

Northern Alberta Development Council
Helping deliver on the promise of the future

2013
2014





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Many photographs in this report were selected from amongst the excellent submissions in NADC's photo contest



MESSAGE from the CHAIR



As the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) entered its 51st year, the organization made significant gains in northern engagement and communicated an important message to the Government of Alberta: “A stronger Alberta through a stronger North”. I am proud of the work of the past year, as outlined in the 2013-2014 annual report and excited to build on our achievements.

Through the Northern Leaders’ Summit, the NADC reignited important relationships between our northern leaders and cabinet ministers. In addition to the Summit, our Council members have been travelling the north, meeting with stakeholders and collecting information about the status of northern communities, businesses and people.

This year the NADC delivered a variety of research pieces, meant to advise policy and program decisions affecting northern residents. With a strong emphasis on transportation and building a skilled workforce, the NADC is poised to make significant impacts on these and other important northern issues.

Yours truly,

Pearl Calahasen
MLA for Lesser Slave Lake



OVERVIEW of the NADC

COUNCIL



Pearl Calahasen



Brian Allen

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) champions the cause of Alberta's northern economy and communities by exploring opportunities for growth and working on strategic priorities. It currently reports to the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations.



Ken Noskey



John Brodrick

The Council is made up of nine public members and one elected Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Council membership reflects the geographic, cultural and vocational diversity of northern communities. In 2013-2014, Pearl Calahasen, MLA for Lesser Slave Lake, chaired the Council for a second consecutive year. Williard Stebchuk of Whitecourt was Vice Chair. The other members were:



Andre Harpe



Williard Stebchuk

Brian Allen, Grimshaw
Ken Noskey, Peavine
John Brodrick, Manning
Andre Harpe, Valhalla Centre

Andy Neigel, Athabasca
Pat O'Neill, St. Paul
Eva Urlacher, Cold Lake



Andy Neigel



Eva Urlacher

The NADC is the only mandated regional and economic development organization spanning northern Alberta.



Pat O'Neill

NADC's Vision for northern Alberta

A stronger Alberta through a stronger north.

Mission

To identify and implement sustainable measures that will advance northern development, and advise government on opportunities and issues for the benefit of Albertans.

Core Business

The mandate of the NADC, as set out in the *Northern Alberta Development Council Act*, is to "investigate, monitor, evaluate, plan and promote practical measures to foster and advance general development in northern Alberta and to advise the Government accordingly." The NADC supports the government's commitment to prosperity by facilitating the development of a thriving and progressive northern economy.

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA'S STRATEGIC GOALS

The NADC supported the following goals of the Government of Alberta:

Goal 1: Honour Alberta's Communities

Goal 3: Healthy Albertans

Goal 4: *Invest in Learning*

Goal 5: Preserve the Province's Finances

NADC'S KEY STRATEGIES

The NADC partners with others to support the goals of Alberta. Partners include other jurisdictions and ministries, northern communities, business and industry, learning providers, and students. Initiatives fit within the following key strategies:

- Build partnerships among key stakeholders to establish priorities and pursue northern opportunities.
- Foster economic strength and diversity by supporting development in transportation, value-added agriculture, tourism, health and other areas.
- Support initiatives to increase northern skill levels, in partnership with northern communities, business, industry, learning providers and students.
- Increase awareness about northern Alberta's employment and lifestyle opportunities.



THE NADC REGION

The Northern Alberta Development Council region represents 60 per cent of Alberta's landmass and 10 per cent of the province's total population. It contains 100 per cent of Alberta's oil sands deposits; 86 per cent of its forests; 28 per cent of its farmland; and 30 per cent of the province's conventional oil and gas.

Economic Strength

The economy of northern Alberta is robust and dynamic. Prospects for growth, employment and investment are strong:

