NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY

CONNECTING BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

NWT Chamber of Commerce

NABA Northern Aboriginal Business Association

nwtac NWT Association of Communities
Connecting Community Governments Since 1966

Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Agence canadienne de développement économique du Nord

Northwest Territories Industry, Tourism and Investment

BILL BRADEN

Table of Contents

From the Economic Opportunities Strategy Governance Committee 5

Introduction 6

1.0 Setting the Stage 9
- 1.1 The Common Ground Strategy (2000) 11
- 1.2 Devolution 12
- 1.3 The Strategy Process 16

2.0 Key Strategy Inputs 19
- 2.1 The NWT Economy - A Level Analysis 19
- 2.2 The Economic Opportunities Strategy Advisory Panel 34
- 2.3 Research in Support of Strategy Development 38
- 2.4 Other Strategies and Initiatives 39

3.0 Themes, Targets, Objectives and Recommended Actions 41
- 3.1 Climate for Growth 42
- 3.2 Building On Success 48
- 3.3 Regional Diversification 56
- 3.4 People: Opportunity Readiness 68

4.0 Next Steps: Monitoring the Implementation 79

5.0 Concluding Comments 81

6.0 Appendices 83
- 6.1 Recommendations from the *What We Heard* Report 83
- 6.2 Timelines for Recommended Actions 92

COVER PHOTOS: BILL BRADEN/GNWT ITI

BILL BRADEN

From the Economic Opportunities Strategy Governance Committee

The Northwest Territories is evolving – and so is its economy.

Our territory will soon have the authorities and resources it needs to build a vibrant and prosperous future. But realizing this incredible potential is reliant on informed, considered decisions anchored to, and guided by, sound economic planning.

Our Governance Committee is pleased to release this NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy – a document that builds on the foundation of research and recommendations presented in the Advisory Panel's What We Heard Report and puts in place the cornerstones of a collaborative 10-year economic strategy.

It offers a plan to connect businesses and communities to economic opportunities in the NWT by nurturing a climate for growth, building on success in key sectors, investing in regional diversification and promoting opportunity readiness in our Territory's most important resource – its people.

How appropriate that a strategy of this importance - and at this time - be developed in the same spirit of partnership and collaboration that has built and transitioned Canada's North. Its focus guided by an extensive engagement process with our territory's foremost stakeholders: its people, businesses, and governments.

The completion of this strategy also marks a beginning. With the broad directions and strategies identified, detailed planning, implementation and monitoring must begin – and we are committed to collaborating in support of this work.

While not all partners will be involved in all of the actions recommended in this Strategy, each partner will support activities that fall within the scope of their responsibility and mandate - and will play a role in providing coordination and oversight throughout the implementation of this strategy.

Our strategy is built on the premise that all segments of our society – businesses and industries, workers, educators, and governments – have a leadership role to play in moving our economy forward and building a strong, prosperous future.

Working together we will explore, develop and maximize opportunities in each region of the Northwest Territories.

Together we can create a territory in which people and business will grow and prosper - and we can solidify our economic future.

NWT Chamber of Commerce

Northern Aboriginal Business Association

nwtac NWT Association of Communities Connecting Community Governments Since 1966

Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Agence canadienne de développement économique du Nord

Northwest Territories Industry, Tourism and Investment

Introduction

The work to develop the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy has highlighted two universally-consistent sentiments in the people it has engaged: optimism and a need for action.

NWT residents can see economic activity and opportunity all around them; from digital satellite technology to hydro development; tourism, communications, agriculture, fishing and the enormous potential of the NWT's non-renewable resource sector. There is a bright future in store for the people of Canada's North and NWT residents view and value their territory as a desirable place to work, invest and raise their families.

There exists a high regard for the cultural values, entrenched in tradition and history, which set northerners apart from other Canadians - and for the activities of the traditional economy which have helped shape our North and remain prevalent in many of our communities today.

But, NWT residents also recognize the need to move forward and are no longer willing to accept the role of spectators to economic development. They have proven their capacity to play an active, fully-engaged role in the economy and are encouraging NWT governments and organizations to act and invest accordingly. The increasing and expanding participation and engagement of Aboriginal businesses, in particular, is evidence of a changing and fast-developing NWT economy.

This Strategy describes an approach to expand and diversify emerging economic activities: An approach that "opens the doors" to new ideas and emphasizes increased support for entrepreneurship and the pursuit of regional and grassroots economic opportunities.

To achieve these goals, careful planning and concrete, measured steps must be taken.

The Governance Committee that has authored this Economic Opportunities Strategy is representative of five key organizations - each of which has a unique role in supporting the NWT's economy and the creation of economic opportunities.

- The Northwest Territories Chamber of Commerce (NWTCC) represents private-sector interests across the NWT. With a network of member chambers from every region, it links businesses by providing partnership and networking opportunities, a forum for the advancement of business-related issues and represents the interests of the NWT business community to territorial and federal governments.
- The Northern Aboriginal Business Association (NABA) represents the interests of NWT Aboriginal businesses to governments and major project participants while working to promote full participation of Aboriginal businesses in the northern Canadian economy.

- The NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC) represents the interests of municipal and community level governments throughout the NWT. With advocacy to the territorial and federal governments and through its membership in the National Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the NWTAC plays a direct role in providing programs and services that result in community-level policies and programs under which businesses operate.
- The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) delivers the federal government's mandate to advance economic development in Canada's northern territories. CanNor fosters growth and development in the North by delivering economic development programs and by collaborating with and aligning the efforts of partners in northern and southern Canada to respond to economic challenges and opportunities in the North.
- The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) leads the development of programs and services that promote and support the NWT's economic prosperity and promote community self-reliance. These activities include a broad range of initiatives targeted at both major projects and small and medium-sized businesses.

Together, these organizations have identified a foundation for long-term economic planning, and actions required to promote and maximize the benefits of increased economic activity in the NWT.

BILL BRADEN

BILL BRADEN

AIDEN CARTRIGHT

1.0 Setting the Stage

As the first Prime Minister to travel north of the Arctic Circle in 1961, Prime Minister Diefenbaker sparked the imagination of Canadians with his notion of a fully defined Canada that extended from sea to sea to sea. He envisioned a road to resources and a sovereign North founded on economic activity and increased self-reliance.

Government became the primary economic driver – creating what might have otherwise been impossible; wealth, jobs and incomes in communities where none existed nor had been contemplated; and building a made-in-the-NWT business and service sector to support government investments alongside those of industry.

Meanwhile, resource exploration in the NWT grew - but not until the report of the Berger Commission halted further development did the discussion of northern control over northern resources truly begin to take shape.

The signing of the NWT's first comprehensive land-claim, in 1984, ushered in a new era for the NWT as the Inuvialuit Final Agreement established its signatories as full participants in both the economic and political life of the NWT. Successive settlements followed; the Gwich'in Land Claim (1992), the Sahtu Dene/Metis Claim (1993) and the Tlicho land, resources and self-government agreement in 2003.

Each agreement raised the level of Aboriginal participation and investment in the economy - eventually transforming the NWT's economic environment when prospects of a Mackenzie Valley pipeline and the discovery of diamonds catapulted the NWT economy to new heights. Today, Aboriginal companies are on the rise and play a pivotal role in almost every area of businesses and industry – providing significant opportunities for investment and driving the development of a skilled and vibrant northern workforce.

The pending devolution of lands and resources from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) will bring the evolution of northern administration and decision making to fruition.

It comes at a critical time. The NWT, fuelled by global demand for minerals and energy, is poised to, once again, play a role in the global resource economy. But this time, today's decision makers have also recognized the importance of economic diversification – looking beyond the NWT's historic focus on oil, gas and mining to expand and add value to the NWT's many other commodities as well - in sectors such as tourism, agriculture, fishing, manufacturing and the traditional economies.

The stage is set for an economic strategy, guided by northerners, supported by governments and driven by regional business and investment; one that will increase economic opportunity and diversity in the NWT and enhance self-sufficiency and self-reliance for NWT communities and residents for many generations to come.

The direction and oversight for achieving the actions set out in this strategy are guided by the following vision statement and guiding principles:

VISION STATEMENT

The Northwest Territories Economic Opportunities Strategy will help to guide the development and realization of economic potential in all regions of the NWT - strengthening and diversifying the NWT's economy - and resulting in an enhanced quality of life for all NWT residents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- *The NWT is an attractive and affordable place to live, invest and raise a family;*
- *Vibrant, healthy, well-educated NWT residents contribute to economic growth;*
- *Economic growth and regional diversity promote prosperous and self-sustaining communities;*
- *NWT resources are developed to maximize benefits for NWT residents;*
- *The Traditional Economy is essential to our Territory's wellbeing;*
- *Development balances the need to respect and protect the NWT's lands and environment with the wise and considered use of its resources.*

1.1 THE COMMON GROUND STRATEGY (2000)

The last NWT Economic Strategy "Common Ground" was released over a decade ago.

Now halfway to its vision of the NWT in 2025, some of the objectives identified in Common Ground have been successful – others, less so.

Common Ground could not have foreseen today's cell phone networks or the use of smart phones, but the Strategy's vision of "wired communities" has been surpassed and high speed internet is a reality in most communities – particularly in schools and health centers.

The strategy projected that resource development companies would come to view the NWT as a "good place to do business" but today's NWT still holds a lower-than-desired investment ranking by the Fraser Institute. Rising project costs and declining natural gas prices put the Mackenzie Gas project on hold and the territory has not yet realized the potential for oil and gas production envisioned in 2000. The potential, however, remains strong particularly in the Beaufort Delta, Sahtu and Dehcho regions.

Ten years ago, it was envisioned that communities would be less "dependent on goods and services from outside" but the NWT, today, is importing more goods and services than ever before. Meanwhile, the NWT is the world's third largest producer of diamonds by value, but it has not been able to sustain value-added processing initiatives as anticipated.

In its day, "Common Ground" observed that the NWT was well positioned to be a northern research and development center. Today, this has been proven true, in part, by Diavik Diamond Mine's investments in wind technology, and smaller scale experiments in energy completed by the NWT Power Corporation.

Finally, Aurora College may not have evolved into the "NWT University" as anticipated but the institution is recognized for graduating highly-sought professionals in partnerships with southern institutions - and addressing northern needs by offering a range of degree-level and certificate programs remains a sound strategy.

GNWT/ITI

BILL BRADEN

GNWT/ITI

1.2 DEVOLUTION

On April 1st 2014, legislative authority, programs, budgets, records and assets related to public land and resource management will be devolved from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).

A long-awaited transition, "Devolution" will mark an important step in the political and economic development of the NWT.

It is a milestone that will have significant impacts on the NWT's economic environment.

For the first time, the NWT – like the provinces and Yukon Territory – will retain a share of the revenues collected from resource development on public land. (A portion of these revenues will also go to Aboriginal governments.)

With Devolution will come the ability to take control of decisions affecting the NWT economy. Authority over lands will provide the ability to plan and guide their use and development; resource revenues will allow the GNWT to generate and invest its own capital; and revenue sharing agreements with Aboriginal governments will open the doors for strong, viable and sustainable partnerships and investments.

Most importantly, Devolution will place decision making for NWT resource development in the hands of the GNWT. With its stronger and more immediate focus on the needs of our territory and its investors - and the ability to improve the coordination of project approvals and government "readiness" initiatives - this will set the stage for new employment and economic opportunities for all NWT residents.

ECONOMIC TIMELINE

Numerous events and measures have impacted, shaped and defined the NWT economy since the release of Common Ground: NWT Economic Strategy 2000.

2000

- The Common Ground Strategy is released
- NWT exports include $51 million in Gold; $625 million in diamonds; and $388 million in oil
- NWT manufacturing sales reach $22 million; retail sales total $391 million; wholesale trade $158 million
- The NWT Mining Heritage Society is established

2001

- Natural gas sales reach all time high of $207 million
- ConocoPhillips, Shell, ExxonMobil, and Imperial Oil sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Aboriginal Pipeline Group
- First Inuvik Petroleum Show
- The NWT becomes the first Canadian jurisdiction to recognize National Aboriginal Day as a formal statutory holiday
- The impacts of "9-11" are felt in the NWT Tourism industry

2002

- The Canada/GNWT joint geoscience office is established
- Salt River First Nation Treaty Settlement
- The NWT's population reaches a new high of 41,479; school enrolment peaks at 9,747
- Small business employment (under 20 employees) peaks at 5,344; declines to 4,821 by 2012

2003

- CDETNO (Conseil de développement économique des TNO) founded
- The NWT's second diamond mine, Diavik, opens
- Conference Board of Canada releases its first economic outlook for the NWT
- Con Mine closes; Gold rallies to pass $400 an ounce
- The Tlicho Agreement is signed on August 25
- The SARS outbreak impacts tourism in the NWT

2004

- The Joint Review Panel for the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project is appointed
- Con Mine closes in Yellowknife

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

2005

- The NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation (BDIC) is established
- CN purchases the rail link to Hay River
- The 17th annual Great Northern Arts Festival in Inuvik

2006

- The Tibbitt to Contwoyto ice road operates for only 42 days and never reaches full capacity
- The Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation cancels the winter fishery due to low fisher participation and dropping catch rates
- 40th Anniversary of the NWTAC
- Air Canada begins scheduled services to Yellowknife

2007

- The Northern Aboriginal Business Association is founded
- Global economic downturn begins
- Ice Road Truckers is filmed in the NWT
- Yellowknife airport the busiest airport in Northern Canada
- A total of 10,922 loads marks record year for the Tibbit to Contwoyto ice road
- Approximately $160 million paid out to residential school victims in the NWT
- Imperial Oil bids a record $585 million for a larger parcel in the Beaufort Sea
- De Beers Canada's Snap Lake mine began production
- 40th Anniversary of the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines
- The Canadian dollar topped $1 US for the first time in more than 30 years

2008

- BP Energy successfully bid a record $1.2 billion for the rights to explore for oil and gas on a parcel of land in the Beaufort Sea
- Gold reaches new high of $1,030.80 an ounce
- Oil exports set a record of $622 million
- Construction begins on the Mackenzie River Bridge
- NWT GDP peaks at $5.1 billion
- Neil McCrank's report on the NWT's regulatory system

2009

- Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) opens
- Joint Review Panel Report on the Mackenzie Gas Project is released with more than 150 conditions.
- Geological Survey of Canada estimates Beaufort reserves at 13.4 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 66 trillion cubic feet of natural gas
- Nunavut celebrates its 10th year anniversary as a territorial government

2010

- GNWT launches ad campaign urging Ontario residents to "come make your mark" in the NWT
- Inuvik international satellite station installed
- Average weekly wages in the NWT exceed $1,191; $272 more than the Yukon
- Government of Canada invests $22 million for an environmental study of the Beaufort Sea to inform deliberations on the safety of offshore drilling
- Diavik reinstates Edmonton as a pick-up point for workers

2011

- Tourism 2015 launched
- The Sahtu oil and gas exploration boom begins
- Gold rises to a two-month high of $1,794.10 an ounce
- Oil production declines to record low of 680,000 cubic meters

2012

- Mackenzie River Bridge opens to traffic
- MGM Energy Corp commits more than $630 million on the Central Mackenzie Valley leases
- Compared to the year 2000 retail sales $826 million from $391 million; wholesale trade reaches $705 million from $158 million; manufacturing sales decline to under $5 million from $22 million
- The NWT Power Corporation reinstates diesel fuel (replacing natural gas) to drive power generation in Inuvik
- The NWT's largest solar project is activated by the NWT Power Corporation in Fort Simpson; a 258-panel structure that provides enough power for up to 10 homes
- The NWT Economic Opportunities Advisory Panel starts community and stakeholder engagements
- Dominion Diamond Corporation buys BHP Billiton's 80% share in the Ekati Diamond Mine

2013

- The NWT Legislative Assembly votes 17-1 to approve Devolution Agreement

1.3 THE STRATEGY PROCESS

In its Vision, *"Believing in People and Building on the Strength of Northerners"*, the 17th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories identified the need to develop a "socially responsible and environmentally sustainable strategy" for economic development in support of its priority, to *"Strengthen and Diversify the Northwest Territories Economy"*.

