

Northern Alberta Development Council

2021-2022 Annual Report



Photo: Rodeo Fair

December 2022
Jobs, Economy and Northern Development



Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) 2021-2022 Annual Report

Jobs, Economy and Northern Development, Government of Alberta

December 2022

Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC)

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Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC), I am pleased to present the 2021-22 Annual Report that highlights key NADC activities covering April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. Last year, with the appointment of two new council members, the NADC had a full compliment of seven council members from across the north. Council members continued to engage with stakeholders in northern communities to understand their perspectives on challenges and opportunities. In doing so, we were able to better inform our advice to government.

Over the past year, northerners once again showed their resiliency while they patiently navigated the numerous economic challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. They proved they are ready to embark on the path of recovery and growth. Throughout this period, council members focused their efforts on communicating and engaging with northern partners. They collected information with the aim of strengthening the local workforce, identifying critical infrastructure, and laying the groundwork for economic recovery and future growth in the north.

Last year, we met with key experts and leaders, who are working on advancing transportation and utility corridors in Alberta, to inform a strategy for the north. The strategy will identify one or more multi-modal corridors across the north that would include broadband, utilities, roadways, and rail. Advancing corridor development supports the north's long-standing issues of market accessibility, resource development, and socio-economic wellbeing. We also continued our regional collaboration with stakeholder groups by attending meetings held by the Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL), Water North Coalition (WNC), and the Labour Education Applied Research North (LEARN). Through these meetings, we obtained information to help NADC provide advice to the government on the needs of the north.

David Hanson, MLA
Chair, NADC



Meet the Council



Chair
David Hanson
MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul
Appointed on November 18, 2020



Vice-chair
Jason Schulz
Appointed on Sep 14, 2020



Jacquie Bateman
Appointed on April 21, 2021



Cody Beairsto
Appointed on Sep 14, 2020



Peter Cardinal
Appointed on Sep 14, 2020



Omer Moghrabi
Appointed on July 8, 2020



Shelly Shannon
Appointed on April 21, 2021

Mandate

The mandate of the council, as outlined 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 council may investigate the requirements of residents in northern Alberta and make recommendations with respect to:

- social and economic development,
- development of communities and service delivery, and
- development of government services and programs.

Vision, Mission, Key Strategies

Vision


A stronger Alberta through a stronger north.