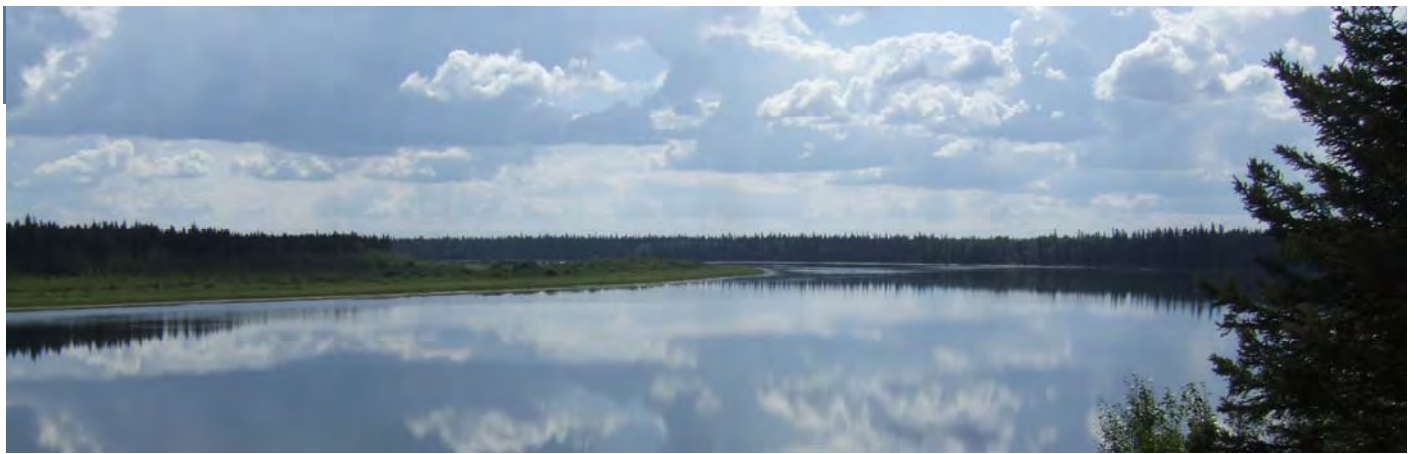
- As of February 2014, \$219 billion dollars of major projects were listed in northern Alberta.
- Over \$1.9 billion dollars of infrastructure projects were listed in northern Alberta.
- The region has an annual average individual income of \$70,000 compared to a provincial average of \$54,000.
- As of the spring of 2014, oil production in Alberta was 12.6 million cubic metres, up 6.4 per cent compared to February 2013. Conventional oil and gas was up 2.3 per cent from spring 2013, while non-conventional oil and gas (oil sands) production increased 9.0 per cent.

Socio-economic Challenges

While the economy of northern Alberta is strong, it does present challenges.

- The region's economy is heavily focused on the development of natural resources, leaving it exposed to volatility in world commodity markets.
- A persistent shortage of labour means workers must be recruited from other parts of Canada and the world.
- The high wages paid in the natural resource sector can make it challenging for other businesses to retain skilled workers.
- The rapid economic and population growth of northern Alberta has put immense pressure on local governments to provide expanded services to residents.





ENGAGING NORTHERNERS

To fulfill its mission as northern Alberta's advisor to government, Council members engaged with communities and industry at various events over the past year. The information gathered during these meetings reinforced the NADC's Strategic Framework and focused NADC's commitment to current and prominent northern Alberta priorities.

Through this intensive engagement, the NADC has enhanced the Government of Alberta's understanding of northern opportunities and challenges. NADC's Strategic Priorities are continuously aligned with the priorities of northern Albertans.

Council in Our Communities

April 2013

- The member from the area attended Grande Prairie County Chambers in Grande Prairie.
- Two members attended the Economic Developers Association meeting in Kananaskis.
- The member from the area attended a Rural Economic Development Plan session in Vermilion.

May 2013

- The member from the area attended a community meeting in Wabasca.

July 2013

- A member attended a Comprehensive Regional Infrastructure Sustainability Plan (CRISP) meeting in Edmonton.

August 2013

- A member attended the Welding Dual Credit Program event in Fox Creek.

October 2013

- A member attended the Northern Corridor Development Corporation AGM and Conference in Fort St. John, B.C.
- A member attended the Prince Rupert Port reception in Edmonton.
- A member from the area attended a Tourism Workshop in Edson.

November 2013

- The member from the area attended the Grande Prairie Regional College President's Ball in Grande Prairie.
- A member attended the Alberta Economic Summit in Edmonton.

January 2014

- The member from the area, accompanied by the NADC executive director, met with the following communities: Sexsmith, Beaverlodge, Wembley, and Grande Prairie County No. 1 (Clairmont).
- The member from the area attended the Growing Alberta Gala in Westlock.

February 2014

- The members from the area, accompanied by the NADC executive director, met with the following groups: Town of Bonnyville, Alberta HUB, Town of St. Paul and Town of Elk Point.
- Members attended Alberta Transportation Strategy sessions in their respective areas.
- Four members attended the Growing the North Conference in Grande Prairie.
- Two members attended the AAMDC Zone 4 meeting in Rycroft.
- Two members attended the Come Together Conference in Calgary.
- Three members attended the Annual Rural Alberta Community Physician Attraction and Retention Conference in Edmonton.

March 2014

- The member from the area, accompanied by the NADC executive director, met with the following communities: MD of Big Lakes, Town of High Prairie and Slave Lake.
- Two members attended Alberta Transportation Strategy sessions in their respective areas.
- A member attended the Growing Rural Tourism Conference in Camrose.

NADC Meetings

Edmonton Meeting May 8-9, 2013

A dinner meeting was held on May 8, 2013 with the Minister of Transportation, Honourable Ric McIver, to discuss ongoing northern transportation concerns. The Council members held an MLA breakfast in Edmonton on May 9. During this meeting Council presented the NADC's Strategic Framework to MLAs from across the province and discussed the topics of transportation, tourism, and health services, among others. Followed by a formal Council meeting, presentations were received from the PTI Group, Alberta Inspiring Education, Alberta Distance Learning – Distance Education, Emergency

Medical Services Ground Transport, and Alberta Tourism. Council members and staff also attended a session of the legislature where they were introduced in the House by the NADC Chair.

