



Investment Readiness and Economic Development Plan

Three Year Plan 2018 - 2020



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Introduction

The District of Tumbler Ridge identified an opportunity to conduct an Investment Readiness and Economic Development Plan on behalf of the Economic Development Office. The plan is to provide an action plan for retaining and attracting investment in the community. The Investment Readiness and Economic Development Plan looks at seven key areas of focus:

- Economic Development and Investment Capacity
- Tumbler Ridge is Open for Business
- Tumbler Ridge has a Diverse Economy
- Tumbler Ridge has a Dynamic Downtown Core
- Tumbler Ridge is an Attractive Place to Live
- Tumbler Ridge has a Workforce for the Future
- Tumbler Ridge has an Infrastructure to Accommodate Growth

Prior to completion of the Investment Readiness and Economic Development Plan, a number of reports and analyses were completed to help provide the necessary background information and analysis along with helping to identify opportunities and strategies.

Report One: [Investment Readiness Assessment](#) documents the results of an analysis on the current status of investment readiness for Tumbler Ridge. The assessment analyses investment readiness from an investor’s point of view and provides an unbiased evaluation. Though Tumbler Ridge had some of the basics in place, overall the community ranked “not ready for investment”. The assessment includes a number of recommendations to improve investment readiness. Implementation of those recommendations along with the development of this Investment and Economic Development Plan will move Tumbler Ridge to “investment readiness” status.

Report Two: [Website Assessment](#) provides a review of the economic development and investment information available on the District’s website. The assessment included first impressions, navigation/usability, content specific to investors and mobile interface.

Report Three: [Stakeholder Engagement](#) represents a glimpse into the thinking of Tumbler Ridge business and community members surrounding the concept of investment readiness and economic development along with their options about what should be done to further economic development in Tumbler Ridge.

Infrastructure Gap Analysis: The project included an Infrastructure Gap Analysis process. The process included a review of over 15 background documents involved the Official Community Plan, various bylaws and the water system annual report. A community visit was included to collect firsthand information on current and future infrastructure needs. Tumbler Ridge has exceptional infrastructure capability & capacity. The water and wastewater systems have no immediate constraints, and the roads/pedestrian infrastructure, while in need of maintenance, are well evolved.

The infrastructure installed in the early 1980’s was designed to support as many as 10,000 people. The water supply, treatment and distribution systems, as well as the wastewater treatment and disposal systems are in very good condition, and operating at approximately 30% capacity based on the current

population. It was suggested that growth from 2,800 to 4,500 people could be accommodated without triggering any major infrastructure upgrades. Appendix A provides the Infrastructure Gap Analysis Summary.

Conference Opportunity and Assessment: An additional component of the project was looking at Tumbler Ridge as a conference destination. The process included online preliminary research, review of existing conference/meeting materials, and a community visit to experience first hand Tumbler Ridge's facilities and amenities for the sector. While Tumbler Ridge is in the early stages of conference and meeting attraction there are several opportunities and ways that the community can increase its presence in the industry and expand capacity. Appendix B provides the Conference Opportunity and Assessment Summary.

In addition to the above reports and analyses, a Community Profile was developed. Background data and information are vital to any investment readiness program as investors require relevant, accurate information to help make educated decisions. The Community Profile provides Tumbler Ridge with an additional economic development tool to attract investors, respond to investment inquiries, and support economic development efforts in building awareness and understanding about the community and regional economic development assets.

Based on review of background information, research collected during the project process and the analysis and assessment of the current community situation, a multi-year (three year) strategy with recommendations was developed for the seven key priority areas. These recommendations are supported by stakeholder engagement including an online survey as well as community meetings and ongoing input.

The following pages provide the competitive advantages of Tumbler Ridge and their economic development and investment attraction context. Key sectors are identified along with recommended sub-sectors that Tumbler Ridge should focus on. Both internal and external messaging is discussed prior to identifying the specific recommendations for Tumbler Ridge over the next three years.

Tumbler Ridge in Context

Tumbler Ridge's Competitive Assessment

The basis for any investment attraction strategy

In order to create any beneficial investment readiness program, a competitive assessment of the District's attributes was undertaken. It quickly became evident that Tumbler Ridge has a variety of assets to leverage at its disposal, however, there are potential issues that could dissuade a potential investor from entering the Tumbler Ridge market. It is critical that an investment strategy leverages the strengths the District has to offer while minimizing the challenges.

Tumbler Ridge's Strengths

- **Industrial land supply**
- **Low cost of development**
- **Access to natural resources/Community Forest**
- **Expandable/long-term infrastructure**
- **Low resident/business taxes**
- **Emerging tourism industry**
- **Affordable housing**
- **Quality of life**

Potential Challenges

- **High industrial tax rate**
- **Regulatory/bureaucratic hurdles**
- **Perceptions/misconceptions**
- **Population base**
- **Distance to major markets**

Industrial land supply – Tumbler Ridge has an abundant land supply for industrial investment, much of which is unoccupied. Investors and businesses look for locations where they can purchase affordable serviced land to establish new facilities. While this is only one factor it is an important one. Having readily available industrial land that is serviced, has rail access (or the ability to) and is available at an affordable price is a clear advantage for Tumbler Ridge.

What does it mean for investment? Not many communities in BC can say they have an abundance of available serviced industrial land. To attract investment, you need land to put them on. Whether it is new manufacturing or the service sector for the mining industry, land will be a critical component. Having readily available industrial land that is serviced, has rail access (or the ability to) and is available at an affordable price is a clear advantage for Tumbler Ridge.

Low cost of development – When attracting investment, it is important to be honest about the total costs of doing business in your community. Start-up costs are an important factor in the investment decision along with the long-term costs of operating. Having affordable land, low commercial taxes and no development cost charges is a great unstated incentive for attracting investment.

What does it mean for investment? Investors are looking for affordable locations that can provide a lower start-up cost combined with lower ongoing operating costs. Marketing low taxes and no development cost charges will be an important part of a marketing program for Tumbler Ridge. It will help to at least get the community on the potential list of communities that businesses may consider for investment.

Access to natural resources/Community Forest– The Tumbler Ridge area has an abundance of natural resources that can help support a local economy. With a coal industry, forestry, and wind energy, all of which depend on natural resources, it is important that the community find ways to work with to retain or expand each of these sectors. The Community Forest has been operating on a 21,000 m³ cut since 2012. The bulk of the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) is coniferous with the remainder being deciduous. In 2017, the Tumbler Ridge Community Forest was awarded an harvest volume expansion from an annual allowable cut of 20,000m³/yr. to 37,500m³/yr. This expansion almost doubles the size of forest operations and its influence on the local forest as well as financial viability of the firm and subsequent annual perpetual revenue source for the community.

Applying 2017 log sales figures from the Community Forest, the expansion harvest volume alone represents an additional annual gross revenue of approximately \$32/m³ or \$560,000 year from Community Forest operations and consequently significant annual inflow of revenue for future town investments. The Wind Energy sector has grown significantly with a new Wind Farm opening between Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd. New opportunities exist with this sector but are dependent on BC Hydro being willing to purchase the supply. The Coal Sector is going through a bit of a resurgence with Conuma and HD Mining both making significant investments. Community Forest, the mining and wind sectors all indicate a challenge in finding employees and local services to meet the current needs.

What does it mean for investment? Attracting new investment in mining is dependent on commodity costs but even meeting the needs of the current industry is important to work on. Attracting new employees to work in this sector, along with new businesses that can support the needs, will lead to many spinoffs. This includes the need for new or redeveloped housing, increased support for existing local businesses, and new demand for medical and educational services. Some opportunities will exist for new industry to take advantage of the Community Forest, but it will not likely mean a new sawmill. Further research should be done to determine if a new bio-fuel facility using local waste or a potential pellet plant. The biggest opportunity however may be in the attraction of local services that can harvest the Community Forest rather than that being done by companies located in Chetwynd or Dawson Creek.

Expandable/long-term infrastructure: Tumbler Ridge is a relatively newly planned community. Despite having several highs and lows for community population and economic conditions, the community still can accommodate new residents and businesses. Many communities will struggle to meet the demand for a growing population, however Tumbler Ridge can grow significantly (three times current population) with limited negative impact on existing infrastructure. While some improvements and upgrading may be required, for the most part Tumbler Ridge has the capacity for growth. Fibre Optics is critical piece of

infrastructure that is missing from the community and is needed in order to attract new residents, virtual workers, conferences and other key sectors.

What does it mean for investment? Infrastructure availability is a critical part of the investment attraction process. The ability to attract investment without the infrastructure to support is virtually impossible without the community willing to incur significant new debt to expand it. Tumbler Ridge has a significant advantage in this and could accommodate new industry, new residential and business development as well as urban reserve which could be a combination of new residential and commercial areas. One area that needs investment is Fibre Optics. In today's connected economy, Fiber Optics plays a key role and those communities that do not have it will often not be considered for investment.

Low resident/business taxes – Tumbler Ridge is fortunate to have a well-managed local government that has been able to maintain low residential and business taxes. Tax rates for industry are high but is likely not a major impediment to growth of the mining industry but could impact the attraction of new industry.

What does it mean for investment? Part of the strategy for economic development will be the attraction of new residents and new small businesses that can support existing industry. Having low taxes will help reduce both the cost of living and the cost of doing business and is another advantage that can be marketed. From a tax perspective Tumbler Ridge is ranked amongst the lowest in Canada and that combined with no Development Cost Charges makes Tumbler Ridge a great location to consider to live and do business. These are built in incentives that should be promoted.

Emerging tourism industry – The tourism industry has many opportunities particularly within the recreational sub-sector. The Global Geopark alone, which gained official UNESCO status in 2014 – has over 250 kilometres of hiking trails to 41 geosites, from waterfalls and caves to canyons and mountain summits. The area is a hot spot for outdoor enthusiasts and those looking to create niche businesses that support and build upon the Global Geopark designation.

What does it mean for investment? The ability of any community to attract new tourism infrastructure (Hotels, back country tourism companies, etc.) is significantly enhanced if it has the natural assets combined with community assets to encourage visitation. Tourism should never be depended on as the primary industry, but it can greatly enhance the feasibility of a business if it can depend on regular visitation throughout the summer months. Tumbler Ridge is part of a new program with Destination BC to develop a Tourism Development Strategy which will go a long way towards identifying new targets for investment in this sector.

Affordable housing – Though housing prices are on the upswing after a significant drop brought on by the region's coal industry Tumbler Ridge still has affordable housing. The average value of a single-family home is expected to increase by approximately five percent in 2017, from \$138,000 to \$146,000.

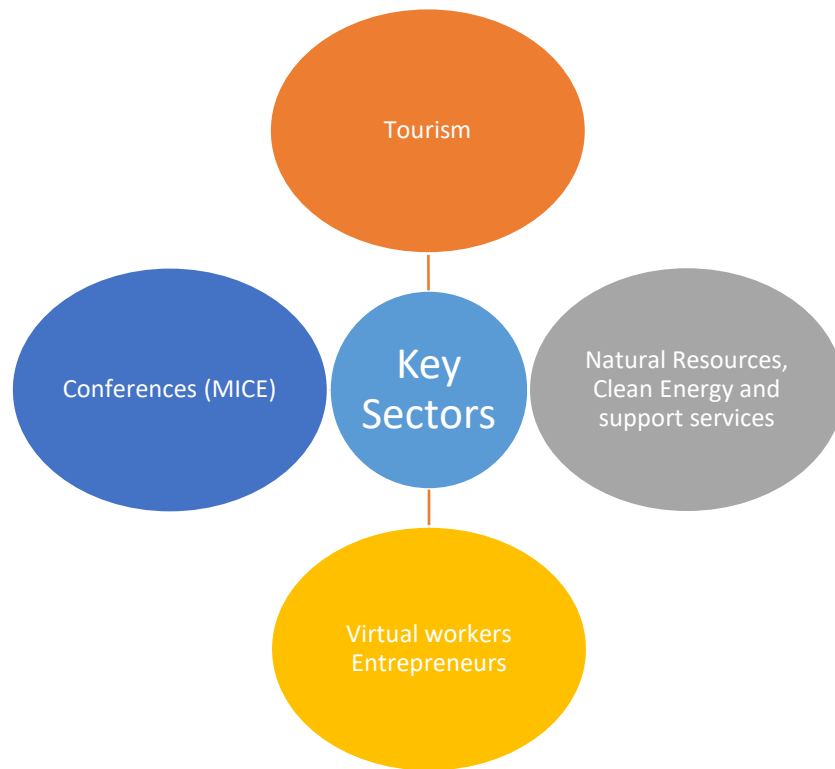
What does it mean for investment? Attracting new residents is greatly enhanced with the low cost of housing. Virtual working opportunities are a new trend in economic development and can lead to new residents located in any community that can provide affordable housing along with the available infrastructure to ensure that communication can occur seamlessly with others involved with a business.

Quality of life – Tumbler Ridge enjoys a unique quality of life that is often cited as a major reason why individuals have moved and remained in the community. Tumbler Ridge's quality of life appeals to those

who are looking for a rural, outdoor lifestyle with opportunities that can provide a balance between work and play.

What does it mean for investment? Research has shown that more emphasis is placed on the importance of the quality of life factor to local economic development than ever before. High environmental quality, culturally desirable working and living conditions, and convenient local amenities are believed to be vital to foster economic growth and job creation by retaining local businesses and attracting inward investment. In the past, companies primarily focused on the cost of real estate, taxes, labour costs and incentives as the primary reason for locating in a specific area. It is widely recognized now though that quality of life is important if they want to attract employees to areas. We have a younger and active workforce that is looking for areas to live where you can combine recreation, important services, and affordable residential and available amenities.

Tumbler Ridge's Key Sectors



Tourism

The Tumbler Ridge region is an outdoor enthusiasts' paradise surrounded by significant wilderness areas, parks, campgrounds, trails, scenic vistas and outdoor activities that appeal to both residents and visitors. Examples of these include Kinuseo Falls, The Cascades, Bergeron Falls and Quality Falls. The region's tourism experiences are characterized by a range of summer and winter activities, primarily centred on outdoor recreation. Additional tourism opportunities include cultural and heritage activities, sports activities and year-round festivals and events. There is also a growing prominence for its paleontological discoveries and research which has seen an increased interest with the discovery of a fossilized tyrannosaur skull found near Tumbler Ridge earlier this year. The area has a unique tourism opportunity with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Geopark designation received in 2014.

With regards to tourism services, the region operates a year-round Visitor Centre. There are several accommodation properties and recreational vehicle camp sites. Tumbler Ridge has a number of meeting venues and provides other facilities and services including a recreation centre, retail shops and restaurants.

In 2014, Destination BC completed a Community Tourism Plan for Tumbler Ridge and, more recently, Northern BC Tourism worked with the Tumbler Ridge UNESCO Global Geopark Society (TRUGGS) to identify marketing and tourism experience opportunities.

TRUGGS has completed an updated Marketing Strategy and Plan (March 2017). The primary focus of the plan is to *“promote inbound travel to the TRUGG and the community of Tumbler Ridge, generate new visitation and increase length of stay, thus increasing economic impact”*.

Target Sub-sectors and Focus Areas – Adventure tourism and recreation is a fast-growing tourism sub-sector and Tumbler Ridge has many of the attributes necessary to expand the sector. Changing trends in travel and tourism, where clients request active, recreational experiences or travel adventures where they can learn about nature and/or culture, are driving the growth. Adventure tourism and recreation draws those who want to experience a place that is natural and unspoiled, and those who want active, unusual vacations. Because activities often mean clients need transport, hotel rooms and restaurants, other tourism sectors also benefit.