Mission


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

Core Approaches

Communication



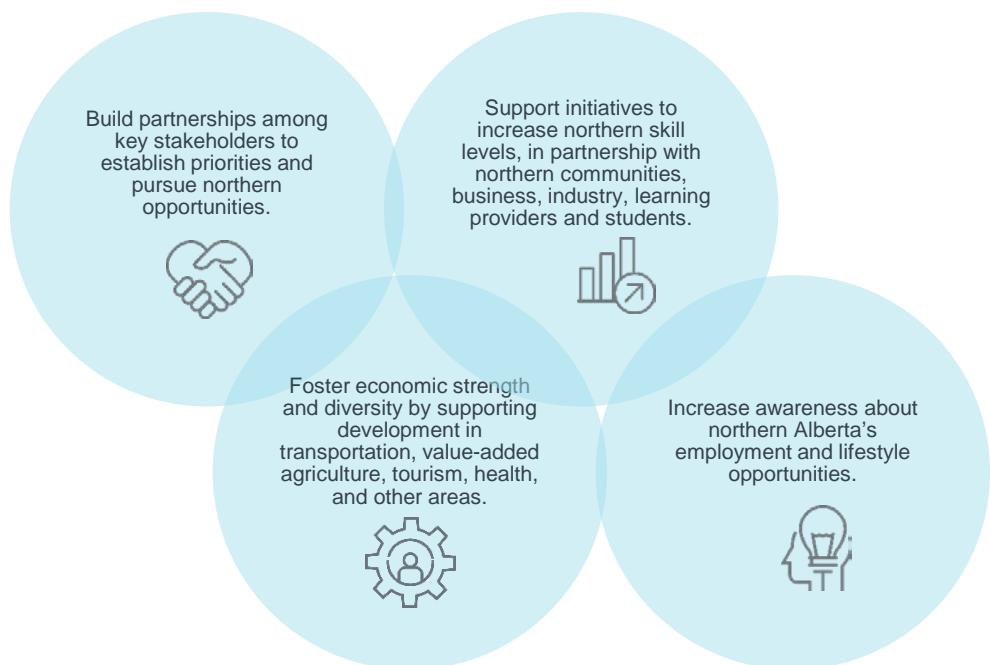
Engagement



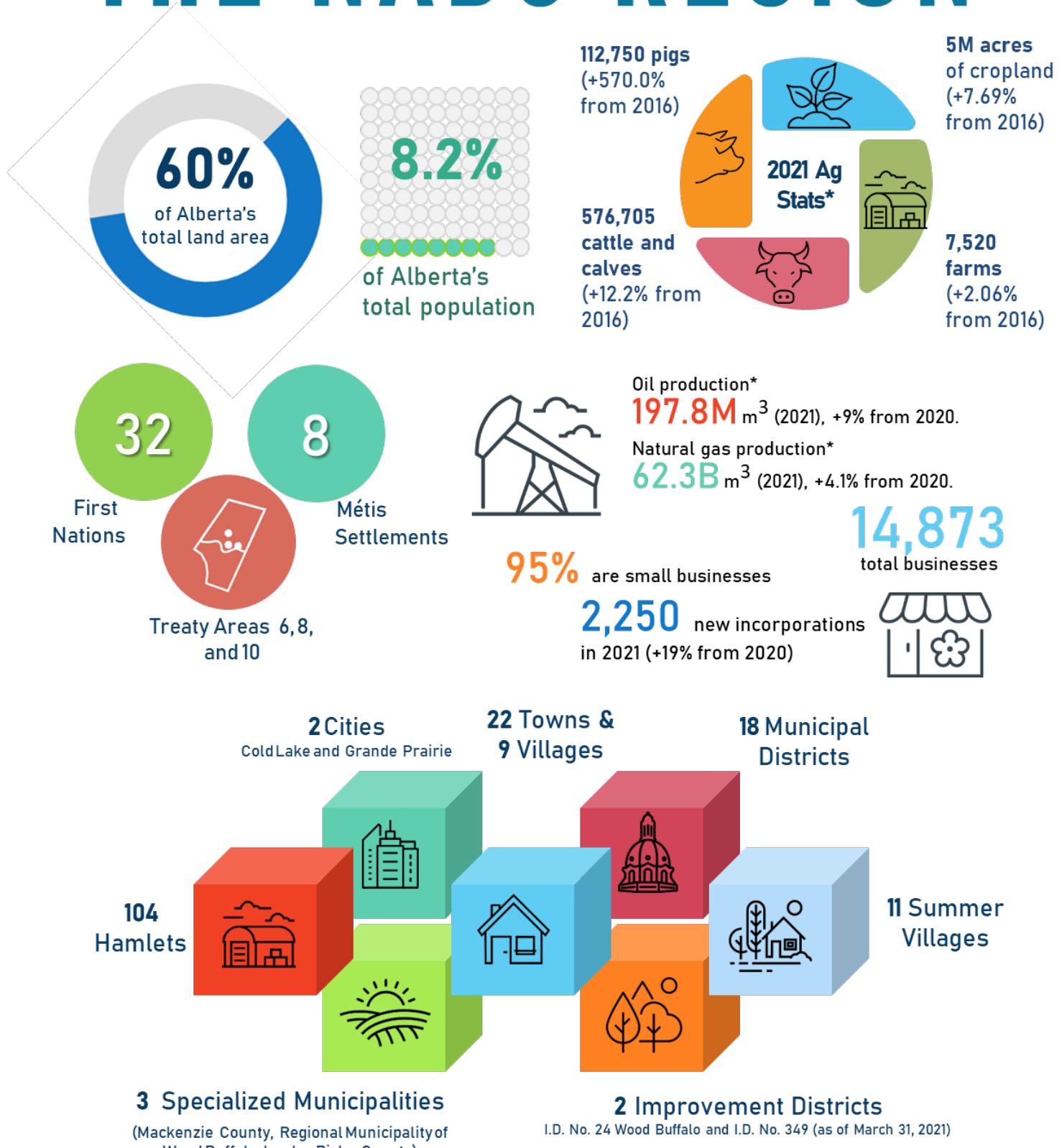
Advise Government



Key Strategies



THE NADC REGION



*Sources: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Agriculture; Alberta Energy Regulator

NADC Key Accomplishments



Results and Contributions

The NADC is accountable to the Minister of Jobs, Economy and Northern Development (JEND) and is responsible for providing advice and guidance regarding northern development.