High Prairie Meeting June 26-27, 2013

On June 26, 2013 Council members held a roundtable dinner meeting in High Prairie with local mayors, chiefs, reeves and Métis chairpersons. Council presented the NADC's Strategic Framework. Topics discussed at the dinner included transportation, workforce development for Aboriginal populations and policing/safe communities. At the June 27 meeting, Council heard presentations from the Alberta Forestry Products Association, Penn West Exploration, and Peace River Oil Partnership, as well as from Northern Lakes College on the High Prairie Tolko/Northern Lakes College Training Centre. Council also heard from Chairperson Gerald Cunningham of the East Prairie Metis Settlement, Chairperson Dave Lamouche of the Gift Lake Metis Settlement and Greg Gauchier from the Peavine Metis Settlement on their respective community initiatives, projects and challenges.

Lac La Biche Meeting August 28-29, 2013

On August 28, 2013 Council members enjoyed a tour of the Lac La Biche Portage College Campus and Bold Centre. Council then hosted a dinner and roundtable discussion for local elected officials regarding physician recruitment and retention. Guests included Genia Leskiw, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake, Shayne Saskiw, MLA for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills, David Kay, Executive Director of the Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP), and Dr. Fred Janke, Director of Rural and Regional Health, Division of Community Engagement, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Alberta. At the August 29 meeting, Council heard presentations from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), Canada FASD Research Network and CN Rail.

Edmonton Meeting October 28-30, 2013

On October 28, 2013 Council members toured the STARS base and helicopter ambulance as well as AHS's Fixed Wing base by the Edmonton International Airport. On October 29 Council heard presentations from Alberta Fish & Wildlife and Métis Relations on the Aboriginal governance structure. Council also hosted a luncheon with the presidents of the northern post-secondary institutes, including a roundtable discussion on the pending Post-Secondary Institute Memorandum of Action (MOA). The MOA outlines a collaborative endeavour for the institutes to provide improved accessibility to post-secondary education for northern Albertans. The Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse was also discussed. On October 30 Council heard a collaborative presentation from Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Alberta Strategic Tourism Council, and Travel Alberta on tourism possibilities and current tourism projects in northern Alberta.



Northern Development Ministers Forum

The Northern Development Ministers Forum (NDMF) enables federal, provincial and territorial ministers to meet and share information on northern development for the betterment of Canada's North.

The NADC acts as Alberta's secretariat for the NDMF and co-hosted the 2013 NDMF in Fort McMurray with Saskatchewan. Ministers toured oil sands operations and a uranium mine (Saskatchewan) during the three-day event. During proceedings, the ministers became acquainted with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and heard presentations from the mayor of Slave Lake on disaster recovery and from working groups on priority projects. The projects were based on priorities determined by the ministers and included benefit agreements, information and communications technology, and housing.



Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL)

NADC staff act as the secretariat for the Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL) group. Eligible members for the group are located within the constituencies of Peace River, Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley, Grande Prairie-Wapiti, Grande Prairie-Smoky, West Yellowhead, and Lesser Slave Lake. NAEL offers a venue for northwestern municipal leaders to gather and share current practices and seek opportunities to collaborate. NAEL advocates for change on numerous issues of common interest in the northwest. The cooperation of the group strengthens their message.



September 13, 2013

NAEL met in Saddle Hills County. They heard presentations from Alberta Transportation-Peace Region and Alberta Municipal Affairs with regards to the *Alberta Municipal Government Act* review. Members of the NAEL group also enjoyed a tour of Saddle Hills County's new administration and public works building. The building includes green energy features such as solar energy to heat water during the summer months and grey water for non-potable water usage, such as in toilets.