Natural Resources, Clean Energy and Support Services

Tumbler Ridge was built in 1981 by the provincial government at the same time that private enterprise was opening the first coal mines following the discovery of vast amounts of coal. Since that time the mining industry has experienced highs and lows taking Tumbler Ridge along for the ride. After the first decline the mining sector experienced a resurgence in 2004 that lasted until 2014. Over the years of boom and bust Tumbler Ridge has been able to keep a percentage of their residents in the community and have looked to diversify from the mining sector. The UNESCO Geopark has brought a new focus onto Tumbler Ridge as well as the Meilke Wind Power project – the biggest wind farm in BC – which was completed in early 2017.

Currently, the Tumbler Ridge mining industry is receiving some positive news with exports of metallurgical (“met”) coal increasing 1,341% in 2017’s first eight months compared with the same period in 2016: to 2,379,698 tonnes from 165,141. Since November 2016, per-tonne met coal prices have spiked three times, twice going above US\$300 and once going above US\$200. According to the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia, BC coal exports totalled \$3.6 million in 2017’s first half – a 163% increase over the same period in 2016.

How long the good times will last for steel and met coal producers depends on a host of global factors, and how much BC will benefit from improved prices and demand will depend on things like new mines being built in Australia. However, according to H&W Worldwide Consulting, a global consulting firm with specialization in resource industries, the steel and met coal sector is going to experience a resurgence for the next few years. Tumbler Ridge has seen some benefit already with the recent reopening of the idled Wolverine Mine by Conuma Coal Resources Ltd. By the end of the 2017, Conuma expects the Wolverine Mine will be at 220 employees. They are also looking for another 220 for Brule (located 1 ½ hours from Tumbler Ridge) and 200 for Willow Creek (located 2 hours from Tumbler Ridge). Conuma estimates they will put \$60 million in wages into the local economy and spend \$250 million in local suppliers and services.

Clean energy as a driver for community economic growth and employment is taking on more of an increased role in economic development and Tumbler Ridge has seen significant investment in the Wind Energy sector over the past several years. Regardless of the final decision on whether to proceed with

Site C, wind and other clean and renewable energy possibilities such as biofuels using excess wood fibre offer new opportunities for economic activity.

The forest industry has never really played a major role in the local economy except in the area of resource extraction. Most fibre that has been taken from the area is shipped to other centres for processing, primarily to Quesnel. In 2017, Tumbler Ridge Community Forest was awarded a harvest volume expansion from an annual allowable cut of 20,000m³/yr. to 37,500m³/yr. This expansion almost doubles the size of forest operations and its influence on the local forest as well as financial viability of the firm and subsequent annual perpetual revenue source for the community.

Applying 2017 log sales figures from the Community Forest, the expansion harvest volume alone represents an additional annual gross revenue of approximately \$32/m³ or \$560,000 year from Community Forest operations and consequently significant annual inflow of revenue for future town investments. The Community Forest allows for local decision making on how the fibre is used and as such could add new opportunities for value added initiatives. The board is currently discussing their own Investment Readiness parameters that will ensure that the benefits derived from the Community Forest provides the most economic impact possible to the local community.

Target Sub-sectors and Focus Areas – Although the mining industry is important to the economic growth of Tumbler Ridge there are other sectors that play an important role to support the industry. Many of these are immediately impacted by investment in the mining industry and the mining sector offers an opportunity to start-ups and expansions of businesses in Tumbler Ridge. There are economic opportunities at each phase of the mining development cycle: 1) exploration, 2) development and construction, 3) operation, and 4) closure and reclamation. However, small business might see the greatest need for their services and products in the operation phase. Support businesses for the mining industry range from specialist technology to housekeeping and food deliveries. The following are potential opportunities for new entrepreneurs or existing businesses to support the mining industry in Tumbler Ridge and surrounding communities:

- Direct services and supplies at the mine site, such as housekeeping, food deliveries, transportation, supplies management and logistic coordination
- Support services, such as catering, meeting interpretation, translation of documents, audio-visual services, clothing and equipment repair
- Locally produced corporate gifts, promotional items, artwork and graphic design
- Community consultations, environmental and climate monitoring, report writing and presentations
- Business travellers needing accommodations, meals, business support services, recreation and entertainment
- Tourism opportunities, such as cultural events, guided trips, hunting, fishing and vacation packages to other communities

With the Community Forest, Tumbler Ridge can make decisions that would allow this fibre to be used in the community for economic generation. This could include the development of a biofuel facility using local wood waste or perhaps a pellet facility. While the attraction of a sawmill would be preferred by many in the community it is not a realistic target for investment. The timber supply in British Columbia has begun a dramatic drop and it is possible that additional sawmill closures are on the horizon. Wood

processing facilities have closed in BC over the past number of years as the trend is towards consolidating lumber production.

Virtual Workers and Entrepreneurs

Tumbler Ridge is well positioned to attract virtual workers and to support entrepreneurs. The virtual worker began back in the early 1980s when the new connectivity allowed an individual who might otherwise have worked inside a company, or at a specialized vendor serving a company, to set up a one-person shop instead. It also enabled marginalized talent – stay-at-home parents, caregivers, retirees, and students – to enter the labour market. Services typically provided in this way included graphic design, report writing, translation and transcription. Wave two of the virtual worker changed to include a more collaborative working environment versus the stand-alone. Organizations were globalizing and asking their full-time employees to work unusual hours and to work on projects with international colleagues and customers. There began to be an understanding of a work approach that could support people who didn't necessarily have to be in an office together and the second wave extended the freedom to work anywhere, anytime, to corporate employees.

The third wave recognized that teamwork and the importance of casual conversations and office interactions sparking new ideas or transferring of knowledge was missing. The major focus of the third wave is to give workers the feeling of being in a shared environment – co-working spaces. These spaces are designed to connect and inspire people who generally work alone. The three most important aspects of such spaces are interaction with other people, flexible working hours, and an environment that encourages serendipitous discoveries.

Virtual workers, along with entrepreneurs, provide a unique opportunity for communities like Tumbler Ridge. In an ever-increasing competitive environment to attract new industries to locate to a community, it's important to look at what is realistic. Attracting new industry is a difficult, expensive and often frustrating process when in North America only 200 business relocations and new facilities happen per year and you're competing against over 45,000 economic development agencies for the same thing. Communities are finding that they have better success in diversifying a local economy by attracting and encouraging entrepreneurs and virtual workers than in trying to attract that big company.

Tumbler Ridge recognizes how the virtual worker and entrepreneurs can contribute to the local economy and the importance of entrepreneurship as an option for job creation, economic diversification and youth retention. Entrepreneurship is understood to be an important element for sustainable development and diversification of an economy. Tumbler Ridge offers a unique quality of life that is attractive to entrepreneurs who are interested in establishing a business that fits the specific opportunities, including tourism and mining.

Entrepreneurs provide significant value to a local economy, including the following.

- Entrepreneurs boost economic growth by introducing innovative technologies, products, and services.
- Increased competition from entrepreneurs challenges existing firms to become more competitive.
- Entrepreneurs provide new job opportunities in the short and long term.
- Entrepreneurial activity raises the productivity of firms and economies.

- Entrepreneurs fill those gaps that are often missing in a small local economy.

Entrepreneurship is important to economic development. The benefits to society will be greater in economies where entrepreneurs can operate flexibly, develop their ideas, and reap the rewards. Entrepreneurs are equally, if not more, important when the economy is doing badly. When unemployment is high, and the economy is contracting or stagnating, dynamic entrepreneurship could help turn the economy around.

Target Sub-sectors and Focus Areas – Many people think of entrepreneurs as being only those in the technology sector, but this is not the case. Entrepreneurs are in every sector of an economy, including mining and tourism and in every demographic. Young or old, entrepreneurship is something that almost everyone has thought about at one time in their life. The key is to provide the tools and resources that can help encourage, foster and support to allow those interested in taking that next step to making the dream a reality.

Programs like a Tumbler Ridge Entrepreneurship Centre where the community, the Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures, and Futurpreneur (Thrive North) are working with all types of entrepreneurs to help them grow are critical to creating that entrepreneurial environment. An Entrepreneurship Centre can be a centre that provides mentorship, networking, and training of business skills to allow entrepreneurs to move from the home, or from another community, and take their business to the next level. The centre can be a combination of office, retail space, pop-up shops, and even a coffee shop, all under one roof in the downtown core. Entrepreneurs can be the answer for the gaps in the Tumbler Ridge retail businesses and help to support new medical professionals in the community.

Virtual workers are another example of where the community could help diversify the local economy and at the same time attract new families to the community. Many virtual workers represent those major companies that you are wanting to attract. With more communication options available today employees no longer need to be in a big office in downtown Vancouver or any other major city. In reducing costs, employers are allowing employees to work remotely – in a location. They can be working in office space in a small community, or in the basement of their home.

During the project’s consultation process, Conuma Coal was asked what gaps it may be experiencing on available services in the community. The following lists the services and/or products the mine requires and could be filled by local entrepreneurs or virtual workers.

Welding / Fabrication	- General Fabrication with automated cutting capabilities for fabrication of replacement components such as rock ejectors.
	- Major capabilities; rebuild of all classes of excavator / shovel / loader buckets
	- Rebuild of truck boxes
Machining	- Full CNC capability, line boring, parts manufacture
Hydraulic services	- Cylinder rebuild and chroming
Electrical Services	- General electrical contracting
	- Instrumentation and Controls
General Cartage	- Local freight services / handling

Medium and Heavy vehicle maintenance	-	Repair of class B & C vehicles
OEM Support, local	-	Only 1 OEM is returning to Tumbler Ridge; a local presence would reduce lead times i.e.: CAT
Millwright services	-	Labour support and facilities for the rebuild of drive and conveyor components
Plumbing / Gas fitting / refrigeration	-	A ticketed contractor for the service of MAU's and climate control systems
Safety Services / supplies	-	Safety wear, boots, outerwear, respiration, fire extinguisher service and inspection

Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE)

Events and conferences contribute dollars to communities. Not only do travellers spend money on the event or conference itself, but 'spinoff dollars' are also spent on everything from accommodation to souvenirs. Travellers need to get to and from the event or conference site, so the transportation sector is also involved. They need to eat, so food and beverage outlets are visited. Conferences usually have social events or entertainment planned, so dollars are spent on tickets, admission, beverages and/or tips. Special events, such as festivals and sports events, may have formal or informal meetings that take place, so meeting space is rented, food and beverages are purchased, and/or local transportation is required. All of this means money is transferred from travellers to the local economy.

If Tumbler Ridge is to be successful in attracting meetings and conferences to the community, there will need to be an understanding of what attendees are looking for and a determination of whether Tumbler Ridge can offer everything. CWT Meetings & Events' 2018 future trends report that millennials will form 40 percent of the workforce by 2020 and they will be directing much of the future of meetings and events including:

- Meeting organizers and attendees take security seriously
- Wi-Fi is a minimum expectation of event attendees and must be secure
- Registration is going virtual with tablets
- Virtual reality is an accepted and viable option
- Social media and event apps that include polling to engage attendees in real time
- Room layout is moving from traditional to sofas or even standing meetings
- Attendees want unique venues and places

In addition, attendees are looking for refreshing breaks during a conference. Previously this meant a cup of tea but now attendees want something much more interactive. Tumbler Ridge is well positioned to offer a wide variety of breaks that are unique and offer the attendee a way to lighten the stress or tension they may have.

A current trend is also combining business and leisure together. Many conferences are looking more like holidays than work events. Again, Tumbler Ridge is well positioned to offer a unique get-away to attends to experience a real outdoor adventure while conferencing.

Target Sub-sectors and Focus Areas – Tumbler Ridge will have to be practical and focused on attracting the conferences that will realistically come to the community. The focus will be small conferences and

meetings that will allow the community to support local business but also promote the community for investment. For example, specialized events, such as the BC Sustainable Energy Association who hosts various events primarily in Vancouver could be approached to host an event in Tumbler Ridge.

Tumbler Ridge's Key Messaging

While Tumbler Ridge has some important advantages and assets, the messaging associated with the investment opportunities needs to be controlled and focused. The messaging needs to step away from how tourism is promoted and move towards a more specific investment message. The development of the Community Profile is a good example of moving away from tourism messaging. The profile includes specific investment data and information that illustrates the strengths and opportunities of the local economy, highlights local accomplishments as well as demonstrating how economic development can assist with investment into the community. Another publication is the Resident Attraction Brochure. Both publications provide some tourism-related information, but the focus is on long-term attraction versus a two-day visit.

Investment messaging for Tumbler Ridge should include:

- Affordable properties (residential and land for development)
- Natural resources and the opportunities for small business
- Niche conferencing (focused small conferences and meetings)
- Quality of life (outdoor recreation, Entrepreneurs and Virtual Workers)
- Global Geopark (multifaceted benefits of working with industry and a tourism engine)

These investment messages should be conveyed through economic development and investment marketing activities, reflecting the advantages of Tumbler Ridge and should include a multi-segment approach based on several core activity areas including:

- Tumbler Ridge brand integration
- Sector-specific marketing (i.e. mining, tourism, etc.)
- Area-specific marketing

Tumbler Ridge can take advantage of its position within the Peace Region and include the wider-region attributes including access to highly skilled labour, strong transportation links, excellent quality of life and access to post-secondary institutions. While highlighting the wider-region strengths it will be important to also differentiate Tumbler Ridge from the rest of the region to tell the story as to why investment should land in Tumbler Ridge versus other communities.

Business and Community Engagement

Engagement with the existing business community is an often-overlooked area of opportunity with regards to economic development investment marketing. Much of the traditional marketing efforts have been focused on the external market and attracting investment, with little focus on the investment that

could come from the existing business community. In an economic development and investment marketing context, it is important to consider all local businesses as potential ambassadors for Tumbler Ridge. Some local business owners have potentially large business and personal networks, and thus potentially large audiences should they have the desire to market the District. That is why business engagement and outreach is a key component to economic development and investment marketing. A community must make sure that it responds quickly to the needs of the local business community, and that the local business community has a generally positive view of doing business in the community. If there is a message to be shared by these individuals, it will likely be influenced primarily by their continued experience with the local community government and administration.

But this informal creation of ambassadors stretches beyond just the business community. Residents of a community have a major part to play in the development and spread of community image, which can have profound effects on the community's economic development potential. The good news for Tumbler Ridge is 84% of residents have a positive image of the community, and 72% believe non-residents have a positive image of Tumbler Ridge.

Messaging to the business community can be easily accomplished through a variety of channels including:

- Ongoing, formalized Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Semi-regular publication with a high-level report on business activity in the community
- Facilitated business networking opportunities (i.e. workshops, focus groups or business forums)

These efforts promote a positive engagement with the local business community, and represent opportunities to shape the opinions of local business people. Reaching the residents of the local community can be slightly more difficult, as economic development personnel do not characteristically connect with the general population. The primary messages should be focused on the community's strengths, such as excellent quality of life, tourism amenities, and small business opportunities. Since the audience is wider and more diverse than the business community, the messages should be clear, logical and concise to reach everyone. Over the focus of wider community outreach should be information transfer, but also inspirational testimonials and local success stories.

A wider variety of channels is also available with regards to community messaging, including:

- Local media and advertising
- Information kiosks/booths at community events
- Print publications and information packages
- Social media groups or events
- Community presentation opportunities (i.e. Council, Chamber of Commerce)

Business and community outreach is an important part of economic development investment marketing. Both parties have a major part to play in the formation of the community's image, and both could potentially have an impact on both internal and external investments in the community. Therefore, paired with all externally-focused marketing efforts, there should be an internally-focused component as well.