In the spirit of collaboration embraced by Members, work to prepare this strategy – the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy – began in November 2012 under the direction of the GNWT's Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and guided by a partnered Governance Committee comprised of the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Aboriginal Business Association, the NWT Association of Communities, Canada's Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) and the GNWT's Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. The work was initiated under the terms of a multi-party memorandum of understanding signed by all of the parties.

An independent four-member Economic Opportunities Advisory Panel was tasked with engaging NWT residents, the private sector, governments and other key stakeholders in a series of discussions about the economy.

Guided by the discussion paper, *"Working Together: Connecting Businesses and Communities to Economic Opportunities"*, NWT residents and organizations were invited to contribute to the Panel's understanding of existing issues, challenges, and opportunities as they related to resource development projects and regional diversification initiatives in the NWT.

The Panel's report provided the Governance Committee with 90 recommendations, (See Appendix 6.1), aimed at connecting NWT businesses and residents to economic opportunities.

Formal work by the Governance Committee to prepare the Economic Opportunities Strategy began in May, 2013.

A strategy that involves five partners requires a collaborative approach that reflects the interests and processes of all five organizations involved.

Partners agreed that the approach presented in this Strategy would reflect the work of the Advisory Panel and compliment partner priorities, existing strategies and the information provided by subject-matter experts.

Further, this strategy would include a meaningful approach to implementation - one that will recognize the elevated role of the territorial government in the years ahead, and promote enhanced communication, cooperation and collaboration. It was recognized that economic conditions and opportunities will change - and so too must the Strategy's implementation be able to adapt and respond to change.

Finally, where economic opportunities are not yet fully understood, it was agreed that this strategy will strengthen the foundation of information around opportunities and set the stage for future actions.

GNWT/TI

GNWT/TI

BILL BRADEN

TERRY PARKER/NWTT

BILL BRADEN

2.0 Key Strategy Inputs

Even as land claim and self-government agreements and the devolution of land and resources responsibilities from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories are contributing to an increased level of northern decision making, the lingering impacts of a global economic recession serve as a reminder that the NWT's resource-dependent economy is reliant on market forces well beyond its control.

The development of the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy has been influenced, first and foremost, by the recognition that without increased economic growth and diversity the NWT remains vulnerable to the boom and bust of the world economy.

The identification of the Strategy's themes, targets, objectives and actions was guided by the work of the project's Advisory Panel and further informed by research and the due-consideration of a range of processes, strategies and action plans currently influencing the delivery of economic programs and services in the NWT.

2.1 THE NWT ECONOMY - A LEVEL ANALYSIS

The following is provided by the Conference Board of Canada

Real economic growth in the NWT will stagnate this year (2013) as diamond production continues to decline. This year's 0.2 per cent growth in real gross domestic product is still a welcome improvement over the declines experienced in 2011 and 2012. (See Table 1.)

Construction activity will surge this year and next as several new mines are developed. This will bring many jobs and increased demand for services to the territory this year; personal income will rise 4.8 per cent. Employment will increase by 400 jobs; and, as a result, the unemployment rate will decrease to 8.8 per cent in 2013—the lowest in more than a decade.

The NWT's employment and economic situations will improve significantly next year as the demand for diamonds returns, and four new mines—Nechalacho, Gahcho Kué, NICO, and Yellowknife—begin construction. Real GDP will advance 2.6 per cent in 2014 (the best performance since 2007), and labour markets will add an additional 600 jobs - lowering the unemployment rate, once again, to 7.9 per cent.

Over the medium term, the NWT economy will continue to expand with development and production at five new mines. Real GDP growth will, however, begin to weaken when Diavik and Ekati diamond mines wind down production and close. Employment and real GDP will start a modest decline in 2020. In 2025 the size of the economy will still be larger than it is today but, due to productivity gains and large-scale job losses at Diavik and Ekati, the territory will employ 300 fewer people than it did in 2012.

TERRITORIAL OUTLOOK[1]

Table 1 Conference Board of Canada – Projected GDP Growth Rates (%)

Source: Conference Board of Canada 2013 Territorial Outlook

MINING

Diamond Mining

Diamond prices declined 12.5 per cent in 2012 and will struggle to make gains in 2013 and 2014. The price drop was led by global economic weakness that caused demand for diamonds to stall in China and decline in India. Demand for diamonds was steady in the United States last year but, with economic growth still modest south of the border, diamond demand could easily lose momentum.

[1] *Note. From "Metals Outshine Diamonds – Almost" by Jacqueline Paladini, 2013. P.1-5. Copyright 2013 by Conference Board of Canada. Reprinted with permission.*

The long-term outlook is much different—a rising Asian middle class and increased preferences for diamond jewelry in China will result in a robust demand for diamonds.[2] There is also the potential for increased investment demand for diamonds.

On the supply side, there has been minimal new diamond exploration. Moreover, it takes several years to bring a world-class diamond mine into production, so no significant boost to global diamond supply is expected in the next 10 years. As a result, analysts claim demand is set to outstrip supply from 2015 onward,[3] and prices are expected to climb.

Table 2 Diamond Mining – Contribution to Real GDP (2002 Base)

Source: Conference Board of Canada 2013 Territorial Outlook

In 2015, global demand is set to outstrip supply, prices are expected to increase, and production is expected to begin at the Gahcho Kué mine and at Ekati's Misery Pit. Diamond production in the territory will pick up speed as Gahcho Kué ramps up to full production and Diavik opens its A-21 pipe in 2017.

[2] *ETF Strategy Ltd.* PureFunds' Diamond ETF Looks Ready to Sparkle, *January 18, 2013. www.etfstrategy.co.uk/purefunds-diamond-etf-gems-looks-ready-to-sparkle-on-positive-outlook-for-diamond-fundamentals-97315/ (accessed January 25, 2013).*

[3] *Professional Jeweller, Rapaport: Diamond Buyers Must Say No to High Prices, January 7, 2013. www.professionaljeweller.com/article-12413-rapaportdiamond-buyers-must-say-no-to-high-prices/ (accessed January 25, 2013).*

METAL MINING

With metal prices at historical highs, it is no wonder that several metal ore mines are being developed and explored in the NWT. Metal ore mining will see very solid growth over the forecast period with an annual average compound growth rate of 18.7 per cent over the 2012–2025 period. (See Table 3.)

Table 3 Metal Mining – Contribution to Real GDP (2002 Base)

CONSTRUCTION

Construction output will experience double-digit growth this year and in 2014. This activity will help sustain the overall economy - as it did in 2012.

The performance of the construction industry is expected to fluctuate over the forecast period. There is upside risk to the forecast if other major projects go ahead, such as oil drilling in the Sahtu region.

SERVICES

The services side of the economy will benefit greatly from new developments in the mining industry. Finance, real estate, and insurance are the largest services category in the NWT and will see the most growth over the forecast: 2.4 per cent compounded annually over the 2012–2025 period.

Non-commercial services, which include education, health care, and social services, will also post growths over the forecast: 1.5 per cent compounded annually over 2012–2025. Although the population will decline slightly over the forecast, increased demand for services in these areas—in particular for health care—is anticipated as the population ages.

The transportation, warehousing, and information services category will also benefit greatly from the new mines coming on-stream and from increased exploration activity. The wholesale and retail trade will be similarly affected.

LABOUR MARKETS

Labour markets are expected to perform well over the near term, due to the construction and production of new mines. The territory will add 1,538 jobs by 2019.

The surge in mine construction will add 370 jobs in 2013 and another 606 in 2014. The majority of these jobs will be directly related to construction, but wholesale and retail trade; finance, real estate, and insurance; and business commercial services industries will all see gains. Non-commercial services will start to add jobs this year and will continue throughout the forecast in line with stronger demographic demands for health care services.

DEMOGRAPHICS

There will be significant aging of the NWT population. This may lead to a larger onus on governments and families to provide social security, health services, housing, and transportation. The population aged 65+ will more than double over the forecast, accounting for 13.3 per cent of the population by 2025 compared with 6 per cent in 2012. Meanwhile, the young working-age population (ages 15 to 29) will shrink considerably—by 25 per cent. Therefore, it may be challenging for firms to recruit the workers they need for economic growth to occur. The transfer of skills from experienced workers to new entrants will be hindered by the fact that there are so few new entrants.

Map 1 – Community Populations

REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Employment in small communities has improved little even with investments in economic support and marketing. The major exceptions are communities impacted by resource development projects.

Table 4 Employment Growth – Employment in NWT Communities 2006 and 2011

	2011 Employed	2006 Employed	Change 2011-2006
By Community			
Yellowknife	11,990	11,490	500
Fort Simpson	640	610	30
Paulatuk	105	85	20
Inuvik	1,840	1,825	15
Ulukhaktok	150	140	10
Fort Resolution	170	160	10
Sachs Harbour	55	50	5
Tsiigehtchic	55	50	5
Gamètì	80	75	5
Wekweètì	50	45	5
Wrigley	35	35	0
Tulita	170	170	0
Enterprise	50	50	0
Detah	75	75	0
Trout Lake	30	35	(5)
Colville Lake	35	40	(5)
Kakisa	15	20	(5)
Behchokǫ̀	505	510	(5)
Jean Marie River	20	30	(10)
Nahanni Butte	30	40	(10)
Délı̨ne	165	175	(10)
Tuktoyaktuk	230	245	(15)
Hay River Reserve (K'atl'adeeche)	90	110	(20)
Fort Good Hope	195	215	(20)
Łutselk'e	85	110	(25)
Whatì	120	145	(25)
Fort Providence	230	270	(40)
Norman Wells	430	470	(40)
Fort Liard	140	185	(45)
Fort McPherson	185	240	(55)
Aklavik	120	185	(65)
Hay River	1,960	2,035	(75)

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census
Prepared by: NWT Bureau of Statistics
Fort Smith is not listed due to coverage errors

OIL AND GAS[4]

While oil and natural gas exports have been in decline for over a decade, there are new developments in the Sahtu and Deh Cho. These frontier basins are host to both conventional and unconventional oil and gas plays that have the potential to yield significant discoveries. Recent advancements in horizontal drilling and multi-stage-fracturing have allowed industry to explore unconventional shale resource plays in the Mackenzie Valley.

More than $600 million in work commitments has been pledged for the Region over the next few years.

MGM holds drilling rights on 470,000 net acres and estimates its potential to be as high as 10 billion barrels of oil. While not all of the volume is considered recoverable, this field could rival the Bakken, a major shale oil region that underlies parts of North Dakota, Montana and Saskatchewan. This promise of fresh discoveries located close to existing infrastructure has lured oil majors including Shell, ExxonMobil Corp., Imperial Oil Ltd., ConocoPhillips Canada and Husky Energy Inc. to the northern region.

There is another significant find in the area around Fort Liard. The National Energy Board of Canada (NEB) approved a "commercial discovery declaration" this year. The well, owned by Lone Pine, produced a sweet gas flow rate supporting a potential delivery of 12 million cubic feet per day from a multi-fractured horizontal well. According to the NEB, the shale gas intervals in the Lone Pine lease area also "appear to be thicker" than those in the adjacent Horn River Basin of northeastern BC – a promising observation for the project.

BILL BRADEN

BILL BRADEN

[4] *IEA, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment*

TOURISM[5]

The tourism industry is forecast to grow by an annual average rate of 2.8% for the next five years. The industry, however, is particularly sensitive to events and factors that play out on a global scale.

Business travel accounts for almost half of tourism spending in the NWT. More and more business travellers are participating in guided tourism activities during their business trip spending more than $48 million in 2010/2011.

The tourism industry cuts a broad swath of sectors; coordination and cooperation among the many businesses is crucial for success. Fundamental requirements including transportation access, accommodations, food services, and attractions and must all be in place to realize full tourism potential.

Table 5 Tourism – Visitor Spending by Sector ($Millions)

Main Purpose of Travel	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	% change 2011/12 to 2012/13
Aurora Viewing	$7.3	$7.2	$6.4	$10.7	$15.2	42%
Fishing	$17.0	$12.6	$12.0	$12.9	$10.6	-18%
General Touring	$8.3	$8.1	$9.5	$10.9	$12.6	16%
Hunting	$12.5	$10.1	$4.3	$5.5	$5.8	5%
Outdoor Adventure	$6.8	$6.1	$5.8	$5.2	$6.0	15%
Visiting Friends & Relatives	$4.0	$5.4	$ 6.6	$7.2	$8.4	17%
Total Leisure Visitors	$55.9	$49.5	$44.6	$52.4	$58.6	12%
Business Travel	$74.6	$58.1	$49.5	$48.5	$48.1	-1%
Total Spending (millions)	$130.5	$107.6	$94.1	$100.9	$106.7	6%

Source: Industry, Tourism and Investment

[5] *IEA, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment*

To provide an overview of various sectors, the following tables are categorized by strengths and weaknesses.

STRENGTHS: BY THE NUMBERS

Table 6 Mining – Production 2012 ($'000)

A major strength of the NWT's economy is mining. Diamond mines, alone, employ over 3,000 workers. Mineral production in the NWT exceeded $1.7 billion in 2012; three times the production of the Yukon or Nunavut.

Source: Natural Resources Canada

Table 7 Wholesale Trade – Regional Sales ($'000)

The growth of wholesale trade is a success story. Current industry sales exceed $700 million; 20% above PEI and significantly higher than those of either the Yukon or Nunavut.

Source: Statistics Canada - Cansim Table 081-0011 Wholesale trade

Chart 1 – NWT Retail Trade ($'000)

Retail trade in the NWT reached a new record high in 2012 of $826 million. This represents an increase of 5% over 2011; by comparison retail trade in Canada increased by 2.5% over the same period.

Since 1999, retail trade in the NWT has increased by 125%.

Source: Statistics Canada - Cansim Table 080-0020 Retail trade

Chart 2 – NWT Fur Harvest ($)

Most NWT communities were developed around the fur trade. While rising costs and the anti-fur lobby have challenged the industry, 2012-13 sales reached a record high of $2.2 million.

Source: Statistics Canada - Cansim Table 080-0020 Retail trade

Chart 3 – Aurora Tourism ($)

The NWT is one of the world's best viewing locations for the Aurora Borealis or Northern Lights. 2012/13 saw a significant increase in visitors' viewing with approximately 15,700. There is huge potential to expand this market from its current annual sales of $15.2 million.

Source: Industry, Tourism and Investment

BILL BRADEN

BILL BRADEN

GNWT/ITI

WEAKNESSES: BY THE NUMBERS

Table 8 – % Populations Growth Over 5 Years

The chart plots population growth in western jurisdictions over the past five years. Population growth in the NWT, during this period, was negative (-1%). By comparison, the Yukon's population increased 9%.

Source: Statistics Canada - CANSIM, table 051-0001

Table 9 – Freight Costs at Kilometre per Tonne

Per shipment and per tonne-kilometre rates remain significantly higher for the NWT relative to its neighbouring territories and provinces. As the average length of haul for shipments terminating in the NWT is close to the Yukon average, rates between the two territories should be similar. However, rates in the NWT are 85% higher.