February 20, 2014

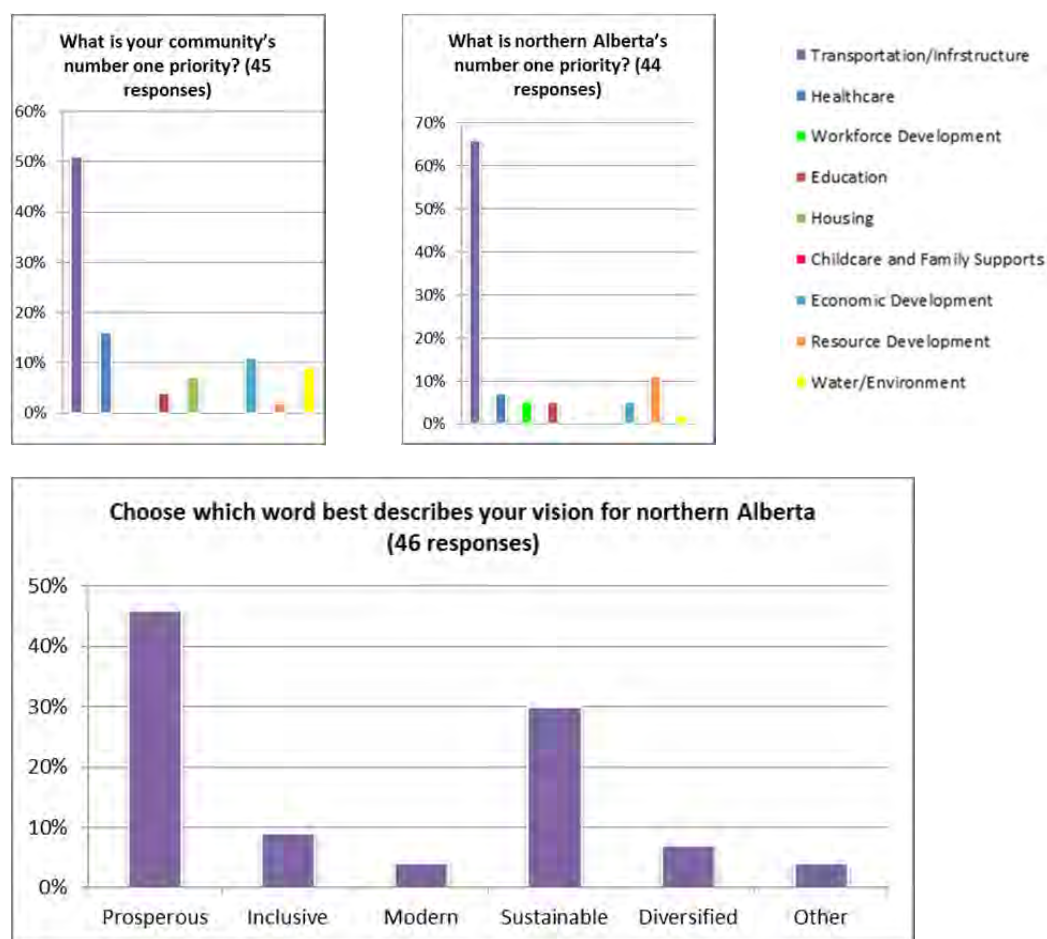
NAEL met at the Growing the North Conference with the Honourable Wayne Drysdale, Minister of Transportation, to discuss concerns regarding the maintenance and construction of northern Alberta highways.

National Aboriginal Day

The NADC celebrated National Aboriginal Day in the main lobby of the Peace River Provincial Building. The Sagitawa Friendship Centre in Peace River generously set up a cultural display featuring First Nation and Métis artifacts and Aboriginal art work from local artisans. The NADC provided tea and homemade bannock for visitors to enjoy while they watched a powwow dance demonstration and learned about the different types of powwow dances. Aboriginal people make up a significant portion of the population of the NADC region. The event was a learning opportunity for all Government of Alberta staff in Peace River, and it helped build relationships with the local Aboriginal community.

Northern Leaders' Summit

As a way to engage northern leadership and set common priorities for the north, a one-day Northern Leaders' Summit was hosted by the NADC. Delegates included northern MLAs, mayors, reeves, chairs and chiefs. The event provided insight for ministers on the unique nature of the north.



The Summit facilitated conversations between provincial and northern leadership to determine northern priorities and opportunities. Ministers heard about a range of northern issues and initiatives affecting northern residents. Delegates identified

transportation as northern Alberta's top priority. Other priorities included health care, environment/water, and economic development.

Throughout the day, delegates had the opportunity to engage in small regional group discussions with cabinet ministers. Concurrent discussion sessions ran for 30 minutes, and delegates were able to ask ministers questions on a variety of topics. Several key themes were highlighted during conversations with ministers responsible for:

- Agriculture and Rural Development
- Human Services
- Community Relations (Aboriginal Relations and Municipal Affairs)
- Transportation
- Innovation and Advanced Education
- Health

Ministers and northern community leaders had the chance to report on progress, share successful practices, and determine future methods of collaboration for regional initiatives and programming. The outcomes from these discussions provided direction to support the NADC's strategic and operational plans. Through a presentation using instant polling technology, delegates were able to answer questions, the results of which were shared in real time with the audience.

The summit is expected to become an annual event and has born other initiatives, such as a Northern Health Summit to be held in fall 2014.





