker focused social media campaigns
- Partnering with local businesses and organizations to distribute marketing materials, including:
 - Visitors Information Centre
 - Local real estate agencies
 - Accommodations
- Use of testimonials to help attract new residents and remote workers

23. Remote Worker BusinessCounts Co-Working Space

The current global pandemic has had devastating negative economic impacts worldwide. But it is also introducing new opportunities to explore for communities and businesses. Many companies recognize that having large office spaces where workers will gather to carry out daily tasks may be unnecessary and allow remote working. Workers, however, will still want to, at times, get out to a location where they can meet with others or make use of equipment they do not have at home. Co-working spaces can take various forms and in no way do they need to be fancy and expensive to set up. Building on other strategies such as the extension of broadband and the attraction of remote workers, the community would benefit from establishing a co-working space. The BusinessCounts co-working space would offer temporary desks and act as a shared office space where members, such as freelancers or those who work from home, can rent desk space for various periods. This co-working space should be located near the downtown core within walking distance to coffee shops and other services. It would work in the Martin Exeter Hall facilities.

24. Housing and Residential Development

Like many other communities, the availability of housing at an affordable price is a key desire. 100 Mile House does have affordable housing, particularly when compared to larger, more urban centres. The community is experiencing higher relocation inquiries as remote working becomes more accessible; however, housing supply may not meet the demand. Housing and residential development need to address the primary target groups:

- Urban dwellers seeking the best in a rural lifestyle but proximity to all amenities offered by nearby cities, including Kamloops, Kelowna and Vancouver
- Youth who have roots in the community and may consider returning to raise a family in 100 Mile House once they have completed their education
- Seniors who have a high-priced property to sell in larger, urban cities and wish to free up capital by purchasing a more moderately priced home in 100 Mile House
- Families looking for an affordable and safe community to raise their children

In addition, to facilitate new rental housing and homeownership opportunities for middle-income families, a partnership could be considered between a local non-profit, the District of 100 Mile House, Canim Lake Band, and HousingHub. The HousingHub is facilitating new opportunities and partnerships with traditional and non-traditional partners to create new affordable homes. BC Budget 2021 provides \$2 billion in development financing through HousingHub to support these types of community-based projects.

There will need to be a promotion of 100 Mile House as a great place to live. The promotion would be targeted to the above groups. It will be important to identify where the best locations for additional residential development are. These locations must fit within the Official Community Plan, and zoning by-laws must also be reviewed, confirmed or determined.

25. Residential and Commercial Developer Attraction

With the expected increase in demand for new locations to live in, the community has the opportunity to attract new developers for both resident and commercial development. To be effective in this, several strategies must be completed before successful marketing can be carried out. For example, it will be important to have an up-to-date community profile completed (Strategy 8) and a land inventory (Strategy 10). Once this information has been completed, the community should consider hosting a familiarization tour. Familiarization tours are effective in showcasing location and resources but are invaluable to establish personal relationships with potential clients. Properly designed, these tours are a uniquely effective form of marketing to raise a community's profile. One method for tours is with existing developers, real estate agencies and others that can play a crucial role in marketing the community for future projects. Inviting developers from the lower mainland and realtors that are part of the BC Northern Commercial Council to be part of a tour highlighting sites for development, empty buildings, and talking about plans will help increase the awareness of the opportunities in the community. These tours would last a half-day, concluding with a luncheon and a presentation from the Mayor and Economic Development Officer.

26. Support Senior Housing Needs

Seniors represent a large portion of the District's population (30%). A 2018 study showed that over half of seniors aged 75 or older indicated they want to stay close to friends and family in their community. The importance of staying within the community cannot be overlooked as research indicates this contributes to emotional well-being and happiness. During the online consultation, seniors housing was something of concern. There appears to be a need for housing (seniors and otherwise), particularly as the District's population continues to age.

The recent 2021 provincial budget announced their commitment to continue to provide funding to support the construction of 114,000 units, including funding 10,000 new housing units over the fiscal plan through grant funding to non-profit housing providers and \$1.6 billion in capital investments. The new units will help BC residents, such as middle-income families, seniors, Indigenous peoples, and women and children. 100 Mile House should provide assistance in the way of supporting funding applications, finding suitable land, and facilitating the permitting process.

27. Enhancing and Communicating Public Amenities

Quality of life amenities are an important part of the community's economic strength and why many choose to live in 100 Mile House. Centennial Park, municipal campground, a diverse mix of snowmobile and hiking trails all provide significant amenities enjoyed by residents and visitors. Successful communities recognize the importance of recreation, parks, and access to nature in their ability to make themselves more attractive to talented workers and new businesses. The landscaped downtown, combined with banners, flowers, and more, are part of the amenities residents appreciate. Many residents expressed a desire to see a new pool developed. While a pool is nice to have, it can also be an expensive and money-losing venture. The community, in partnership with the Cariboo Regional District, continues to do research on the feasibility of a pool and at this time no decision has been made. A mixture of the District maintaining and enhancing community parks and recreational facilities, supporting local groups to maintain trails and build new ones, and working with the private sector to promote visually appealing facades or frontage should be pursued.

28. Expand Festivals and Events

The online survey found that residents want to have more activities and amenities offered. 100 Mile House does have several events throughout the year, including Hot July Nights and the Santa Claus Parade, but there may be room for more. Increasingly, municipalities temporarily close streets to motor vehicles (generally on weekends) and open up streets to non-motorized traffic and temporary businesses. The benefit is more people frequenting an area, spending money on products and services and creating a more vibrant downtown. An example of an event that could be held downtown is one focused on art, allowing artists and other vendors to set up pop-up galleries, exhibits, and displays.

29. Incorporate Inclusion and Respect for Cultural Diversity

Inclusion is not just the smart thing to do; it is also the right thing to do. It is what is not only desired but expected by all levels of government and business. To create a culturally inclusive community, there needs to be business leaders who are committed to

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Term**

making the community equitable and inclusive, a place to live, work, and play and where all people have the opportunity to thrive, belong, and contribute regardless of age, gender or ethnicity.

Through creating an “Inclusivity Task Force,” a comprehensive program could be established to create a culturally inclusive community and become a leader in British Columbia on creating a community that is open for all. A variety of projects could be considered, such as:

- Implement Community to Community Forum with Canin Lake Band (Strategy 5)
- Hanging of the Canin Lake Indian Band or the Shuswap Nation Flag at the District office
- A blend of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous banner art along Main Street and Highway 97
- Development of a Culturally Inclusive Business Recognition Program
 - Self-assessment of a specified criteria
 - Window certificates recognizing the participating businesses.
- Development of specific age and culturally friendly events
- Designation as a Dementia Friendly Community
- Hosting of workshops on equity and inclusion

The Inclusivity Task Force would include Canin Lake Band, businesses, community groups representing seniors and youth, Council and others.

Supporting Economic Diversity and Opportunities - Tourism

The majority of economic development organizations are not responsible for tourism. However, some organizations, particularly smaller communities, combine both economic development and tourism activities. While the District funds tourism, there is no direct management of the tourism activities by the economic development department. It should be noted that tourism-related activities often cross over into economic development and visa versa. There are several strategies within this plan where tourism and economic development are equally affected.

30. Wayfinding

Wayfinding refers to systems that help people find their way from one place to another. Many elements contribute to wayfinding, from landmarks to maps to handheld GPS systems to ask for directions from a friendly stranger. Good wayfinding is a blend of art and science. When executed well, wayfinding can give visitors key information on what is around to experience. It can lead to additional time being spent in the community and surrounding area. It can increase awareness to future residents on what is available to see and do if they lived in the area. Wayfinding is typically done by signage or by creating an app for use on smartphones. Both have pros and cons.

Individuals/visitors can use Wayfinding signage to:

- Identify various points of interest throughout the community and surrounding area – usually multiple sites on one sign
- Celebrate heritage sites to visitors and residents
- Encourage visitors to turn off the main road through the community and stop at a local place of business
- Take advantage of the major transportation corridors and centres in the community

Some communities have opted to create or purchase an app that can be downloaded onto cell phones or tablets and connected to Wi-Fi or cellular networks. These apps can be used to promote various points of interest and promote local businesses. An app recently released by BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is called 468 Insider and could be considered in partnership with CCCTA or the CRD. 100 Mile House needs to create a wayfinding strategy to determine the best mix of tools to increase awareness of the region.