Source: Conference Board of Canada

Chart 4 – NWT Fish Harvest ($'000)

The commercial harvest of fish has declined from a high of 1,039 tonnes (2004) to 385 tonnes in 2011.

Comparable data is only available from 2009, but as shown, the NWT with a vast potential stock of commercial fish, harvested less than 25% of Alberta.

Source: Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Table 10 – Wages Lost to Non Resident Workers ($Millions)

Every year the NWT imports thousands of skilled rotational workers from southern Canada. Almost $380 million in wages was lost in 2011.

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics

Chart 5 – Manufacturing Shipments ($'000)

On the strength of processed diamonds, manufacturing shipments from the NWT once exceeded $90 million per year. By 2011/12, however, sales had declined to $5 million. Over the same period, manufacturing shipments in the Yukon rose from $25 million to $49 million.

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics

Table 11 – 2011 Forrest Consumption (Hectares)

Commercial forestry is in decline. In 1996 the commercial harvest exceeded 1.8 million cubic meters; the 2011 harvest is around 28,000 cubic meters.

The 2011 commercial harvest accounts for less than 1/100% of the total hectares consumed.

Source: Natural Resources Canada – Forestry Statistics.

2.2 THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY ADVISORY PANEL

Between December 2012 and February 2013, the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy (EOS) Advisory Panel facilitated over 80 public forums and meetings in all regions of the Northwest Territories. They met and talked with hundreds of informed and insightful residents – encouraging them to speak frankly about barriers and impediments but, most importantly, to identify and highlight opportunities.

People responded with a high level of interest and enthusiasm; hundreds of recommendations, observations and suggestions were brought forward. Input was also received on-line (website and social media) and in separate written submissions. (A summary record of all of these meetings is available at: www.NWTOpportunities.com.)

The Advisory Panel's "What We Heard Report", released in May 2013, documented what people had to say. It also included informed observations based on the perspectives and expertise of individual panel members and provided 90 recommendations to guide the drafting of the final Economic Opportunities Strategy.

The Advisory Panel's engagements and discussions were compiled and presented in five broad themes:

- Renewable Resources and Small Business
- Non-Renewable Resources
- Our Most Important Resource: People
- Infrastructure
- Government Programs and Support

In its presentation to the Governance Committee, the EOS Advisory Panel highlighted five "overarching" messages that it felt should underpin the drafting of a final strategy:

- People are essential – the NWT cannot grow its economy with a stagnant population. Similarly, community wellness will be reflected in a healthy economy;
- The NWT's potential, as it is represented in renewable and non-renewable resources, is largely unrealized – as is the potential of its people;
- Economic incentives must begin with local entrepreneurs and community-based businesses that provide sustainability and growth in community economies;
- Economic opportunities and development must be considered and measured according to the benefits provided to the NWT and its people; and
- The NWT's dependence on southern resources and people is not conducive to the economic health of the NWT. NWT residents are unified in their desire to realize more effective uses for northern resources like power, wood pellets, farm produce, fish – and especially people.

The Economic Opportunities Strategy Advisory Panel's "What We Heard" Report documented numerous opportunities highlighted during its various engagements. With opportunities, of course, come challenges; and in almost every meeting, NWT residents also identified obstacles hindering economic growth and opportunity.

OPPORTUNITIES – WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT:

Resource Exploration and Development

"People now can buy houses, drive skidoos and boats. Industry made a big difference in our lives…"

Beyond immediate jobs and business benefits, NWT mines offer residents scholarships and opportunities for education and training.

Tourism and Parks

"We see tourism as an essential building block of the NWT economy."

The widespread potential for tourism is supported by entrepreneurial ideas and suggestions from every corner of the NWT.

Agriculture

"There is a million acres of class 5 (agriculture) land in the South Slave, good for pasture and cattle."

Commercial and community gardens provide opportunities in every region – with the prospects of commercial sales and distribution as operations grow.

Biomass and Wood Heating

"It (proposed pellet plant in Enterprise) seems like a fantastic project - and they just went ahead and did it."

Demand is rising for alternative energy sources that can replace conventional fuels - especially biomass for heating.

Commercial Fishery

"There are fish, there are just no fishermen. It's an untapped resource."

Great Slave Lake, in particular, represents a huge and sustainable resource capable of supporting many fishers and a value-added processing and marketing industry as well.

Educational Facilities

"We need to start thinking of knowledge as a commodity that we can export."

The Mackenzie Valley fiber optic link and Inuvik's satellite station could position NWT education facilities as world-leaders in space-based research.

CHALLENGES – WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT:

High Costs

"Heating costs and electricity costs are currently killing the NWT economy…"

The high costs of living and doing business in the NWT threatens the viability of even the region's most traditional economies where "trapping is hardly viable because of the cost of fuel"

Red Tape

"Nunavut and the Yukon are friendlier… There needs to be a push (in the NWT) to get through the processes and reduce permitting delays."

In almost every region of the NWT, there is uncertainty resulting from unsettled land claims and an imperfect regulatory system.

Attracting Skilled People And Youth

"We need to attract more young people with fresh ideas and encourage them to stay…"

While generous and attractive to young families, NWT advantages such as minimal tax, health care and Student Financial Assistance (SFA) are not widely recognized.

Training and Labour Supply

"There are people without jobs and jobs without people."

There is a prevailing demand for laborers and tradespersons throughout the NWT. However, the emerging work force seems under-educated or unprepared to meet this demand.

Lack Of Value-Added Processing

"The underlying problem with the NWT is that we allow industries or raw products to leave then we buy back the product."

Readily available resources in the NWT (such as fish, lumber, wood pellets, garden produce) continue to be imported from the South.

Access To Resources

"Five year land leases provide no certainty…"

Assured access to land and resources is critically important to investors; limits on land availability and inconsistent regional and community planning make it difficult to realize business financing in the NWT.

Industrial/Regional Strategies

"There is a distinct lack of long term planning; we're just reacting to opportunities…"

In the absence of a coordinated effort and timely funding, business opportunities are being lost.

Communications

"Government is well intentioned and working hard but... there is a disconnect there somewhere."

General confusion exists in the NWT regarding the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of various government-funded programs and services.

MADSON KAYLO

BILL BRADEN

BILL BRADEN

2.3 RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The development of the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy was further guided and informed by areas of additional research and study.

These were identified, in part, through the public engagement process and commissioned on behalf of the Economic Opportunities Strategy (EOS) from independent third-party service providers.

Costs Of Increasing The Northern Residents Tax Deduction

While an important challenge to northern development is the availability of skilled workers, one of the primary barriers to recruiting and retaining workers is the high cost of living in the NWT. This research offered a study and evaluation of existing tax incentives and the level of influence that they can play in influencing people's decisions to stay or come North.

Ground Transportation Costs To And From The Northwest Territories

The cost of moving goods impacts both economic development opportunities and the final cost of goods. Recognizing that the NWT's remote location, climate and lack of transportation infrastructure contribute to a higher cost of doing business, this research compared the costs of shipping goods (by truck) to and from the NWT with those for shipping goods to and from other regions.

Independent Research Report On Economic Programs In The NWT

Governments, through varying partners and a number of processes, provide programs and services to support NWT businesses with start-up funding, capital for equipment, and assistance in marketing their goods and services. This research analyzed and made observations on the impact, effectiveness and delivery of all business related programs and initiatives delivered in the NWT.

Northwest Territories Commercial Fisheries Marketing And Promotions Program

The NWT's commercial fishing industry is an important sector of the economy, and represents a significant underused resource. In the interest of determining the viability of a domestic commercial fishery, this research provided greater understanding of present markets, the competitiveness of products, and the opportunities and constraints related to supply, production and distribution.

Personal Telecommunications And Internet Pricing In The Northwest Territories

NWT residents and businesses are vulnerable to high telecommunications costs for even basic service objectives such as high-speed internet and cell phone service. Enhanced telecommunications infrastructure could offer improved efficiencies and growth for participants in the NWT economy. This research compared the costs of personal telecommunications and high speed internet in Canada's northern and remote markets.

Short Analysis Of Gasoline Prices

This research provided an assessment of gas prices in the NWT.

2.4 OTHER STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

The NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy has been developed simultaneously with, and in consideration of, a number of additional (GNWT) strategy processes.

These include the: Mineral Development Strategy, Land Use and Sustainability Framework, NWT Energy Plan, Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Workforce Planning Strategy.

Work to develop the Economic Opportunities Strategy has also referenced the following:

- Canada's Northern Strategy and Economic Action Plan
- Pathways to Mineral Development; Report of the Stakeholders Engagement Panel for the NWT Mineral Development Strategy
- 2013 NWT Labour Force Development Symposium Report
- The Ministers Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness: Healing Voices; April 2013
- 2013 Northwest Territories Energy Action Plan
- Northwest Territories Biomass Energy Strategy 2012-2015
- What We Heard About "Land is Life": Towards a GNWT Land Use and Sustainability Framework
- Tourism 2015

In addition to the research described above, several research studies are still under way. The NWTAC, with support from CanNor and ITI, is presently overseeing research including:

- The examination of economic opportunities that may emerge as a result of major project activities in the Northwest Territories over the next ten (10) years;
- The compilation of existing strategies, reports and studies related to NWT resources and power supplies; and
- Research to support the industrial planning and readiness necessary to connect businesses and communities over the next decade.

Completion of these additional research projects is expected in early 2014.

BILL BRADEN

3.0 Themes, Targets, Objectives And Recommended Actions

Four themes have emerged as the cornerstones of the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy.

THEME 1:
CLIMATE FOR GROWTH

Targets:

1. Stimulate Investment
2. Encourage Residency

THEME 2:
BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Targets:

3. Explore Our Potential
4. Enhance Our Connections

THEME 3:
REGIONAL DIVERSIFICATION

Targets:

5. Build Sectors Using Regional Strengths

THEME 4:
PEOPLE: OPPORTUNITY READINESS

Targets:

6. Establish a Positive Entrepreneurial Environment
7. Prepare NWT Residents For Employment

3.1 CLIMATE FOR GROWTH

The Economic Opportunities Strategy aims to identify and realize the economic potential that exists outside of our territory's rich resource sector, and to advance opportunities in the grass roots economies of our territory's regions and communities that will foster and encourage greater economic diversity.

Such opportunities however, cannot in themselves drive and sustain growth in the NWT economy to the extent that it is required. Instead, the most important investments that can be made to stimulate opportunity and diversity in the NWT economy are those to attract and retain major infrastructure or industrial projects and a healthy vibrant population.

These two economic drivers also provide the best catalyst for a fair, open and equitable marketplace in which small business ventures can grow and succeed. While entrepreneurs and small business owners are the backbone of our local and regional economies, they cannot thrive in the absence of major investment and people.

To facilitate a climate of growth for the NWT economy, two targets are identified:

- Stimulate Investment
- Encourage Residency

TARGET 1: STIMULATE INVESTMENT

For the past decade and a half, resource exploration and development have presented unprecedented opportunities for investment, employment and growth in the NWT's business and service industries.

As this investment grows, so too will opportunities for small and medium sized businesses across the NWT.

OBJECTIVE 1A: ATTRACT MAJOR PROJECTS AND INVESTMENT TO THE NWT

Investors and proponents of major projects require certainty in permitting, consultation and process timelines to advance resource or infrastructure development. The GNWT is pursuing an NWT Mineral Development Strategy (MDS), in part, to offer these assurances and to position the NWT as an attractive and welcoming jurisdiction for mineral exploration and investment.

In the same manner, however, an NWT oil and gas strategy is also needed.

Map 2 – Mineral/Oil and Gas Resources

To attract major projects and investment to the NWT, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
1. Compliment and expand the NWT's (existing) Major Projects Office to: • Market and promote the NWT to all potential investors; • Act as an advocate for investors looking to understand and navigate the NWT's regulatory process; • Work to maximize the benefits of major projects to the NWT economy; and • Inform NWT business and workforce development to ensure industry requirements can be met in the NWT	• A jointly resourced single-window service office will provide improved support and certainty to proponents of major projects and demonstrate a commitment to supporting industry investment in the NWT. • An improved investment ranking will increase the NWT's competitiveness as an investment destination. • New projects and investments will create jobs and business opportunities. • An increased understanding of land claim and regulatory processes; and of NWT hiring and procurement requirements, will strengthen industry relationships with the NWT and inform investment and decision making.
2. Promote the Aurora Research Institute as a center for research and applied sciences in study areas relating to the North such as: • Water labs and testing; • Geoscience and sampling; • Energy conservation; • Cold weather testing; • Alternate energies; and • Climate Change Adaption	• New opportunities and investments driven by northern research capacities and activities will create jobs and business opportunities.
3. Negotiate geographic sector-specific development zones to encourage a more expeditious review process.	• Development zones will enable the multi-faceted implementation of public/private development to take advantage of opportunities in a timelier manner.

MEASURES

- Investment ranking of the NWT
- Number and value of projects approved
- Timelines for regulatory processes
- Exploration investment and expenditure values
- Jobs (by industry)
- Business and training opportunities
- Investment trends by industry

TARGET 2: ENCOURAGE RESIDENCY

In the absence of a vibrant increasing population, economic growth will not be sustainable. A growing population is critical to maintaining the NWT's economic base and links directly to government revenues, consumer demand and labour supply.

Young NWT residents are increasingly choosing to leave their communities for larger centers and the south. Despite having the highest level of family income in Canada and significant employment growth over the past decade, the NWT's population is declining.

In particular, the NWT economy is challenged by the growing number of "non-resident" workers.

The solution is twofold. Retain those currently residing in the NWT and attract new residents to meet demands of economic growth. In both cases, there is a need to address the high cost of living and working in the NWT.

OBJECTIVE 2A: INCREASE THE DEPENDABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF THE NWT HOUSING MARKET

An optimum vacancy rate is key to ensuring available housing for prospective residents and to maintain competitive pricing. While the retention of essential service personnel (nurses, teachers, RCMP) would serve to grow the NWT population, many struggle to find satisfactory or affordable housing options.

Developing and building housing units could be an area of economic opportunity in every community. The primary obstacles are the availability of land and construction costs.

To increase the dependability and affordability of the NWT Housing market, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
4. Investigate a business model to incent private sector developers to build and lease housing units for essential service personnel in non-market communities.	• The assurance and availability of market-priced housing will serve to attract and retain essential personnel such as nurses, teachers and police as permanent residents. • Providing incentives and opportunities for private sector investment in the NWT housing market will leverage government funds and counter escalating building prices through cost efficiencies.
5. Issue long-term leases or fee simple lands to increase land access for residential and business development.	• Increased access to land will promote construction development.
6. Evaluate the Cooperative housing model as an option for staff housing in remote communities.	• Cooperative housing can create a market where none exists. Members get a portion of their equity return when they leave and new members can buy in under the same conditions and guarantees.

7. Examine incentives to promote individual home ownership like: • A remissible down payment plan • Eliminating NWT residency requirements for existing housing programs • Increasing ceilings for existing income based home ownership programs.	• Opportunities for home ownership will attract and encourage young families to settle in the NWT.

MEASURES

- Optimum vacancy rates (3-5%) are maintained
- Increased home ownership
- Increased housing construction and home starts.
- Increased retention and attraction of essential service personnel
- Cost of housing

OBJECTIVE 2B: STRENGTHEN AND PROMOTE TAX ADVANTAGES TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT NWT RESIDENTS

The Northern Residency Tax Deduction (NRTD) was introduced by the Government of Canada in 1987 to counter the high cost of living in the North - reducing the amount of tax payable by northern residents annually. This tax policy, however, has not kept pace with inflation and its impact and benefit has been lessened.