Recommendations – Positioning Tumbler Ridge for Success

As a cumulative result of the previous research, analysis and stakeholder consultation, seven key focus areas and a total of 43 strategies emerged to form the Tumbler Ridge Investment Readiness and Economic Development Plan. The seven key focus areas are:

- Economic Development and Investment Capacity
- Tumbler Ridge is Open for Business
- Tumbler Ridge has a Diverse Economy
- Tumbler Ridge has a Dynamic Downtown Core
- Tumbler Ridge is an Attractive Place to Life
- Tumbler Ridge has a Workforce for the Future
- Tumbler Ridge has an Infrastructure to Accommodate Growth

These strategic themes were heard throughout the public consultation process and are supported by the community. The top three economic development goals as identified in the community survey are:

- Existing companies staying (and expanding)
- Attraction of new residents
- Revitalization of older commercial areas

Both tourism and retail were rated by survey respondents as priorities with 50.62% and 41.98%, respectively.

The following recommended strategies are dependent on a number of factors including:

- Enhance economic development and investment capacity
- Approval of funding from various programs, specifically the Rural Dividend Fund
- Adoption of an aggressive economic development and investment approach by Council
- Increased communication both internally and externally
- Broadband Network Improvements
- Infrastructure renewal and assessment management

This plan was written to ensure strategies can be implemented by assigning specific funding options, timelines and potential partnerships. It was also written as a guide to what strategies are priorities and what strategies have a longer-term focus. In addition to the strategies recommended in this plan there are day to day economic development activities that must be taken into consideration. Considerable time can be devoted to the following core activities that take place on an ongoing and/or daily basis. Some of these activities are built into the strategy while others involve additional time and resources:

- Respond to business and public inquiries daily (phone, email and walk-in)
- Clearing house for information
- Data updates (community profiles, website, customized requests)
- Regional initiatives
- Work with companies or individuals seeking to locate in the community

- Work with groups of companies within specific industry sectors to ensure new markets developed
- Communications – community, business, government, organization

Funding

There are many recommended strategies that may be eligible for funding through the Province of BC's Rural Dividend Program. There is currently a fourth-round application process underway with an application deadline of December 15, 2017. Once this plan has been presented and accepted by District Council a Rural Dividend application should be completed utilizing the "Community and Economic Development" project category. The program will accept strategies that will be completed over a two-year period.

An additional source of revenue, besides the BC Rural Dividend Fund, and traditional municipal resources is the Tumbler Ridge Community Forest. With \$1.8 Million in retained earnings, the Community Forest could be an important asset towards funding specific initiatives that enhance the economic stability of the community.

Strategy Implementation Timelines

The following table places each strategy by year of implementation. In addition, the table identifies the strategies that will be ongoing after initial implementation. For example, Strategy 1.5 will begin implementation in year one but work will continue on in years two and three (ongoing).

Strategies	Year			
	1	2	3	Ongoing
1.0 Economic Development and Investment Capacity				
1.1 Review and Enhance Economic Development Assistant Position				
1.2 Complete a BC Rural Dividend Application				
1.3 Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP)				
1.4 Create Regular Communications				
1.5 Have the Right Marketing Materials				
1.6 Enhanced Online Presence				
1.7 Promote Tumbler Ridge Through Townfolio				
2.0 Tumbler Ridge is Open for Business				
2.1 Review Policies and Procedures through an Economic Development "Lens"				
2.2 Identify and Promote "Places to Grow"				
2.3 Create an Investment Response Team				
2.4 Identify and Address Business Needs				
2.5 Hold an Annual Business Expo and Tradeshow				
2.6 Create Best of Class Investment Readiness				
2.7 Modernize Revitalization Tax Incentive Program				
3.0 Tumbler Ridge has a Diverse Economy				
3.1 Attract Virtual Workers				
3.2 Identify and Address Gaps in the Local Mining Sector Supply Chain				
3.3 Partners with TRUGGS on Specific Marketing Plan Strategies				
3.4 Develop Tumbler Ridge as a Conference Destination				
3.5 Encourage a Partnership to Establish an Urban Reserve				
3.6 Pursue Value Added Clean Energy Projects				
3.7 Pursue a Partnership with Futurpreneur to Encourage Entrepreneurship				
4.0 Tumbler Ridge has a Dynamic Downtown Core				
4.1 Establish the "Tumbler Ridge Co-Working/Entrepreneurship Centre"				
4.2 Establish a Retail Incubator/Pop up Shop Program				
4.3 Create a Vibrant and Lively Downtown				
4.4 Façade Improvement Program				
4.5 Strengthen the Chamber of Commerce				
5.0 Tumbler Ridge is an Attractive Place to Live				
5.1 Create a Tumbler Ridge Attraction Campaign				
5.2 Track Youth Leaving Town				
5.3 Establish a Resident Response Team				
5.4 Assist with Medical and Healthcare Recruitment				
5.5 Welcome Home Program				

6.0 Tumbler Ridge has a Workforce for the Future				
6.1 Proud to Live in Tumbler Ridge				
6.2 Work Here Website				
7.0 Tumbler Ridge has an Infrastructure to Accommodate Growth				
7.1 Plan and Approve Future Residential Land Development Areas and Infrastructure Expansion				
7.2 Maximize Federal and Provincial Infrastructure and Housing Grant Applications				
7.3 Invest in Broadband Internet Connectivity				
7.4 Advance Rail, Airport, Golf Course, Cemetery, RV Parks and Landfill Master Plans				
7.5 Apply for Asset Management Funding via MAMP Grant				
7.7 Consider a Development Cost Charge Bylaw				
7.7 Establish 10-year Capital Plans				
7.8 Utilize Utility Reserves for Maximum Benefit				
7.9 Plan and Approve Industrial Park Expansion				
7.10 Expedite Sand and Gravel Pit Explorations				

1.0 Economic Development and Investment Capacity

Nearly every community sells a “great quality of life”. Some believe that all a community needs to do is focus on being a great place (community development) and the economic part will simply take care of itself. On the contrary, for a community to be economically viable, it must make a concerted effort to work on both community development and economic development. They are interdependent and reinforce each other. In addition, it is important to recognize that economic development must be supported by having capacity to seek strategic investment opportunities.

Tumbler Ridge needs to establish an overall framework and capacity to develop and pursue appropriate investments and projects in a strategic manner.

1.1 Review and Enhance Economic Development Assistant Position

Tumbler Ridge’s Economic Development Department has a full-time Director of Economic Development and Tourism and one full-time Economic Development Assistant. During the project the assistant position became vacant but was filled effective January 8, 2018. With the strategies identified in this plan along with the direction the community wants to move towards, it is recommended the Economic Development Assistant’s duties and responsibilities be reviewed. In order to implement a number of the recommended strategies and to increase investment readiness the Economic Development Assistant job description should be adjusted to include the following capabilities:

- Identify, plan and implement strategic initiatives that will effectively position the District of Tumbler Ridge as a key and desired location for business and new investment
- Establish and maintain an up-to-date, comprehensive inventory of all real estate options, vacant lands, buildings and related opportunities
- Provide current information to new prospective businesses seeking materials and data about the District of Tumbler Ridge while confidentially and expeditiously responding to site selection requests in a thorough and complete manner
- Manage and maintain an up-to-date information database, including confidential, demographic and market research materials, in both electronic and hardcopy format
- Assist with implementing economic development marketing programs in alignment with overall marketing and branding direction
- Assist with managing the District’s economic development promotional materials including multimedia tools, print and electronic advertising campaigns, publications, promotional items, information packages, and other resources materials designed to meet the District marketing initiatives
- Develop, maintain and support content and creative development for social media channels

1.2 Complete a BC Rural Dividend Application

The BC Rural Dividend is providing \$25 million a year over four years to assist rural communities with a population of 25,000 or less to reinvigorate and diversify their local economies. Currently the program is under review, however, it is expected the program will continue over the next two years. The completion of this plan was funded by the Rural Dividend Program and there are many strategies within this plan that are eligible for implementation funding. These strategies include:

- 1.4 Communications – Newsletter, Social Media Program, Investment Database
- 1.5 Marketing Materials – Investment Kit, Conference Destination
- 1.6 Enhanced Online Presence
- 2.5 Annual Business Expo and Tradeshow
- 3.3 Tourism tradeshow
- 3.6 Feasibility of Clean Energy Projects
- 3.1 Attract Virtual Workers
- 4.1 Establish the “Tumbler Ridge Co-working/Entrepreneurship Centre”
- 5.1 Tumbler Ridge Attraction Campaign
- 6.1 Proud to Live in Tumbler Ridge
- 7.3 Broadband Internet

1.3 Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP)

An economic development advisory panel is different than a committee and a more informal process. It does not require “official” appointments and the members are there to exchange information on what is happening within their organization and to hear from the District of what is occurring from an economic development perspective. A panel like this is easier to manage and leaves no expectations that participants are expected to carry out specific tasks. It is a good way to exchange information with a broad range of industry and business stakeholders. Typically, these meetings are held quarterly and chaired by the Mayor, and attended by the CAO, the EDO, and could include other District representatives as well as industry stakeholders. We would recommend the panel include representatives from the following:

- Council
- Community Forest
- Community Futures
- Chamber of Commerce
- Geopark
- Conuma Coal
- Teck Resources
- Real estate and land development
- Other business/industry

The panel could help in several areas of the implementation of this plan including being part of the Investment Response Team to greet and talk to new potential investors. Engaging key industry stakeholders is a critical component of any investment attraction effort. It is also important to know the concerns of those that have already invested so that they can be addressed before new investors come to the community.

1.4 Create Regular Communications

The implementation of this plan, and the key changes that will take place for economic development in Tumbler Ridge, must be communicated out to the business community, residents and stakeholders to ensure everyone is aware of what is happening, the successes and accomplishments. In addition to internal communication, Tumbler Ridge will need to ensure external communication is enhanced. There are several methods that need to be implemented.

Internal Communication:

- *Quarterly written report to Council* – providing high-level information on what has happened within the department including number and broad description of inquiries, activities implemented from plan including successes and any risks associated, number and broad description of meetings, etc. The report is to be only a short overview and should not include details or confidential information of any kind.
- *Annual presentation to Council* – the presentation should include a high-level overview of the previous year's work with a focus on completions and successes. The presentation should include a summary of proposed work plan for the coming year.
- *Newsletter* – There is no longer a local newspaper and residents and businesses are lacking information on the community. There is an opportunity for the District to fill this role while ensuring that economic development is promoted, and successes are communicated. Many communities have smaller newsletters that get distributed throughout the community, an example is Coffee Talk that many communities distribute. Alternatively, the economic development department can develop an electronic newsletter that is distributed. The newsletter can report on council meeting outcomes and next meetings, business opportunities, public notices, etc. There is an opportunity to partner or contract with the Chamber of Commerce (*Strategy 4.5*) to put out the monthly newsletter. As well, the newsletter could include a specific section on returning youth and attracting new residents (*Strategies 5.1, 5.2*).



- *Social Media* – there is an opportunity for the District to enhance and expand the social media platform to communicate with residents and local businesses. The review of the Economic Development Assistant position (*Strategy 1.1*) should ensure there is the skill set to create a strong social media campaign with ongoing content and ways to grow the District's social media presence including for local businesses, new investment, attraction of workers and new residents.

External Communication

- *Investment database* – Economic development needs to focus on building its investment database including potential investors, levels of government, supply chain, developers, real estate, etc. This database will be utilized to distribute specific investment news, successes and opportunities.

- *Newsletter* – this will be an investment-focused newsletter that can be distributed electronically to those in the investment database. The newsletter should be short and designed in keeping with the current brand but needs to be eye catching. The newsletter should be quarterly and focus on the opportunities and successes. A typical newsletter could feature a specific property, provide a business success/testimonial, specific investment programs (local or provincial), highlight an advantage and include a “fun fact” on Tumbler Ridge.
- *Provincial Partnerships* – Having relationships with Provincial agencies involved in attracting and support business in BC is critical. Whether it is the Ministry of Jobs, Technology and Trade (MJTT), Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) or any other Ministry that is working with businesses to identify locations, it is important that the community build relationships with key staff and educate them on the opportunities available in Tumbler Ridge. It is equally important to meet and educate agencies like Advantage BC and HQ Vancouver who are all playing a role in encouraging investment to communities throughout BC. It is suggested Tumbler Ridge consider attending the following events to enhance communication and promote the community:
 - *BCEDA’s Minister Dinner – March 2018 (Vancouver)*
 - *BC Economic Development Summit – June 2018 (Kelowna)*
 - *One-on-one meetings with MJTT/PNP staff in Vancouver*

1.5 Have the Right Marketing Materials

With expanding and maintaining some of the tools in place already, Tumbler Ridge can gain an additional marketing advantage by providing and maintaining clear and concise regional information packages. Timelines for investors to search out specific information is often tight and uncertainty or delays in clarifying any factors may lead to the choice of another location. Key information on labour, transportation, zoning, municipal fees, and utilities must be readily available and scaled to a specific opportunity in a format and through tools that are easily obtainable. Any printing of materials should be done in house and printed at the time an investor may be visiting. All of the tools should be available online (*Strategy 1.6*). Some of the tools that could be developed, include:

- Investment kit folder/package
 - Quick facts – one sheet that quickly outlines the “top 10” information investors are looking for
 - Property sheets (*Strategy 2.2*)
 - Community profile
 - Business support or what economic development will do – this is a one sheet on the services and “hand holding” that economic development offers
 - Incentives sheet – for Tumbler Ridge this should include the Revitalization Tax Program, low taxation and no development cost charges

1.6 Enhanced Online Presence

In an increasingly digital world, the internet has become an important platform for investors and potential residents to obtain services and information. To adequately serve the audience, communities must ensure their websites provide the information necessary to keep the visitor engaged and informed.

A well-constructed website has other benefits. In addition to providing the right information, websites can free up District staff time by answering frequently asked questions and processing common requests and forms. It can effectively and inexpensively communicate about doing business in the community and opportunities. It can serve as a central information source for investors and potential residents on a broad range of topics such as starting a business, moving to the community and what support services exist.

Businesses planning to begin or expand operations in a community will often look to the municipal website for important information such as licensing and permitting, availability of utilities, and land uses in different zones. Communities that provide this information online demonstrate their support of economic development and increase their investment readiness.

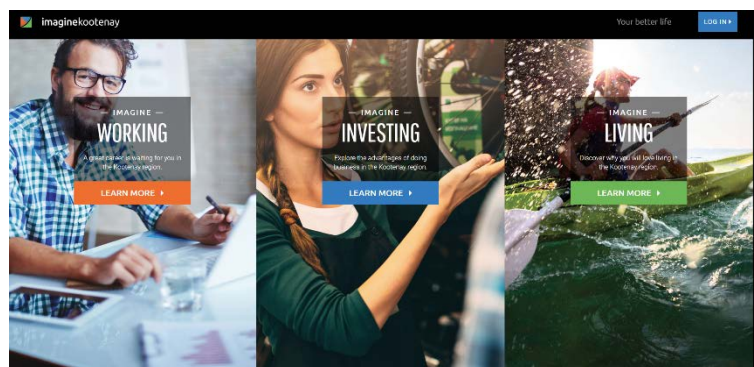
As part of this project, EDCD Consulting completed an assessment of the current economic development website, which is part of the overall community website. While the District has done an excellent job of improving the resources available, along with the look and feel of the website, the assessment determined that additional work needed to be done to truly provide the experience that investors/business expect. The total score for the District in the assessment was 89/166.

The following are the recommendations made to improve the site and overall experience.

1. Finding investor, site selection or economic development information for Tumbler Ridge is not as easy as it could be. A key factor is the lack of a dedicated domain name. Tumbler Ridge would benefit from a more keyword-focused domain such as choosetumbleridge.com or investtumbleridge.com. Both are available for purchase. The unique URL does not need to be a separate website from the District but can simply be directed seamlessly to the appropriate page(s) within the District website. The reason this domain is recommended is that it allows Tumbler Ridge to use the website for a number of options including:

- Investment
- Resident Attraction
- Workforce

It is further suggested the website have a landing page that allows visits to choose from the three options. An example of this is ImagineKootenay.com (picture on right).