31. Cohesive and Coordinated Tourism Partnerships

100 Mile House has a well-managed Visitor Information Centre, and tourism marketing for the region is managed through the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CCCTA). While we do not recommend that the District's economic development department take over tourism responsibilities, we recommend that a clear understanding of roles and ongoing projects are defined. Regular meetings between economic development and the CCCTA will help clarify what is being done and enable the District to talk about what is being done to support tourism. The most logical schedule would be quarterly based on the four tourism seasons. During each meeting, discussions regarding how the hotel marketing tax is being applied, upcoming events, need for additional resources, etc. can be explored. These meetings will allow economic development and tourism to work together seamlessly and build a strong relationship built on trust and understanding.

32. Tourism Inventory

Tourism was ranked as a top sector for future regional growth potential in the community online survey. To better understand the tourism potential, it is important to identify what assets or inventory the community and surrounding area have. Complimenting this would be an inventory of existing tourism-related businesses, their current status, capacity and business opportunities. An inventory of tourism-related assets will help define what 100 Mile House offers concerning its infrastructure, culture, activities and events that visitors can experience. The inventory of these assets can clarify where the greatest opportunities currently exist and identify gaps and potential for tourism development and promotion.

Supporting Economic Diversity and Opportunities - Agriculture

Agriculture has been ongoing in the South Cariboo area since the Cariboo Gold Rush in the late 1800s. At one point, the Cariboo was filled with roadhouses along the gold rush trail, which served as stopovers for miners. The roadhouse supplied many of the needs of the travellers, including dairy, poultry, livestock and more. An “Agricultural Land Use Inventory,” completed in 2015 by the CRD and the BC Ministry of Agriculture, showed that the area still reflects its agriculture history. While dairy is gone, cattle production has been a mainstay of the region, combined with small scale mixed agriculture.

The loss of abattoirs over the years negatively impacts those requiring slaughtering capacity, resulting in a decline in cattle ranching.

While the SFU study identified a significant number of strategies that could be implemented to support the sector, the recommendations are not, for the most part, feasible for local government to implement. Several strategies included in this plan, such as a Business Retention and Expansion Program, Business Workshops and more, are all areas where they should also support the agriculture sector. The following strategies are recommended to provide a realistic chance to build the foundation for a strong and vibrant agricultural sector.

33. Agriculture Sector Growth Strategy

Building on the 2015 Agricultural Land Inventory and the recommendations included in the SFU report, the community, working with the CRD, should develop a broad-based and realistic strategy to sustain and grow the agriculture sector. A dedicated working group consisting of the different agriculture support agencies like the 4-H Club and the South Cariboo Farmers Market, along with producers, Canin Lake Indian Band, and both the CRD and the District of 100 Mile House should develop the strategy. While this should be a partnership, the CRD should take the lead as most agriculture production occurs outside of the District of 100 Mile House.

34. Explore Opportunities for Year-Round Local Grown Products

While fruit and vegetable pricing is always a challenge in rural communities the current trend is individuals wanting to live in areas where locally grown products are available. Many of these individuals are willing to pay more for locally sourced produce. Adopting new technology allowing affordable options to grow local produce is opening the doors to new opportunities. There can be community solutions such as working with existing producers in establishing or expanding a locally grown food cooperative, or the private sector can be partnered with or encouraged to take the initiative.



Several options exist that could be considered for the region. New technology such as container growing by companies like The Growcer could be a possibility. The Growcer empowers communities, retailers, and organizations to grow local produce effortlessly anytime and anywhere, from the arctic to the desert, with their hydroponic container farms. New operations are under development in BC in communities like Squamish, Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a (Prince Rupert). The project is typically run by a local organization or through establishing a social enterprise or a cooperative. A local entrepreneur could also start it with facilitated support from the local governments to help them access different programs and other levels of assistance.

35. Agriculture Public Awareness

One of the biggest challenges facing the agriculture industry today is the lack of awareness of what it takes to bring food to the table. The cost of land, equipment, growing, processing and distribution make agriculture an expensive venture. The challenge also exists in educating the public on the different aspects of farming and why some things are done the way they are. These pressures will undoubtedly increase as residents move from more urban locations to rural communities in search of a lifestyle offering more space to do things.

To fight this challenge, we need to develop programs and initiatives to educate new and existing residents and our youth on the value of agriculture. The District of 100 Mile House, working with the CRD, the South Cariboo Chamber of Commerce, 4-H and others, could develop a new multi-phased education program. Several initiatives to increase the awareness of the value of agriculture could be developed, including:

- Inviting the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation to work with local schools to distribute information to students
- Host a Value of Agriculture Farm Tours once per year
- Hold an annual Farm Tour, inviting regional decision-makers, realtors, and lenders to discover the different types of agriculture production available in the region
- Development of Fact Sheets – talking about the South Cariboo Agriculture Sector

36. Explore the Feasibility of a Local Abattoir Cooperative

Ranching has been negatively impacted in recent years due to the loss of local butchering facilities to kill, cut and wrap meat. In many cases, animals need to be shipped as far as Manitoba for processing, taking away any opportunities to purchase or market locally grown meat. The situation arose following a decision by the B.C. government in 2004 to put in policies around slaughterhouses that require a meat inspection system in provincially licensed Class A and B abattoirs. Abattoirs must have a trained government meat inspector to inspect each animal beforehand and each carcass after slaughter. This increases cost and reduces feasibility. Efforts should continue to encourage the government to change these requirements. Still, in the meantime, an application should be made for funding to explore the feasibility of establishing an Abattoir Cooperative. It should be noted that this opportunity was also identified in the SFU Report.

Supporting Economic Diversity and Opportunities – Forestry

At one point, forestry was the largest employer in the region, including primary harvesting and manufacturing. While forestry may no longer provide the jobs that it once did, the sector remains an important part of the local economy. Keeping the current state of the forest industry in mind, a limited number of strategies directly related to the sector are included. This is for several reasons, including:

- There is a strong need to diversify and strengthen other sectors
- The need to ensure timber supply remains in the community for processing is a political issue and typically out of the control of economic development
- Many strategies previously identified will support the forest sector and other sectors, including those in “The Cariboo Leader in Business Development and Support,” along with many foundational strategies. It will be critical for the District to maintain regular communications with West Fraser and others involved in this industry through the implementation of the Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Stakeholders ranked forestry as the fifth sector in order of those holding the most potential for economic growth

37. Leverage the Community Forest to Support Sector Sustainability

The 100 Mile Development Corporation manages the Community Forest on a multi-use basis with the primary focus on good environmental stewardship, guaranteed recreational and public use opportunities and the continued enhancement of the forest resource. No plan is readily available to demonstrate the long-term forecast for the Community Forest on how the resources extracted will be targeted towards community value. In reviewing the financial information for the Development Corporation, it looks like both are well run and are creating a return on investment. A partnership between the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC) and 100 Mile House Development Corporation has focused on reducing the risk of wildfires in the area. This project with FESBC is critical work as part of a mitigation phase to reduce the risk for another economic disaster due to wildfires. There are several ways in which the Community Forest could develop programs to encourage new investment in the industry and benefit from previous resource attraction. This could include projects such as:

- Complete a “Strategic Plan” that outlines future activities of the Community Forest. This plan should be a public document
- Forestry Dragons Den: Many residents are using wood to develop new value-added products. A partnership between the 100 Mile Development Corporation, Community Futures, and West Fraser could be developed to host an annual “Dragons Den.” This annual event would bring together local/regional residents to submit business plans, project concepts, etc. on projects that utilize wood products and have the potential to create new jobs. The winner(s) of the “Dragons Den” would receive a small grant to help the project become a reality
- Continue to support the development of new recreational assets, including bike trails, snowmobile trails, skiing, and more. This shows the value of the work done through resource extraction and builds assets used to support and retain existing residents and attract new ones and visitors

38. Work with the Sector to Retain Facilities and Increase Competitiveness

While the 100 Mile House BusinessCounts initiatives will see an increase in business engagement, a special focus needs to be established to meet those in the Forest sector regularly. Through a mix of one-on-one meetings and focus groups, the District and the CRD need to be in constant communication to understand the industry's challenges and opportunities better. By hearing firsthand, the challenges, the community will be better prepared to deal with the impacts of closures or downsizing. This engagement should include the primary facilities like West Fraser or Log Home Building Companies - and those involved in resource extraction and support industries.