To strengthen and promote tax advantages to retain and attract NWT residents, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
8. Facilitate pan-territorial dialogue on the Northern Residency Tax deduction that will explore options and identify balanced solutions to reflect an increased cost of living.	• A balanced solution that reflects increased cost of living would offset the Northern Residence deduction and increase its current $6,023 to approximately $9,493.
9. Create an additional (tax) zone in the NWT to mitigate the increased cost of living in remote northern communities.	• Reducing the tax burden in remote and northern NWT communities may help recruitment to these areas and stem migration to regional centers.

10. Educate and inform NWT residents and businesses regarding applicable tax structures and rates.	• A clearer understanding of tax implications may incent workers to choose NWT residency over migratory work.
11. Maintain and promote a tracking of individual income tax burdens (net effect of total taxes and deductions) in the NWT in comparison to Canadian jurisdictions.	• The NWT's predominantly positive tax environment can be a tool to support immigration and recruitment.

MEASURES

- Reduced Out-Migration
- Wages paid to Non-residents
- Increased number of NWT residents
- Tax rates

OBJECTIVE 2C: STRENGTHEN INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS TO THE NWT

Retaining people in the NWT is a priority and NWT residents are the preferred candidates to fill all employment opportunities in the territory.

Yet specific skills shortages persist, as they do across Canada. Increasingly NWT jobs are being filled by non-resident workers. Over $350 million in wages is paid each year to workers who do not live in the NWT.

Investments to attract new residents to the NWT pay significant dividends. New families enrich the economy by paying taxes, buying homes and purchasing goods and services. Above and beyond these investments, they represent a contribution of $30,000 per capita under the NWT's Formula Funding Agreement with the Government of Canada.

Attracting new residents to the NWT, whether from other provinces or other countries, requires a coordinated and supportive approach to immigration.

An effective method of attracting new residents from outside Canada could be the (Northwest Territories) Nominee Program. This program is instrumental in attracting most investments from international immigrants to provinces and territories but is not currently used in the NWT.

JESSIE COLTON

GNWT ITI

GNWT ITI

To strengthen initiatives to attract new residents to the NWT, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
12. Increase collaboration between government, industry and agencies to promote the NWT as a place to live, work and invest by: • Linking online tools (websites, hiring portals, social media forums); • Developing common marketing plans, strategies and resources; • Sharing labour force and recruitment forecasts, research and data; and coordinating targeted resources and initiatives.	• Pooling marketing investments and tools of all NWT interests will realize cost efficiencies and increase market reach and impact. • An awareness of future workforce needs will better guide recruitment efforts. • The competitiveness of the NWT's promotional and recruitment efforts will be increased.
13. Effectively utilize the "NWT Nominee Program" by: • Creating a focused website to target and promote international immigration; • Marketing and promoting the program to NWT employers; and • Adjusting Territorial minimum net worth for those interested in creating a business.	• Attracting immigrant entrepreneurs will increase investment and employment in the NWT.

MEASURES	
• Number of NWT residents • Employment • Lost wages to non-resident workers	• Number of entrepreneurs supported and retained • Number of jobs in regional centers • Number of businesses engaged • Number of partners engaged

3.2 BUILDING ON SUCCESS

The Northwest Territories economy became the fastest growing economy in Canada as a result of resource development. Our territory's rich mining and oil and gas sectors have generated significant employment, skill development and wealth generation; and have facilitated the construction and maintenance of vital economic infrastructure that continues to support economic growth in other sectors.

The presence of Aboriginal businesses in the NWT economy is fast emerging. From leading-edge, multi-faceted corporations negotiating multi-million dollar contracts with governments and resource developers to small local entrepreneurs providing local goods and services, Aboriginally owned and operated businesses have dramatically changed the economic landscape of the NWT. The number of northern and Aboriginal companies, once barely in existence, is now on track to making up half of all business interests in the NWT.

As we prepare for the next wave of exploration and development in the Northwest Territories, continued investment in key sectors will be key to ensuring businesses and communities remain connected to the opportunities that arise from major projects.

This strategy proposes two targets to promote and realize greater opportunities for the NWT economy.

- Expand Our Potential
- Enhance Our Connections

TARGET 3: EXPAND OUR POTENTIAL

From the discovery of shale oil near Norman Wells, to the prospect of offshore oil and to the mining of rare earths, geoscience and new exploratory technologies are improving our understanding of the NWT's geology - contributing to the exploration and discovery of more resources and expanding opportunities for investment in our Territory.

OBJECTIVE 3A: FOSTER EXPLORATION AND SUPPORT GEOSCIENCE

Establishing a strong foundation of information about the resource potential of the Northwest Territories will benefit the northern economy for generations to come, and sets the stage for investment, jobs and growth.

To foster exploration and support geoscience, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
14. Prepare for opportunities that arise from the development and implementation of an NWT Mineral Development Strategy.	• Increased prospecting and exploration will result in more discoveries and project start-ups.
15. Enhance geoscience research in the NWT. 16. Establish incentives for prospecting and exploration.	• Increased public geoscience will attract and guide investments in mineral exploration.

17. Develop and implement an NWT oil and gas strategy.
18. Explore new markets and routes to export oil and gas.

- The implementation an oil and gas strategy for the NWT will rejuvenate investment and exploration in this sector; and ensure these resources continue to be developed in a manner that ensures sustainability and benefits to NWT residents.
- Securing markets for NWT oil and gas will also stimulate the development of infrastructure to access these resources.

MEASURES

- Investment ranking of the NWT
- Number and value of projects approved
- Timelines for regulatory processes
- Exploration investment and expenditure values
- Number of claims in good standing
- Jobs (by industry)
- Business and training opportunities

OBJECTIVE 3B: EXTEND THE LIFE OF EXISTING MINING ACTIVITIES

One of the biggest hurdles to advancing mineral development in the NWT is the high cost of new investment. The NWT's existing diamond mines each required more than $1 billion in initial investment for construction and operations.

Only the richest properties can raise this type of capital. From the perspective of accruing benefits for NWT residents and businesses, extending existing mine projects may be more certain and cost-effective than creating new mines.

To extend the life of existing mining activities, the following action is recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

19. Examine, with industry, ways to support the extended viability of operating mines such as:
- Tax policies;
- Reduced energy costs; and
- Infrastructure investments.

OUTCOMES

- Longer mine life will extend associated employment, business and service agreements.

MEASURES

- Extended mine life
- Consistent growth while reducing negative trends. i.e. Gross Domestic Product by industry.

Map 3 – Oil and Gas Basins

OBJECTIVE 3C: INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Locally owned and operated airlines, hotels, restaurants, construction firms, telecommunications and logistics companies and service and supply industries are evidence of the capacity of northern and Aboriginally-owned businesses to leverage investments from resource development and to participate and invest fully in the NWT's economy as successful business owners, operators and investors.

To increase participation in resource development, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
20. Continue to pursue and enforce socio-economic agreements and contracts with large project proponents that ensure employment and business and educational opportunities for NWT residents.	• Local employment, training and business and investment opportunities will be realized from major projects in the NWT.
21. Facilitate and fund expert analysis and studies in regions aligned to benefit from major projects to enhance community and resource readiness.	• Advanced planning and readiness initiatives will ensure that local businesses and residents are prepared with skills and services to benefit from major resource and industrial projects.
22. Encourage and support NWT businesses involved in prospecting and exploration.	• Financing and other incentives will support "juniors" in the complex and risky early-stage exploration.
23. Conduct business/industry strategies aligned to major projects.	• Identification and evaluation of opportunities linked to major projects will offer residents, businesses and governments the needed intelligence to maximize benefits and reduce leakages.

MEASURES

- Employment figures
- Northern procurement
- Number of NWT residents trained
- Number of northern hires
- Jobs and investment
- Secondary processing of minerals in the NWT
- Presence of NWT based junior mining and petroleum companies
- NWT based minerals and oil and gas service and support industry

TARGET 4: ENHANCE OUR CONNECTIONS

In addition to underpinning development in the NWT's resource sectors, and serving to reduce the cost of living, investment in large transportation, energy and communications projects can, themselves, offer economic growth and opportunity.

OBJECTIVE 4A: DEVELOP THE NWT'S ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

High costs are a common concern for NWT residents and businesses alike. The high cost of power, in particular, is consistently identified as a barrier to development in the NWT.

While an abundant supply of natural energy resources exists, much of the energy currently used for heating, transportation and electricity is imported from southern Canada. Realizing the NWT's domestic energy potential requires significant planning and investment, but offers significant opportunity for economic development and cost savings.

To develop the NWT's energy infrastructure, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
24. Support the development and implementation of an NWT Energy Strategy by the GNWT.	• New infrastructure projects and investments will create jobs and business opportunities.
25. Examine the potential to expand the NWT electricity grid.	• Connecting the Taltson and Bluefish Hydro facilities in a single grid would increase the reliability of the electricity system and may reduce the cost of power in some communities.
26. Examine and support new and alternative energy technologies for increased energy efficiencies and cost savings.	• The development of alternative energy initiatives and the delivery of energy awareness programs will help to reduce energy costs and provide small-scale regional economic opportunities.
27. Examine the potential for developing hydro production on the Slave River.	• New infrastructure projects and investments will create jobs and business opportunities.
28. Use the availability of excess hydropower as an incentive and opportunity to grow and expand manufacturing and value-added industries in applicable regions.	• The ability to provide energy savings from excess hydropower, or during off peak operating hours, is a significant advantage to communities interested in attracting manufacturing and value added projects and industries.

MEASURES	
• Price of electricity • Energy infrastructure	• New manufacturing facilities in the South Slave • Household spending on electricity and other utilities

OBJECTIVE 4B: DEVELOP THE NWT'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Developing the NWT's transportation infrastructure will underpin investment in all economic sectors and improve the dependability, availability - and above all – cost of transportation between NWT communities.

Freight costs, a significant contributor to the cost of living and doing business in the NWT, are 30% to 100% higher, on a per kilometer basis, than in other Canadian regions.

To develop the NWT's transportation infrastructure, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
29. Prepare for opportunities that arise from the development and implementation of a GNWT Transportation Strategy.	• New infrastructure projects and investments will create jobs and business opportunities. • Enhanced highway infrastructure will increase access to NWT hydro, mineral and oil and gas resources; enhance regional tourism opportunities; and reduce the cost of living and doing business in NWT communities.
30. Maximize opportunities that arise from the phased construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway.	• Building the Mackenzie Valley Highway as a series of smaller projects, will maximize NWT employment, training, apprenticeship and businesses opportunities.
31. Extend travel seasons on the NWT's existing winter highway system.	• Extending travel seasons on winter highways will improve access, and reduce seasonal costs for businesses, industry and residents.
32. Examine opportunities to link NWT communities to base metal opportunities in the Slave Geological Province, Nunavut and near the Yukon border through the Canol Trail.	• Improved access to proven resource-rich regions will support and facilitate increased exploration and development.
33. Consider the potential for a deep water port near Tuktoyaktuk.	• A deep water port would connect the Mackenzie Valley Corridor to international markets.
34. Explore options to extend runways at identified airports.	• Improvements to NWT airports will facilitate the operation of a higher capacity aircraft and promote tourism opportunities.
35. Examine, with Parks Canada, and the Province of Alberta, an all-weather road through Wood Buffalo Park connecting Fort Smith to Garden River AB.	• The completion of this transportation "loop" would support increased tourism to this region and reduce costs for businesses, industry and residents.

MEASURES

- A transportation strategy
- Completion of the Highway
- Lower cost per kilometer compared to the Yukon
- Locations served and tonnage carried on winter road system
- Relative freight rates to currently isolated (non-all weather road access) locations
- Traffic volumes

OBJECTIVE 4C: DEVELOP THE NWT'S COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

In today's high-tech business environment, communications infrastructure can be as important to economic development as physical infrastructure.

The construction of a fibre optic link along the Mackenzie Valley is a case in point.

Inuvik's satellite ground station is set to become one of the pre-eminent centers for remote sensing - not only in North America, but the world. This will increase opportunities for employment and value-added data processing facilities; and position the Aurora Research Center as one of the world's foremost facilities in which to conduct space-based Arctic research.

Real-time digital access will enable NWT entrepreneurs along the Mackenzie Valley to become active participants in the international digital economy.

To develop the NWT's communications infrastructure, the following action is recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

36. Prepare for opportunities that arise from the installation of a fibre optic link down the Mackenzie Valley, including:

- Increased investment in the Inuvik satellite ground station;
- Value-added data processing opportunities;
- Opportunities for expanded e-commerce;
- Improved productivity for NWT businesses; and
- Lower internet costs.

OUTCOMES

- An established fiber optic connection will stimulate investment in the Inuvik satellite ground station.
- It will provide an opportunity and competitive edge for NWT businesses to participate in the global marketplace.
- The opportunity to complete data processing in Inuvik will create employment, training and learning opportunities for local residents.
- It will also improve the quality of life in communities along the Mackenzie Valley Fiber Optic Line.
- New opportunities and investments driven by northern research capacities and activities will create jobs and business opportunities.

MEASURES

- Completion of the fibre optic connection
- Investment in the Inuvik base station.
- Speed of connections
- Number of research licenses issued

3.3 REGIONAL DIVERSIFICATION

As investment and residency in the NWT grow, so too will opportunities to expand and diversify the NWT economy outside of its resource sector - in areas such as tourism, agriculture, fishing, manufacturing and the traditional economies.

With the NWT's resource-based economic environment prone to the rise and fall of the world economy, a grass roots approach to economic growth and diversity is critical to maintaining the territory's overall economic health and stability and will serve to build capacity and self-sufficiency in communities and residents.

The challenge of realizing these wide ranging opportunities and converting them into real and tangible economic development is one best met by NWT entrepreneurs and small businesses.

It follows that economic diversity in the NWT is, foremost, reliant on a competitive business environment, in which NWT residents have the incentive, confidence and tools to invest, take risks and prosper.

As these individuals and opportunities flourish locally, success will be reflected in regional economic growth and eventually in the sustainability of the NWT's economy overall.

This strategy proposes one target to promote and realize greater opportunities for the NWT economy.

- Build Sectors Using Regional Strengths

TARGET 5: BUILD SECTORS USING REGIONAL STRENGTHS

Economic opportunities vary depending on where in the NWT you live.

While sectors such as tourism, arts, the traditional economy - and even agriculture - offer opportunities in nearly all NWT communities; opportunities in other sectors like fishing, forestry, satellite communications and manufacturing are more specific to regions and even communities.

The objective of the Economic Opportunities Strategy is not to create opportunities in every region and community but to establish a competitive business environment in which these opportunities can be identified, pursued and realized.

The design and development of Regional Economic Action Plans is a key next step. The NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy has provided the impetus for this work by addressing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analyses) of each region.

Recommended actions are offered to strengthen economic opportunities in the following sectors:

- Tourism
- Arts
- Manufacturing
- Commercial Fishing
- Forestry
- Agriculture; and
- The Traditional Economy.

Additionally, actions are recommended to: Encourage and Grow Domestic Markets for NWT Products.

OBJECTIVE 5A: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN TOURISM

With over $100 million dollars in annual receipts, the tourism sector is already an important component of the pan-territorial economy. The NWT's unique tourism product, however, offers the potential for more direct and indirect economic opportunity in each region and community in the NWT.

As baby boomers enter retirement in full force and the world travel industry grows and becomes more discerning, today's tourists do not gamble with their travel dollars. They want the sure bets –"must sees" – and they do their research.

Increasingly, these travellers want to visit national parks, enjoy scenery and wildlife and participate in outdoor-adventure activities. A vast majority express a desire to experience Aboriginal culture.

The NWT can fill this market demand – and more – with a full inventory of attractions that are not only comparable, but in many cases, unmatched or found nowhere else.