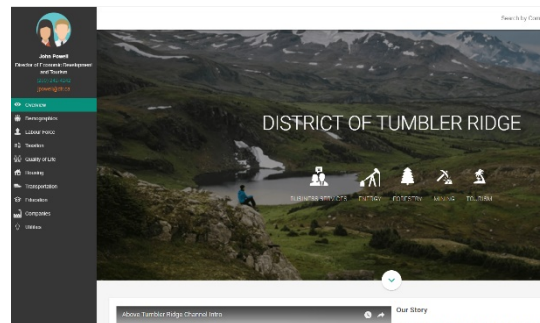


2. Create a “request for information” link on each page that takes visitors to a page where an information form can be submitted that goes directly to the department.

3. Contact name should be placed on every page so that visitors do not need to search the site to see who they should be talking to for more information.
4. Placement of various pieces of information should be moved to a more prominent location. For example, the relocation guide should be moved to the same page as the Community Profile. This however would instead be placed if a new front page was developed that directed visitors to areas of interest (see Recommendation 1).
5. A return button needs to be placed on each page to redirect visitors back to the main page.
6. A map needs to be developed showing Tumbler Ridge in relation to major centres (Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Calgary, Prince George, Vancouver, Seattle).
7. Once completed the updated Community Profile needs to be added to the site.
8. Testimonials should be developed from various businesses, residents and industry. These can be done in writing and by video. Powell River has used videos very effectively (*Strategy 5.1*).
9. Search Option needs to be added to every page not just the main page.

1.7 Promote Tumbler Ridge Through Townfolio

Townfolio just a few years ago was start-up company trying to create a website presence for economic development offices. Today Townfolio has 100's of communities from across Canada and is viewed from investors from around the world looking to find that next location. Currently Tumbler Ridge is listed on the Townfolio site but by purchasing a license you can access all that Townfolio offers. Townfolio has created software to automate a community profile and the information can also be used to update the Tumbler Ridge PDF profile. Municipal governments and economic developers use Townfolio to aggregate, automate, and visualize their public data. Townfolio is becoming a hub to promote and discover data and business opportunities from 100 countries and counting.



By joining Townfolio you get access to even more data than what is currently available on the free version. The following are some of the benefits of investing in Townfolio:

- Access to 30+ Datasets
- Automatic Data Updates every 30 days (as information comes available)
- Website Chart Embedding (to the Tumbler Ridge website)
- Profile Analytics (see how many times your profile is viewed by visitor location and sectors)

Townfolio is quickly becoming a site used by economic developers to increase awareness of their community and providing up to date information to those interested. EDCD has obtained a quote that it will provide to Tumbler Ridge. The budget numbers have been included in this report.

2.0 Tumbler Ridge is Open for Business

Open for business means providing a welcoming environment to all kinds of businesses — including small and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) — from downtown to your business parks, and including new mining and other resource extraction industries. “Open for business” should not just be a saying, but instead the actual culture in which the community operates. Tumbler Ridge can implement an Open for Business Program that embodies this meaning as the community builds a future of significant opportunity. While it may seem ambitious, the community must take this step to put itself on the map as a destination for investment.

2.1 Review Policies and Procedures through an Economic Development “Lens”

Tumbler Ridge has made great strides in its efforts to be seen as a location for investment. This process, just like Business Retention and Expansion (*Strategy 2.4*), should be an ongoing effort to ensure that you are ready when someone is looking to do business in the community. Developing tools, such as “process maps”, reviewing and updating small business regulations, developing approved business development regulatory interpretations, and completing regular comparisons of taxes and other imposed municipal fees should be done on a regular basis. This combined with ongoing improvements and updating of OCP’s and zoning will ensure that the community is ready and clearly demonstrate the commitment to business success by those looking at Tumbler Ridge. In addition, the EDO should be notified when a new business license is purchased in the community so that they can contact the business owner to welcome them and to offer any assistance that they may need.

2.2 Identify and Promote “Places to Grow”

Tumbler Ridge is steps ahead of many other communities in that it has an established available land inventory online. However, this inventory only highlights municipal owned land. The community should partner with local and regional real estate agencies to include all commercial and industrial real estate (land and buildings). In many cases, the District of Tumbler Ridge economic development website will be the location that site selectors and other investors will look to see what real estate options are available. In addition, by partnering with real estate agencies, you are demonstrating your commitment to working with the private sector on promoting the community for investment. Partnerships between the local government and real estate professionals to streamline the site location process and prepare the appropriate response will make it easier when working with those looking to invest. The “Places to Grow” tagline could be used to lead people to the real estate section on the site and shows a focus on what you are trying to achieve.

In addition to including all properties on the website, specific properties should have a property “sell sheet” developed. The sell sheet would highlight the property, its specific location and details (zoning, services, size, etc.). The sheet should include current opportunities, quick facts on the community and highlight Tumbler Ridge advantages. These sheets should be available online and for print to take to various tradeshows and other promotional events (*Strategy 3.3*).

Tumbler Ridge is actively marketing its own properties for commercial and industrial investment. It is important to make sure the District is getting the leads that come in to the community from other sources than those that call the District office. Real estate agencies throughout the North need to know what is available in Tumbler Ridge and also that they can receive a commission if they direct a client to the community. While it is not necessary to sign with a real estate agency it is important to establish a flat rate for commission that can be paid if a deal happens because of a referral from a realtor. This should be set and then marketed to agencies in Grande Prairie, Fort St John, Dawson Creek and Prince George. The goals of Tumbler Ridge should also be taken on the road by presenting to organizations like the Urban Development Institute. Presentations can be made in Vancouver, Edmonton, and Calgary to talk about the future of Tumbler Ridge and the opportunities that exist for real estate and development.

2.3 Create an Investment Response Team

Establish an “Investment Response” team comprised of the EDO, CAO, and other senior staff, to provide timely consistent responses for new investment inquiries and applications. In addition, establish a network of local and regional professional services (legal, planning, engineers, accounting, contractors, builders, etc.) who can work with investors when both looking at the community for investment and to use once the investment is confirmed. Investors depend on quick response times when seeking information on a community. In addition, when they visit the community they want to see people working together and providing consistent and accurate information. By having a response team, the community can better coordinate responses and provide first class assistance to those interested in investing in Tumbler Ridge.

2.4 Identify and Address Business Needs

Business Retention and Expansion is the cornerstone of any economic development function. It is also an essential part of any Business Attraction program as investors look for a community that supports and encourages existing businesses, since if they make an investment they will be one.

Community Futures of Peace Liard has done extensive interviews over the past several years to determine business needs, opportunities and challenges. This baseline of information is available for the community through the BC BusinessCounts program, with the permission of Community Futures. In addition the community could use this tool to continue with a broad based BRE program. A regular visitation schedule of local businesses with a goal of conducting at least three business interviews per month should be maintained. This will provide a useful source of information on the current needs of business but also a good source to identify new business leads and information for investment attraction. Local partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce can be used to assist with components of this program but ideally all major business interviews will be managed by the EDO. It’s also vital that the outreach process be extremely well coordinated, and for DTR to take a lead on all activities including ownership of confidential proprietary data (in partnership with Community Futures).

The Chamber of Commerce assume the responsibility of coordinating a biennial BusinessWalks. Business Walks is not like a traditional Business Retention Program. Business Walks involves a partnership between the Chambers, Mayor and Council, District Staff, Community Futures and others. “Walkers” (teams of

leaders made up from the partners) walk from business to business asking a few conversationally structured questions that capture the pulse of the business community. Over a few short hours large portions of the community are covered ensuring that every business is given an opportunity to be heard. Home based businesses could be covered by a drop in BusinessWalks at the Chamber of Commerce office where HBB operators would go to the Chamber office to provide the information typically collected in a BusinessWalks. The Business Walk program offers an excellent opportunity to listen to the local business community, identifying common themes for action while bringing together educational resources, municipal services and representatives of the business community for specific action plans. The Business Walks program allows visitation to numerous businesses in a short amount of time to gather industry intelligence to foster business growth.

During the consultation process, including the survey, several workshops were identified that businesses would appreciate having. These workshops could be an expansion of the popular lunch and learn hosted by Community Futures. The following are the top workshops identified:

- Marketing your Business
- Social Media for Business
- Accounting and Finance
- E-Commerce
- Funding or Grant Programs
- Information Technology

2.5 Hold an Annual Business Expo and Tradeshow

Increasing awareness of the products and services in Tumbler Ridge could help in reducing consumer leakage and at the same time help businesses find new customers, partnerships and employees. The creation of a Tumbler Ridge Business Expo can bring together businesses in the community to one venue. All businesses would be invited to participate for a small fee, including home based, retail, professional, non-profit, etc.

To add extra value, the night before the expo, or the morning of, could be used as an opportunity to encourage business-to-business communications, a “get to know each other” and would be an opportunity for all local leaders to network with businesses in the community. The expo would be an excellent partnership with the Chamber to assist them to promote their services and enhance their business community presence (*Strategy 4.5*).

2.6 Create Best of Class Investment Readiness

As part of the Investment Readiness and Economic Development Plan process an Investment Readiness Assessment was completed for Tumbler Ridge. Though Tumbler Ridge has some good foundational pieces in place the assessment showed the community is not yet ready for investment. There are a number of factors that contributed to this assessment including an underdeveloped economic development marketing toolkit and no specific investment procedures in place.

The importance of a community being investment ready cannot be underestimated. Investors want to talk to communities who are knowledgeable, accessible and have current information available at their fingertips. Investment readiness means making the most of your community's resources – its land, people, unique characteristics and planning system. Through the assessment and this strategy, a number of those factors are addressed.

Though all recommendations in the Investment Readiness report should be implemented the following are the priorities:

- Enhance communication with investors (*Strategy 1.4*)
- Completion of the Community Profile and ensure it's available as a download on website (*Strategy 1.5*)
- Develop specific property sell sheets (*Strategy 2.2*)
- Develop promotional materials on specific investment/business opportunities (*Strategy 1.5*)
- Enhancement of investment-focused content on website (*Strategy 1.6*)
- Improve development process (*Strategy 2.1*)
- Reactivate business retention and expansion program (*Strategy 2.4*)

2.7 Modernize Revitalization Tax Incentive Program

Section 226 of the Community Charter provides authority to exempt property from municipal property value taxes. Tumbler Ridge has an existing bylaw (Bylaw No. 570, 2010 and amended No. 629, 2016) that currently ends in 2020. This bylaw has been designed to increase the extent to which persons construct and maintain improvements in the commercial zones and industrial zones.

According to the Community Charter, a revitalization program may apply to a small area or areas, a certain type of property or properties, a particular activity or circumstance related to a property or properties, or an entire municipality. The District of Logan Lake took the proactive step to encouraging revitalization of older residential areas as well as commercial and industrial areas by designating the entire community as a revitalization zone.

Tumbler Ridge, while a newer community, has several residential areas and buildings that could be reinvigorated. By designating the entire community, Tumbler Ridge could encourage property owners, many of who have lived in the community for years but have experienced the boom and bust of the local economy, to renovate existing residences without the immediate fear of dramatic tax increases due to higher assessed values.

One of the other weaknesses of many of the revitalization zones in British Columbia communities is the lack of awareness that they exist. Many communities have established these bylaws but do not inform property owners that this incentive is available. The Tumbler Ridge website does mention the program but does not have a brochure explaining that it is available or how it works. A new marketing program should be developed once the bylaw has been amended to include the entire community explaining the program and how it works for commercial, industrial and residential revitalization.

3.0 Tumbler Ridge has a Diverse Economy

When a community has a variety of industries, products that they produce, and skill sets their employees possess, that community is better able to absorb the shock of market trends. An economy cannot and will not grow if it counts on a single form of industry, revenue or skill set.

Tumbler Ridge has experienced the negative impacts that a declining or failing industry can have on a community. Tumbler Ridge recognizes it needs to ensure there is a diverse economy that will be better able to weather through the economic downturns that certain industries have. The community is well positioned to encourage diversity through collaboration with local and regional businesses and organizations, assist the start-up of new businesses and work towards attracting investment from other industries.

3.1 Attract Virtual Workers

With new forms of communications and doing business we live in a different environment today than we did twenty years ago. Today in many industries you no longer need to be in the bricks and mortar of a corporate head office. Several examples of that exist today even in Tumbler Ridge where a company like Teck employs residents that are not in an office in a larger centre or in one located in the community. These types of employees are known as “Virtual Workers.”

Virtual workers are employees that do not commute to a central place of work daily. They work from any location and at any time thanks to modern communication tools. As a result, they generally benefit from more autonomy and a flexible schedule. In some cases, virtual workers will look for local co-working facilities to broaden their network and to find a quiet but interactive location to work.

It's also a very diverse sector. Virtual workers range from lawyers, graphic designers, HR support, and financial advisors to virtual assistants, researchers, marketers and sales roles. The diversity in this sector alone can change the economic make up of any community. In short, virtual work is expanding, increasingly popular, and it is a realistic opportunity for business attraction. With low residential taxes and low cost of real estate, combined with two major airports within a short drive, virtual workers are a realistic target for Tumbler Ridge to pursue. Typically attracting these types of people to the community would form part of a resident attraction program and by using testimonials (print/web/video) which also are included in this strategy. The attraction of virtual workers can also be part of attendance at various trade shows (*Strategy 3.1*).

3.2 Identify and Address Gaps in the Local Mining Sector Supply Chain

Tumbler Ridge has little direct impact on the mining sector. It is a difficult sector to influence at the local level because outside factors tend to drive decisions on exploration and development. Commodity prices dictate the feasibility of a mine and not local government. Another significant factor is the provincial investment climate in the mining industry, which at present is fairly positive but could change as new regulations are enacted that could either positively or negatively impact the sector.

Local actions will not necessarily affect the increase or decrease in the mining sector. However, the development of new projects should be closely monitored, and action taken to ensure that local employees and trades are considered. In addition, new businesses could be attracted that can address

the shortage of local services available to the mining industry. Hosting a Virtual Job and Service Fairs online would help to address the shortage of labour while an inventory of the business services currently contracted for outside of the community would help identify potential targets for investment. Attending the Mining Industry Trade Shows armed with a list of needs in the community would help increase awareness of the opportunity that exists in Tumbler Ridge.

The Conuma Coal mine currently has 560 employees and are continuing to grow. They are experiencing difficulties in getting labour and local services and this may be an area where the community could assist. Conuma Coal has identified the following services and/or products the mine requires:

Welding / Fabrication	- General Fabrication with automated cutting capabilities for fabrication of replacement components such as rock ejectors. - Major capabilities; rebuild of all classes of excavator / shovel / loader buckets - Rebuild of truck boxes
Machining	- Full CNC capability, line boring, parts manufacture
Hydraulic services	- Cylinder rebuild and chroming
Electrical Services	- General electrical contracting - Instrumentation and Controls
General Cartage	- Local freight services / handling
Medium and Heavy vehicle maintenance	- Repair of class B & C vehicles
OEM Support, local	- Only 1 OEM is returning to Tumbler Ridge; a local presence would reduce lead times i.e.: CAT
Millwright services	- Labour support and facilities for the rebuild of drive and conveyor components
Plumbing / Gas fitting / refrigeration	- A ticketed Contractor for the service of MAU's and climate control systems
Safety Services / supplies	- Safety wear, boots, outerwear, respiration, fire extinguisher service and inspection

3.3 Partner with TRUGGS on Specific Marketing Plan Strategies

Tourism is a key sector for Tumbler Ridge and there are opportunities to enhance and grow the industry. There is an opportunity for outdoor recreation and the Global Geopark provides an excellent partner to work with. In March 2017, the Global Geopark updated its marketing plan and there are several strategies that the District can partner on. These strategies, while tourism in nature, also provide the District with an opportunity to include an investment message.