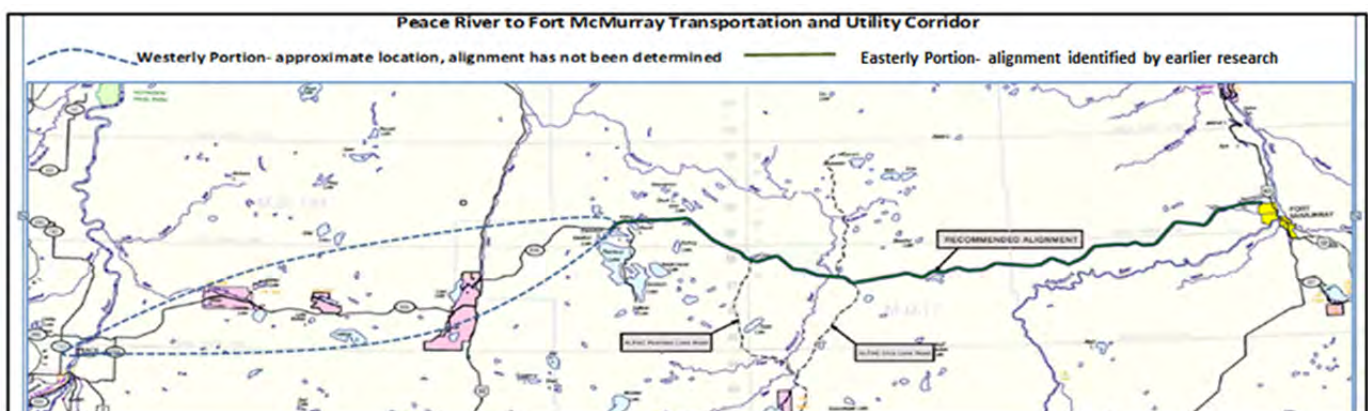
Priority: Transportation and Infrastructure

Alberta Transportation's 50 Year Strategy

Alberta Transportation held a series of public meetings across the province in January and February 2014 to gather input on the public's vision of what Alberta's transportation system should look like in 50 years. NADC members attended several of these meetings. Alberta Transportation sought further public responses in April and May 2014 to draft a Transportation Strategy. The NADC will continue to monitor the progress of the developing strategy and its implications for the north.

Transportation and Utility Corridor between Fort McMurray and Peace River

The NADC commissioned a report on the analysis of the economic, social and environmental impacts on the concept-in-principle of building a transportation and utility corridor (TUC) between Fort McMurray and Peace River. Such a corridor could support two or more of the following functions: road, rail, water line, power, telecommunications cable, and oil/gas pipeline. The report built on previous work that mainly focused on the technical aspects of building a road between Fort McMurray and Peerless Lake. In the earlier report prepared for Alberta Transportation, utility uses and their additional right-of-way requirements were a minor consideration in route planning and selection.



PRIORITY: TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

As part of this project's sensitivity analysis, three TUC scenarios – Minimal, Partial and Full – were analyzed for cost-benefit outcomes:

- The costs of developing a corridor are lower than the status quo of developing individual single-use initiatives.
- The social and environmental benefits of building multi-use corridors are higher than single-use corridors.
- Many key stakeholders view this as two separate initiatives (i.e., east and west portions) which in turn impact almost every aspect of the project, including costs, benefits, priority and timing.
- A road does not necessarily have to be the first linear infrastructure built within the multi-use corridor or even built at all.

The cost-benefit analysis reveals that the faster any TUC scenario can be initiated, the better the overall result.

Transportation Options for Seniors

The NADC co-facilitates the *Transportation Strategies for Seniors Committee* with the Alberta Motor Association (AMA). The group meets to share information, develop educational materials, and explore partnerships for transportation options for seniors. Currently the group is collaborating to develop a toolkit for aging drivers for distribution by AMA.

Developing Sustainable Transportation Options for Small Communities

The Town of Peace River engaged NADC to conduct an environmental scan of best practices in rural transportation and to review its previous transit program. The *Developing Sustainable Transit Options for Small Communities* report shares information and best practices on developing transit in small rural communities. Its original intent was to support the development of transit service in Peace River, but the report has also been shared with other northern communities to improve the quality of life and mobility options for residents.



Priority: Resource Management

Agriculture

In 2008 the NADC partnered with Branding the Peace Country Association and Alberta Research Council to conduct preliminary chemical analysis on several northern agricultural products. They were believed to have superior desirable chemical compositions compared to crops grown in southern regions. This research identified that northern flax seed had superior Omega 3 content. Research was then undertaken to develop early maturing strains with high Omega 3 content that were suitable for growing in the north. The target date for commercialization is March 2016. Some forecasts anticipate that the potential cash value of new flax seed strains would be equal or higher to that of northern canola. This would provide another high value crop to add to crop rotations for good crop management. Potential royalties for Alberta Innovates are projected to be \$500,000 per year for ten years.

Tourism

The NADC broadened its knowledge and partner base in tourism by meeting with Tourism Parks and Recreation, recreational trail operators and Travel Alberta. The NADC supports northern tourism initiatives and the development of market-ready tourism products.



Priority: Health Services

Access to Healthcare

NADC received data from Alberta Health and analyzed the travel patterns of northern Alberta residents who accessed healthcare outside their home region. The data facilitates the understanding of health access and travel patterns of northern Alberta residents. This data will also improve the capability to inform the development of health policy in northern Alberta.

Physician Recruitment and Retention Conference: Changing Landscapes

NADC partnered with the Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) to host the 2014 Rural Alberta Community Physician Attraction and Retention Conference in Edmonton. It provides information and networking opportunities to assist communities in improving their physician recruitment strategies. At the conference, the NADC presented information on its current attraction, recruitment and retention strategies.