Direct and indirect benefits from tourism are far reaching but growth in this sector is dependent on attracting new markets, developing new products and engaging more NWT residents into the sector.

To increase opportunities in tourism, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
37. Support the development and implementation of the GNWT's Tourism 2015 Strategy.	• A vibrant tourism environment will mean more tourists, more income for tourism operators and more jobs for residents. This equates to more income for NWT communities and more economic opportunities for the business and service sectors that support them.
38. Increase and diversify the NWT tourism product by developing Aboriginal tourism and eco-tourism packages. 39. Develop and build tourism products and infrastructure in NWT communities. 40. Assist existing operators to package inter-regional tourism products.	• Quality products and services, including tour and adventure packages, will make the NWT tourism product more competitive - especially in areas of Aboriginal tourism and non-consumptive tourism.
41. Measure the effectiveness of NWT Tourism as a delivery model for investments in marketing.	• Measurements and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) will offer an impartial and definitive understanding of issues, solutions and possible alternatives to guide future decisions regarding tourism marketing.

42. Establish a convention bureau to attract business tourism, conferences and industry events.	• Promoting the NWT as a destination for conventions may open new high-income markets for tourism operators including hotels, lodges and airlines. • A Conventions Bureau will connect operators directly with organizers in the planning and development of conventions.
43. Increase the development and availability of tourist friendly accommodation facilities by: • Providing incentives for private sector developers • Assisting existing facilities to create northern themed experiences • Reviewing alternative ownership models.	• Especially in smaller communities, assured (and tourist friendly) accommodations provide a foundation for additional tourism attractions.
44. Develop and maintain competitive standards for NWT tourism products.	• Maintaining and enforcing a high quality tourism product in the NWT will increase consumer satisfaction and demand – allowing NWT tourism operators to charge and receive premium prices.
45. Examine with Aurora College formalized skills training for the NWT's tourism workforce such as: • Youth and entry level programs • Progressive career training; and the implementation of national (CTHRC) training standards in the NWT.	• An educated, informed and local tourism workforce will enhance the quality and delivery of a positive NWT tourism experience. • Formalized training and certifications will raise the profile of the tourism industry as a sustainable means of employment with real opportunities for career progression.
46. Examine models that will enable tourism operators to access more affordable insurance packages.	• Affordable insurance options will reduce the operating costs for NWT tourism operators.

MEASURES

- Increase in accommodation facilities in small and remote communities
- Tourism statistics
- Accredited training programs
- More jobs
- Tourism licenses
- Number of conventions held in NWT
- Number of eco-tourism outfitter starts
- Number of Aboriginal Tourism starts

OBJECTIVE 5B: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ARTS

In addition to contributing to the preservation of culture, tradition and language in the NWT, the Arts sector can serve a role in diversifying the economy by providing artists – especially those in smaller communities – with employment choices and income opportunities.

The vastness of the NWT supports artists in all disciplines. Unique northern arts and fine crafts, including carvings, beaded garments, home-tanned hides, paintings and jewelry, are available in almost every community; they are in high demand seasonally from visitors and residents alike. For many traditional artists, however, accessing traditional materials is a challenge.

As global interest in the North grows, NWT artists have an ideal opportunity to showcase their creative talents to the world through books, film, performances, traditional crafts, paintings, sculpture, and so on.

To increase opportunities in the Arts, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
47. Support the Development and Implementation of the NWT Arts Strategy and Tactical Plan.	• The successful implementation of the NWT Arts Strategy will increase demand and distinguish and promote NWT artists and their products in the marketplace.
48. Strengthen branding for made-in-the-NWT art products.	• A recognized and trusted branding program will promote and protect NWT art in local, national and international markets.
49. Provide additional funding and support to art festivals.	• Raising the profile of festivals/events will provide increased exposure for artists and serve as an economic generator in regions.
50. Identify, with NWT Tourism, opportunities to promote NWT artists and their products in target markets.	• Promoting and celebrating NWT artists as an element of the NWT tourism product will increase the profile of both the NWT and its art.
51. Support, with the NWT Film Commission, the development and implementation of an NWT film strategy.	• A definitive strategy and accompanying policy instruments will guide joint government investment, support business opportunities and economic growth for this sector.
52. Examine, with the NWT Film Commission, a program to rebate filmmakers for wages and services incurred in relation to television and film production in the NWT.	• Rebates for filmmakers will help address competitive disadvantages in respect to programming offered by adjoining and competing jurisdictions.

53. Identify with NWT Tourism opportunities to promote the NWT as a filming destination.	• Increased activity in the film industry will generate benefits in other sectors of the economy. Exposing the NWT, its residents, adventures and stories, through film and television will increase interest from those looking to visit (and possibly move to) the NWT.
54. Examine ways to develop and maintain a competitive marketplace for quality arts and crafts.	• Maintaining high quality arts and crafts in the NWT will increase consumer satisfaction and demand – allowing artists to charge and receive premium prices for their art work.
55. Expand provision of raw materials for arts and crafts.	• The availability of an affordable and ready supply of art and craft materials will enhance artistic production and reduce operating costs for working artists.
56. Examine a model for the establishment of an NWT Visual Arts and Craft Council/Association to serve as one voice for NWT artists.	• An NWT Visual Arts and Craft Council/Association would promote, develop and advocate for fine arts and craft in the NWT through organized exhibitions, publications, marketing ventures, education projects and other information services for its members and the general public.

MEASURES

- Increased access to national and international markets
- Number of quality arts and crafts products with NWT logo
- Number of film productions in NWT

OBJECTIVE 5C: INCREASE NWT MANUFACTURING

High costs, small markets and other related factors put the manufacturing sector in the NWT at a competitive disadvantage.

Manufacturing in the NWT is supported, primarily by allowances in the GNWT's procurement process which recognize higher production costs for made-in-the-NWT products.

The GNWT's NWT Manufactured Products Policy (NWTMPP) and Business Incentive Policy (BIP) are designed to ensure government purchases are made through NWT owned businesses – thereby leveraging this investment into the business and manufacturing sector.

To increase NWT Manufacturing, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
57. Eliminate the northern residency requirement (BIP) for businesses to be approved as NWT manufacturers.	• An NWT manufactured product will be determined solely by the value-added activity that occurs in the NWT.
58. Encourage value added processing of materials sourced in the NWT including: • oil and gas products; • diamonds; and • biomass.	• From petro chemical-by products (i.e. propane) to diamond jewelry and wood pellets, value added production, sales and distribution (in any form) can mean increased employment and economic activity in the NWT.
59. Encourage buyers and producers to work together to develop common standards, processes and product listings to encourage the manufacture and supply of Made-in-the-NWT products to governments and industry.	• A mutual and consistent understanding of markets, processes and demands will result in the supply of a more dependable and cost-effective product.
60. Improve compliance with established manufacturing and procurement agreements with: • Regular meetings to bring together industry, business and public interests; and • Diligent monitoring and/or reporting.	• Face to face meetings will enhance accountability, and strengthen partnerships and collaboration.
61. Promote the "Made in the NWT" Program.	• Increased consumer awareness and demand for NWT products will drive supply and contribute to employment, investment and economic activity in this sector.

MEASURES	
• Number of manufactured products	• Registered manufacturers • Registered BIP companies

OBJECTIVE 5D: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN COMMERCIAL FISHING

The commercial fishing industry on Great Slave Lake has been a mainstay of the South Slave economy since the 1950s when the fishery was developed to supply export markets.

Infrastructure and operations were heavily weighted towards serving these markets and the NWT industry became dependent on export marketers. However, commercial prices offered and paid for fish have not kept pace with the continually rising cost of operations - and participation in this once-strong local sector has diminished.

In 2012, less than 20% of the available harvest was realized, yet the resource (est. quota 1.8 million kilograms) remains - and is largely untapped.

Today, new markets are emerging for Great Slave Lake fish and offering renewed opportunity for NWT fishers. Fish volumes aimed for export markets have increased, and are showing signs of continued improvement, and the domestic commercial market is showing excellent potential for expansion and growth.

To grow the NWT fishery, more participation is needed and fishermen will have to look beyond their present ranks for this growth. New entrants must be encouraged and supported.

To increase opportunities in commercial fishing, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
62. Provide financial support to leverage investment for the construction, management and operations of a fish processing plant(s)	• New capital will help to attract new entrants, leverage additional investment and facilitate marketing options to distribute products in domestic and export commercial markets.
63. Work with NWT fishers and the NWT Fishermen's Federation to expand the export and domestic market of Great Slave Lake Fish by: • Ensuring security of supply • Implementing a marketing program • Establishing effective product distribution systems	• The development and expansion of the domestic commercial market will provide new income for fishermen, support import substitution, and lessen dependence on export markets. • Developing reliable distribution systems will assure security of supply for prospective investors and buyers.
64. Promote opportunities for value-added manufacturing of fish products	• Value-added products such as fish fillets and smoked fish will increase processing efficiency and competitiveness.
65. Provide incentives to fishers to increase their efficiency and productivity (i.e. purchasing fish fillet machines)	• Incentives will enable fishers to upgrade their fishing vessels and improve cost efficiencies.

66. Provide training and financial support to existing fishers and new entrants to the fishery.	• Retaining and attracting fishers will increase the availability of product and contribute employment and economic growth to impacted communities.

MEASURES

- Increased participation and volumes
- Expanded market uptake
- Increased sector investment
- Organized market support
- Trade (exports) and investment
- A new fish processing plant
- Diversification of product

OBJECTIVE 5E: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORESTRY

Fully 17% of Canada's merchantable forests are situated in the Northwest Territories, yet except for firewood and a small operation based in Hay River, there exists no forest industry in the NWT today.

In the South Slave and Dehcho Regions, where detailed forest inventories exist, sustainable harvest levels have been calculated at 4.6 million hectares. Operating costs, however, are intimidating and certainty is not available for the acquisition of multiyear land leases. The value of the NWT's forest harvest has declined from a high of $3 million a year to under $300,000.

Access to NWT timber resources and land are the underpinning for the GNWT's Biomass Strategy to reduce dependence on imported fuel. One northern company is now pursuing the opportunity to manufacture wood pellets for markets in the NWT and elsewhere.

To increase opportunities for forestry, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
67. Support the implementation of the Northwest Territories Biomass Energy Strategy.	• The use and availability of NWT wood pellets will displace imported fuels and support greater import substitution. • Increased demand for wood pellets will drive supply. • The operation of a commercial mill will provide jobs and economic investment.
68. Facilitate the identification and long-term access to lands for forestry development.	• Improved certainty regarding forest inventories and land availabilities will attract more participation and investment in this sector.
69. Finalize inventory of forest resources and sustainable harvest levels.	• The use and availability of forestry resources will displace imported fuels and goods and support greater import substitution.

70. Examine and consider incentives for private sector investment to expand the firewood harvest, including: cutting, collection and distribution.	• New projects and investments will create jobs and business opportunities.

MEASURES

- Increased sector investment
- Increased sector employment and income
- Volume of harvest
- Number of conversions
- Number of jobs

OBJECTIVE 5F: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE

Motivated by high food costs, opportunity and lifestyle choices, participation in local food production is increasing in most, if not all, communities in the NWT.

The Agriculture sector has grown dramatically over the past decade and now ranges from small community gardens to commercial greenhouses; regulated egg production, the harvesting of "wild" edibles, and the commercial harvest of game.

Opportunities for future growth are broad and diverse and could include unique NWT products like birch syrup or herbal tea.

To increase opportunities in agriculture, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
71. Develop and implement an Agriculture Strategy for the NWT.	• A definitive strategy and accompanying policy instruments will guide joint government investment, support business opportunities and economic growth for this sector.
72. Conduct mapping, land classification and identification of long-term access to lands suitable for agriculture in all communities.	• Improved certainty regarding land availabilities will attract more participation and investment.
73. Develop, with the NWT Farmers Association, a "Grown in the NWT" branding program.	• A recognized and trusted brand will help promote and protect "Grown-in-the-NWT" products in the NWT's domestic and commercial markets.

74. Examine the viability of establishing commercial market gardens in all Regions.	• Market gardens will make cheaper, fresher and, in some communities, "brand new" foods available to NWT residents for consumption - reducing the need for, and cost of, importing these foods from elsewhere. • Increasing the amount of local food products produced, harvested, and sold in the NWT will contribute to employment, investment and economic activity in this sector.
75. Conduct research on agriculture and greenhouse technologies.	• As technologies improve and increase agricultural production in the NWT, so too will opportunities for small businesses in this sector.

MEASURES

- Increase in the availability of locally produced foods.
- Increased participation and investment.
- Agriculture strategy and policy.
- "New" farmers.
- Expanded program support, extension services and research.
- Inventory and measurement of production capacity and value of the sector.

OBJECTIVE 5G: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY

Founded in the fur trade, the traditional economy is the NWT's original economy – and is as important to the northern economy, as small-scale farming is in southern Canada.

Fur harvested in the NWT is recognized world-wide as the highest quality fur that money can buy.

As wage economies take hold and disposable incomes increase, fewer NWT residents are engaged in the traditional economy, however it remains entrenched in the economy of the NWT's smaller and most isolated communities where costs are the highest and conventional cash incomes are the lowest. In these places it remains not only the primary economy but, an economy of last resort.

The GNWT's Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur (GMVF) program, with its purchased product and guaranteed income support, is often highlighted as a model for other renewable resource industries.

To increase opportunities in the traditional economy, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
76. Increase funding and program support for the Traditional Economy through: • The GNWT's Community Harvesters Assistance Program; and • The Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur program	• Increased investment in CHAP will support subsistence food harvest and reduce dependence on expensive imported foodstuffs. • Trapping provides seasonal employment and incomes in smaller communities. • Investment in the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program will drive sustained activity and investment returns from trapping.
77. Engage the private sector to increase support to the GNWT's Take a Kid Trapping program.	• Expanding the Take a Kid Trapping Program will increase exposure and participation in traditional harvesting activities.
78. Create a mentorship program with supports to provide assistance to adults pursuing a return to a harvesting lifestyle.	• Active participation in the traditional economy can be a source of income and economic activity in smaller communities.
79. Examine with the GNWT's Departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services, opportunities to incorporate traditional economy activities into social wellness and healing programs.	• The pursuit of traditional activities in whole or in part can provide a stepping stone to increased community wellness. Delivering such programs will provide opportunities for local employment and businesses.

MEASURES

- Fur harvest
- Sales of traditional arts and crafts
- Increases in hunting and fishing as measured by the NWT Bureau of Statistics.
- More youth engaged in traditional harvesting.
- Track the number of adults returning to the traditional harvesting sectors.
- Lessen dependence on imported food products

OBJECTIVE 5H: ENCOURAGE AND GROW DOMESTIC MARKETS FOR NWT PRODUCTS

There are a number of resources (for example: fish, lumber, wood pellets, garden produce, and some energy commodities) which, while readily available in the NWT, continue to be imported from the south.

In addition to providing local employment, economic initiatives based on replacing goods and services currently being purchased and transported at a cost from southern Canada, will further serve to: build capacity in the NWT, reduce costs to NWT residents, promote entrepreneurialism and enhance economic diversity.

