

Updates from the Northern Alberta Development Council

April 2020

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Message from the NADC Chair

As we close in on almost a month under a new normal, I wanted to provide an update on a number of issues related to the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) as we end another challenging week across the province. While our provincial government continues to address the emergent health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic concurrently with a global crash in the price of oil, I want to remind you that the NADC continues to work in support of development across the north.

Alberta is certainly experiencing unprecedented times and it can be very discouraging as we see our provincial economy battered and concern rise around the globe as the pandemic continues to shut down businesses, isolate people and claim lives. As NADC Chair, I believe we have an opportunity to play a key role in Alberta's economic recovery once the COVID-19 crisis is behind us. In the interim, we will work to assist across the north to get through this challenging time together. Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, NADC was preparing a newsletter to update you on our activities including the recently released Information Technology Needs in the North Report and the recently concluded Northern Workforce Survey. While that information no longer seems as critical at this time of crisis, there are a few pieces of information that I wanted to bring to your attention:

NADC OFFICE UPDATES

- During this time of physical distancing, the NADC offices will remain open to serve you via telephone and online – for the safety of all Albertans, our offices will not be open to the general public until further notice.
- As a result of budget and other pressures, the NADC will be working to have a more focused set of priorities and enhanced cross-ministerial collaboration on tasks.

NADC BURSARY PROGRAM UPDATES

- NADC continues to prepare for the Bursary Program's spring allocation. Applications are still being accepted until April 30, 2020. The NADC Bursary continues to serve the north by incentivizing graduates in key professions to return to the north upon completion of their programs. In the past year, NADC awarded 251 bursaries to students. This is equal to over 2800 months of return service for the north. The NADC Bursary Program will continue to provide critical trained labour for our northern communities to realize their maximum economic development potential. To support bursary recipients impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are developing some guidelines to support recipients during this time of transition. If you have been impacted, please call the Bursary Coordinator to discuss options or visit our website for more information.
<http://www.nadc.ca/our-bursaries/nadc-bursary/>

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND EMERGING PRIORITIES

- Once we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, NADC will be focused on supporting the north to transition back into full economic activity. The provincial government will be looking to stimulate economic growth to facilitate job creation quickly. NADC will be available to the north to communicate priorities and assist organizations and communities to connect with projects once they are identified. Further, NADC will be available to assist in communicating projects identified across the north back to government for consideration. Please stay tuned for more information.
- As we strategize for recovery, NADC will be communicating the criteria for project prioritization as it becomes available. Criteria will be developed, predicated on the potential for immediate job creation and the longitudinal value added to our communities and economy. It is no secret that world economies have been devastated by this pandemic, and Alberta will need to exercise even more discipline in our budget allocation as we look to the future.
- Since my appointment as Chair, I have had many discussions with my elected colleagues and conveyed to them the importance of the north to the overall provincial economy. An emerging priority is the development of a trade utility corridor across the north. There is much work happening that is continuing to move this file along. Projects of this magnitude could provide significant benefits to our northern communities for many years to come and Council has and will continue to work to engage with the north and advise government on transportation and utility corridors that will benefit the region.

The work of Council remains a priority during this period of instability. As NADC Chair, I want to thank you for your leadership in communities across the north and your contribution to help stop the spread of COVID-19. This must remain our highest priority for the safety of Albertans and the security of our future. For the most up-to-date information on Alberta's response to COVID-19, including supports for affected Albertans and the latest requirements for prevention of the spread, please visit www.alberta.ca/covid19. Stay safe out there.

Sincerely,
Tracy L. Allard, MLA for Grande Prairie
Chair, Northern Alberta Development Council

About the NADC

The Northern Alberta Development Council is a provincial government agency that investigates northern Alberta's economic and social development priorities, programs, and services. Council provides advice and recommendations to the Government of Alberta. Please visit the [NADC website](#) for more information on the Council.

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