JEND staff provide NADC with secretariat services to support the council's vision, mission, goals and strategies. Below is a summary of council's activities and performance in 2021-22.

Northern Strategy

In the *Fair Deal Panel report: Government's response* (recommendation 5), government indicated that NADC would continue to focus on the development of one or more multi-modal corridors across the north, including broadband, utilities, roadways, and rail to inform a strategy for north.

NADC continued to meet with key stakeholders and experts related to transportation and corridors to understand their perspectives on the development of one or more multi-modal corridors in the north. Examples of this work include engagement with the Northern Transportation Advocacy Bureau (NTAB), the Canadian Northern Corridor program, and A2A Railway.

As a special stakeholder, NADC provided feedback to the Economic Corridors Task Force (ECTF) stakeholder engagement questions highlighting the importance of existing and potential new or expanded northern corridors.



NADC Bursary Programs

The NADC bursaries initiative was created to attract and retain skilled professionals to grow and diversify the northern economy. The initiative is funded through JEND (formerly Jobs, Economy and Innovation), Alberta Education and Advanced Education. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the program provided 249 recipients with 255 bursaries totaling \$1,558,350. Sponsors provided an additional \$118,350 in funding directly to the students. A total of 618 applications were received.

Jobs, Economy and Northern Development	Alberta Education	Advanced Education
\$150,000	\$360,000	\$1,048,350

The NADC bursary program is comprised of eight different bursaries including the NADC Bursary; four specialty bursaries for students studying to become veterinarians, pharmacists, nurse practitioners or medical doctors/dentists; the First Nations (status or non-status) Métis and Inuit Bursary; the Northern Student Teacher Bursary; and Bursary Partnership Program. Details on the suite of NADC bursaries can be found at nadc.ca.

BURSARY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



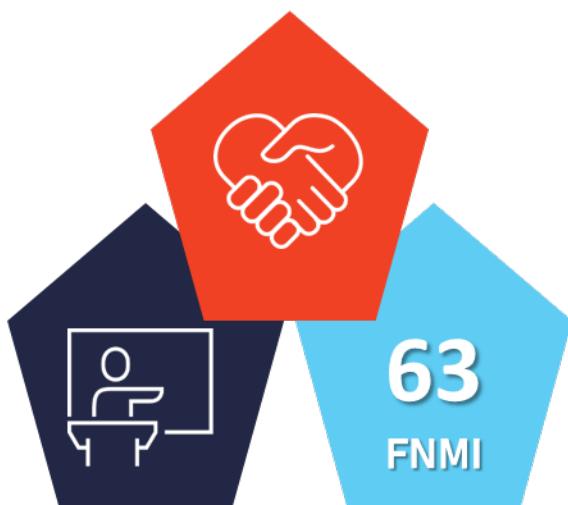
\$1.56M Total dollars awarded

\$118K Sponsor matching



255 Total # awarded

72 Bursary Partnerships



- **NADC Bursary**

The NADC Bursary focuses on students training in professions determined to be in demand by northern employers. In the 2021-2022 academic year, 84 NADC Bursaries were provided for a total of \$480,000.