Priority: Workforce

NADC Bursary

2013 at a glance

79 NADC Bursaries
13 Medical Bursaries
1 Nurse Practitioner Bursary
2 Pharmacy Bursaries
3 Veterinary Bursaries
79 Bursary Partnerships
24 Teacher Bursaries

2013 NADC Bursaries

44 Health Care
4 Education
8 Social Services
11 Engineering/Technical
8 Business Administration
4 Agriculture/Environment

Educational Levels

5 certificate
25 diploma
38 degree
11 masters

NADC Bursary Programs Overview

NADC bursaries work to attract students entering skilled professions and retain them in northern Alberta by the fulfillment of a return-service commitment. Since 2000, the NADC has awarded 3,377 bursaries. In 2013-2014, the return-service rate was 79 per cent. Demand for skilled professionals in the north and for the bursaries continues to far exceed what is available.

In collaboration with the Alberta Scholarship Programs office of Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, the NADC offered 201 bursaries to students this year. This includes the NADC Bursaries, higher-valued specialty bursaries, Bursary Partnerships, and Northern Student Teacher Bursary offered in collaboration with Alberta Education. Details on NADC bursaries can be found at www.benorth.ca.

The NADC Bursary is awarded to students training in high demand professions, as determined in a thorough workforce scan of northern Alberta. In 2013-2014, 228 Alberta students applied, and 79 received NADC bursaries:

- 77 of \$6,000
- 2 of \$3,000

Recipients were enrolled in a wide variety of fields and levels of education: five certificate programs, 25 diploma programs, 38 degree programs, and 11 masters programs.

Higher Valued NADC Bursaries for Specialty Programs

Certain programs in demand receive bursaries of higher value:

- 13 students received \$12,000 medical and dentistry bursaries – eight in medicine and five in dentistry
- One student received the \$9,000 nurse practitioner bursary
- Two students received the \$6,000 pharmacy bursary
- Three students received the \$6,000 large animal veterinary bursary



NADC Bursary Return Service Rate

Recipients of the NADC Bursary enter into an agreement to live and work in northern Alberta when they complete their education – one year of full-time work for each year of bursary support. The NADC follows up with each recipient. Students who do not fulfill their return service obligations repay their bursaries. Bursary repayments are used to fund additional bursaries to benefit students and northern employers.

*The return-service rate is calculated using graduates within a three-year period. When fewer bursaries are awarded, each bursary carries more weight in this calculation. An additional complication is the number of bursaries awarded to individual students. If one student receives five bursaries (one prior to medical studies, and four during a medical degree) and chooses not to return to the north, this is weighted as five in the return-service calculation, not one. It is also important to note that the value of bursaries has been increasing, while the overall budget for bursaries remains unchanged.

NADC Bursary Partnerships Support 79 Students

Bursary Partnerships are an excellent opportunity for businesses and community organizations to bring in the skilled professionals that fit their organization. In the program, sponsors provide the students they select between \$1,000 and \$3,000, and then apply to the NADC for matching bursary funds. Recipients are obligated to provide return-service within the NADC region, based on one month of fulltime employment for every \$500 of total bursary support received.

In 2013-2014, 79 partnership bursaries totalling \$295,900 were awarded, with \$147,450 provided through the NADC. New sponsorships are accepted on an ongoing basis; potential sponsors can contact the NADC.

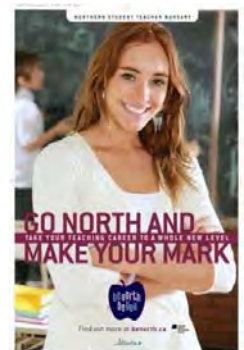
Bursary return-service rate*

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| 2006-07 | 81 per cent |
| 2007-08 | 78 per cent |
| 2008-09 | 88 per cent |
| 2009-10 | 87 per cent |
| 2010-11 | 85 per cent |
| 2011-12 | 83 per cent |
| 2012-13 | 82 per cent |
| 2013-14 | 79 per cent |

Northern Student Teacher Bursary Awarded to 24 Students

Teacher attraction and retention in northern, rural and remote Alberta locations are significant workforce challenges. Population projections for school-age children as well as teacher retirements show that the demand for teachers will only grow.

Alberta Education collaborates with Alberta Scholarship Programs and the NADC to offer the Northern Student Teacher Bursary (NSTB), which requires a return-service obligation from recipients. Superintendents of northern school jurisdictions participate in determining eligibility criteria and selection processes to ensure the most qualified applicants are awarded bursaries. In 2013-2014 applications were restricted to education students who



PRIORITY: WORKFORCE

would be qualified to teach high demand subjects such as math and sciences. There were 105 applications, and 24 bursaries of \$16,000 were awarded.



