



# Our Future

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



2017 Strategy created by

**URBAN**  
systems



# Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge that this economic development plan has only been possible thanks to the comments, thoughts and insights provided by numerous local stakeholders and stakeholder organizations. In fact there were more than four-hundred and fifty touch points arising from individual one on one interviews, focus groups, surveys and conversations. This overwhelming response surely recognizes the importance of the exercise. For that we are thankful.

This economic development plan would not have been possible without the financial support of the Government of British Columbia, BC Rural Dividend Program.

Finally we are especially grateful to all of those with whom we have had the pleasure to work during this project. Each of the members of the District of Chetwynd Economic Development Commission have individually and collectively provided us with extensive guidance and support.



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA



# Letter from the Mayor & Peace River Regional District Area E Director

The District of Chetwynd truly is a wonderful place to call home. We have a friendly, proactive Council that is open to business, new ventures and marketing ideas. Council is actively pursuing growth to enhance our local economy and to provide opportunities for our residents.

This Strategy briefly explains how the District's economy works, and describes ways by which we might jointly sustain success and address the many challenges and obstacles along the way. This is not a strategy for growth for its own sake. Instead this strategy reviews the growth trends facing us and the reasons for them. For the challenge lies in being prepared to meet those trends in a sustainable manner. As well we cannot sit back and expect the benefits of economic success to trickle down to benefit all our citizens and enterprises or to hope that environmental imperatives will address themselves. We must establish policies to ensure our economy develops in ways that meet these

challenges. It is the role of this strategy to point out ways of moving forward so success in one area can support progress in others.

Today we must take the time to move from analysis and discussion of visions and ideas, towards action. As a community we need to work together to deliver economic success, a sustainable environment and high standards of health and quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in, or visits our community

This is an exciting time for the District of Chetwynd. Our future is bright. I look forward to working with our citizens, our business community and all of our stakeholders and partners to make sure our future is something we can all be proud of.

*Merlin Nichols*  
Mayor  
District of Chetwynd

*Dan Rose*  
Area E Director  
Peace River Regional  
District



The District of Chetwynd is one of British Columbia's and Canada's best communities in which to live and work. We have a friendly, proactive Council. We are open to business, new ventures and marketing ideas. Council is actively pursuing growth to enhance our local economy and to provide opportunities for our residents.

Today it is essential that communities and regions undertake careful and comprehensive strategic planning along with committed and focused action to preserve and enhance economic circumstances and quality of life. Our Economic Development Plan, based on contemporary best practices, is grounded and driven by strong participation from our community members. As presented, this plan celebrates the great work already being done and strives to work collaboratively to capitalize on our opportunities and address our challenges.







# Our Vision

Chetwynd exists in order that the area residents have sustainable opportunities for

**Security, Health, Safety & Prosperity**

in surroundings that display the best of our natural environment.





# Our Purpose

Strive towards a diverse economy that emphasizes the importance of balance between large industry, Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises and entrepreneurship in order for equitable employment opportunities that allow for a high-level of quality of life.



# Our Guiding Principles

01

Effective Communication and Transparency

02

Focus on Regional Partnerships

03

Build From past success and present momentum

04

Respect Capacity & Limitations

05

Economic Development is not industrial development

06

Economic Development is Community Development & Quality of Life

07

Consistency and alignment of the Economic Development efforts and all levels of community planning

08

Community Owned

09

Inclusive and Engaged Citizens





# Strategic Priorities

## ACTIVITIES & TACTICS

### Healthy and vibrant Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises Sector

- Develop a succession of existing businesses in District of Chetwynd
- Business ecosystem which includes eight (8) elements:
  1. Entrepreneurial culture
  2. Experienced mentors
  3. Regulatory environment
  4. Collaborative culture
  5. Visible successes
  6. Risk tolerance
  7. Availability of capital
  8. Human capacities
- Support and foster linkages between the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises sectors, talent and skill and primary (large) industry
- Continue to conduct a functional review of the regulatory process at the District Level in order to ensure a facilitative and enabling environment.
- Conduct regional (District of Chetwynd and Peace River Regional District Area E) employment land use inventory and strategy (Gap Analysis).
- Establish a regular series of community seminars focusing on linking District of Chetwynd with key resources and expertise
- Explore the need for Co-working space & incubator
- Peer to peer mentoring for business owners' professional development model
- Identify key (service and retail) leakages
- Buy-local Program (Chetwynd Gold)
- Maintain a business inventory 'Love Chetwynd' (existing business database including home based).
- Work with business lending organizations (i.e. Community Futures, Business Development Bank of Canada) to prepare community services specific to District of Chetwynd and provide space and calendar of activity







## Regional Collaboration

- Continue to foster a partnership with Northern Health
- Work with regional Partners to design and develop adequate and affordable supply of Employment Lands (all types)
- Communicate regularly with the region's Economic Development Officers to discuss efforts and look for synergies
- External marketing and promotion efforts (Tourism, Inbound Investment, Citizen Attraction etc..)

## Sustainable Economy through Diversification

- Ambassador Program
- Team Chetwynd – Site Selection Team
- Create sense of Place in the downtown - Complete downtown theming
- Create a tourism development strategy
- Develop a Model Youth Business (Demonstration Project)
- Undertake a Youth Business Contest (High school)
- Prepare investment profiles for five (5) key industries (examples: services to trucking industry (maintenance business), satellite retail/service opportunities.
- Establish contact and pursue under entrepreneurial immigration



# Build Sustainable Economic Development Function

- Socio-economic Youth Leadership Council
- Quarterly meeting with Peace River Regional District Area E representative
- Quarterly Report (provide progress, quantitative and qualitative impacts)
- Pursue the introduction of a Partners in Action program. Introduce action team approach to Economic Development initiatives
- Succession Plan for Economic Development
- "Sharing Our Successes!" Prepare and distribute quarterly press releases on economic development initiatives
- Introduce youth representation in economic planning; participate/share in economic development
- Quantify and communicate the impact of economic initiatives
- Have the Economic Development Function to work through the provided workbook

## Attract and Retain Citizens

- Develop a citizen attraction and retention strategy
- Utilize existing local event (example Carving Festival) to promote the District of Chetwynd. 'Make District of Chetwynd your home'
- Leverage Diaspora (residents that have grown up and moved away) "Home Coming"
- Organize Youth Retreat "The Future of The Peace." Improve opportunities for youth to highlight their skills and link to the community.
- 'Welcome to Chetwynd Program' – Engage Realtors to interview new residents (when buying a home) to ask about their family interests and hobbies and link them to services providers
- Support the existing efforts to conduct downtown beautification
- Social Capital retention – fatigue of volunteers