- *In region consumer shows* – the District should continue to attend the Fort St. John Trade Show and Prince George Home Show to promote Tumbler Ridge as a place for investment, tourism business opportunities and new residents. The new marketing materials (Strategy 1.5) should be brought along.
- *In region events* – the District should distribute their investment focused and resident attraction promotional materials at the identified in region events

- *Stakeholder consumer shows NE consortium* – the marketing plan identifies two shows, Early Bird RV Show and the Abbotsford Boat & Sportsman Show. The District should consider attending in partnership with the Global Geopark to promote the investment and new resident opportunities
- *Stakeholder Consumer Shows (Projected)* – the marketing plan identifies the Vancouver Outdoor Adventure Show. The District should consider attending a variety of tradeshows in partnership with the Global Geopark to promote the investment and new resident opportunities

Attendance at the above events provides cross-over on many of the strategies identified in this plan including communications (*Strategy 1.4*) by building the investment database; virtual workers (*Strategy 3.1*) by promoting Tumbler Ridge as an potential location; mining (*Strategy 3.2*) by promoting job opportunities and supply chain; resident attraction (*Strategy 5.1*) by promoting Tumbler Ridge as a place to live. Attendance at trade shows should not be considered one offs but should be a consistent presence is necessary to in order to show commitment and to highlight the opportunities the community offers.

3.4 Develop Tumbler Ridge as a Conference Destination

The attraction of conferences is a difficult venture and one that will only succeed if goals are practical and focused on attracting the conferences that will realistically come to Tumbler Ridge. With limited room availability, and distance from transportation hubs, the ability for Tumbler Ridge to attract conferences will only succeed if the community pulls together to help coordinate and make the experience memorable for participants and meets the needs of the organizers.

During strategy development, a visit was made to Tumbler Ridge by a conference meeting specialist. The information collected during the time spent in the community, some activities to move Tumbler Ridge into a strong position as a conference destination became clear. The following two activities are something that Tumbler Ridge can bring to implement quickly:

- **Website** - currently there is no information on meetings or events for Tumbler Ridge. There is an accommodation page where you can find the Trend Hotel website, but it contains limited information. Tumbler Ridge can expand their existing website to include a “Meet in Tumbler Ridge” page(s). The page should have a separate URL that can be marketed and directs the visit immediately to the information (MeetinTumblerRidge.com or MeetinTumblerRidge.ca are both currently available). The page(s) can place meeting specific information, get references or feedback quotes from events and groups that have already met there and easy to find specific contact information for someone that will respond to questions within a 24-business hour period. Just like responding to economic development or investment inquiries people looking for meeting or event information require quick response so any delay in response could mean a lost opportunity. The website page(s) can also include a summary page of meeting spaces (SF, capacity charts in rounds and theatre style), caterers, off-site activities, restaurant dinner buy out capacities etc. Connection or links to other conference focused websites will need to be done, for example, Meeting and Conventions Canada.

- **Meeting and Conference Package/Folder** – development of a Tumbler Ridge package that includes printed information from the website. The package should include information on existing tourism experiences along with other activities or amenities in the community. The package can be given out at trade shows or mailed out to specific groups.

In addition to the above activities, the conference meeting specialist listed the following ideas or suggestions for Tumbler Ridge to consider:

- Offer an incentive to companies already doing business in the area - training meetings, their next board meeting, etc.
- Signage – there needs to be more of a presence as you drive from Fort St. John to Tumbler Ridge. Though the drive is beautiful there are areas where it can be dark with no lighting on certain stretches, additional signage, particularly in these areas, would be helpful.
- Golf Tournaments - Executive golf course on site, there may be an opportunity for local companies doing business in the area to do fundraising golf tournaments or leverage the facility in providing exposure for Tumbler Ridge.
- Transportation - Get a better understanding (and include in package, and website) on other ways to access Tumbler Ridge from major hubs. There is a big challenge in the fact that it takes longer than an hour to access the destination. Whistler, Banff - although significantly larger in size and capacity, etc., are very good at marketing to and targeting clients. One way is to have easy solutions with pricing at the ready, company pricing or company information included in package pricing. Be clear if it will cost an extra \$500.00 per person to fly them in from Ft. St. John or Prince George from the beginning. It takes the guesswork out of it and makes it a viable (or not in some cases) option to get people there easier.
- Start with Tour/Travel - the ones that will take a bus and travel that distance - 2-night stay and play packages for TT/leisure group travel. Get on their Northern BC Tour stops (bird watching, adventure tourism packages, etc.)
- A working together concept is key. Hotels need to understand the caliber of experience Tumbler Ridge is marketing to. Alongside the restaurants, caterers, activities - if everyone can come together and Tumbler Ridge can produce examples of 2-3 day packages, or have tour/travel package pricing they can offer incentive companies, then it is all about being ready and going out and getting the community out there. Once the marketing side of things is ready, organizing familiarization visits will help push Tumbler Ridge forward quickly.
- Resources for potential clients or meetings/events: Look to Fort St. John, Grand Prairie, Dawson Creek (meeting reader boards are a great resource as to who is hosting meetings in the areas).

3.5 Encourage a Partnership to Establish an Urban Reserve

The most successful economic development partnerships are built on a foundation of trust and mutual respect. Tumbler Ridge can be an early leader in BC smaller communities by establishing a partnership with an area Indigenous community to be part of the opportunity that Tumbler Ridge offers by establishing an Urban Reserve (also known as First Nation Development Area).

With an extensive amount of Crown Land within municipal boundaries, along with an infrastructure designed to accommodate significant growth, the positive economic impact of this opportunity should not be overlooked. In rural Saskatoon over 50 Urban Reserves have now been established in small and medium sized communities. The developments range from the development of new residential areas or commercial areas and in many ways, take place in areas that the development community is not actively playing a role in filling the gap.

When lands are purchased in an urban area (defined by type of municipality, not population), the federal government requires that First Nations negotiate agreements with the relevant municipal government to address land use planning, by-law harmonization, compensation for tax loss, and compensation for basic municipal services, as well as a dispute resolution process.

Saulteau First Nations or the West Moberly First Nations may consider working with Tumbler Ridge to develop an Urban Reserve in the community. In talking with Saulteau they expressed a keen desire to have discussions and are actively pursuing ways to develop new relationships with area local governments, as well as industry and business to increase economic opportunities for all.

The opportunity that the development of an Urban Reserve can create for the community cannot be understated. New development will spur new private sector development within the community. It will strengthen the residential sector and increase the workforce for mines and other industries. It can increase the feasibility of new services being offered in the community and strengthen the viability of the local schools and the hospital.

3.6 Pursue Value Added Clean Energy Projects

Internationally, the biofuels industry is likely to continue to evolve at a rapid pace as government mandates and programs show exceptional support for renewable energy sources. Canada is clearly on board and British Columbia, with its mainly resource-based economy, is striving to be a leader in clean technology. The impact of the mountain pine beetle and years of logging in areas like the Northeast, leaves a large supply of fibre available for alternate uses.

The Community Forest has also expressed interest in cleaning up waste wood from the forests as part of its program and to align with provincial and local goals that include opportunities that achieve long term community, social and economic benefits. Both Biofuels that could be used to create energy to power municipal owned services, or perhaps a Pellet facility are two value added projects that could be undertaken. However, while these are great initiatives they are also very costly and in many cases, depending on the various factors, bringing these types of projects to fruition is a challenge and a tremendous risk. Before the area will be successful in these types of initiatives a proper business plan will need to be completed to ensure that a project is feasible.

There is considerable risk and cost to municipal governments taking on the responsibility of completing a business plan for investment projects. It is recommended instead that the Community Forest undertake some initial work on a pre-feasibility study that identifies the inventory of available fibre (current AAC, waste wood, and potential additional sources), potential land for facilities and storage, and some initial costs to get the facilities established. Once this has been completed then the community can work towards identifying potential private sector partners who can complete the rest of the due diligence and form a potential partnership with Tumbler Ridge for these types of facilities.

The region has been a hot spot for wind farms. In fact, just recently the new \$400-million Meikle wind energy project was completed. This project is the last one approved to sell to the electric grid but many more have the opportunity to be built. Even with the Site C Dam being completed Tumbler Ridge should work with the private sector and area Indigenous communities to encourage additional approvals for wind energy projects creating new construction and maintenance jobs.

3.7 Pursue a Partnership with Futurpreneur to Encourage Entrepreneurship

Futurpreneur Canada has established a program called “ThriveNorth.” ThriveNorth is an initiative to enhance entrepreneurship opportunities and empower youth. It connects young people, 18-39 years old, to business resources, financing and mentoring with the goal of inspiring and supporting them as they launch and grow businesses.

Managed by Futurpreneur Canada, ThriveNorth was launched in November 2014 as part of expanding its offerings through local partnerships and community resources. The first initiative was launched in Northeast BC and is now expanding to other areas of Northern BC.

Growth in many small rural communities often comes from existing residents. In fact, new trends in economic development have led to an increase of efforts by local governments and other organizations to encourage and support entrepreneurship. Investing in young people brings considerable rewards, as small businesses are powerful job creators with high growth potential to benefit local communities. It also helps to encourage existing youth to stay, or return, to the community they grew up in and to invest in the local economy.

Tumbler Ridge, as part of its efforts to establish co-working spaces, and to put in place additional tools to support existing businesses, should pursue a partnership with Thrive North to be a community that they operate in and support young entrepreneurs. It would help put Tumbler Ridge on the map as the smallest community in BC to have an official ThriveNorth program and would bring their efforts to the forefront of one of the primary funders of the program - the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

4.0 Tumbler Ridge has a Dynamic Downtown Core

Downtowns in many communities have experienced neglect, abuse and abandonment. Fortunately over the last number of years this trend has slowly begun to shift. Today, communities of all sizes have implemented plans to revitalize, re-grow and reinvent their downtowns.

Downtowns have an important and unique role in economic development and investment attraction. Downtowns create a critical mass of activities where commercial, cultural and civic activities are concentrated. This concentration facilitates business, investment and cultural exchange.

4.1 Establish the “Tumbler Ridge Co-working/Entrepreneurship Centre”

Co-Working is becoming much more effective and desirable in rural municipalities and the District can take a leading role in establishing and promoting such a space. Whether repurposing and repositioning existing underutilized space, or creating new facilities with modest furnishings and technological amenities, co-working spaces help to incubate and launch start-up businesses, encourage collaboration and connectivity between businesses, and serve to incent business growth into independent and profitable enterprises.

Today, small rural downtowns, just like Tumbler Ridge, have unique issues that are often very different from those in larger communities. Long gone is the shopping district with products ranging from apparel to hardware. The following tables present the typical number of businesses located in smaller community downtowns.

Cities/Villages with 1,000-2,500 Pop.¹	
NAICS Description	Avg. Number Per Community
Full-service restaurants	3.19
Drinking places (alcoholic bev.)	2.17
Beauty salons	2.15
Gasoline stations	1.08
Auto. Mech. & electrical repair	1.08
Grocery stores	1.01
Other amusement (bowling, golf)	0.98
Gift, novelty, & souvenir stores	0.92
Used merchandise stores	0.64
Auto. parts, accessories, & tire	0.54
Auto. body, paint, interior, & glass	0.54
Florists	0.53
Specialty food stores	0.52
Barber shops	0.50
Hardware stores	0.47

Source: Retail and Service Business Mix Analysis of Downtowns. Bill Ryan, Beverly Stencel, and Jangik Jin. University of Wisconsin – Extension

You can easily tell by looking at this chart that some services are just not feasible and as such small-town downtowns often struggle with empty storefronts and underutilized buildings. These downtowns, just like in Tumbler Ridge, were once the hub of commerce and community activities. A full range of retail stores once occupied the main core and served as the shopping and gathering center for the community. It was primarily the private sector that drove this activity with local governments not having to play a major role. Today it is different with local governments have to take the lead to drive investment, create places for retail activity, and to create a vibrant and active downtown through the nurturing of creative building and land uses. The Tumbler Ridge downtown was built as the main centre of the community, and provides many opportunities for creative thinking to once again make it the main walking centre that has retail, office and even residential.

Several examples below are just some of the potential uses for the vacant real estate in downtown Tumbler Ridge.

- Community Gathering Place
- Food Truck(s)
- Artisan Studio and Showroom
- Retail Incubator/Pop-up Shops (*Strategy 4.2*)
- Co-working space / Entrepreneur Centre
- Outdoor Retail Market Place
- Health Care Support Services (Massage Therapy, Chiropractic, Tele-Doctor, etc.)

To facilitate the creation of any of the above-mentioned facilities and to support local entrepreneurs, communities can take the lead in acquiring real estate, renovating existing facilities, and create policies and programs that allow a broad range of uses.

In addition, it is common in many communities for absentee landlords that do not fully understand the local market and charge rental rates that do not make it feasible for local businesses. This results in empty storefronts and forces other businesses to find alternative locations or work out of their homes.

By taking a small piece of real estate and creating life in the downtown core, Tumbler Ridge will be able to attract additional retailers that can take advantage of the increased foot traffic.

It is recommended the District acquire 200 Main Street including the Royal Bank foundation and adjacent building(s). The building could be redesigned as a Tumbler Ridge Co-working/Entrepreneurship Centre. This centre could be managed by the Chamber of Commerce (*Strategy 4.5*) and would offer temporary or on-going space providing support to existing and new businesses and entrepreneurs. A business case will need to be made regarding the feasibility of the centre including structure type (private, community owned, non-profit, co-operative etc.), ongoing operations/management and target businesses (incubator, maker, retail incubator, professional, or any combination, etc.). The Royal Bank foundation could be used during the summer months for pop-up shops or an outdoor retail market place.

An alternative to the purchase of the 200 Main Street block would be opening discussions with Teck to determine their interest in using the existing office building as the co-working space. While Teck is committed to supporting the community, the space is too large for their current requirements. By partnering with Teck and the use of their building to become the location for a co-working/entrepreneur centre would provide Teck with the option of remaining in the downtown.

4.2 Establish a Retail Incubator/Pop up Shop Program

Pop-up shop/Retail Incubator programs typically aim to improve the walkability of a neighbourhood's commercial area while providing support to new retailers for up to six months, all while sharing with other retailers. Property owners make empty space available to these business owners for a small period of time. The pop-up shops (tenants) test their new businesses and the landlord gets the space used at a reasonable lease rate creating a livelier neighbourhood. This is very similar to a Farmers' Market however it is run year-round versus seasonally.

For a community like Tumbler Ridge, Pop-up Shops/Retail Incubators provide a unique opportunity to add life to the downtown and return it to its days of being a focal point of the community. Pop-up shops can be indoor and outdoor. While the indoor ones are typically referred to as a Retail Incubator they both have essentially the same outcome – creating an opportunity for retailers to share space and costs. Six months is not long enough in many cases and it is not recommended that this be the goal. Instead the District should review bylaws to make sure that no impediments exist in allowing this type of activity. Once this is done, a Retail Incubator/Pop-up Shop program should be pursued and marketed. This could occur in the new Tumbler Ridge Entrepreneur Centre and the adjacent lot (see strategy 4.1) or in partnership with private property owners. The mix of retailers should be broad and include such things as:

- Outdoor Recreation Guides and Supplies
- Food-trucks
- Arts and Crafts
- General Retailers (ie: clothing, food, specialty products)
- Medical services (massage, eye care, Physiotherapy)
- Hair and Spa Salon

Powell River has established a “pop up” shop on their downtown main street. The shop opened in 2016 as a temporary Christmas store. The shop offered “tables” to local artisans, crafters, home based businesses at a reasonable monthly rent and allowed each business to display their products. The businesses are not required to do anything but provide their products. The shop is managed by an entrepreneur who takes care of all related business operations (retail sales, inventory, invoicing, building administration costs and leasing, etc.). The shop was very successful and is now a permanent retail business in the downtown. Currently the shop is undergoing a management change with a new entrepreneur taking over after successfully completing the Community Futures self-employment program. Merritt has a similar shop but is more focused on arts and crafts and each business is required to volunteer a set number of hours at the shop each month.