To encourage and grow domestic markets for NWT Products, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
80. Promote and expand the practice of buying locally produced products with: • Marketing campaigns; and • Local "farmers" markets.	• Increased consumer awareness and demand for NWT products will drive supply and incent business expansions and start-ups. • Local and community markets will develop as an opportunity to introduce products and instill local consumer practices.
81. Promote the sale of northern foods to NWT stores, restaurants, industry establishments and government institutions.	• Established commercial markets will provide a reliable consumer base for increased domestic production and sales.
82. Develop, with producers, NWT-wide markets and distribution systems for regionally-specific products	• Once local (community) demand is satisfied, regional and territorial markets can be developed as supporting infrastructure is identified and put in place. • This will mean increased income for producers and Increased access for NWT residents to local foods.
83. Work with NWT Bureau of Statistics to assess the value of traditional harvesting.	• Statistical data will offer greater recognition and understanding for the value of this sector to the NWT economy. It will serve to highlight if, or where, supports are needed and can have the strongest impacts on regional economies.
84. Assess consumer or potential markets in NWT.	• Market studies will guide and inform plans for expanded production or new business start-ups.

MEASURES

- Commercial sales of Northern foods
- Domestic sales of northern foods
- Number of community markets
- Number of NWT products available
- Applicable business start ups

3.4 PEOPLE: OPPORTUNITY READINESS

A strong and diversified NWT economy will offer opportunities for employment and participation and increase the demand for a healthy, trained and skilled workforce.

Clearly, NWT residents are best positioned to meet this demand but must possess skills, knowledge and prerequisites commonly realized through increased learning in schools, colleges, universities or in the workplace.

A broad range of partners are working to identify, inform and develop educational initiatives designed to build a strong, stable and skilled resident workforce in the NWT. Collaboration and commitment is needed by governments, agencies, business and industry and most importantly, people themselves.

While the NWT is indeed rich with resources – none are more valuable in the workplace, than those that live, invest and raise their families in our communities.

This Strategy establishes two targets:

- Establish a Positive Entrepreneurial Environment
- Prepare NWT Residents for Employment

TARGET 6: ESTABLISH A POSITIVE ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

Characterized by determination, creativity and hard work, NWT entrepreneurs are the driving force behind local economies - leveraging their resilience into successful ventures and providing the energy and innovation to fuel a competitive and prosperous small business environment.

With declining population numbers and increased competition from southern markets, the challenges faced by the NWT's small business sector are growing and consideration must be given to restoring the North's once-vibrant spirit of entrepreneurship in the interest of much-needed diversity and growth.

OBJECTIVE 6A: STRENGTHEN THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT FOR REGIONAL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs and small businesses owners, especially in the NWT's small-market communities, are significantly challenged by limited economies of scale. Professional service providers rarely establish offices in small markets and amortized capital and operating expenses are high.

Meanwhile, increasing technological, procedural and regulatory requirements add to the administrative burdens of NWT entrepreneurs and employees are consistently being lured away by higher wages in public and industry sectors.

To strengthen the operating environment for regional businesses and entrepreneurs, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
85. Create Regional Economic Action Plans for communities and regions based on the Economic Opportunities Strategy.	• Regional Economic Action Plans will identify specific economic opportunities, needs and challenges in each of the NWT's five regions and chart the course for development and economic activity. • The planning and design of these plans will serve to engage resident participation.
86. In collaboration with partners, examine models for regional business centers to provide single-window business supports.	• A reliable stable of professional support services will contribute to the positive economic health of NWT businesses and enable entrepreneurs to concentrate on expanding their enterprises.
87. Explore partnered approaches to encourage entrepreneurship, especially among the youth and Aboriginal populations.	• More NWT residents will consider entrepreneurship as a means to improve their economic position and create their own jobs. • A partnered approach will allow individual mentors and successful role models to provide experience and expertise to future entrepreneurs. • New entrepreneurs will increase investment and employment in the NWT.
88. Develop a Business Internship Model to assist businesses in smaller centers to recruit and retain accredited accountants, bookkeepers, and office managers.	• Business internships can help small businesses recruit and retain the professional help they need and draw business personnel and service providers to smaller communities. • This will help to improve business performance, management and ultimately profitability
89. Make existing public infrastructure and buildings available for local business operations like: • Arts and crafts stores at visitors centers; • Coffee shops/restaurants in schools; and territorial parks • Gift centers at NWT airports.	• Using existing community infrastructure as a base for small business operations is a way to avoid high capital costs.

90. Through the Northwest Territories Nominee Program, promote investment outside major centers.	• Attracting immigrant entrepreneurs will increase investment and employment in the NWT.
91. Make all business forms available online.	• Providing resources online will improve efficiencies and access for all entrepreneurs – but especially those in isolated areas.
92. Target government resources and funding to realize identified regional opportunities and priorities	• Recognizing and targeting government resources according to regional needs and strengths will strengthen the impacts and leverage of these investments and enable impacted communities to address opportunities in a timelier manner.

MEASURES

- Number of completed regional economic development plans
- Number of new opportunities in regions
- Program statistics for Canada and the NWT.
- New commercial ventures started in public buildings
- Number of businesses participating in the business internship program
- Financial performance and length of time in business for businesses participating in the Business internship program
- Number of partners engaged
- Number of businesses engaged
- Number of entrepreneurs

OBJECTIVE 6B: STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR NWT BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS

The framework in which government economic development programs are provided in the NWT is complex. Several agencies – the GNWT's Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI), the NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation (BDIC), Community Futures Organizations and CanNor are mandated to provide funding, assistance and services to business owners and prospective entrepreneurs. These sometimes competing, processes can result in duplication, unnecessary costs and delays.

Many entrepreneurs say they are reliant on government staff to navigate programs and services and complete necessary application processes.

While government accountability requirements are consistently met, improved results reporting is required to measure and evaluate the impact of government programs and services in order to strengthen these supports.

To strengthen government programs and services for NWT businesses and entrepreneurs, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
93. Institute measures and accountabilities for the delivery and effectiveness of all government programs	• Definitive measures and established key performance indicators (KPIs) will improve the analysis and evaluation of government programs and services. • Improved data will allow governments to better target available supports for areas where they are needed most and can have the strongest impacts on regional economies.
94. Enhance or re-negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between government partners on the delivery of business and economic development programs and services in the NWT to: • Identify and confirm roles for each government; • Streamline and coordinate programs and services; and • Promote and market available business programs and services.	• Coordinated communications and program delivery will improve awareness of, and access to, government programs and services in support of NWT entrepreneurs and businesses.
95. Focus the management of government business programs and analysis at the regional level	• Government programs will be managed by individuals that both understand, and are familiar with the communities and economic environments in which they are being delivered.
96. Develop a catalogue or database of existing territorial, federal, and private funding sources and promote to NWT businesses and representatives.	• Connecting northern entrepreneurs to available funding sources including national programs such as: The Canada Small Business Financing program; The Canadian Youth Business Foundation (CYBF); and Start Up Canada will increase the amount of financial support available to NWT businesses.
97. Examine the role and application of the GNWT's Business Incentive Policy (BIP) in relation to its objectives, operating transparency, effectiveness and administration.	• An impartial and definitive understanding of issues, solutions and possible alternatives to the BIP will guide future decisions regarding this program.

MEASURES

- A public listing of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for all business programs.
- Regular reporting of KPI's to the NWT Legislative Assembly and the public
- Increased uptake on government programs
- Number of businesses engaged
- Number of partners engaged in MOU
- A resource database (catalogue) of national programs for entrepreneurs to access funding
- Findings from BIP review
- Value and number of contracts awarded to BIP businesses
- Number of BIP businesses registered
- Number of BIP businesses in compliance

OBJECTIVE 6C: CREATE A STRONG VOICE FOR NWT BUSINESS

To ensure that business supports in the NWT are appropriate, effective and relevant, guidance for government needs to be strong, relevant and timely and the forum in which this information is exchanged must be clear and direct.

To create a strong voice for NWT businesses, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
98. Establish semi-annual sessions between the NWT's business representatives (NWT Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Aboriginal Business Association and others) and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment.	• Clear and direct communications will contribute to increased and more appropriate responses to opportunities and challenges faced by NWT businesses and entrepreneurs.
99. Facilitate regular dialogue between territorial government representatives and the NWT's community of northern and Aboriginally-owned businesses.	• An improved understanding and alignment of NWT business and political priorities will improve working relationships and support for development priorities.

MEASURES

- Improved dialogue between business and government

TARGET 7: PREPARE NWT RESIDENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT

In order to obtain the skills and knowledge necessary to obtain employment, most residents need to graduate high school and participate in post-secondary studies. Access to appropriate education and training opportunities is critical to the NWT's workforce development.

OBJECTIVE 7A: ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION

NWT residents can best take advantage of economic opportunities when they have access, in the NWT, to appropriate and suitable education and training.

High school programming is critical in preparing students for future learning and the workforce.

In its three campuses and over 20 community learning centers, Aurora College offers a wide range of learning opportunities. The College has the structure to adapt and adjust its programming to reflect existing and future economic opportunities. The College's programs and services are currently under-subscribed and could be more effectively linked to specific education and training requirements.

The workplace itself is also a valuable learning environment in which NWT residents can gain direct experience and prepare themselves for long-term employment success.

To enhance opportunities for workforce training and education, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
100. Increase university Level Programming offered by Aurora College northern campuses including: • Degree offerings; and • Technologist programs.	• Increased college offerings and enrollments will be reflected in an increase of residents choosing to remain in the NWT to advance their learning and seek employment.
101. Expand and adapt Aurora College program offerings to reflect areas of specific or unique economic opportunities for the NWT.	• NWT–appropriate training will give graduates a competitive advantage when filling related positions. The availability of ready, qualified local candidates will improve cost efficiencies and associated hiring processes for prospective employers.
102. Establish co-op and job placement programs.	• Students will receive valuable on-the-job training and experience in real work environments. By hiring and maintaining a student workforce, participating employers will realize cost savings and efficiencies.

103. Include provisions for local training and employment initiatives in project contracts with industry and local Aboriginal corporations.	• Aboriginal corporations and northern businesses working with major projects can provide opportunities for local on-the-job training and employment. • Including specific provisions in contracts will work to reduce the use of, and reliance on, a fly-in-fly-out workforce.
104. Expand apprenticeship opportunities for high school programs.	• Exposure to specific trades and job experiences will engage and motivate students to pursue employment options suited to their interest and skills

MEASURES

- Aurora College program and course offerings linked to economic opportunities
- NWT resident college and university enrolments
- NWT college and university graduation levels
- Success levels of employer-based training programs
- Trade and Occupational Certifications
- Number of high school students enrolled as apprentices
- Number of students participating in job placement programs

OBJECTIVE 7B: LINK RESIDENTS TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NWT

Having completed education and training programs, NWT graduates must make the transition from study to work. This transition may not be easy and requires graduates to take an active and committed role in pursuing desired employment opportunities.

NWT graduates that do not find work may look for opportunities outside of the Territory - depriving the NWT workforce of their much-needed participation, skills and abilities.

Governments, business and industry will need to work together to ensure NWT graduates are able and equipped to transition from their education and training to the NWT workforce.

To link residents to career opportunities in the NWT, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
105. Track the transition of NWT high school and post-secondary graduates "school to work".	• Monitoring student transitions to the workplace will provide an understanding of issues, experiences and programs that can support and encourage future success in this area. • Using the database, NWT students can be kept aware of appropriate NWT employment opportunities, internships, tax incentives and other advantages.
106. Develop mechanisms to promote timely and targeted career and employment information to NWT graduates.	• Matching NWT students with career and employment prospects will encourage them to return to the North and help to build the NWT's resident workforce.
107. Target NWT graduates in hiring.	• As graduating students take their place in the NWT workforce, they will settle and grow their families – investing in their communities, the Territory and its economy.
108. Expand existing programming targeted at student summer hiring to increase work experience placements for students in the private sector.	• Expanding summer employment programs to the private sector will expand the amount and types of work environments and job experiences that students can benefit from – and provide private sector employers with cost savings for summer hiring. • Increased opportunities for summer employment will improve the financial capacity of more students to complete their schooling.
109. Establish mentorship programs for students that are transitioning into career paths from school.	• NWT students will benefit from the support and guidance of experienced individuals and their expertise.

MEASURES	
• Number of NWT graduates (high school and postsecondary) that transition from education/training to the workforce	• Number and percentage of NWT residents in the workforce

OBJECTIVE 7C: IDENTIFY AND PLAN FOR FUTURE WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS

Developing a skilled workforce that is responsive to economic change requires vision, analysis and careful planning.

Collaboration is required between employers and governments to identify the types of jobs that are likely to emerge and the knowledge and skills that will be required to fill them.

Once these needs are determined, governments, Aurora College, business and industry must work together to put in place the academic and skills training required to ready NWT residents for these opportunities.

To identify and plan for future workforce requirements, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
110. Support the development and implementation of the GNWT's Workforce Planning Strategy; and an NWT Labour Market Development Strategy. 111. Increase collaboration between industry and government to prepare for labour needs in the NWT workforce. 112. Align Aurora College programming to address future workforce demands.	• Timely planning, study and analysis will provide the basis for initiatives to align the NWT's resident workforce with anticipated needs. • Connecting NWT residents with the right training tools and education programs will ensure they are prepared and equipped to satisfy future workforce demands.
113. Increase private sector participation in regional training program committees	• The added perspective and participation of the private sector will improve this already-successful approach to the identification and coordination of NWT training requirements.
114. Link the NWT Major Projects Office to developers of education and training programs	• The availability of a trained and ready workforce aligned with the development of major projects in the NWT will reduce the NWT's reliance on fly-in fly-out workers – retaining more of the benefits of increased economic activity in the economy.

MEASURES

- Demonstrated multi-year linkage between northern education and training and economic opportunities
- Numbers and success of regional training coordination activities
- Existence of training plans associated with major development projects

OBJECTIVE 7D: INCREASE AWARENESS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

To be ready to work, residents need to also understand the expectations of the "work world". For some NWT residents, this may require addressing personal or educational issues that are posing barriers to successful employment.

It is essential that programs are available to address challenges such as low academic skills, substance abuse, mental health concerns or other such circumstances. Such additional supports may enable more residents to participate in the workforce and benefit from current and future economic opportunities.

To increase awareness of employment opportunities and expectations, the following actions are recommended:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	OUTCOMES
115. Support and expand programs and public information initiatives related to: • Promoting employment opportunities; • Highlighting employer expectations; • Accessing needed health and social services; • Job readiness training; and • Academic and skills upgrading.	• Increased awareness of employment needs and employer expectations, common industrial training and certifications and improved access to social supports will all contribute to the entry-level employability of NWT residents. • The ability to participate in the workforce will restore confidence and individual self-reliance where it is lacking. • Increased participation in the workforce will contribute to an overall increase in community wellness.
116 Build on existing wellness programs with a social media campaign linking healthy lifestyles with employment and career success.	• Increased awareness of the opportunities and benefits offered by regular employment can be a motivator for more positive choices and increased personal responsibility.
117. Establish a program to connect NWT students directly with industry representatives and local role models to promote education and career employment	• Increased exposure to successful role models and the demonstrated benefits of education and employment will instill a sense of purpose in students and reinforce the connection between schools, industry and self-reliance.

MEASURES	
• Enrollment in job readiness programming	• Enrollment and graduates from academic preparation programming • Employment stats

HANS PFAFF/NWTT

4.0 Next Steps: Monitoring The Implementation

This Strategy has been developed with the contributions of many individuals, organizations, businesses and governments. It includes targets and recommended actions that will enable NWT residents to take advantage of the economic opportunities that exist now and in the future. While the development of this Strategy marks the completion of important work, the coordinated implementation of this plan will be paramount to its success.

Effective planning and monitoring will be required. (A listing of recommended actions and the anticipated time period for their implementation can be found in Appendix 6.2).

This Strategy is reliant on the continued contributions and participation of the private sector, governments and representative organizations and agencies dedicated to strengthening the NWT's economic climate and opportunities.