Supporting Economic Diversity and Opportunities – Retail

The economic landscape is changing, and the marketplace of the 21st century is global. To compete and thrive, communities need to have economic development strategies and flexible, innovative, and sustainable actions. Initiatives need to take advantage of every opportunity to support locally-owned businesses. Downtown 100 Mile House is highly valued by residents and businesses and is considered a strength of the community. Downtown’s main street provides residents with a broad mixture of land uses, including a theatre, financial institutions, pharmacy, insurers, restaurants, the municipal office and several varieties of retail shopping. Other businesses provide a wide range of shopping, professional services, and other services to the larger region off the downtown main street. While 100 Mile House

| <u>Cities/Villages with 1,000-2,500 Pop. - Average of 143 Downtowns</u> | | | <u>Cities/Villages with 5,000-10,000 Pop. - Average of 45 Downtowns</u> | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------|---|---------------|----------------------|
| <u>NAICS Description</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Sales (000's)</u> | <u>NAICS Description</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Sales (000's)</u> |
| Full-service restaurants | 3.19 | 1,520 | Full-service restaurants | 7.93 | 5,378 |
| Drinking places (alcoholic beverages) | 2.17 | 528 | Beauty salons | 6.69 | 1,451 |
| Beauty salons | 2.15 | 284 | Drinking places (alcoholic beverages) | 3.91 | 1,224 |
| Gasoline stations | 1.08 | 4,085 | Automotive mechanical & electrical repair | 2.18 | 854 |
| Automotive mechanical & electrical repair | 1.08 | 409 | Gift, novelty, & souvenir stores | 2.04 | 729 |
| Grocery stores | 1.01 | 5,077 | Other amusement (bowling, golf, fitness) | 1.93 | 791 |
| Other amusement (bowling, golf, fitness) | 0.98 | 511 | Used merchandise stores | 1.82 | 810 |
| Gift, novelty, & souvenir stores | 0.92 | 332 | Gasoline stations | 1.71 | 5,527 |
| Used merchandise stores | 0.64 | 201 | Appliance, television, & other electronics stores | 1.69 | 3,322 |
| Automotive parts, accessories, & tire stores | 0.54 | 429 | Grocery stores | 1.56 | 13,973 |
| Automotive body, paint, interior, & glass | 0.54 | 176 | Barber shops | 1.33 | 148 |
| Florists | 0.53 | 126 | Specialized building material dealers | 1.27 | 2,240 |
| Specialty food stores | 0.52 | 706 | Jewelry stores | 1.13 | 830 |
| Barber shops | 0.5 | 43 | Florists | 1.11 | 413 |
| Hardware stores | 0.47 | 788 | Automotive parts, accessories, & tire stores | 1.09 | 1,550 |

has good retail variety options, residents believe that some products or services are not locally available, and therefore they must shop outside the community. What are the opportunities, and how can 100 Mile House attract new retail options? One way to begin to answer the question is to understand the typical number and type of businesses located in smaller communities:

Based on the above tables, 100 Mile House seems to be well serviced. However, there may indeed be gaps in products and services supplied within the community. By comparing this table with the responses collected as part of the survey of residents, we can start to understand better where gaps may exist. Alternatively, it may be a case of better-educating residents on what is available already within the community.

39. Establish a Robust Shop Local Program

“Buy local” (local first, shop local, etc.) programs and local branding educate consumers about the economic and social advantages that independent and local businesses bring to a community. The ultimate goal of these campaigns is to create a thriving local economy by maximizing the potential of local businesses and increasing their market share relative to non-locally owned businesses.

With the proximity of Williams Lake, Kamloops, and the increase in online shopping, many residents are drawn to the larger retail offerings there than local retailers. While buy local campaigns are not new to 100 Mile House, an event or a strong program that promotes local purchasing to residents, local procurement to businesses, and positions 100 Mile House as a valid retail option is seen as having value. The program would be an addition or expansion to the existing shop local programs including the Love 100 Mile House, the Chamber of Commerce and the Free Press programs. There is value to having all the “players” (i.e. Chamber and First Press) be partners in the new shop local program. An expanded program would better define 100 Mile House’s identity and brand to residents, visitors and businesses. The shop-local program could also help businesses identify a better or more intriguing value proposition and articulate their competitive advantage to attract residents to their offerings instead of the retailers outside the community.

40. Establish a First Impression Retail Assessment Program

100 Mile House can choose to take control of its economic destiny. As part of the community online consultation, residents were questioned about their shopping habits. Slightly more than 60 percent (61.6%) of residents shop outside 100 Mile House at least once a month. A similar percentage (61.1%) spend over \$150.00 per month outside the community. Most residents (84.6%) who shop outside of 100 Mile House say the service or product is not available. There is an opportunity for 100 Mile House to bring together the retail sector to determine how they can lessen the threat of consumer leakage from the community. The benefits of a thriving independent business sector are not limited to the economy. Small businesses help define a community’s self-image and can be a point of pride for its residents. Small businesses downtown can demonstrate the vitality of a community and help attract visitors and new residents. Using the BRE program, retail businesses can be asked their level of interest in attending a workshop focused on educating and enhancing their business and customers’ experience. The workshop could include information on current shopping patterns, trends, social influences, technology, management effectiveness, product mix, niche retail, branding

and marketing. As a value-add, workshop participants could sign up for additional one-on-one consultation to assess their retail operation. The assessment would include first impressions, access/signage, displays, available product, etc. This workshop and assessment could be a partnership with the Retail Council of BC, who will have the expertise and network of consultants to deliver the workshop and assessments.

41. Build Retail Capacity

The SFU Assessment report completed in the fall of 2020 provided a section on the retail industry. This section identified several strategies that we believe should be reviewed to determine if worthwhile of implementation. The specific strategies we recommend reviewing are:

- *Support capacity building for current and new business owners (recommendation 30 in the SFU report)* – this could be completed through the Business Retention and Expansion program (Strategy 13)
- *Perform a retail price points comparison (recommendation 31 in the SFU report)* – discuss with the South Cariboo Chamber of Commerce as an activity they could take on
- *Leverage locals' current interest in and demand for local products during COVID-19 to normalize the habit of buying local in 100 Mile (recommendation 32 in the SFU report)* – this could be completed through the Establish a Robust Shop Local Program (Strategy 39)

42. Expand Retail Sector

The International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC) hosts an annual conference in Whistler. The event provides a great opportunity to network learn more about the ideas and institutions shaping the retail industry. Many retailers attending the show are looking at location opportunities. Smaller communities within the province have attended past shows with excellent results. 100 Mile House should explore the potential of attending the 2023 ICSC show. The attendance could be in partnership with surrounding communities to make it more affordable and showcase the wider region to retail operators. Before attending the event, 100 Mile House can identify the specific targets they are looking for and develop the appropriate marketing materials to take along to the show.

Be Prepared for Disasters

Every area of the province is vulnerable to disasters, such as floods and fires. In 2020, unexpected events like COVID19 clearly illustrated how disasters could affect every community. Communities can face dramatic social and humanitarian consequences in the wake of a disaster, as well as sudden economic losses and dislocation. Not only have disasters become more frequent in recent years, but also their impacts have become more costly. Preparing Economic Disaster Recovery Programs is an important part of economic development activities and helps to ensure the local economy is resilient and can recover faster.

43. Prepare an Economic Disaster Recovery and Resiliency Plan

100 Mile House is vulnerable to many types of disasters, particularly wildfires. It should develop a plan and associated programs to ensure the community is prepared for the economic consequences post-disaster. Typical programs as part of a resiliency plan include:



- hosting key business data in the cloud
- establishing a tiered approach for business re-entry
- educate the businesses on the importance of preparedness
- establishing a disaster communications plan
- ensuring staff responsible for economic development is included in the emergency operations centre.

Conclusion

An economic development strategy is a “guiding” document to help the community be more prosperous. While it may seem there are a lot of recommendations in this plan every effort has been made to ensure the strategies are to be implemented over a period of years. Some strategies will become ongoing activities, while others will have a clear and defined start and finish.

Successful economic development does not just happen because of local government actions. It takes the partnerships and the participation of a much broader community. By working together, implementing the recommendations, and ensuring the community is inclusive, the District of 100 Mile House will be a more prosperous community for all.

To follow are 13 key things that every community should incorporate into economic development to create optimism and show the community that you support a stronger and more resilient economy for the future.

1. **It’s both Community Development and Economic Development.** The old way of thinking that community development and economic development are two separate things no longer holds true. In today’s economic development world, you cannot do successful economic development without community development.
2. **Understand what your economic development staff does.** Local elected officials will be more effective in leading economic development activities when they have a clear understanding of what economic development staff do on a daily basis.
3. **Have an economic development strategy plan in place and up-to-date.** A strategic plan serves a number of purposes for the community and its elected officials. It provides a roadmap that will guide the community to the desired future.
4. **Understand your local and regional assets.** By understanding your community’s economic assets, the vision and strategies you create will be based on the true reality of your community and will significantly increase the likelihood of implementation and success. Your assets are not defined by municipal boundaries. Think regional.
5. **Measure your success.** Performance measure should flow from the community’s strategic plan with specific metrics selected to measure the progress towards the plan’s objectives. If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.
6. **Develop strong partnerships.** Economic development cannot be done in a silo. Strong and mutually beneficial partnerships need to be developed and nurtured. The role of the local official is increasingly important to economic development partnerships. Partnerships with the Province of BC, Community Futures, Regional District, Tourism Associations and others are all critical to the success of your efforts.