- **Higher Dollar Valued NADC Bursaries for Specialty Programs**

Certain programs in demand allow individuals to receive a bursary for additional years of studies. The value of the bursary may be of a higher amount. Seven students received NADC Specialty Bursaries for a total of \$63,000:



3 Medical and Dentistry Bursaries – 2 in Medicine and 1 in Dentistry – with an amount of \$12,000 each



1 Nurse Practitioner Bursary with an amount of \$9,000



2 Pharmacy Bursaries with an amount of \$12,000 each



1 Veterinarian Bursary with an amount of \$6,000

- **Bursary Partnership Program**

Bursary partnerships are an excellent opportunity for businesses and community organizations to bring in the skilled professionals that fit their organization. This is a 50-50 matching program where the sponsors provide the students they select between \$500 and \$3,000, and then apply to the NADC for matching bursary funds. Specialty bursaries allow for higher matching funds ranging from \$6,000 to \$12,000. Recipients are obligated to provide return service within the NADC region, based on one month of full-time employment for every \$500 of total bursary support received to a maximum of 12 months return service per year.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, the Bursary Partnership Program awarded a total of \$236,700, with \$118,350 provided by sponsors and \$118,350 provided through the NADC to 72 students. For this program, new sponsorships are accepted on an ongoing basis; and potential sponsors can contact the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Northern Development.



- First Nation (Status or Non-Status), Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Bursary**

This bursary was launched on October 29, 2015 to assist meeting the needs of Indigenous learners. In 2021-22 academic year, a total 63 FNMI bursaries were awarded with a total amount of \$537,000.



Fields of Study:
Education: 9
Medical Doctor: 1
Health Care: 15
Social Services: 23
Agriculture/Environment: 4
Business Administration: 7
Engineering/Technical: 1 Other: 3

Program:
Certificate: 3
Diploma: 17
Degree: 33
Masters: 7
PhD: 2
MD: 1

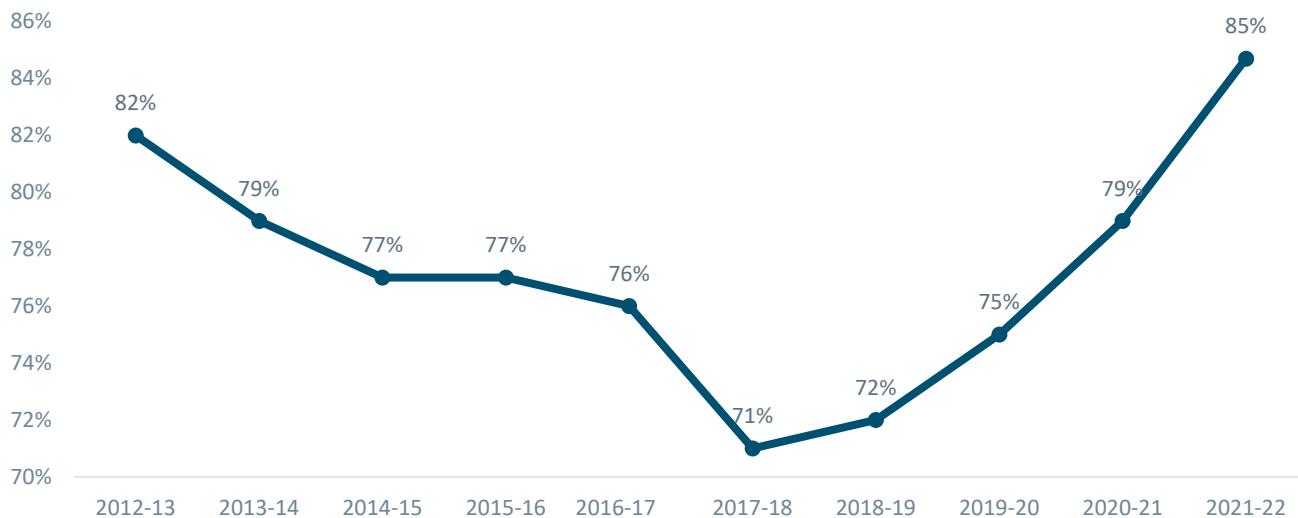
- Northern Student Teacher Bursary**

Alberta Education collaborated with the NADC to offer the Northern Student Teacher Bursary (NSTB), which requires a return-service obligation from recipients. Twenty nine NSTB were awarded in 2021-22 academic year for a total of \$360,000. This bursary helped address the challenges of attracting and retaining teachers in northern, rural and remote Alberta locations.

