

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES ON MANAGING CHANGE IN NORTHERN ALBERTA

NORTHERN LEADERS SHARED PRIORITY ISSUES AND UNIQUE PRACTICES



In 2016, the NADC conducted preliminary research into the impacts of economic change on northern Alberta. A sample of municipal leaders was interviewed about the changes in their communities. These insights are being shared to exchange ideas and encourage dialogue between communities in the NADC region. The information highlights local perspectives on the impact of resource industries/economies to community development, which may interest municipal leaders, planners and administrators.

1 CHANGING ECONOMY

Alberta's resource industries have experienced many periods of economic fluctuation. These changes affect the stability of communities, **especially in northern Alberta where cycles of development strain the local social and physical infrastructures.**



3 PRIORITY ISSUES CORRELATED TO ECONOMIC FLUCTUATION

Revenue and Budget

Northern communities struggle with reduced, unstable, or insecure revenue and corresponding budgetary constraints.

Quality of Life

Despite adversities, northern leaders are committed to improving the livability of their communities by increasing the quality of life for residents. They do this by leveraging current assets or creating and adding value through new initiatives.

Infrastructure

Northern communities suffer from infrastructure deficits, including ageing water treatment and healthcare facilities to deteriorating transportation networks. These are long-standing and cumulative challenges.

Workforce and Business Economy

Community leaders are concerned about increasing unemployment, shortages and high turnover rates of skilled workers, underemployment, reduced contracting opportunities, disparities between urban versus rural areas, and population changes.



2 PLANNING AND STUDY

To assist communities planning for growth and fluctuation, the **NADC conducted preliminary research into the socio-economic changes that impact northern Alberta and the practices communities employ to manage change.**

4 COMMUNITIES FACING SIMILAR CHALLENGES MAY CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING IDEAS:

Plan

Diversify capital and operational plans to include short, medium and long-term goals. Adjust existing plans by prioritizing, rescheduling, or reducing items within programs, services and infrastructures.

Incentivize

Encourage development strategically using tax incentives, planning permits and grants or subsidies to revitalize downtowns, grow businesses or develop housing as needed.

Customize

Customize financial tools in support of capital and operational plans by conserving or leveraging debt, low interest or tender rates.

Optimize

Enhance resource sharing or collaborative partnerships to maintain levels of services.

Review

Generate review processes that are proactive, predictive, and adaptive to ongoing amendments.