7. **Have your foundational pieces in place.** Think of economic development using an analogy of the structure of a house. There are important pieces of information required (the foundation) to ensure future economic development goals can be successful.
8. **Engage your business community.** Local officials can help create an environment that supports the growth and expansion of local businesses, primarily by opening lines of communication. Meet with businesses, listen to businesses, help businesses deal with challenges that they may have, and help to facilitate business growth.
9. **Foster an Entrepreneurial Environment.** Entrepreneurs create jobs. Local officials can play an important role in promoting entrepreneurship in their communities. Doing this in partnership with Community Futures will help to ensure many of the pieces are in place to help entrepreneurs grow and create new jobs and bring new money in the community.
10. **Be realistic about your readiness.** Economic development is seemingly always under pressure to deliver more and deliver faster. This tendency can cause short-sighted decisions that lead to long-term problems. Local elected officials need to take the time to truly understand their community's level of readiness for economic development activities.
11. **Celebrate the small wins.** There is a tendency to only celebrate "big" successes – the relocation of a large company, for example. Most communities may never have this opportunity and it is important for elected officials to understand a small win – an existing company adding three jobs – is a success and should be celebrated.
12. **Use your tourism assets.** Local leaders can better support economic development efforts and realize greater benefits from knowing how tourism assets can effect change in a community. These assets may be beyond your municipal boundaries. Find ways to encourage people to use the regional assets but still stay, visit and potentially move and invest in your community.
13. **Be disaster ready.** Successful communities need to take the steps to prepare for the unexpected disaster that may occur. It could be the loss of another major employer, a wildfire (like experienced in 2017), flooding, or a pandemic. Ensuring that you have a plan in place to manage the "*economic*" impacts of future disasters will help your community to be resilient to unexpected change. Components of the previous "12 Things" can be used in your economic disaster planning process.



Visitor Centre



Appendix A

Current Status Economic Overview

The ultimate resource in economic development is people. It is people, not capital or raw materials that develop an economy.

- Peter Drucker -



Appendix A: Current Status – Economic Overview

This section assesses the advantages 100 Mile House offers its residents and businesses. The assessment is based on categories such as population change, education attainment, changes in labour force, employment change, housing and income. The data is based on Statistics Canada 2016 census data (last census available) and data may include neighbouring communities for comparison purposes.

Location and Proximity

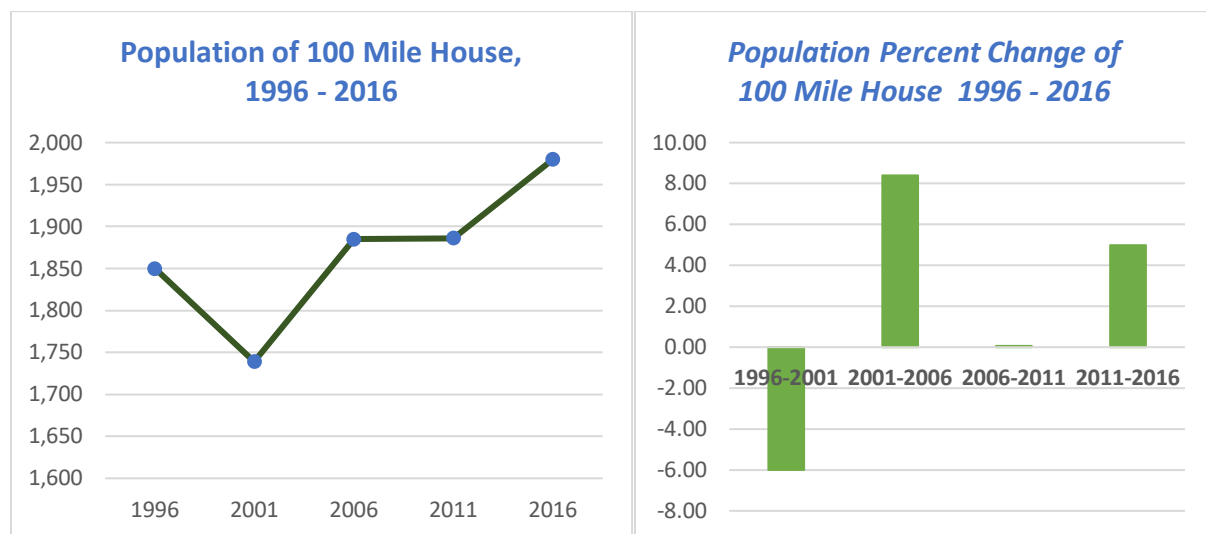
100 Mile House is centrally located in the heart of British Columbia’s interior region and is located along Highway 97. 100 Mile House has the advantage of being the commercial hub and main service centre for over 15,000 residents in the South Cariboo, a population that swells to 25,000 or more in the summer months.

Distance from 100 Mile House

| Destination | Kilometres (miles) | Travel Time |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Kamloops, BC | 196 (122) | 2 hours, 15 minutes |
| Vancouver, BC | 456 (284) | 5 hours, 15 minutes |
| Prince George, BC | 326 (202) | 3 hours, 40 minutes |
| Seattle, Washington | 568 (353) | 6 hours, 30 minutes |
| Calgary, Alberta | 813 (505) | 9 hours |

Population

Over the last 20 years 100 Mile House has experienced population growth of 7.0%. Population in 1996 was 1,850 and the last census period of 2016 reflects a population of 1,980. During the last census period (2011 – 2016) population growth was 5.0% - 1,886 (2011 census) to 1,980 (2016 census). 100 Mile House’s increasing population trend contrasts with regional population trend. Both the South Cariboo Region and the Cariboo Regional District lost population over the same 20-year census period of 1996 – 2016, decreasing 4.43% and 6.75%, respectively.