The partnership, established to develop this Strategy: the NWT Chamber of Commerce; the Northern Aboriginal Business Association; the NWT Association of Communities; the Government of Canada (CanNor); and the Government of the Northwest Territories (represented by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment), will continue to serve as its Governance Committee. As such, these partners will be expected to play a role in the implementation of the Strategy's actions although clearly, not all partners can be involved in every action.

It is recognized that other NWT organizations will have an interest or expertise in specific Strategy areas. The Governance Committee looks forward to building and facilitating their participation in the Strategy's implementation.

The Governance Committee will meet at least twice per year. Leadership of the Committee will rotate between the partners with the selection of the Committee's chair occurring once every two years. Administrative support for the Governance Committee's work and for monitoring and reporting on the results of the Strategy's activities will be established as a first action following the publication of the Strategy.

Finally, the Economic Opportunities Strategy will require review and adjustment on a periodic basis. This Strategy is described as a "living" document. Ensuring that it is current and effective throughout the course of its implementation will be an important task for the Governance Committee and may, over time, require adjustments or changes to its objectives and/or recommended actions.

JIRI HERMANN

5.0 Concluding Comments

The NWT is at a critical point in its economic and political evolution.

At one time, governments and traditional economic activities played the predominant role in stimulating the NWT's economy. Today, however, new economic drivers are evolving; in resource development, the NWT's expanding private sector and the rising influence of Aboriginal development corporations and companies.

In the past 30 years the Aboriginal business community, in particular, has experienced explosive growth. Aboriginal companies now aspire, not only to engage and participate in the NWT economy, but to be a part of guiding its growth and development.

Meanwhile, NWT residents are recognizing the benefits that can be realized from economic activity. Especially in our smaller communities, new and diversified opportunities are critical to improving and maintaining a quality of life that is both expected and deserved.

This strategy describes an approach to strengthening economic opportunity for all NWT residents.

Its development has been led by a partnership representing the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories, the NWT Association of Communities, the NWT Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Aboriginal Business Association.

While the Economic Opportunities Strategy lays out a number of actions it needs underscoring that this strategy will not be the sole driver of economic activity in the NWT.

As indicated throughout this document, many strategies are being undertaken in support of energy planning, mineral development, biomass fuels, labour force development, addressing poverty and improving transportation. Each will identify and bring forward initiatives that, when implemented, will serve to diversify the economy, reduce the cost of living, create employment, and address infrastructure needs leading to greater economic prosperity.

The process of developing this strategy has - above all else - confirmed that NWT residents are right to feel optimistic about their future; and are ready and able to make the meaningful decisions that will lead to northern prosperity.

BILL BRADEN

6.0 Appendices

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE *WHAT WE HEARD* REPORT

In the chart below the recommendations from the Economic Opportunities Strategy Project Advisory Committee's report, titled *What We Heard*, are listed. Notations are provided for each recommendation indicating whether the recommendation is supported in the final Economic Opportunities Strategy

It should be noted that some of the recommendations (e.g. mining related recommendations) from the *What We Heard* Report may be addressed through other government strategies or documents.

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
1. Coordinate "made in the North" arts and crafts - through support for the provision of raw craft materials, training of artisans	**Theme 3** **5B**
2. Centralized coordination of arts and crafts such as quality control, purchasing, marketing and sales of arts and crafts	**Theme 3** **5B**
3. Determine the viability of meeting health and other standards for fish processing	**Theme 3** **5D & 5H**
4. Promote and grow the market for NWT fish through direct support and by facilitating the consumption of local fish products in public institutions	**Theme 3** **5H**
5. Determine the viability of developing a distinct NWT brand and effective distribution system to help penetrate the regional wholesale and retail fish market	**Theme 3** **5D & 5H**
6. Investigate the application of the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Furs (GMVF) program model to the commercial fishing industry in matters such as freight subsidies, value of product (i .e . filleting fish) and other means of meeting operating challenges and increasing profits	**Theme 3** **5H**
7. Work with the NWT Fisherman's Federation to develop a fish plant in Hay River that can process, package and market Great Slave Lake fish products	**Theme 3** **5D**
8. Investigate a mentorship-style program that would help attract young people to a career in commercial fishing	**Theme 3** **5D**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
9. Support and expand small-scale agriculture enterprises intended to replace imports of vegetables and other agricultural products	**Theme 3** **5F**
10. Develop programming to stimulate the development of community greenhouses and gardens as a means to replace imports, promote community well-being and lower the cost of living	**Theme 3** **5F**
11. Governments collaborate to provide long-term secure access to agriculture lands that will help qualify prospective enterprises for bank financing and provide operational security	**Theme 3** **5F**
12. Determine the means to address standards for the commercial harvest and sale of country foods, and develop a plan for the distribution of country foods within NWT public institutions that serve meals	**Theme 3** **5H**
13. Support school programming on agriculture within the NWT school system, including Aurora College	**Theme 4** **7A**
14. Complete forest inventories in the South Slave Region to determine allowable harvests, and phase in inventories in the Dehcho region as the foundation for determining the sustainability and economic viability of potential commercial enterprises.	**Theme 3** **5E**
15. Grant harvesting permits of at least 15 years so that proponents have greater operational security and potential to qualify for bank financing	**Theme 3** **5E &5F**
16. Institute policies and incentives to encourage import substitution of wood, wood products and biomass fuel products	**Theme 3** **5C & 5E**
17. Reinstate the Manufacturers Advisory Council to the Minister of ITI-GNWT to provide a regular opportunity for industry representatives to discuss their issues and concerns with senior government	**Theme 4** **6C**
18. Strengthen SEAs or contracts with large project proponents that can provide northern enterprises with appropriate business opportunities	**Theme 2** **3C**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
19. Consider ways and means to reduce the freight and other operating costs of NWT manufacturing businesses	**Theme 2** **4A & 4B**
20. Encourage the development of a manufacturing policy for "buying north" that applies to all governments and related government agencies using government funding	**Theme 2** **5C**
21. Support NWT manufacturers who export products outside of the territory	**Theme 3** **5C & 5H**
22. Reinvigorate the diamond polishing industry as a secondary industry that provides value added benefits to the NWT in addition to the primary mining activity	**Theme 3** **5C**
23. Consider a centralized approach to the branding and marketing of quality, locally-made arts and crafts products	**Theme 3** **5B**
24. Consider ways and means (i.e. multi-year funding, tax incentives) to enhance an NWT-based film industry	**Theme 3** **5B**
25. Maintain and expand the means to supply local craft materials (i .e . bone, antlers, moose hide) using experience gained through the GMVF program	**Theme 3** **5B**
26. Develop a plan (including funding) to provide comprehensive long-term support to the cultural and fine arts sectors in the NWT economy	**Theme 3** **5B**
27. Make more funding available for tourism product development and promotion, including a modest levy on hotel rooms earmarked for the promotion of tourism in NWT communities	**Theme 3** **5A**
28. Develop tourism packages of sufficient quality to attract international travellers and other high-end clients. Focus marketing efforts on those potential clients to provide a higher rate of return	**Theme 3** **5A**
29. Establish and support a convention bureau to attract and facilitate the organization of large meetings, including provision of associated cultural and tourism opportunities	**Theme 3** **5A**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
30. Upgrade and expand on a 1-800 call center with a mandate to effectively coordinate expressions of interest from tourists with relevant tourism providers throughout the NWT	*Promote existing Call Centre*
31. Fully integrate performing and visual arts and cultural events in tourism marketing efforts	**Theme 3** **5A & 5B**
32. Aurora College reinstate tourism training for operators and tourism providers that includes a component on hospitality	**Theme 3** **5A** **Theme 4** **7A**
33. Investigate the potential of securing group insurance for tourism providers (i .e . outfitters and ecotourism operators) as a means to reduce individual operating costs	**Theme 3** **5A**
34. Make available a one-day fishing license for tourists	*Referred to GNWT ENR for consideration*
35. Government facilitate the continuation of existing mines, which may be more certain and cost-effective than creating new mines, by exploring energy costs and infrastructure that will reduce the mine operating costs	**Theme 2** **3B**
36. Address the limited geo-science mapping of the NWT in part by having the NWT Geo-science Office (NTGO) convene a workshop with mineral and petroleum industries to help identify a 5 and 10 year plan for geo-science research	**Theme 2** **3A**
37. Establish tax credits or other exploration incentives to re-invigorate mineral exploration activity in the NWT	**Theme 2** **3A & 3B** *Referred to GNWT ITI for consideration in the Mineral Development Strategy (MDS)*
38. NWT to collaborate with neighbouring jurisdictions such as Nunavut and Yukon to pursue economic opportunities that will benefit both jurisdictions, including the enhancement of secondary industries (i .e . transportation, supplies)	*Existing inter-jurisdictional forums exist to discuss these matters*

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
39. Set aside a percentage of mining royalty revenues to invest in initiatives (i .e . energy; infrastructure) that will reduce the operating costs of mine development and help meet the infrastructure needs of NWT communities	*Referred to GNWT, ITI for consideration in the Mineral Development Strategy*
40. GNWT use its existing Heritage Fund to accept a portion of its non-renewable resource royalties and use funds to encourage renewable industries and as a contingency for potential adverse economic circumstances	*Referred to GNWT, ITI for consideration in the Mineral Development Strategy*
41. Strengthen northern procurement, contracting and hiring of northern workers through more aggressive monitoring, enforcement and reporting on SEA's or contracts	**Theme 2** **3C**
42. Develop a standalone NWT strategy to guide and inform decision making for oil and gas development into the future; and to ensure these resources continue to be developed in a manner that ensures sustainability and benefits NWT residents	**Theme 2** **3A**
43. Undertake further research and provide information on the potential physical impacts of gas fracking in the NWT	**Theme 1** **1A** **Theme 2** **3C**
44. Re-establish the successful Oil and Gas Training Partnership between Industry, GNWT and Canada which was used in the early 2000s to partner with industry in providing training programs	**Theme 4** **7A**
45. Develop a communication forum between government and industry to better predict industrial exploration and development activities and associated needs to allow adjustments in local business preparation, related infrastructure and training programs	**Theme 1,3 & 7** **1A, 3C & 7C**
46. Review territorial capital cost allowances for pipelines and determine if changes to the tax system would help with pipeline development	**Theme 2** **3A**
47. Establish a Norman Wells Oilfield Transition Team with members from the federal, territorial and municipal governments and Esso to review the current status of the field, its planned demise and the most economical use of the field's assets (i .e . pipelines) to support new development in the region	**Theme 1 &2** **1A & 3A**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
48. GNWT establish a Major Projects Advocacy Office, located within the Premier's Office, to assist developers, land owners and stakeholders to understand the NWT regulatory system, and to monitor industry commitments under the SEAs and contracts. This Office would play a central role in major projects from marketing the NWT to potential investors to "path finding" monitoring and reporting through to project closure	**Theme 1** **1A**
49. GNWT undertake an internal government-wide regulatory review to eliminate any duplication or lack of clarity in its existing permitting processes. The review should include a comparative analysis of neighbouring jurisdictions so that GNWT is not at a perceptual disadvantage relative to these jurisdictions	**Theme 4** **6B**
50. GNWT, as part of its regulatory review, ensure that entrepreneurs have assured access to resources (land, timber, etc .) for a sufficient duration so as to provide operational certainty	**Theme 3** **5E & 5F**
51. The federal government complete its regulatory review in a timely manner so that the NWT has greater certainty, particularly with respect to the time frames of regulatory processes	*Federal review in final stages*
52. Support the updating and implementation of existing community economic development plans as the basis for pursuing appropriate economic opportunities	**Theme 4** **6A**
53. Facilitate and support the systematic preparation and implementation of new community economic development plans in communities where none are in place	**Theme 4** **6A**
54. Support more aggressive efforts to prepare, employ and retain NWT residents by reconsidering the purpose and effectiveness of the current personal taxes and benefits to provide incentives to residency in the NWT.	**Theme 1** **2B**
55. Implement programs aimed at better integrating residents with physical and developmental disabilities into the NWT workforce	**Theme 4** **7C**
56. Encourage industry to communicate its expectations regarding northern workers and better inform youth of the requirements for being hired	**Theme 4** **7A, 7B & 7D**
57. Strive to make school programming more relevant to the needs of NWT society by increasing student awareness of potential job opportunities and providing work opportunities for youth	**Theme 4** **7A, 7B & 7D**
58. GNWT expand the relationship with the Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program that encourages students to stay in school and develop the knowledge and skills necessary for success, but also provides entrepreneurial skills necessary for business ownership	**Theme 4** **6A**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
59. GNWT reinstitute the Western Arctic Leadership Program or a similar regional program	*Referred to Department of ECE*
60. Promote a University of the North to be established in the NWT	**Theme 4** **7A & 7C**
61. Explore ways of minimizing the use of "fly-in/fly-out workers" by encouraging industry and government to hire north, by developing programs to qualify northern residents and by helping them maintain their certifications once obtained	**Theme 4** **7A, 7B & 7C**
62. Better promote programs offering incentives to employers to hire NWT high school students for summer or part -time employment with on the job training	**Theme 4** **7B**
63. Consider the development of summer work "boot camps" where young adults are employed on projects and are exposed to 'real-life' work experiences and expectations	**Theme 4** **7A & 7B**
64. Provide more opportunities for management training to increase (gradually) the percentage composition of NWT residents in management positions	**Theme 4** **7A & 7B**
65. Review policies with respect to support for students attending upgrading or correspondence programs	*Existing programs in place*
66. Establish a Business Advisory Council that will inform the development of Aurora College programs	*Existing committee in place*
67. Aurora College expand its efforts to reach out to students in all communities so that they are fully aware of the programs and opportunities provided by the College	**Theme 4** **7D**
68. Encourage southern academic institutions that offer programs not addressed by Aurora College to establish satellite campuses in the NWT so that students may remain closer to home	**Theme 4** **7A**
69. Review policies with respect to financial support for post secondary students	*Referred to GNWT ECE for consideration*
70. Develop a database and tracking system for NWT students following graduation, including those outside of the territory, to monitor their progress and provide information on job opportunities in the NWT	**Theme 4** **7B**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
71. Begin and fund a plan to expand NWT transportation infrastructure to support resident and industrial purposes. Begin with construction of the Wrigley-to-Fort Good Hope portion of the Mackenzie Highway modeled on the "Hire North" project building out from each community	**Theme 2** **4A & 4B**
72. GNWT continue to implement its multi-modal strategy and consider applying aspects of the 'Hire North' model to its initiatives	**Theme 2** **4A & 4B**
73. Review the feasibility of the Tuktoyaktuk harbour being used as a deep water port	**Theme 2** **4A & 4B**
74. Explore the feasibility and potential economic advantages (such as tourism) of extending the length of the Yellowknife airport runway to accept international flights	**Theme 2** **4A & 4B**
75. Determine the most-cost effective, and environmentally and socially acceptable, means to use the surplus hydro power from the Taltson dam. Consider extending power through the South Slave region to Fort Providence from where it can ultimately be linked with the Snare power system	**Theme 2** **4A**
76. GNWT consider a more flexible approach to setting commercial power rates including a separate rate for industry that could have a positive impact on operating costs and encourage investment	**Theme 2** **4A**
77. Continue to reduce reliance on imported hydrocarbon fuel through increased use of NWT biomass resources (i .e . woodchips and pellets)	**Theme 2** **4A**
78. Continue to explore the viability of other power generation initiatives (solar, wind, Liquid Natural Gas (LNG), nuclear and geothermal) to further reduce our collective reliance on imported fuels	**Theme 2** **4A**
79. Continue without delay to implement the Mackenzie Valley fibre optics link including connections to each community, to support educational, health and social initiatives through increased bandwidth. Another primarily purpose would be to facilitate the further development of the Inuvik satellite station benefitting both Canada and the NWT	**Theme 2** **4C**
80. Undertake a review of the cost of living and doing business in the NWT (i .e . freight rates, cost of fuel, groceries, building supplies and other products) . Determine the amount and reason of the cost differential between NWT communities and similar communities in northern Alberta and elsewhere	**Theme 1** **2B**