4.3 Create a Vibrant and Lively Downtown

Tumbler Ridge has a downtown that provides that unique opportunity for people to gather, walk around and be part of activities. However, while the opportunity exists it is no longer in place you see empty storefronts and limited resident interaction. This was echoed in public consultation throughout the development of this strategy. With the community centre at one end of downtown and municipal hall at the other the ability to create vibrancy and a sense of place is high. Building a sense of place and a vibrancy to a community is not something that can be done overnight but there are small things that can be initiated to help move a community towards creating a more lively and energetic place where community wants to gather.

Music: One simple idea is to pipe music throughout the downtown. Port Alberni recently took this initiative in their downtown effort and instantly experienced an improved sense of place. People have remarked many times how much more enjoyable walking the downtown is with the music playing, how coffee shops set up outdoor seating to enjoy the music, and the feeling of safety it provided after hours. This is a quick and easy win for Tumbler Ridge to implement.

Art in Empty Buildings: Nothing portrays decline and defeat like a block full of empty storefronts. If a small town looks empty, and feels in decline, what entrepreneur is going to be able to visualize themselves creating a successful business there? What visitor is going to stop long enough for even a bite to eat? What future resident is going to decide that this is the place we want to be? Changing perceptions is one of the first steps to turning around a small town. Taking an idea from larger communities, small towns are beginning to turn to their arts community for help. In Dunsuir, California, a town of less than 2,000, local building owners and regional artists are working together to revitalize a charming but empty downtown by filling the windows with art. The program is based on an economic development revitalization project for the San Francisco Arts Commission and a program implemented in Eugene, Oregon. The Teck Resources offices are a good example in Tumbler Ridge on how art can be used to portray a different image. The building does not look empty (from the outside looking in). While it is important to let people know that space is available, it does not mean that you have to visibly show the empty space to anyone walking by.

Wi-Fi in the Downtown: With the potential expansion of broadband to Tumbler Ridge, the community could pursue a partnership with Telus to make available complimentary broadband in the downtown for visitors, and residents. The availability of Wi-Fi in the downtown offers another reason for people to congregate to the area and to stay a little longer. It demonstrates to visitors that Tumbler Ridge is a connected community – encouraging a creative and innovative community.

4.4 Façade Improvement Program

The Façade Improvement Program, offered with the support of the Northern Development Initiative Trust is an excellent program to encourage existing businesses to invest in façade improvements. NDI offers up to \$20,000 annually to each local government to support a local program.

Features and benefits of the program are broad and should be actively marketed by the District. Some benefits of a façade program include:

- Enhanced economic viability and vibrancy of a community by supporting visual improvements such as facades, signage, murals, architectural features, siding, lighting and awnings.
- New private sector investment in local business improvement.
- Increased assessed values and tax base because of improved properties.
- Attractiveness of community to enhance community pride, an appearance of community vibrancy, as well as tourism experience.
- Improved community appearance to support recruitment of new businesses and/or residents.

These benefits fit in to what the District of Tumbler Ridge is trying to do – attract new investment and residents to the community.

While Tumbler Ridge has accessed the funding, no efforts have gone in to marketing that it is available. This has primarily been because the community wishes to update existing Urban Design Guidelines. While guidelines are important, every effort should be made to ensure that the ones established do not generate excessive red tape and costs associated with improving the overall image of existing buildings. The District should proceed with updating the guidelines and then begin marketing, and packaging with other programs (Revitalization Tax Incentive) to encourage a renewal in the downtown and business parks.

4.5 Strengthen the Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce has a good percentage of local businesses as members and currently operates the Visitor Information Centre (VIC). The operation of the VIC is under review by the District and responsibility may move from the Chamber to the Global Geopark. If this happens the viability of the Chamber of Commerce will be in question with a lack of both human and financial resources. There are many opportunities where the District can work with the Chamber to help them enhance their capacity, sustainability and increase their presence in the business community.

Discussions should be had with the Chamber to determine the feasibility of their moving from their current location to a downtown space. This relocation would better serve the small business community and would create a healthy synergy downtown and help to spur vibrancy (*Strategy 4.3*). The benefit to the Chamber would be an increased presence in the business community and should they not retain the VIC operation the Chamber could then manage the co-working/entrepreneur centre (*Strategy 4.1*).

Should the operation of the VIC be given to the Global Geopark, the District could enter a fee for service with the Chamber to promote businesses. The Chamber would be removed from the tourism side and would change its focus to business retention and expansion. This fee for service could be on a project to project basis. By focusing on business, the Chamber could implement a number of programs that would directly benefit local business. They already have several projects in place including the Christmas passport and there are other opportunities they could undertake. The District could have the Chamber be responsible for:

- Updating and enhancing the business and services directory
- Develop specific program(s) for shop local
- Organize an annual Business Expo and Tradeshow
- Quarterly newsletter for businesses and residents (*Strategy 1.3*)
- Proud to Live in Tumbler Ridge (*Strategy 6.1*)

5.0 Tumbler Ridge is an Attractive Place to Live

Resident attraction and retention is an issue that communities across Canada are challenged with. Many communities experience a variety of rapid demographic and economic change that are altering the way their local economies operate including low birth rates, aging population, increased urbanization and loss of youth. This contributes to limiting local business growth, a decline in the tax base and the opportunity to create jobs.

Beyond just economic development factors, local residents support communities through service clubs and volunteer activities, schools and churches, libraries and recreational facilities – typically “community economic development”. They support their communities through their taxes, by shopping at local stores and by providing the workforce for local employers.

Attracting and retaining residents has become an important consideration in the viability of a community. By working together, increasing awareness, and by ensuring the community's attractiveness you can implement strategies to retain and attract the most important asset of any community: Residents

5.1 Create a Tumbler Ridge Attraction Campaign

Raising awareness about Tumbler Ridge's existing assets, particularly in terms of outdoor experiences, and the opportunities that exist, along with what makes the community an attractive place to live are the foundations for new resident attraction strategies. This can be done in a number of ways, but any resident attraction strategy should work together with the tourism brand and organizations that current exist.

There are a few communities that have developed resident attraction campaigns and have experienced success. The City of Powell River targeted their campaign to telecommuters, entrepreneurs and youth. They developed a resident attraction “magazine” and developed eight videos highlighting the advantages and opportunities that exist. (powellriver.info). The Central Okanagan Regional District recognized there are many local businesses struggling to find workers. Together with business they developed a “talent” attraction campaign – highlight job opportunities to attract new residents.

Tumbler Ridge can create a resident attraction campaign supported by the existing brand and working together with various partners including the Global Geopark and the mines. The campaign should highlight the quality of life, the opportunities (particularly small business, entrepreneurship and mine jobs) and include testimonials. The campaign should build on the existing Resident Attraction Brochure but make the information into smaller, bite-size pieces versus the full brochure. For example, the Central Okanagan's promotional material is one page double-sided. By condensing the information, the one-page brochure can be distributed into all hotel rooms, left a various businesses (i.e. restaurants, grocery store, etc.) and can easily be “picked up” by visitors. The brochure should be provided to the mines for their inclusion in any of their labour attraction efforts (*Strategy 3.2*).



In addition, the campaign can work in conjunction with workforce development and the attraction of virtual workers and entrepreneurs (*Strategy 3.1*).

5.2 Track Youth Leaving Town

Many communities experience their youth leaving town and Tumbler Ridge is no different. There are some advantages to having youth leave as it provides them with improved educational opportunities and new job skills that they can bring back into the community. It also means experiencing ideas and cultures that increase perspective and can lead to product or service improvement. Some youth may never return, some youth will, while other youth will need to know what opportunities exist before they make the decision. By tracking youth once they leave the community Tumbler Ridge can keep in touch with these individuals and inform them of the changes in the community, the opportunities that exist and keep them connected to home.

Tracking the youth can be done by partnering with the school district to develop an “exit survey” of youth upon graduation. The survey can include questions asking if they are staying the community, why they are leaving the community, will they come back to the community and what would entice them to return. The survey could ask youth to rank specific topics including quality of life, amenities, job opportunities, etc. The survey should end with an ask for contact information (i.e. email) to allow the District to keep in touch with the individual and provide ongoing information on the community.

5.3 Establish a Resident Response Team

Develop a “one team” Tumbler Ridge approach to resident attraction efforts comprised of the EDO, the Economic Development Assistant, industry representative (depending on resident’s interest, i.e. mine, healthcare, small business, tourism, education, etc.) and real estate representative. This team will be brought together when a “high level” potential resident has been identified. This type of resident could include a doctor, mine executive/professional, etc. The team will be brought together on an as need basis to welcome the new resident, to showcase Tumbler Ridge and to personally tour the individual(s) through the community. A customized welcome package can be developed including the Resident Attraction Brochure, Community Profile, Business Directory, recreational amenities and appropriate personalized information. The team can work with existing businesses to develop “discount coupons” to include in the package. The strategy below is an example of how the Resident Response Team can assist a new resident, in this case, it is the medical professional, and a focus should be on the spouse.

5.4 Assist with Medical and Healthcare Recruitment

There are presently two permanent fulltime doctors working out of the doctor’s office. One doctor was recruited by Dr. Helm who has just recently retired but still provides care from time to time. The second doctor was recruited through the International Doctor Program through Northern Health. These are doctors from other countries who have to receive training under Canadian doctors in their practice before they can legally practise on their own. The third doctor will arrive in March 2018 once he has completed his training in Canada in a Fort St John Medical Clinic. The new doctor is from Nigeria and wanted to locate

to a safe place to raise his family. His wife is an engineer and she wanted to locate to a place that wasn't too far from specialists such as gynecologists and hospitals. Tumbler Ridge offered the safe environment and is only an hour away from specialists and hospital.

There are four staff in the doctors' office. Three provide reception and patient services and one is the Office Manager who oversees HR and daily operations.

It is hard to compete with other communities when recruiting doctors as there is not a visible assistance or particular incentive to attract medical professionals. Chetwynd and Fort St John provide a house for doctors as well as a welcoming program. These programs are promoted through their local government. None of these incentives are evident in Tumbler Ridge.

The doctors that are presently practising in the doctor's office are newcomers and there is still time to offer a welcome or location incentive for them to remain in Tumbler Ridge for a long term. There is also an opportunity to provide an incentive to attract other professionals such as a chiropractor, physio therapist and massage therapist. The Resident Response Team should discuss how to the District can better assist the medical community and its attraction efforts. Recommendations should be made to the District for approval and implementation.

5.5 Welcome Home Program

There is overwhelming evidence from the business and resident community that Tumbler Ridge is an excellent place to live, raise a family, retire and enjoy the lifestyle it offers. Unfortunately, the uncertainty about the mining industry several homes remain empty (or unimproved), and the retail sector is not as strong as it could be.

Everyone talks about the excellent recreational opportunities that abound in the region – that are sometimes minutes away in any direction. Residents are anxious to share their attributes with others and are determined to make the region a place where others can share in the high quality of life they enjoy.

Young residents leave the community to explore new opportunities or to get a higher level of education. Many of these people never return as residents but do return to visit family and friends. To increase the awareness of the opportunities that exist, the area should develop a welcome home program that can encourage those that have left to come home and rediscover what it is like to live, work, and start a business in Tumbler Ridge.

6.0 Tumbler Ridge has a Workforce for the Future

Historically, workforce development and economic development have had different missions. The primary link has been labour market information – employment, unemployment and wage data. As a shortage of skilled workers in key occupations has increased, the relationship between workforce development and economic development has grown closer. More and more economic development organizations are developing specific workforce programs to help their economy grow and provide opportunities to workers in their community.

6.1 Proud To Live In Tumbler Ridge

As in many communities there is a perceived lack of a standard for service that consumers, customers and visitors expect. This was mentioned throughout the public consultation process by residents. Existing businesses stated they are challenged with access to trained staff and those businesses in the tourism sector are further challenged with the seasonality.

It is important that a level of service is demonstrated throughout the community not only to existing residents but to visitors as Tumbler Ridge is wanting to grow the tourism sector. The District of Hope was experiencing the same issues and their economic development organization, Advantage Hope, developed a program called “Proud to Live in Hope”. The purpose of the program is to create a standard for service throughout Hope that contributes to the economic health of the community by encouraging longer and more quality stays by visitors. The program offers free customer services skills training to businesses and organizations. Businesses who hire for the summer have a finite amount of time and resources to train staff and job-specific skills are often prioritized over customer service skills. This program allows employers to access free on-site training in basic customer service skills for their employees. The Hope program runs for three hours and are facilitated by the Operations Manager of the Hope Visitor Centre. The Advantage Hope board are often involved in the training as guest speakers.

They have had excellent success with the program with most of local businesses preferring to have their staff complete the “Proud to Live in Hope” program. They are currently adapting the program to have the training included in grade 12 planning curriculum where every student who graduates from Hope will be better prepared to join the workforce.

This program would be transferable to Tumbler Ridge and could be undertaken in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce (*Strategy 4.5*). To move Tumbler Ridge towards Best in Class and to demonstrate leadership consideration should be given to provide this training to all District staff that are involved with the public.

6.2 Work Here Website

With the recommended changes to the existing website (*Strategy 1.6*) a special page should be developed that highlights the job opportunities available in Tumbler Ridge. With the current mining activity, future mining, expansion of wind farms, and more, Tumbler Ridge is in need of attracting a labour force for the future. Through targeted assistance the District of Tumbler Ridge could have an active website that highlights the existing (and future) employment opportunities and provide the assistance that companies need to succeed. By allowing all employers to list job opportunities the community is enhancing several

economic development initiatives including Business Retention and Expansion, Entrepreneurial Development (spousal opportunities to start a business), and Resident Attraction to name a few.

7.0 Tumbler Ridge has an Infrastructure to Accommodate Growth

One of the priorities for Smart Growth within the District is the strategic and sustainable expansion of infrastructure required to accommodate growth. Understanding the implications and outcomes of growth; the trigger points and costs of network expansion, allow for smart long-term decisions with the opportunity for short-term benefits.

Tumbler Ridge has exceptional infrastructure capability & capacity. However, sustainable asset management and funding solutions should be determined now to allow for adequate preventative maintenance and repair. In addition, the pro-active expansion of the system to support growth will be a key actionable item in helping ensure long-term funding and working towards cost recovery.

The costs associated with the projects identified in this section are not part of the economic development budget.

7.1 Plan and Approve Future Residential Land Development Areas and Infrastructure Expansion

Tumbler Ridge has exceptional attraction and appeal. The community amenities are appealing, and the economy has key drivers. The challenge appears to be around the availability of appropriate housing and as such, additional housing options should be created.

Currently there are 91 listings for residential real estate for sale, plus 25 lots and four commercial properties. Residential units are ranging from \$33k-319k, this appears to represent approximately 6-9% available inventory. The key consideration being that if major employers start ramping up operations, Tumbler Ridge needs to be agile and able to facilitate timely delivery of new housing options.

While it may not be desirable to undertake the actual subdivision and construction of new development areas, there are key opportunities to advance the planning, investigation, and design phases in order to make future developments “shovel-ready”. Recommended for immediate action, it is recommended that:

- Council and Staff identify the priority development areas, whether District or Crown owned, and initiate the planning processes: zoning and positioning.
- Concept site plan designs, subdivision plans, road designs, infrastructure designs, geotechnical and environmental assessments can all be undertaken for moderate investment.
- Market and promote the land-development opportunity to the private sector.
- If necessary, consider servicing and subdividing the lots in order to maintain an adequate supply of serviced residential lots for sale.
- Future residential lands identified near existing municipal industrial processes may require additional nuisance and impact studies that should be led by the District to ascertain appropriateness of future development in these areas.