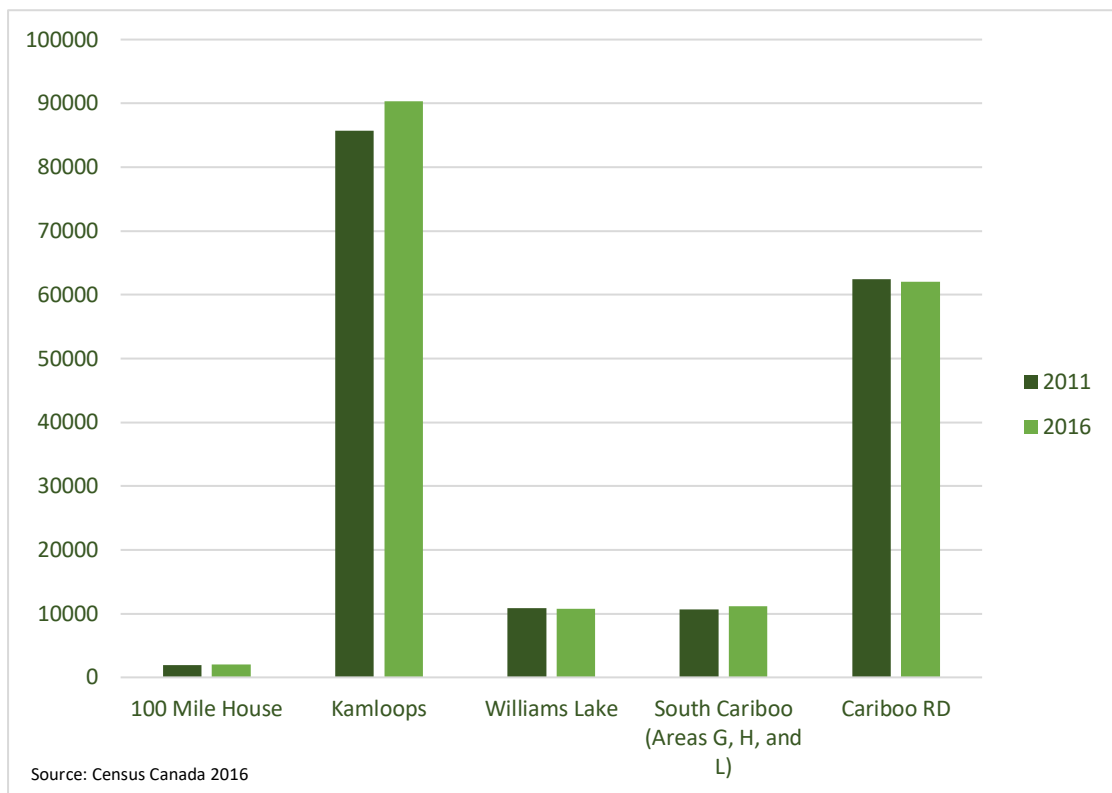
Source: Census Canada 2016

Source: Census Canada 2016

**Total Population, Number and Percentage Change in Population,
1996, 2006 and 2016**

| | 1996 | 2006 | 2016 | Pop. Change | % Change |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 100 Mile House | 1,850 | 1,885 | 1,980 | 130 | 7.03% |
| Williams Lake | 11,235 | 10,744 | 10,753 | -482 | -4.29% |
| Kamloops | 76,394 | 80,376 | 90,280 | 13,886 | 18.18% |
| South Cariboo (Areas G, H, and L) | 11,660 | 11,034 | 11,144 | -516 | -4.43% |
| Cariboo RD | 66,475 | 62,190 | 61,988 | -4,487 | -6.75% |
| Total | 144,719 | 144,451 | 154,248 | 9,529 | 6.58% |
| British Columbia | 3,724,500 | 3,907,738 | 4,648,055 | 923,555 | 24.80% |

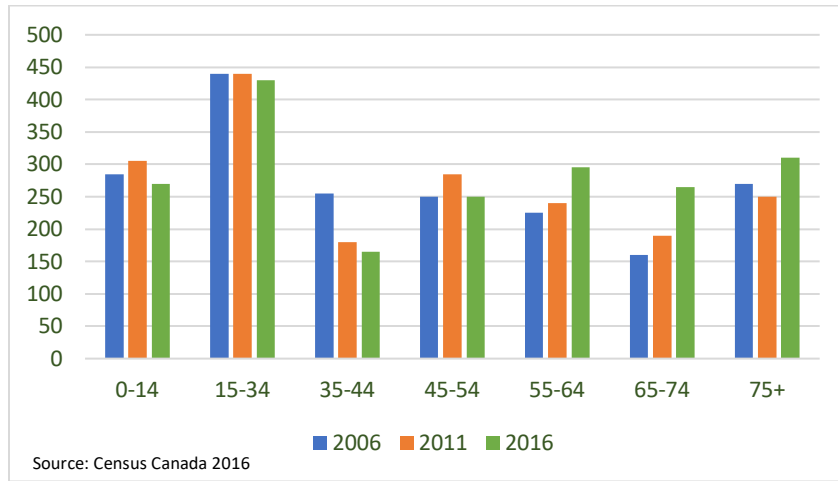
Source: Census Canada 2016



Age and gender profile

The population remains older than the regional and provincial averages – the median age is 51.2 compared to 47.4 in the Cariboo Regional District and 43.0 in the province. Median age is defined as the exact age where half the population is older, and half is younger. The median age in 100 Mile House has seen an increase since 2011, when it was at 46 years. The population is aging with close to one-third of 100 Mile House over the age of 65 (29.04% in 2016), compared to less than one-quarter (22.88%) in 2011. 100 Mile House has a significantly higher percentage of seniors when compared to both the Cariboo Regional District and the province, 17.46% and 18.20% respectively.

One Hundred Mile House, Age Groups, 2016



| | British Columbia | | Cariboo Regional District | One Hundred Mile House | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------|------|
| | 2016 | 2016 | 2016 | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 |
| Total Population | 4,648,055 | 61,988 | 1,885 | 1,880 | 1,980 | |
| 0-14 | # 691,390 | 9,530 | 285 | 305 | 270 | |
| | % 14.9% | 15.37% | 15.12% | 16.22% | 13.64% | |
| 15-34 | # 1,163,290 | 12,805 | 440 | 440 | 430 | |
| | % 25.0% | 20.66% | 23.34% | 23.40% | 21.72% | |
| 35-44 | # 588,635 | 6,635 | 255 | 180 | 165 | |
| | % 12.7% | 10.70% | 13.53% | 9.57% | 8.33% | |
| 45-54 | # 676,740 | 9,090 | 290 | 285 | 250 | |
| | % 14.6% | 14.66% | 15.38% | 15.16% | 12.63% | |
| 55-64 | # 679,020 | 11,005 | 225 | 240 | 295 | |
| | % 14.6% | 17.75% | 11.94% | 12.77% | 14.90% | |
| 65-74 | # 489,305 | 8,235 | 160 | 190 | 265 | |
| | % 10.5% | 13.28% | 8.49% | 10.11% | 13.38% | |
| 75+ | # 359,670 | 2,590 | 270 | 240 | 310 | |
| | % 7.7% | 4.18% | 14.32% | 12.77% | 15.66% | |
| Median Age | 43.0 | 47.4 | 51.2 | | | |
| Average Age | 42.3 | 44.1 | 47.4 | | | |

Source: Census Canada 2016

Education

Education is linked to many aspects of a community's well-being, including employment, community capacity, income, and health. Therefore, education data provides insight not only into the level of education present in the community but also informs about possible root causes of challenges in other areas of community well-being.

Education attainment for 2016 shows that close one-third (33.2%) of the 100 Mile House population do not have any certificate, diploma or degree, another third of the population have a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent and the remaining third have post-secondary education. For those individuals with post-secondary education, the majority (12.3%) have a university certificate or diploma, either below, at or above bachelor level. Comparisons for the Cariboo Regional District and province are included in the table below.

Educational Attainment (percentage) – population aged 15 years and over

| | 100 Mile House | Cariboo RD | BC |
|---|----------------|------------|-------|
| No certificate, diploma or degree | 33.2% | 25.8% | 15.5% |
| Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate | 33.6% | 32.4% | 29.4% |
| Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree | 33.2% | 41.8% | 55.0% |
| • Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma | 9.3% | 13.0% | 8.8% |
| ○ Trades certificate or diploma other than Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification | 3.3% | 5.2% | 3.7% |
| ○ Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification | 6.0% | 7.8% | 5.1% |
| • College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma | 12.0% | 16.3% | 18.1% |
| • University certificate or diploma below bachelor level | 4.7% | 3.1% | 3.6% |
| • University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above | 7.6% | 9.4% | 24.6% |
| ○ Bachelor's degree | 4.7% | 6.4% | 16.1% |
| ○ University certificate or diploma above bachelor level | 1.3% | 0.7% | 1.8% |

Source: Census Canada 2016

Labour Force and Employment

The employment status in a community can be expressed through various indicators including participation in labour force (percentage of people who are either employed or are actively looking for work), sector and occupation employment. 100 Mile House has 750 as total labour force. The majority

of workers are employed in the retail sector (22.3%), followed by manufacturing (16.0%) and accommodation and food services (13.2%).

When looking at attracting investment it is important to include the labour force that is available in the surrounding communities. As the second table below shows, the total labour force is 5,880. It is generally accepted that population/labour force within a 45 to 60-minute commute can be used as a community's own asset.

Self-employment in 100 Mile House is lower when compared to the Regional District and the province. About seven percent (7.7%) of the labour force is self-employed compared to 14.6 percent in the Cariboo Regional District and 16.5 percent in the province.

| | 100 Mile House | Cariboo Regional District | BC |
|--|----------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Participation Rate | 49.3 | 60.1 | 63.9 |
| Employment Rate | 43.8 | 53.7 | 59.6 |
| Unemployment Rate | 10.4 | 9.3* | 7.2* |
| Class of Worker – Employee | 92.3% | 85.4% | 83.4% |
| Class of Worker – Self-employed | 7.7% | 14.6% | 16.6% |