WHAT WE HEARD *Report Recommendation*	*EOS (Theme, Objective)*
81. Adopt a policy of 'import substitution' with respect to goods, services and workers as the foundation upon which to begin addressing cost differential and building a more vibrant NWT economy. By necessity, this is a long-term goal that should inform many of the future policy decisions of the GNWT	**Theme 3** **5C, 5D, 5E, 5F & 5H**
82. GNWT undertake a limited review of its BIP, such as separate BIP programs for materials vs. labour, to determine if the program is meeting its objectives operating transparently and being effectively monitored for compliance	**Theme 4** **6B**
83. In terms of government procurement policy, the GNWT consider whether the NWT economy can be better served through the issuance of several smaller contracts (rather than a single large one) for large projects. This could increase the potential for smaller northern businesses to bid on such work	**Theme 4** **6B**
84. Re-focus small business support programs on the longer term through the provision of ongoing business counseling and mentorship support to help ensure sustainability and profitability of the business	**Theme 4** **6B**
85. Review and streamline NWT business support programs and establish clear goals, objectives, performance measures and evaluation timelines for the restructured programs	**Theme 4** **6B**
86. Develop performance measures for all NWT business support programs and collect appropriate information so the program may be evaluated with respect to its success in meeting the goals and objectives	**Theme 4** **6B**
87. Review the effectiveness of the BDIC in supporting NWT economic development	**Theme 4** **6B**
88. Undertake a review to clarify the roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships with respect to various program delivery officers and positions with similar functions	**Theme 4** **6B**
89. Consider providing multi-year funding for eligible performing and visual artists and organizations so that they may have resource certainty with respect to organizing and advertising their products and events	**Theme 3** **5B**
90. Consider increasing the funding available in business support programs following the reviews described above	**Theme 4** **6B**

6.2 TIMELINES FOR RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This appendix identifies each of the recommended actions in the Economic Opportunities Strategy and describes the expected timeframe in which activities associated with the recommended action will be initiated. For the purposes of the Strategy short term is defined as 2013 – 2015; medium term is 2015 – 2019 and long term is beyond 2019.

It is understood that these timelines are estimated and subject to change depending upon factors such as the availability of resources, economic conditions and the priorities of project partners.

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
THEME ONE – CLIMATE FOR GROWTH	
TARGET 1 – STIMULATE INVESTMENT	
OBJECTIVE 1A: ATTRACT MAJOR PROJECTS AND INVESTMENTS TO THE NWT	
- Complement and expand major projects office to market and promote the NWT to potential investors; act as an advocate for investors looking to understand and navigate the regulatory process	Short
- Identify and promote the Aurora Research Institute as a centre for research and applied studies relating to the North.	Short
- Negotiate geographic sector-specific development zones	Short
TARGET 2 – ENCOURAGE RESIDENCY	
OBJECTIVE 2A: INCREASE THE DEPENDABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF NWT HOUSING MARKET	
- Investigate business model to incent private sector investment in housing in non-market communities	Short
- Issue long term leases or fee simple lands	Medium

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Evaluate potential for cooperative housing model in remote communities	Medium
- Examine incentives to promote home ownership	Medium
OBJECTIVE 2B: STRENGTHEN AND PROMOTE TAX ADVANTAGES TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT NWT RESIDENTS	
- Facilitate pan-territorial dialogue on Northern Residency deductions that will explore options and identify balanced solutions to reflect the cost of living	Short
- Create an additional northern tax zone related to the Northern Residency Tax deduction	Short
- Educate and inform NWT residents and businesses of NWT tax structures and rates	Short
- Track and promote the NWT's individual income tax burden in comparison to other jurisdictions	Short
OBJECTIVE 2C: STRENGTHEN INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS TO THE NWT	
- Increase collaboration between government, industry and agencies to promote the NWT as a place to live and work	Short
- Link online promotional tools	Short
- Develop common marketing plans, strategies	Short
- Share labour force and recruitment forecasts	Short
- Effectively utilize the "NWT Nominee Program"	Short/Medium
- Create focused website to target international immigration	Short
- Market and promote Nominee Program to NWT employers	Short
- Adjust Territorial minimum worth for those interested in creating businesses	Short

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
THEME TWO – BUILDING ON SUCCESS	
TARGET 3 – EXPAND OUR POTENTIAL	
OBJECTIVE 3A: FOSTER EXPLORATION AND SUPPORT GEOSCIENCE	
- Prepare for opportunities that arise from the development and implementation of an NWT Mineral Development Strategy	Medium
- Enhance geoscience research in the NWT	Short
- Establish incentives for prospecting and exploration	Short/Medium
- Develop and implement an NWT Oil and Gas Strategy	Medium
- Examine new export routes and markets	Medium/Long
OBJECTIVE 3B: EXTEND THE LIFE OF EXISTING MINING ACTIVITIES	
- Examine ways to support extended viability of operating mines such as tax policies, reduced energy costs, infrastructure investments	Short
OBJECTIVE 3C: INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	
- Continue to pursue and enforce socio-economic agreements and contracts with large project proponents	Short
- Facilitate and fund expert analysis and studies in regions	Short/Medium
- Encourage and support NWT businesses involved in prospecting and exploration	Short/Medium
- Conduct business/industry strategies aligned to major projects	Short/Medium
TARGET 4 – ENHANCE OUR CONNECTIONS	
OBJECTIVE 4A: DEVELOP THE NWT'S ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE	
- Develop and implement an NWT Energy Strategy	Short

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Examine potential to expand NWT power grid	Short
- Examine and support new and alternative energy technologies	Medium/Long
- Examine possible development of Slave River hydro potential	Medium
- Use availability of excess hydro-power as an incentive to grow and expand manufacturing	Short/Medium
OBJECTIVE 4B: DEVELOP THE NWT'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE	
- Prepare for opportunities that arise from the development and implementation of a GNWT Transportation Strategy	Medium
- Maximize opportunities that arise from the phased construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway	Medium/Long
- Extend travel seasons of the existing winter highways	Medium/Long
- Examine opportunities to extend roads to resource rich areas in the Slave and Canol areas	Medium/Long
- Consider establishment of deep water port near Tuktoyaktuk	Medium
- Explore options to extend runways at identified airports	Medium
- Examine, with Parks Canada, and the Province of Alberta, an all-weather road through Wood Buffalo Park connecting Fort Smith to Garden River AB	Medium/Long
OBJECTIVE 4C: INCREASE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR	
- Prepare for opportunities that arise from the installation of a fibre optic link down the Mackenzie Valley	Medium
- Promote increased investment in Inuvik Ground Station	Medium
- Support value added data processing opportunities	Medium
- Support expanded e-commerce opportunities linked to the Mackenzie Valley fiber link	Medium

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
THEME THREE – REGIONAL DIVERSIFICATION	
TARGET 5 – BUILD SECTORS USING REGIONAL STRENGTHS	
OBJECTIVE 5A: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN TOURISM	
- Support the development and implementation of the GNWT's *Tourism 2015* Strategy	Short
- Increase and diversify NWT tourism packages	Short
- Develop and build tourism products and infrastructure	Short/Medium
- Assist operators to package inter-regional tourism products	Short
- Measure the effectiveness of *NWT Tourism* as a delivery model for investments in marketing	Short
- Establish a convention bureau	Short
- Increase the development and availability of tourist friendly accommodation facilities by providing incentives for private sector developers, reviewing alternative ownership models and assisting existing facilities to create northern themed experiences	Short/Medium
- Develop and maintain competitive standards for NWT tourism products	Short
- With Aurora College examine formalized skills training for the NWT tourism workforce	Short
- Examine models that will enable tourism operators to access more affordable insurance packages	Short
OBJECTIVE 5B: INCREASE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ARTS	
- Support the development and implementation of the NWT Arts Strategy and Tactical Plan	Short
- Strengthen branding for made-in-the-NWT arts products	Medium
- Provide additional funding and support to arts festivals	Medium
- Identify with NWT Tourism, opportunities to promote NWT artists and their products	Short

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Support, with the NWT Film Commission, the development of an NWT film strategy	Short
- Develop a program to rebate filmmakers for wages and services incurred in relation to television and film production in the NWT	Short
- Identify, with *NWT Tourism*, opportunities to promote the NWT as a filming destination	Medium
- Examine ways to develop and maintain a competitive marketplace for quality arts and crafts	Short
- Expand provision of raw materials for the creation of arts and crafts	Medium
- Examine a model for the establishment of an NWT Visual Arts and Craft Council/Association	Short
OBJECTIVE 5C: INCREASE NWT MANUFACTURING	
- Eliminate the northern residency requirement for businesses to be approved as NWT manufacturer	Short
- Encourage value added processing of materials source in the NWT including diamonds, oil and gas products and biomass	Short/Medium
- Encourage users and producers to develop common standards, processes and product listings to encourage the manufacture and sale of made-in-the-NWT products	Medium
- Improve compliance with established manufacturing and procurement agreements	Short/Medium
- Promote the "Made in the NWT" Program	Short
OBJECTIVE 5D: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN COMMERCIAL FISHING	
- Provide financial support to leverage investment in the construction, management and operations of a fish processing plant(s)	Short
- Work with NWT fishers and the *NWT Fishermen's Federation* to expand the export and domestic market of Great Slave Lake fish by: ensuring security of supply, implementing a marketing program and establishing an effective product distribution system	Short/Medium

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Promote value added manufacturing of fish products	Medium
- Provide incentives to fishers to increase their efficiency and productivity	Short/Medium
- Provide training and financial support to new entrants into commercial fisheries	Short
OBJECTIVE 5E: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORESTRY	
- Support implementation of the *NWT Biomass Energy Strategy*	Short
- Facilitate the identification and long-term access to lands for forestry development	Short/Medium
- Finalize an inventory of forest resources and sustainable harvest levels	Medium
- Examine and consider incentives for private sector investment to expand firewood harvest	Short/Medium
OBJECTIVE 5F: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE	
- Develop and implement an Agriculture Strategy	Medium
- Conduct mapping, land classification and identification of mechanisms for long-term land access	Medium/Long
- Develop, with the *NWT Farmers Association*, a "Grown in the North" branding program	Medium
- Examine viability of establishing commercial market gardens in all regions	Medium
- Conduct research on agriculture and greenhouse technologies	Medium
OBJECTIVE 5G: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY	
- Increase funding and program support for Community Harvester Program	Short
- Increase funding and support for the Genuine Mackenzie Fur Program	Short
- Engage private sector to increase support for the *"Take A Kid Trapping"* Program	Short
- Create a mentorship program with supports to assist adults pursuing a harvesting lifestyle	Short/Medium

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Examine with government departments options to incorporate Traditional Economy activities as part of social wellness and healing programs	Short
OBJECTIVE 5H: ENCOURAGE AND GROW DOMESTIC MARKETS FOR NWT PRODUCTS	
- Promote and Expand the practice of buying locally	Medium
- Promote sale of northern foods to NWT stores, restaurants, industry establishments and government institutions	Short
- Develop, with producers, NWT markets and distribution systems for regionally specific products	Medium
- Work with the Bureau of Statistics to assess the value of traditional harvesting	Short
- Assess consumer or potential markets in NWT	Short
THEME FOUR – PEOPLE: OPPORTUNITY READINESS	
TARGET 6 – ESTABLISH A POSITIVE ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT	
OBJECTIVE 6A: STRENGTHEN THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT FOR REGIONAL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS	
- Create Regional Economic Action Plans for communities and Regions	Short
- Examine models for regional business centres to provide "single-window" supports	Short/Medium
- Explore partnered approaches to encourage entrepreneurship especially amongst the young and Aboriginal populations	Short
- Develop a business internship model to assist businesses in smaller centres to recruit and retain accredited staff	Medium
- Make existing public infrastructure and building available for local business operations like, arts and crafts stores in visitors centres; coffee shops/restaurants in schools and parks; gift shops in airports	Short/Medium
- Through the Northwest Territories Nominee Program, promote investment outside of major centers	Short

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Make all business forms available online	Short
- Target government resources and funding to realize identified regional opportunities and priorities	Medium
OBJECTIVE 6B: STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR NWT BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS	
- Institute measures and accountabilities for delivery and effectiveness of all government programs	Short
- Enhance or re-negotiate a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between government partners on the delivery of business and economic programs	Short
- Identify and confirm the roles of each government	Short
- Streamline and coordinate programs and services	Medium
- Promote and market available programs and services	Short/Medium
- Establish framework for co-sharing of programming	Short
- Focus the management of government business programs and analysis at the regional level	Short
- Develop a catalogue or database of existing territorial, federal and private source funding sources for use by NWT businesses	Short
- Examine the role and application of the GNWT's Business Incentive Policy (BIP) in relation to its objectives, operating transparency, effectiveness and administration	Short/Medium
OBJECTIVE 6C: CREATE A STRONG VOICE FOR NWT BUSINESS	
- Establish semi-annual sessions between NWT business representatives and GNWT, ITI	Short
- Facilitate regular dialogue between territorial government representatives and the NWT's community of northern and Aboriginally-owned businesses	Short

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
TARGET 7 – PREPARE NWT RESIDENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT	
OBJECTIVE 7A: ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION	
- Increase university level programming offered by Aurora College	Short/Medium
- Expand and adapt Aurora College program offerings to reflect areas of specific or unique economic opportunities in the NWT	Short/Medium
- Establish co-op and job placement programs	Short
- Include provisions for local training and employment initiatives in project contracts with industry and local Aboriginal corporations	Short/Medium
- Expand apprenticeship opportunities for high school programs	Short
OBJECTIVE 7B: LINK RESIDENTS TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NWT	
- Track the transition of NWT high school and post secondary graduates "school to work"	Short/Medium
- Develop mechanisms to promote timely and targeted career and employment information to NWT graduates	Short
- Target NWT graduates in hiring	Short
- Expand existing programming targeted at student summer hiring in the private sector	Short/Medium
- Establish mentorship programs for students that are transitioning into career paths from school	Short/Medium
OBJECTIVE 7C: IDENTIFY AND PLAN FOR FUTURE WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS	
- Support development and implementation of *Workforce Planning Strategy* and *Labour Market Development Strategy*	Short
- Increase collaboration between industry and government to prepare for labour force needs	Medium

RECOMMENDED ACTION	*Timing of Initiation of Implementation*
- Align Aurora College programming to address future workforce demands	Medium
- Increase private sector participation in regional training committees	Short
- Link NWT Major Projects Office to developers of education and training programs	Short/Medium
OBJECTIVE 7D: INCREASE AWARENESS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS	
- Support and expand programs and public information initiatives related to employment opportunities, employer expectations, accessing health and social services, job readiness and academic and skills upgrading	Short
- Build on existing wellness programs with social media campaign linking healthy lifestyles with employment and career success	Short
- Establish program to connect NWT students directly with industry representatives and local role models	Short

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY
Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9 Phone: 867-873-7361 Email: Info@NWTOpportunities.com

www.nwtopportunities.com

NWT Chamber of Commerce

NABA Northern Aboriginal Business Association

nwtac NWT Association of Communities
Connecting Community Governments Since 1966

Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Agence canadienne de développement économique du Nord

Northwest Territories Industry, Tourism and Investment