NADC Bursary Return-Service Rate

Recipients of all NADC bursaries 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 full bursary support. The NADC follows up with each recipient to verify they fulfill their return-service obligations, as they are required to repay the funding amount received from the NADC if they do not complete their obligation. This year, the program maintained a high return-service rate. In 2021-22 academic year, 84.7 per cent of bursary recipients returned to the north, the highest rate since 2012-13.

Bursary Return Service Rate



NADC Health Care Practicum Funding

NADC partnered with Alberta Health Services for the NADC Health Care Practicum Funding program. In 2021-22 fiscal year, the program helped support 47 applicants towards completing a practicum placement within NADC boundaries. With a total allocation of \$50,000 in funding, this program supported occupations that are in demand and in locations under pressure in northern Alberta.



Council Meetings

Last year, NADC held five virtual council meetings. Different area experts and leaders were invited to present at the meetings with a focus on northern priorities, including transportation and corridors. The council members also discussed the issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, access to health services, transportation development, and access to broadband infrastructure in the north.

Council meetings give members the opportunity to discuss the needs of northern residents. Members then plan and provide strategic advice to government based on what they heard. For example, NADC advised the former Jobs, Economy and Innovation Minister to reach out to the Ministry of Transportation to recommend expanding Class 1 truck driving programs to serve not only unemployed Albertans but to include employed Albertans, or develop a similar program with shared funding responsibilities between the government and northern employers.

Stakeholder Engagement, Committee Representation, and Communication

Over the year, in addition to its own regular council meetings, NADC attended external meetings and events to engage and communicate with different northern stakeholder groups.

NADC members participated in the meetings of the Rural Development Network (RDN) and Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) and attended the 13th annual Growing the North (GTN) conference held virtually from February 22 to 24, 2022. The meetings with RDN and RMA allowed the council to provide updates on NADC, raise awareness about NADC's value, and to gather information about northern challenges and opportunities to inform NADC's advice to government. The GTN conference provided opportunities for members to network with municipal leaders, entrepreneurs, and economic development officials as well as hear recent innovations and approaches to economic development in the Peace Region of Northwest Alberta and Northwest B.C.

Council members also sat on committees such as the Labour Education Applied Research North (LEARN), Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL), and the Water North Coalition (WNC).

Labour Education Applied Research North (LEARN)

NADC participated in the LEARN partnership as a member, with JEND staff providing secretariat, key administrative and research supports until October 2021. LEARN focuses on discussing, sharing, and exploring information regarding labour market trends and training needs in Alberta's north in order to support institutional planning of partner post-secondary institutions (Northwestern Polytechnic - formerly Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, Northern Lakes College, and Portage College).

NADC's engagement with the LEARN member institutions helped the council understand the issues and opportunities related to post-secondary training and workforce development in the north.

Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL)

NAEL is a consortium of 40 Alberta municipalities that meet to identify and discuss issues impacting municipal development in Alberta's northwest. Last year, NADC attended three NAEL meetings and provided updates on NADC activities and priorities. JEND staff provided the secretariat support to NAEL until November 2021.

NADC's attendance in the NAEL meetings and engagement with NAEL members continued to enhance NADC's awareness of local perspectives to support NADC's advice to government on the needs of the north.

Water North Coalition (WNC)

NADC attended the WNC meetings and participated in their discussions to understand northern water and wastewater issues. WNC is a partnership between northern Alberta municipalities and water/wastewater partners focusing on drawing attention to northern challenges in delivering safe water and wastewater management systems, and enabling key partners to work collaboratively to deliver training to water and wastewater operators.

NADC Website

Apart from above engagement opportunities, the NADC also continued to use its communication methods through its website to inform, engage, and cultivate relationships with northern stakeholders.

 **NADC Website**
www.nadc.ca



Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The NADC is a provincial government agency that investigates northern Alberta's economic and social development priorities, programs, and services. It advises the government on supports needed to meet the needs of northern residents.

Section 8 of the *Northern Alberta Development Council Act* stipulates: "The Council shall prepare an annual report of its activities that shall be laid before the Legislative Assembly not later than 15 days after the opening of the session next following the preparation of the report."