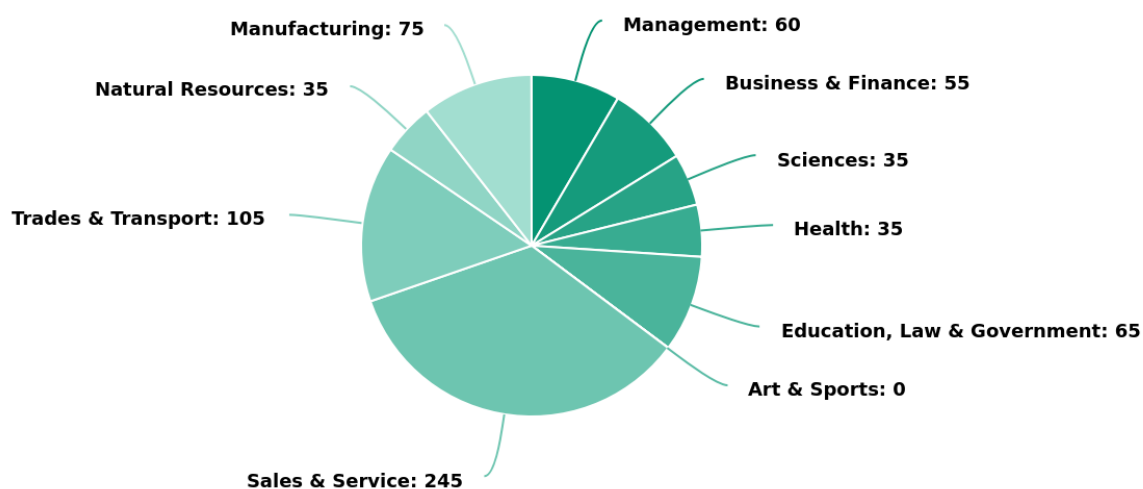
Source: Census Canada 2016

Labour Force by Industry – 2016

| Sector | 100 Mile House | | South Cariboo G H L | |
|---|----------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| | # | % | # | % |
| Total Labour Force population aged 15 years and over | 750 | | 5,130 | |
| Industry - NAICS2012 | 30 | | 70 | |
| All industry categories | 720 | | 5,065 | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 45 | 6.3% | 530 | 10.5% |
| Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | 0 | 0.0% | 65 | 1.3% |
| Utilities | 0 | 0.0% | 35 | 0.7% |
| Construction | 50 | 6.9% | 550 | 10.8% |
| Manufacturing | 115 | 16.0% | 580 | 11.5% |
| Wholesale trade | 10 | 1.3% | 120 | 2.3% |
| Retail trade | 160 | 22.2% | 680 | 13.4% |
| Transportation and warehousing | 10 | 1.3% | 270 | 5.3% |
| Information and cultural industries | 10 | 1.3% | 60 | 1.2% |

| Sector | 100 Mile House | | South Cariboo G H L | |
|---|----------------|-------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % |
| Finance and insurance | 15 | 2.1% | 90 | 1.7% |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 15 | 2.1% | 95 | 1.8% |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 40 | 5.6% | 250 | 4.9% |
| Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | 35 | 4.9% | 200 | 7.9% |
| Educational services | 10 | 1.3% | 225 | 4.4% |
| Health care and social assistance | 65 | 9.2% | 470 | 9.2% |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation | 0 | 0.0% | 90 | 1.7% |
| Accommodation and food services | 95 | 13.2% | 360 | 7.1% |
| Other services (except public administration) | 15 | 2.1% | 220 | 4.3% |
| Public administration | 20 | 2.8% | 175 | 3.5% |

Labour Force by Occupation



Labour Force by Occupation

| Sector | 100 Mile House | South Cariboo | Cariboo RD | BC |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------|---------|
| Management | 60 | 605 | 3,035 | 275,000 |
| Business, finance and administration occupations | 55 | 595 | 3,275 | 368,940 |
| Natural and applied sciences | 35 | 240 | 1,425 | 161,520 |
| Health | 35 | 285 | 1,595 | 162,865 |

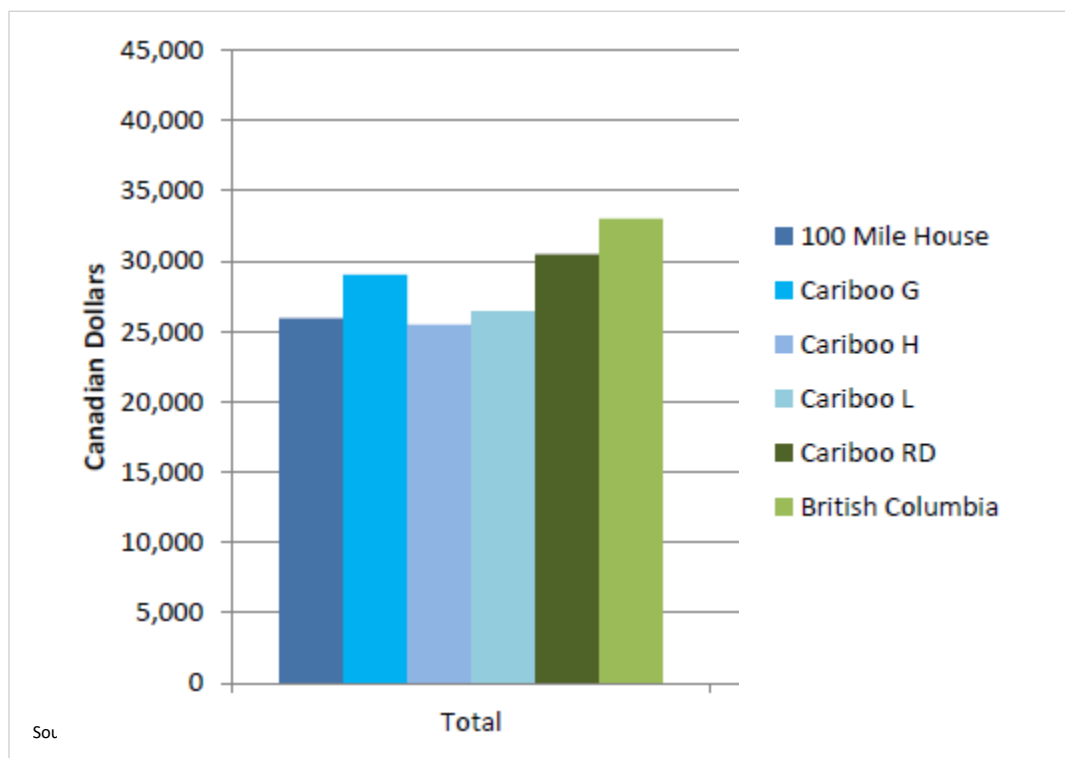
| | | | | |
|---|-----|------|-------|---------|
| Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services | 65 | 375 | 2,770 | 269,255 |
| Art, culture, recreation and sport | 0 | 115 | 500 | 93,100 |
| Sales and service | 245 | 1135 | 6,710 | 595,225 |
| Trades, transport and equipment operators | 105 | 1140 | 6,650 | 360,970 |
| Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations | 35 | 310 | 2,215 | 64,235 |
| Occupations in manufacturing and utilities | 75 | 260 | 2,155 | 76,745 |

Source: Census Canada 2016

Income

Income data provides information on a community about the availability of high paying jobs and possibly spending habits. Exactly half of the report incomes are below and the other half above the median income. This measure is less likely than average income to be skewed by extremes.

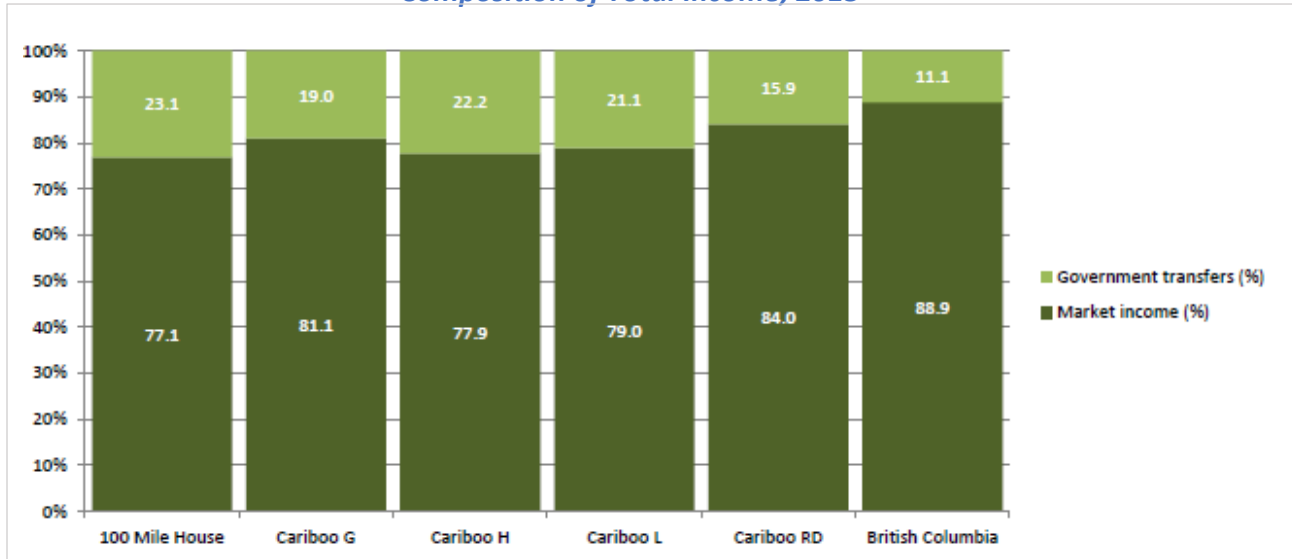
One Hundred Mile House, Median Total Income, 2015



Median total income in 100 Mile House in 2015, as shown above, was \$25,941. Female median income was less than 60% of male median income. The South Cariboo (areas G, H and L) show slightly higher median income. Compared to the Cariboo Regional District and the province, income in 100 Mile House was lower. The median income in the Cariboo Regional District is around 18% higher and, in the province, it is over 27% higher than 100 Mile House.