This is the single most effective recommendation, and an investment now of \$50-80k will be an enormous incentive for the private sector to invest in the District. Existing District consultants can drive the work, or our team can facilitate the delivery. If implemented in year two, the lots could be available as early as

Summer 2019, and likely drive full cost recovery, population growth, and crucial support for the major employers.

7.2 Maximize Federal and Provincial Infrastructure and Housing Grant Applications

There is a critical housing shortage across the Province, and while the focus of Federal and Provincial efforts may be in larger urban areas, the same opportunities and programs exist for all municipalities. For example, BC Housing often issues Requests for Proposals requiring a full development team: financier, developer, land, contractor, etc. Pre-positioning Tumbler Ridge for participation in these programs is a crucial opportunity to leverage support from other levels of government.

This initiative requires some Staff time and Council direction, identifying a couple of potential development sites, zoning and pre-positioning the site for development, and identifying/attracting project partners should all be done in advance. When the District has pre-packaged a couple of sites for immediate development, they will be best-positioned for successful grant applications.

The current mandate is for temporary accommodations utilizing modular units. This form is easy to incorporate into the District, but consideration should be given to location, context, and best practices in community planning. However, there may be interest in supportive housing, assisted living, affordable housing, micro-suites, tiny homes, etc. and time and attention should be invested in this initiative.

Beyond the Housing grants, there are Infrastructure Grants that should be optimized. Key upgrades and shovel-ready projects are often funded, and neighbourhood rehabilitation and road improvements may be the key extensions, but all key upgrades should be considered vs. the government priorities.

This is a powerful opportunity and if initiated in early 2019 with an intent to prepare, it could be ready to implement in Fall of the same year. Keep in mind that while grants and support from other areas is very helpful, the opportunities to utilize available modular units, create demonstration developments, and lead the delivery of attainable housing is an option the District may wish to consider and might be prepared to initiate independently.

7.3 Invest in Broadband Internet Connectivity

Our world has become technologically reliant in all aspects of our lives: personal, social, economic, industry, commerce, critical systems, and connectivity. The ability to access reliable broadband (high-speed) internet access is an expectation of most residents, and likely soon, a fundamental system as determined by CRTC. Tumbler Ridge would be well-served to explore this opportunity.

Resident satisfaction at being able to be connected, stream video, access social media, and communicate is hard to quantify. The number of potential residents who would resist relocating to an area without Broadband is easier to understand. The opportunity for start-up, home-based and tech-focused businesses to operate from Tumbler Ridge if it had Broadband is enormous.

Ultimately Telus has already completed the feasibility study to extend service throughout Tumbler Ridge. While it is not on their approved project list due to the challenge of full-cost recovery (as is the case in almost all small (<10,000 person) communities, they do have a program whereby if the Municipality is prepared to support, and contribute in a meaningful financial way, they will expedite design and installation and plan for network upgrades.

This investment in the community is determined to be of critical importance, and very safe as this technology is in the mature and stable stage of its evolution. Consequently, while payback may be tough to calculate, an investment of \$1.2-\$1.5m now to initiate the project with hopes of installation in 2018 is one we recommend Council consider. Tumbler Ridge is in ongoing discussions with Telus and Peace Region Internet Society to extend fibre throughout the community. These discussions need to continue until fibre is a reality in Tumbler Ridge.

7.4 Advance Rail, Airport, Golf Course, Cemetery, RV Parks and Landfill Master Plans

Tumbler Ridge is in the enviable position of having exceptional municipal infrastructure: the rail, airport, golf course, cemetery, RV Park and landfill are all very valuable and positive features. However, a proactive approach to optimizing the impact of these features is recommended.

The recommendation here is that each feature have a strategy and master plan associated with its growth, expansion, enhancement or operations and maintenance. The studies need not be expensive, but they need to evaluate existing conditions, opportunities, best practices, costs, and a series of options.

For example, if one of the major employers required charter jet, helicopter, or rail service, is staff aware of the current condition and needs of each asset? Are the golf course and RV Park taking advantage of recent innovations and advances and promoted optimally? Is the Cemetery and Landfill in need of investment, or are there revenue-generating options that could be explored?

It is expected that these initiatives could cost as much as \$100k total; however, likely have not been prioritized in staff's workplans as they are time-consuming and low-priority; but high importance. It is recommended that these be evaluated and prioritized for external consultant investigation throughout 2020 so that action plans may be established and evaluated by Council.

7.5 Apply for Asset Management Funding via MAMP Grant

Asset Management is a very popular topic yet should remain at the forefront of Municipal planning and decision making. Many municipalities are tasking existing staff with the formidable challenge of devising an asset management program, whereas there are established best practices, and more importantly, transferrable templates and tools that a consultant could provide to expedite this process. There is a \$50k grant available to every BC Municipality to expedite their Asset Management initiatives, and we recommend that the grant application we prepared be submitted for consideration.

Asset Management is simply a matter of applying appropriate accounting measures to municipal infrastructure. Buildings, roads, underground utilities, fleet etc. are usually funded on an as-needed and emergency-repair basis; however, enormous savings are realized when preventative maintenance is funded, appropriate condition assessments undertaken, and the repair/replacement program established.

The critical component of this initiative is that with infrastructure installed in the early 1980's, critical preventative maintenance works are now due. More importantly, 20-30 years from now, major infrastructure renewal will become due. It is essential to plan, prioritize, and budget for these works in order to protect the District, and its residents, from significant financial impacts of unfunded infrastructure.

This initiative could be initiated immediately, and with the \$50k investment, the program could be advanced from the existing state, which is an impressive summary of all infrastructure and overview of conditions, into a comprehensive financial plan. This becomes the cornerstone of the District's Capital Works Plans for a decade to come. While this is an ongoing program, not a discrete project, the next phase could be completed by Fall 2018, utilizing industry experts, and making important contributions to the District's financial planning processes.

7.6 Consider a Development Cost Charge Bylaw

Directly linked to the Asset Management initiative above, there is an inherent need for development to pay its fair share of the infrastructure burden on a municipality. It is correct that keeping DCCs low or by not having them is a competitive advantage vs. other municipalities, and there are strategic reasons to incent growth, especially for Tumbler Ridge with significant excess capacity in its infrastructure and the opportunity to easily and inexpensively assimilate significant additional growth.

However, a well-conceived and implemented DCC Bylaw is a key tool in the District's toolbox for sustainable financial well-being. Knowing the true cost of development, the cost of impacts, the funding requirements is key for every municipality. This is an inexpensive Bylaw to prepare, \$5-10k, it can be done by either the District's own consultants or any other firm; however, should be prepared and established before it is needed.

A lower-priority project, subject to Council support, Staff time and resources, this could be initiated late 2019 for implementation in 2020 as desired.

7.7 Establish 10-year Capital Plans

Directly linked to the Asset Management and DCC Bylaw recommendations above, shifting the focus to the long-term asset expansion, improvement and rehabilitation is a key component of managing the District's municipal infrastructure. While a 10-year Capital Plan may already exist, it was not uncovered during the site visits and discussions.

The value of such a plan allows for the efficient forecasting of investment, but also the prioritization and effective planning of major infrastructure upgrades. When plotted on a timeline, each project can then be effectively planned with regard to funding, property acquisitions, public consultation, contractor scheduling, tendering, design, contract administration, etc. The best municipal Capital Plans allow for early identification, expanded schedules, and ample notification to the public and stakeholders.

This is a plan that staff usually prepare in-house. It can be facilitated by an expert, but likely has very low capital costs to undertake. If prioritized on staff workplans, it could be in place by Summer 2018.

7.8 Utilize Utility Reserves for Maximum Benefit

Municipalities across BC have a dilemma with regard to encouraging and facilitating private sector investment vs. undertaking and instigating strategic investments themselves. Often it is best to prioritize the former, but in the absence of sufficient activity, resort to the latter to stimulate growth. Tumbler Ridge is in the enviable position of having the resources to advance works, so it is recommended that they be leveraged for maximum advantage.

One of the largest inhibitors to private sector investment is large up-front investment needed to accommodate a development. While developer/builders can afford the infrastructure needed to support

their development, major network upgrades, utility extensions or capacity improvements often deter projects based on the risk.

While it is important not to compete with the private sector, in conjunction with the above recommendation to plan future residential areas, it is recommended that the District consider utilizing reserves to expand the utility and road infrastructure to incent growth, yet achieve full-cost recovery.

Municipalities can afford to be the patient financial partner. Installing works using a Latecomer Agreement or Local Area Service, creating a Spec Area or delivering infrastructure now to incent investment with cost recovery is a valuable contribution to the economy. Strategically acquiring lands is a lucrative opportunity. Developing small commercial strata units and co-working spaces will incubate and facilitate a new generation of commerce.

This objective could be achieved with an arms-length Land Development Corporation; however, may be achieved as part of the District provided it follows the requirements of the Community Charter and Local Government Act. Alternatively, partnering or joint-venturing with the private sector may effectively stimulate growth. Simply put, extending networks to grow the cost-recovery and service stakeholders is a good investment.

Staff, or an external consultant, would be easily able to identify key investment opportunities. The next phase of the Industrial Park, future residential lands, and extensions within the municipal boundaries are all value-added and would result in full-cost recovery. Plans could be initiated in Spring 2019 for delivery in 2020.

7.9 Plan and Approve Industrial Park Expansion

The Industrial Park is an amazing future economic driver for the District. It should be marketed and enhanced in any way possible. It can be challenging if all lots are privately held, with either costly remediation required, or unreasonable expectations of sale prices. It is recommended that the District initiate an expansion, undertake the investigations and approvals needed, and position the lands as “shovel-ready” for future private investment.

A simple planning, engineering, and consulting exercise, likely achievable for under \$100k, this investment would position Tumbler Ridge as agile and responsive to industry needs. This work could be undertaken by consultants in Spring 2019 and ready by Spring 2020.

7.10 Expedite Sand and Gravel Pit Explorations

Tumbler Ridge has a potential asset in this site, yet it will require study, planning, preparation and positioning before it can be realized. With five sites currently listed, it is prudent to make plans for future expansion. Initiating the concept studies in Spring 2019 to understand the scope and steps is a crucial first step. Whether this is to become a District operation, or positioned for private-sector investment, the scoping and investigations are crucial to moving things forward.

Performance Measurement and Reporting

Performance measurement in economic development is important to monitor changes in the community as well as the performance of the of the economic development activities. Performance measures provide timely information that can be used to inform responses to issues. Performance reports are useful tools for informing staff, Council, businesses and stakeholders, who all have a unique role to play in the economic development of our community.

Priority Area 1: Economic Development and Investment Capacity

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Expanded economic development capacity	TR economic development dept.	Increased capacity Ability to implement investment readiness plan Increase community input on economic development
Rural Dividend Funding	Province of BC	Ability to implement strategies
Improved economic development communications	TR economic development dept.	Increased communication and input from both an internal and external audience Increased support from Council and community at large Active social media campaign Increased knowledge of Tumbler Ridge by other levels of government
Website	TR economic development dept.	Increased visitors to site Increased inquiries through website
Townfolio	Townfolio/TR economic development dept.	Increase leads, visitors to Townfolio Tumbler Ridge Profile Page

Priority Area 2: Tumbler Ridge is Open for Business

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Increase in the number of businesses and investments	TR economic development dept.	Job creation, increased revenue to District to support services and programs
Diversification of businesses	TR economic development dept.	Diversification of local economy

Development timeliness met	TR economic development dept/ property owners	Economic growth, increased certainty for investors, increased positivity for District
Ongoing BRE program	TR economic development dept.	Improved communication and responsiveness to issues Business growth and success improved Challenges decreased
Annual Business Walks	TR economic development dept/ District Council	Improved communication and feedback to Council
Value of development/construction	TR economic development dept.	Business expansion and development, increased revenue to City to support services and programs
Inquiries received by the District from investors and new businesses	TR economic development dept.	Investment attraction and business development Economic growth and job creation
Number of visits to economic development pages on website	TR economic development dept.	Improved marketing and communications with investors and business

Priority Area 3: Tumbler Ridge has a Diverse Economy

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Number of business licenses	District	Diversification of local economy
Increased services/employees available to the mining industry	TR economic development dept./Mining Companies	Healthier industry sector, increased residents and businesses
Increased conferences/small retreats	TR economic development dept.	Increased awareness of Tumbler Ridge Increased economic activity throughout the year

Priority Area 4: Tumbler Ridge has a Dynamic Downtown Core

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Increase in the number of businesses opened in the downtown	TR economic development dept.	Desirability of the downtown as a place to shop and do business
% of downtown businesses reporting growth as compared to previous year(s)	TR economic development dept.	Retention and expansion of existing businesses

Uptake of the business façade program	TR economic development dept.	Improved attractiveness of downtown
Uptake on the Revitalization Tax Program	TR economic development dept.	Increased investment in downtown

Priority Area 5: Tumbler Ridge is an Attractive Place to Life

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Number of home sales and average sales price	Real estate board	Increase in value of real estate over time indicating strength in the local market
Inquiries received by District from potential new residents	TR economic development dept.	Resident attraction and population growth
Number of visits to economic development pages on website	TR economic development dept.	Improved marketing and communications with new residents

Priority Area 6: Tumbler Ridge has a Workforce for the Future

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Development of curriculum for training	TR economic development dept. TR Chamber of Commerce	A training course that can be delivered to businesses and employees and at the High School
Number of training sessions delivered to businesses and employees	TR economic development dept. TR Chamber of Commerce	Employers and employees have a better understanding of tourism and community assets in the community
Number of training sessions delivered to high school students	TR economic development dept. TR Chamber of Commerce Tumbler Ridge High School	Future employees have the ability to talk to visitors and future residents on the benefits of Tumbler Ridge.
Number of visits to the “Work Here” pages on website	TR economic development dept.	Improved marketing and communications with potential new residents
Number of Job Postings by local employers	TR economic development dept.	Improved dialogue and partnership with existing and future businesses

Priority Area 7: Tumbler Ridge has an infrastructure to Accommodate Growth

Performance Measure	Data Source	Outcomes
Identification and acquisition of Crown Land for Residential and Industrial Expansion	District of Tumbler Ridge	New land to encourage new residential and industrial development. Increased tax base.
Obtaining housing grants to develop new affordable assisted living, micro-suites, tiny homes, and other forms of residential	District of Tumbler Ridge	Ability for seniors to remain in the community when new services are needed. Affordable housing for those in need. Temporary quality housing for temporary labour force need
Broadband available throughout the community	District of Tumbler Ridge. PRIS	New virtual workers in the community. Complimentary wifi throughout downtown to accommodate visitors and local residents
New updated master plans outlining immediate and future needs of important community infrastructure to accommodate new growth	District of Tumbler Ridge.	Long term ability to ensure that current exceptional infrastructure is available for the future.
Development of a 10-year Capital Plan	District of Tumbler Ridge.	Efficient forecasting of investment, but also the prioritization and effective planning of major infrastructure upgrades

Year One Implementation and Action Plan

Goal #1	Economic Development and Investment Capacity			
Strategy 1.1	Review and Enhance Economic Development Assistant Position			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps				Year One Timeline
1. EDO to review strategy with Assistant to identify key duties and responsibilities of the job ensuring sufficient capacity and skill set. See specific items listed for Strategy 1.1 in Economic Development Strategic Plan.				1 st Quarter
2. Consult with BCEDA for other economic development assistant/coordinator job descriptions.				1 st Quarter
3. Complete annual review of job description and align it with the Economic Development Strategic Plan.				4 th Quarter Ongoing
Responsibility				
Primary:		Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District Departments 		
Resources Needed				
Funding/Budget:		Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct budget implication 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 		
Other: Time from economic development staff				
Timeframe				
This initiative is:				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing
Additional Information				
Information on economic development job descriptions can be found at: www.bceda.ca				
Strategy 1.2	Complete a BC Rural Dividend Application			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps				Year One Timeline
1. Complete a Rural Dividend Application based on the recommended strategies outlined in the Economic Development Strategic Plan.				1 st Quarter