Northern Health Care Practicum Funding Helps 52 Students

The North Zone of Alberta Health Services administers the Health Care Practicum Funding Program, designed to increase the number of health-care students completing their practicums in the North. Thanks to \$50,000 in funding from the NADC, 52 students who completed a health care practicum in northern Alberta received reimbursement for eligible travel and accommodation.

Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

Northern post-secondary institutions require labour force and economic information to help them identify new training programs and modify existing curriculum. The Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse, a joint initiative of the NADC and Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, Portage College and Northern Lakes College, provides such information to its members. The Clearinghouse also serves as a forum for communication and cooperation between the partner institutions and enhances their capacity and shared understanding of northern post-secondary issues. The Clearinghouse's most recent report, *Improving the Recruitment and Retention of Instructors in High Demand Industrial Programs*, identifies key factors impacting northern colleges' ability to recruit and retain instructors in selected industrial and trades programs and identifies strategies to address these challenges. All past Clearinghouse reports are available at www.nadc.ca.

Northern Post-Secondary Institution Presidents' Meeting

Council met with the presidents of northern Alberta's post-secondary institutions. The meeting's objective was to identify areas of potential collaboration between the parties in the area of local workforce development. At the meeting, the presidents shared the details of the Northern Post-Secondary Education Institution Collaborative Memorandum of Action, connecting the schools and allowing simplified student transfers. The MOA was signed in the months following the meeting. NADC plans to continue meeting with the presidents annually.

Apprenticeship and Trades Training Strategies for Northern Alberta

NADC collaborated with stakeholders to research the apprenticeship training system. The research sought to review its applicability to employers and apprentices in northern Alberta. The results offered suggestions on modifications or enhancements to better meet the needs of the region. Recommendations included improved offerings in northern locations and online, increased exposure for primary/secondary students to apprenticeships and trades training, and changes to funding and government policy/regulations.

Tolko Evaluation

The NADC completed the program evaluation for the Tolko/Northern Lakes College dual credit program in High Prairie. The evaluation fulfilled a grant requirement from the Rural Alberta Development Fund, the main funder of the project. The project highlighted the success of dual credit programs as a mechanism for workforce development. The evaluation also provides a template for future program evaluations.

Woodlands Operations Learning Foundation

The Woodlands Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF) is committed to building a skilled forestry sector workforce through online and classroom training and simulation. The forest industry continues to account for a considerable portion of the workforce in northern Alberta. Engagement with WOLF enables the NADC to remain at the forefront of forestry sector education and changes in its workforce.

Aboriginal Entrepreneurship

At the June 2013 NADC meeting in High Prairie, Metis Settlement leaders were invited to address Council and share some of their community concerns. Three Metis Settlements presented information about economic and workforce development challenges and identified some areas where the NADC could assist. All three Métis groups want to develop economic opportunities within the community that would lead to workforce development and employment for the local population. Although each of the three communities were at various stages of community development, the NADC assisted these groups by initiating conversations and identifying key people within government who could assist in the next step of their economic development plans.

Immigration to the North

Labour shortages continue to be one of the most prominent issues facing economic and community development in northern Alberta. The NADC continues to liaise with northern communities, employers and governments to maintain awareness and identify key issues and trends. The NADC met with Immigration Policy and Planning, from the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour to learn about immigration and temporary foreign worker policies and practices.



Communication to the Region

Marketing Opportunity North

The Opportunity North website was updated in 2010 and serves as an information resource for individuals looking to relocate to or work in Alberta's north. In conjunction with the website, the NADC promoted living and working in northern Alberta through a variety of channels:

- Development of "Living and Working in Northern Alberta" Prezi presentation
- Regular meetings with the employment services working group to promote Opportunity North
- Promotion of Opportunity North in Alberta Works Centres throughout Alberta
- Promotion of northern Alberta at job and career fairs outside the NADC region

NADC Communications Team

The NADC uses several methods to communicate initiatives and projects within government and to northern stakeholders, including:

- Social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Newsletters, press releases and presentations
- Websites
- Development of marketing material for programs, conferences and workshops
- NADC 50th Anniversary video and historical online content

| Facebook | Twitter | NADC.ca | BeNorth.ca | Opportunity North |
|----------------------|----------------|---|--|---|
| As of March 31, 2014 | | April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014 | | |
| Friends: 219 | Followers: 547 | Total Visits: 129,447 19 per cent increase over 2013 (109,006) | Total Visits: 84,218 6 per cent increase over 2013 (79,648) | Total Visits: 78,974 31 per cent increase over 2013 (60,138) |



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The NADC is renewing its strategic plan in 2014-2015. In addition to supporting the Government of Alberta's strategic goals, the NADC will focus efforts on the following priority areas:

1. Skilled, Educated Workforce

Objectives: To attract and retain skilled professionals, establish training programs to address the "skills gap," and increase the percentage of under-represented populations in the local workforce.