The table below illustrates total income composition. 100 Mile House has a higher dependency (23.1%) on government transfers when compared to the Cariboo Regional District (15.9%) and the province (11.1%). One reason for the higher percentage is that the community has a higher percentage of seniors, many of whom will be receiving pensions.

Composition of Total Income, 2015



Housing

The housing values and assessments are increasing but are significantly more affordable than larger, urban communities. For comparison purposes, the table below provides BC Assessment information on a few communities followed by the average value of owned dwellings from the 2016 census. The affordability of 100 Mile House can be a distinct advantage in attracting residents and businesses that are able to work from any location. This has become a focused endeavour for many communities with the remote working opportunities that have emerged due to COVID.

Average Assessed Values, 2018 - 2019

| Community | Assessed Value | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | % Change |
| 100 Mile House | \$236,000 | \$242,000 | +2% |
| Williams Lake | \$249,000 | \$266,000 | +7% |
| Clinton | \$150,000 | \$153,000 | +2% |

Average Value of Dwellings, 2016

| | | 100 Mile House | Cariboo Regional District | British Columbia |
|------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 2006 | Average value of dwellings (\$) | 170,117 | 171,421 | 418,703 |
| 2016 | Average value of dwellings (\$) | 204,231 | 257,402 | 720,689 |
| | Percent Change 2006 - 2016 | 20.1% | 50.1% | 72.1% |

*100 Mile House data from the 2011 National Household Survey was suppressed

Source: Census Canada 2016

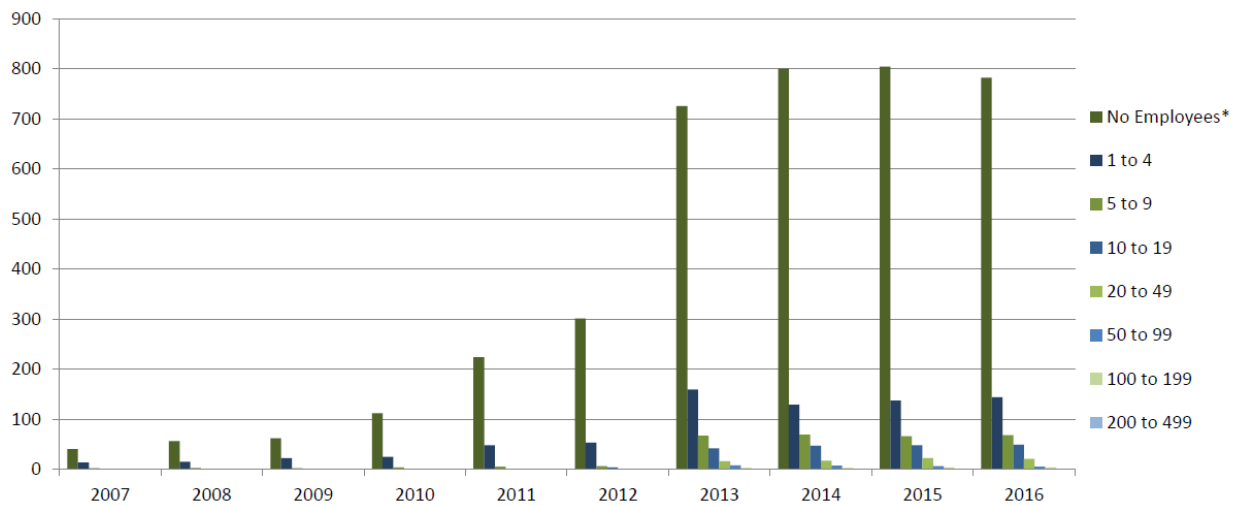
Business and Industry

The number of businesses registered in 100 Mile House has been steadily growing since 2010 with the largest increase in 2013. In 2016, a total of 1,074 businesses were registered in 100 Mile House.

Business by number of employees breakdown as follows:

- 72.8% of businesses did not have any employees
- 13.4% of businesses have 1 – 4 employees
- 6.3% of businesses have 10 – 19 employees
- 2.9% of businesses have more than 20 employees

Business Counts in 100 Mile House – 2007-2016



Source: BC Stats, 2016



Appendix B

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats

To create an extraordinary quality of life, you must create a vision that's not only obtainable, but that is sustainable.

- Tony Robbins -



Appendix B: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)



Strengths

What do you do well? What unique resources can you draw on? What do others see as your strengths?

A Diverse, High Quality of Life

One of the great strengths of 100 Mile House and neighbouring communities is the resident's and visitors' high quality of life. Centennial Park, winter and summer activities, recreation facilities, health care, schools, and affordable housing (compared to other BC areas) add to the high quality of life. These are all important factors in the community's efforts to attract investment and new residents.

Transportation Access

Even before the gold rush in the 1860s, 100 Mile House has always been a strategic stopping point for travellers heading to or returning from the North. Being located directly on Highway 97 and several roads intersecting from the East and the West, the community is easy to access from any direction. While the community does have an airport, the closest commercial airport is located in Williams Lake (92 km) and Kamloops (195 km), but close enough to promote commercial flights.

Affordable Housing

BC is experiencing significant real estate transactions due to a desire to relocate from the higher populated lower mainland and the new trend into allowing remote working. 100 Mile House, while also experiencing increased real estate activity, is still seen as a location where real estate is affordable compared to larger populated markets.

Strong Community Pride

An overarching impression in all of the research and engagement recognized that community members have a great deal of pride in their city. Staff also identified this clearly as residents themselves. This sense of civic pride and desire to make one's environment the best was evident in the survey, the First Impressions Assessment, and in all of the interviews.

Proximity to Larger Centres

100 Mile House's proximity to larger centres in Williams Lake and Kamloops, along with its locations to significant recreational opportunities, makes the area an attractive location to attract visitors and new residents seeking a balanced lifestyle but can still access services available in larger centres.

Tourism Assets combined with a Strong Supply of Accommodations

A combination of pubs and restaurants, specialty stores, a wetland, ski trails, endless lakes, and ample accommodations gives the community an advantage over many seeking a location to spend a relaxing vacation. As a vacationer, the area has a significant number of diverse assets and services one may require but small enough to offer a friendly welcome and relaxed atmosphere. 73.5% of all survey respondents consider tourism to be a key economic driver for the community.



Weaknesses

What could you improve? Where do you have fewer resources than others? What are others likely to see as weaknesses?

Lack of Reliable Broadband

Reliable and fast broadband service is no longer a luxury but instead considered a utility that is as important as water or electricity. Technology and broadband can improve and enhance the way we work and live and help to support and expand a local economy. Access to affordable and abundant broadband is quickly becoming the most critical economic development infrastructure, just like electricity, transportation, and roadways were early last century. The introduction of low latency broadband internet systems like Starlink to meet consumers' needs can help improve communities like 100 Mile House.

Perceived Bureaucracy and Lack of Communication

Perception can be just as bad as reality. The survey of businesses and residents showed a perception that the District is not supportive of business or economic development. This is not the case; however, increased results-based communication can alleviate some of these concerns.

Underdeveloped Collaboration Opportunities

Stronger collaboration with partner communities/rural areas, Indigenous governments, support agencies, and community groups could support 100 Mile House in retaining and expanding business, encouraging expanded infrastructure and attracting new residents and business.

Lack of Economic Diversity

Curtailed in forest sector has clearly shown that that the community must work towards creating a diverse economy. A diverse economy may not necessarily mean the attraction of anyone new sector but instead supporting a cluster of new investments in various sectors, including the encouragement of entrepreneurship and remote working.

Insufficient Support for Business Sector

Through the survey and in different levels of consultation, concerns were expressed about the communities' attentiveness to local businesses and that more could be done to support smaller businesses' needs. The sentiments suggest that smaller businesses have had greater difficulty accessing succession planning, mentorship, expansion, human resources, customer base access, encouraging shop local and more. There was confusion or lack of awareness on what, if anything, the local government is doing to help businesses succeed. The result is a misunderstanding of what services and supports are available and their importance in supporting its local small businesses. This suggests the need for more effective communications on the local government's existing services, including the impressive work by its economic development program and the desire to ensure that projects can happen quickly.

Keeping Young Skilled Workers

Residents expressed a real concern about the ability of the community to retain young skilled workers. Efforts need to be taken to encourage young workers to return to the community after reaching the education level needed for the career they wish to pursue. The changing work environment towards working at home may help in this regard but will need to be combined with an inventory of what opportunities exist for families.

Availability of retail/restaurant/entertainment options

Only 24% of all survey respondents indicated the need to attract better retail amenities. They indicated that they are making monthly trips (42.7%) to purchase supplies and services outside of the community. Availability of diverse housing options with the primary reason (84.6%) indicating it is because the service or product they are looking for is not available, secondary reason the service or product is too expensive (55.68%). This may be a perception, and in fact, the services they are looking for may be available, but residents are unaware. New efforts should be pursued to develop a detailed directory of products and services available.



Opportunities

What opportunities are open to you? What trends could you take advantage of?
How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?

Small Business and Entrepreneurial Growth

Suppose small business and entrepreneurial development are consistently encouraged. In that case, all businesses are motivated to improve and adapt in good and bad economic times like wildfires, COVID19, or major employers leaving the community. It is the flexibility of these ventures that often create new technologies, develop new products or process innovations, open up new markets and expand the ability to shop local. There is a opportunity to develop a strong network of public and private sector partners to implement programs to foster entrepreneurship, start-ups, and small businesses. Through active business retention programs and a potential review of business regulations can help to demonstrate a desire to support existing versus the most common perception of all that matter is attract a new company or business, sometimes in direct competition to what the community already has.

Resident and Talent Attraction and Retention

Today, people are looking for locations offering more open places, close to nature and outdoor recreation, walkable communities and access to a basic quality of life factors. They are looking to relocate from the higher density communities to smaller communities where they can still work but have easy access to other pursuits. Remote workers are an ideal target for 100 Mile House. The attraction of remote workers will open up new opportunities for existing residents and businesses. Working with youth will help create a community that welcomes those who leave the community to seek higher education or new career opportunities. Several people live in the community but work elsewhere, leaving the spouse and children at home. New opportunities to support these families should be considered.

Regional Collaboration on Tourism Attraction and Development

The 100 Mile House area has significant natural tourism assets that can be used to attract new visitors to the area. Collectively within the region, new partnerships can be created to encourage visitation and new tourism products.

Encourage Private Sector Investment in Housing

New developments must be pursued and encouraged to attract new residents and allow existing residents to remain in the community as they age.

Encourage Emerging Agriculture

Small-scale mixed agriculture has been an economic driver in the region. Like forestry, changes to this sector have resulted in the decline of cattle ranches and new diverse crops and opportunities. A desire to encourage locally grown products exists.

Enhanced Lifestyle Amenities

Many survey respondents indicated a desire to see a new pool built in the community. However, in many communities, pools are often not feasible and can be a drain on taxation. 100 Mile House has significant natural lifestyle amenities that can be better packaged and promoted to even those living in the community. A community with a vibrant downtown core, where events are a regular activity, brings people together and supports new and expanded retail amenities. These are the types of communities that see growth and vibrancy.

Collaboration with Indigenous Communities and the Cariboo Regional District

Increased collaboration with neighbouring communities, including Indigenous and Rural Areas of the CRD, will be paramount to the success of 100 Mile House in retaining existing business and the attraction of new economic activity. Stronger collaboration with partner communities and governments could increase the potential for attracting potential prospects, new residential growth, and expansion of the tourism and agriculture industry.



Threats

What threats can harm you? What threats cannot be controlled? How do we reduce the impacts of the unavoidable?

Fluctuating Canadian Dollar

Like any global economy, a fluctuating dollar can impact the economy in different ways. For communities in Canada, a stronger dollar can hurt communities as people travel to other markets to shop or for vacations. It can also drive down our competitiveness in our natural resource sector. A weaker dollar also has its risks in driving up the costs of imports, including food products, increasing the need to grow local.

Disasters

Over the past ten years, BC has experienced more natural and human disasters than any time in recent memory. The wildfires of 2017 and 2018, combined with COVID19, have all created significant economic disruption to individual communities and their businesses. These disasters have resulted in job losses, significant debt creation, and the need to make sure that we, as communities, must be better prepared to respond to disasters.

Senior Government

Local communities for years have been subject to downsizing by senior levels of governments. Government downsizing can result in the loss of jobs and services that the government sector provides. We have seen forestry offices closed to become more centralized, hospitals downsized and made into medical centres instead of offering full medical services, and more.

Sector Dependence

When single industry communities, or those so heavily weighted to one economic sector, lose their anchor industry or experience significant downsizing, there is a mixture of reactions from other businesses, residents, and government officials. Once the decision, finger-pointing, anger, and other immediate responses subside, a laundry list of programs, projects, and ideas is inevitably developed. The most common step is to throw money at planning and not implement identified programs to help transform and create a more diverse and sustainable economy. This will result in a community that is always “living in the past” rather than working towards a strong future.

Perception of rural/small-town living

Individuals who have lived in a major urban centre for most of their lives may have the perception that rural and small-town living is undesirable. Small towns are often perceived as having limited services, lower quality of life, no connection to arts and culture, limited ability to work remotely and areas that do not value the land. With natural disasters and increased density in the larger urban centres, this perception is changing. Still, it will take more time and education to drive many people to consider returning to rural living or trying it for the first time. A collective effort of rural communities to provide this education is needed.



Appendix C

Business Retention and Expansion Program



Your customer doesn't care how
much you know until they know
how much you care.

- Damon Richards -

Appendix C: Business Retention & Expansion Program

The following provides additional details how the steps required to implement a Business Retention and Expansion Program.

- **Establish Your Team of Resource Providers:** Your BRE team or resource and service providers can work with you to identify issues and barriers to your BRE plan. After you collect information from business owners in the community, they can help develop and implement a BRE action plan and assist in specific and immediate needs identified from individual businesses. This team, led by the District of 100 Mile House Economic Development, should at a minimum include representatives from Community Futures, the Chamber of Commerce, WorkBC, Canim Lake Indian Band, and the CRD Economic Development.
- **Establish the Structure:** A successful BRE program does not rely on one individual or organization but an entire team comprised of skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced individuals and agencies. These are the key stakeholders and partners you identified as your resource providers. There is a natural fit for economic development organizations to take the lead and house the program.

When determining the structure of your BRE program, there are a variety of other items that need to be defined, including who will manage the program, how many businesses will be interviewed, and how will you manage the data? It is recommended that a Customer Relationship Manager, like the BC BusinessCounts Program, be considered to manage data and reporting.

- **Establish Your Goals:** An effective BRE program is community-centred, and working with the team, you should establish specific goals to focus on what directions and outcomes are expected. It is important to design your BRE program to suit the needs of your local business community and economy. By following your BRE goals, you can learn about the current business climate, understand challenges and opportunities, and create an action plan to support business success. In addition to setting a realistic goal on the number of businesses to meet with in a given year based on staff resources, broader BRE goals are unique to every community. However, most communities agree their goals will include:
 - Support the expansion of small businesses and entrepreneurs
 - Enable growth and assist businesses in leveraging new opportunities
 - Identify businesses at risk of leaving or downsizing
 - Identify business and community challenges
 - Better align the workforce with the needs of employers
 - Provide assistance (immediate and ongoing)
 - Build relationships
 - Reduce barriers to the planning and development process

- **Marketing and Communication:** Once the structure and goals are determined, there should be an official launch of the BRE program explaining the importance of the effort and why it matters. By communicating out your BRE program's purpose and goals, you can inform local businesses of the key role they play in the program. It will also make it easier for you to contact your local businesses to schedule meetings and to make the community aware of the importance and economic impact businesses have at the local level.

Communication is a critical part of a successful BRE program. How and when you communicate the data and information you collected through your BRE program can help to build ongoing community support, develop new programs and policies, and demonstrate accountability and transparency in the program. When all the data from the business surveys have been entered into your chosen system, a report highlighting the results of each survey question should be generated. Analysis and identification of trends should be completed. The summary report should be reviewed with your BRE team before releasing the information to the community.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Monitoring your BRE program on an ongoing basis tracks the performance of outcomes of projects and programs. The evaluation of your plan compares outcomes to desired results by measuring performance against predetermined objectives (your goals). Through monitoring and evaluating your plan, you can maintain accountability, ensure progress, identify problems, assess performance, track results, and justify funding.