2. Robust, Diversified Economy

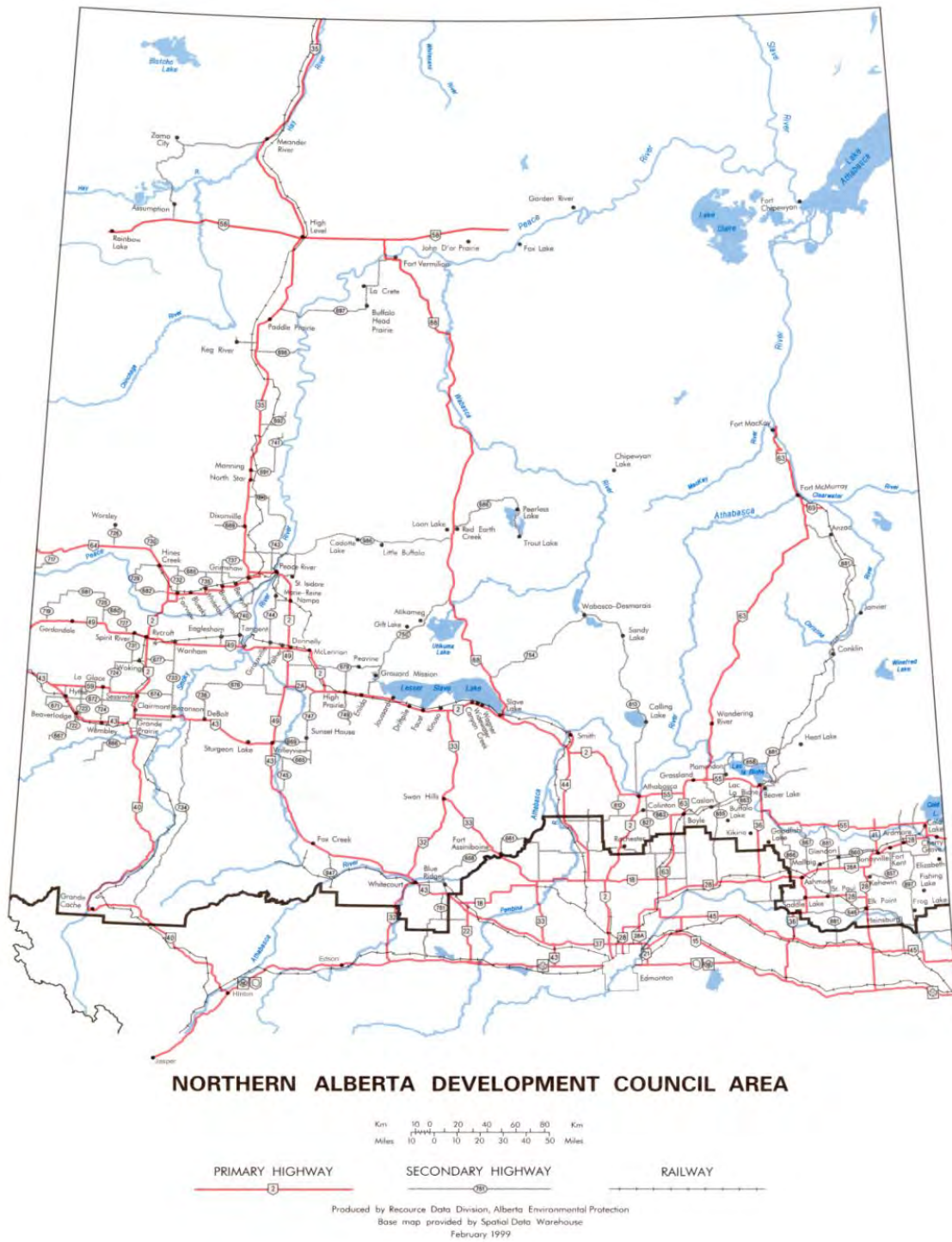
Objectives: To establish an integrated transportation strategy and encourage the development of government programs and policy that support diversification.

3. Strong, Vibrant Communities

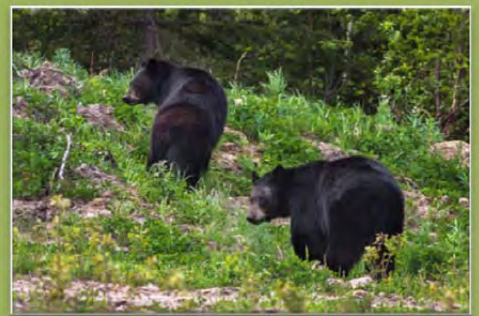
Objectives: To establish effective regional partnerships to address health and human services priorities and promote regional collaboration to support regional priorities.

The NADC will continue to strive for excellence in its presentation of northern Alberta's challenges and opportunities to provincial leaders.

For more information, please go to our website, www.nadc.ca, or visit our Facebook and Twitter pages.



We're putting opportunity on the map.



206 Provincial Building
9621 – 96 Avenue
Bag 900-14
Peace River AB T8S 1T4
Phone: 780.624.6274

www.nadc.ca
www.benorth.ca



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