2. Once approval is received review the Economic Development Plan to align years one and two work plan and action steps.		2 nd Quarter
3. Complete Rural Dividend Program requirements (i.e. reports and budgeting).		4 th Quarter
4. Review the Economic Development Strategic Plan to identify other strategies that may apply for additional funding. Re-apply to the Rural Dividend Program as required.		4 th Quarter Ongoing
Responsibility		
Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 		Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District Departments Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Technology EDCD Consulting
Resources Needed		
Funding/Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent on application and approval 		Potential Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time to apply and manage the reporting process 		
Timeframe		
This initiative is:		
	Year One	Year Two
		Year Three
		Ongoing
Additional Information		
BC Rural Dividend Program information including application process can be found at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/support-organizations-community-partners/rural-economic-development/rural-dividend		
Strategy 1.3	Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP)	
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines		
Action Steps		Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>		N/A
Timeframe		
This initiative is:		
	Year One	Year Two
		Year Three
		Ongoing
Additional Information		
Contact with BCEDA can be made during Year Two for assistance and additional information. Contact with EDCD Consulting can be made during Year Two for assistance and additional information.		
Strategy 1.4	Create Regular Communications	
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines		

Action Steps	Year One Timeline
1. Review Economic Development Strategic Plan to determine methods of communications.	1 st Quarter
2. Internal Communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a quarterly monthly report to Council outlining high-level information including activities, successes and any identified risks related to strategic plan implementation. b. Create a quarterly newsletter directed to an internal audience (see Economic Development Strategic Plan for additional information on content). c. Economic Development Assistant to develop and expand social media presence (see Economic Development Strategic Plan for additional information on content). d. Prepare an annual presentation to Council 	2 nd Quarter 2 nd Quarter 2 nd Quarter 4 th Quarter
3. External Communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create and maintain an investment-related database (see Economic Development Strategic Plan for additional information on content). b. Working with 2.a above, create a quarterly newsletter focused on an external investment-focused audience. 	2 nd Quarter
4. Identify the investment related events to attend on an annual basis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine who will attend and develop budget b. Develop a calendar schedule of event(s) c. Register for event(s) d. Attend event(s) e. Include outcomes from event(s) into both internal and external communications (above) 	2 nd Quarter

Responsibility

Primary:	Support:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Economic Development & Tourism • Economic Development Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant District Departments • Chamber of Commerce • Global Geopark

Resources Needed

Funding/Budget:	Potential Sources:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic newsletter services would be less than \$1,000 per year • Funding dependent on attended events. For example, estimated costs to attend BCEDA's Economic Development Summit include (per person): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration: \$500 Travel: \$600 Hotel: \$800 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Dividend Program • Invest Canada Community Initiative (ICCI)

Other:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to apply and manage the reporting process • Assistance in the development and contribution to content could include the Chamber of Commerce, Global Geopark and various local businesses 				
Timeframe				
This initiative is:				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing
Additional Information				
<p>Sample newsletters from other economic development organizations can be found at: http://www.investkelowna.com/blog/ http://medasf.org/newsandpress/newsletters/ http://www.redwater.ca/business/economic-development/newsletters</p> <p>A sample annual economic development communication to stakeholders can be found at: https://www.portalberni.ca/sites/default/files/doc_library/Economic%20Development%20Department%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf</p> <p>Event information can be found at www.bceda.ca</p> <p>Professional development courses can be found at www.iedconline.org</p>				
Strategy 1.5	Have the Right Marketing Materials			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps			Year One Timeline	
1. Create an investment kit folder/package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Take the appropriate information from the Community Profile and create a Fact Sheet highlighting the “top 10” information investors are looking for (i.e. population, education, labour force, key sectors, etc.) b. Include economic development contact and list of services available 			3 rd Quarter	
2. Create an incentive sheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide details of the services the economic development office provides b. Provide information of programs offered (i.e. revitalization tax program) c. Outline competitive advantages (i.e. low taxation and no development cost charges) 			3 rd Quarter	
3. Ensure your investment kit includes the appropriate information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fact Sheet (above) b. Incentive Sheet (above) c. Community Profile d. Property Sheets (Strategy 2.2) 			3 Quarter	

4. Update investment packages to ensure that information is always kept current.		Ongoing
Responsibility		
Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 		Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District Departments Northern Development Initiatives Trust
Resources Needed		
Funding/Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct funding implication 		Potential Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff Alternatively, newsletter development could be contracted out (approximately \$100 per newsletter) 		
Timeframe		
This initiative is:		
Year One	Year Two	Year Three
		Ongoing
Additional Information		
Sample Economic Development Fact Sheet can be found at: https://edasealberta.wordpress.com/2013/06/19/medicine-hat-infographics/		
Sample of Economic Development Advantages and Incentives can be found at: http://www.clarksvilletned.com/idb/infographics/		
Strategy 1.6	Enhanced Online Presence	
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines		
Action Steps		Year One Timeline
1. Review the recommendations regarding enhancing the Tumbler Ridge online presence (see the Economic Development Strategic Plan and Website Assessment for detailed information).		2 nd Quarter
2. Complete the recommendations.		2 nd Quarter
3. Complete annual review of website content to ensure that the information is kept current		Ongoing
Responsibility		
Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 		Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District Departments Local businesses for testimonials
Resources Needed		
Funding/Budget:		Potential Sources:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program Northern Development Initiatives Trust 		
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff Time from local businesses for testimonials 			
Timeframe			
This initiative is:			
Year One	Year Two		
Year Three	Ongoing		
Additional Information			
<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">Strategy 1.7</td> <td>Promote Tumbler Ridge Through Townfolio</td> </tr> </table>		Strategy 1.7	Promote Tumbler Ridge Through Townfolio
Strategy 1.7	Promote Tumbler Ridge Through Townfolio		
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines			
Action Steps	Year One Timeline		
1. Contact Townfolio to collect information on their subscription model, information required, etc.	3 rd Quarter		
2. Join Townfolio.	3 rd Quarter		
3. Provide appropriate information to Townfolio and maintain with up-to-date data.	3 rd Quarter		
4. Review information annually to ensure that information is kept current	Ongoing		
Responsibility			
Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 	Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District Departments Real estate or local businesses 		
Resources Needed			
Funding/Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,500 annually 	Potential Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program 		
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff Time from realtors or local businesses for business opportunities 			
Timeframe			
This initiative is:			
Year One	Year Two		
Year Three	Ongoing		
Additional Information			
Information on Townfolio can be found at: https://townfolio.co/			

Goal #2	Tumbler Ridge is Open for Business				
Strategy 2.1	Review Policies and Procedures Through an Economic Development “Lens”				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 2.2	Identify and Promote “Places to Grow”				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 2.3	Create an Investment Response Team				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 2.4	Identify and Address Business Needs				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
1	Develop a regular BRE schedule – recommended maximum three businesses per month or minimum of 20 annually).				2 nd Quarter
2	Work with Community Futures to access their license to the BC BusinessCounts Program.				
3	Identify the businesses to interview in 2018 and begin to schedule meetings.				2 nd Quarter
4	Complete interviews, ensure follow ups as required and information is entered into BC BusinessCounts Program.				2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th Quarters

5	At year end put together a report to distribute to Council regarding the outcomes from the program including number of businesses met, issues and common trends, assistance provided and steps for 2019.	4 th Quarter Ongoing
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Responsibility

<p align="center">Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Economic Development & Tourism • Economic Development Assistant 	<p align="center">Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant District Departments • Community Futures • Chamber of Commerce • Global Geopark
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Resources Needed

<p>Funding/Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No direct funding implications 	<p>Potential Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
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Other:

- Staff time to schedule, interview, data entry and report
- District staff time to respond to related issues or concerns from business
- Chamber of Commerce staff time to assist with interviews process as required
- Global Geopark staff time to assist with interview process as required
- Local business staff time to participate in program

Timeframe

This initiative is:

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
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Additional Information

Strategy 2.5 | Hold an Annual Business Expo and Tradeshow

Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines

Action Steps	Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>	

Timeframe

This initiative is:

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
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Additional Information

Strategy 2.6 | Create Best of Class Investment Readiness

Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines

Action Steps	Year One Timeline
1 Review the recommendations outlined in the Investment Readiness Assessment report regarding improving investment readiness. Also see the Economic Development Strategic Plan for priorities.	3 rd Quarter
2 Complete the recommendations as required.	3 rd Quarter
3 Complete the self-assessment questionnaire on an annual basis	Ongoing

Responsibility					
Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 			Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District Departments 		
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs included in recommendations from related strategies 			Potential Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program 		
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff 					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 2.7		Modernize Revitalization Tax Incentive Program			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Community Charter Section 226					
Strategy 3.1		Attract Virtual Workers			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					

Goal #3	Tumbler Ridge has a Diverse Economy			
Strategy 3.2	Identify and Address Gaps in the Local Mining Sector Supply Chain			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps				Year One Timeline
1. Contact Conuma Coal to schedule a meeting to determine how economic development can work with them (i.e. worker attraction, supply chain, new business/entrepreneur development, etc.)				2 nd Quarter
2. Determine a schedule for regular meetings (i.e. quarterly, bi-annually)				2 nd Quarter Ongoing
Responsibility				
Primary:		Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mining industry Community Futures 		
Resources Needed				
Funding/Budget:		Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct funding implications 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 		
Other:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time to attend meetings and any follow up requirements Mining industry representative's time to attend meetings 				
Timeframe				
This initiative is:				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing
Additional Information				
Strategy 3.3	Partner with TRUGGS on Specific Marketing Plan Strategies			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps				Year One Timeline
1. Meet with TRUGGS to determine what initiatives economic development can coordinate and partner on in 2018.				1 st Quarter
2. Based on meeting develop a schedule of meetings, events, shows, etc.				1 st Quarter Ongoing
Responsibility				
Primary:		Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Geopark 		
Resources Needed				
Funding/Budget:		Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding is dependent on events and shows attended. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program 		

Other:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to attend meetings and follow up requirements along with any event or tradeshow attendance • Global Geopark staff time 					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 3.4 Develop Tumbler Ridge as a Conference Destination					
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
1. Create a “Meet in Tumbler Ridge” page off the District website including a separate domain name, and relevant information (see the Economic Development Strategic Plan for additional details).				3 rd Quarter	
2. Develop a Marketing and Conference package (see the Economic Development Strategic Plan for additional details).				3 rd Quarter	
3. Throughout the process of completing the website and package consult with the conferencing meeting specialist for input and additional advisement.				3 rd Quarter	
4. Ensure materials are updated as required.				Ongoing	
Responsibility					
Primary:			Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Economic Development & Tourism • Economic Development Assistant 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Global Geopark • Local businesses 		
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget:			Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,000 to develop website and design marketing package 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Dividend Program 		
Other:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time from economic development staff • Conference meeting specialist time • Chamber of Commerce, Global Geopark and local business time 					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Membership in conference associations including: www.destinationcanada.com					

Strategy 3.5		Encourage a Partnership to Establish an Urban Reserve			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 3.6		Pursue Value Added Clean Energy Projects			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 3.7		Pursue a Partnership with Futurpreneur to Encourage Entrepreneurship			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
1. Contact Futurpreneur Canada to discuss their programs including ThriveNorth.				1 st Quarter	
2. Schedule a meeting to discuss how Tumbler Ridge could be a pilot community for ThriveNorth				2 nd Quarter	
3. Additional implementation steps dependent on agreement with Futurpreneur.				Ongoing	
Responsibility					
Primary:			Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Futures Futurpreneur Canada 		
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget:			Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct funding implication 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Futurpreneur Canada 		
Other:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time to attend meetings and any follow up requirements Community Futures staff time to provide support 					

Timeframe				
This initiative is:				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing
Additional Information				
<p>Program information can be found at: https://www.futurpreneur.ca/en/microsites/thrivenorth/</p> <p>Direct contact for Futurpreneur Canada is Paulina Cameron (pcameron@futurpreneur.ca – or telephone at 604-598-2923 ext. 4104)</p>				

Goal #4	Tumbler Ridge has a Dynamic Downtown Core			
Strategy 4.1	Establish the “Tumbler Ridge Co-working/Entrepreneurship Centre”			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps				Year One Timeline
1. Develop a working group (Community Futures, Futurpreneur, Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders) to develop a business plan.				2 nd Quarter
2. Negotiate agreement to acquire 200 Main Street (see Economic Development Strategic Plan).				3 rd Quarter
3. Once building is acquire set the next steps based on business plan for opening the centre in 2019.				4 th Quarter Ongoing
Responsibility				
Primary:		Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District departments Community Futures Futurpreneur Canada Chamber of Commerce 		
Resources Needed				
Funding/Budget:		Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program Northern Development Initiatives Trust Community Futures 		
Other:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff Time from other organizations, groups and local businesses 				
Timeframe				
This initiative is:				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing
Additional Information				
Strategy 4.2	Establish a Retail Incubator/Pop up Shop Program			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines				
Action Steps				Year One Timeline
1. Undertake research of retail incubators and pop up shops in Canada and North America to collect information including best practices.				2 nd Quarter
2. Make contact with other communities to collect additional information and begin to develop a plan. Communities should include Powell River and Merritt.				2 nd Quarter
3. Reach out to local businesses and Farmers Market representatives to provide information collected and determine how to proceed. Chamber of				2 nd Quarter

Commerce, Global Geopark and Tumbler Ridge Love could also be at initial meeting.		
4. Determine the need for a bylaw to manage a pop-up shop program		2 nd Quarter
5. Attend 2018 Farmers' Market and other related events to gather interest in a retail incubator/pop up shop program for 2019.		3 rd Quarter
6. Annual attendance and review of program		Ongoing
Responsibility		
<p>Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 	<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant District departments Various groups and organizations including Chamber, Geopark and TR Love 	
Resources Needed		
<p>Funding/Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct budget implication 	<p>Potential Sources:</p> <p>N/A</p>	
<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff Time from other organizations, groups and local businesses 		
Timeframe		
This initiative is:		
	Year One	Year Two
		Year Three
		Ongoing
Additional Information		
<p>Winnipeg's Downtown Incubator and Pop Up Shop program http://downtownwinnipegbiz.com/launchit/ Stories and information on pop-up shops https://pop-upshops.ca/ https://www.retail-insider.com/retail-insider/2017/7/pop-up http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/pop-up-shops-retail-1.4346501</p>		
Strategy 4.3 Create a Vibrant and Lively Downtown		
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines		
Action Steps	Year One Timeline	
1. Contact Port Alberni to discuss how the process they undertook to have year-round music in their community and the benefits they have experienced.	2 nd Quarter	
2. Meet with relevant District Departments to determine requirements for allowing music and expanding free Wi-Fi year-round into the downtown core.	2 nd Quarter	
3. Complete a report to propose music and expand free Wi-Fi for Council.	2 nd Quarter	
4. Present proposal to allow music and expand free Wi-Fi to Council for approval	2 nd Quarter	
5. Upon approval implement music and expanded Wi-Fi. Ensure this initiative is communicated out.	2 nd Quarter	

6. Work with local building owners and regional arts to revitalize empty buildings with windows of art.	3 rd Quarter
7. Review annually.	Ongoing

Responsibility

<p align="center">Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Economic Development & Tourism • Economic Development Assistant 	<p align="center">Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant District Departments • Chamber of Commerce • Global Geopark
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Resources Needed

<p>Funding/Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal budget implication. 	<p>Potential Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District of Tumbler Ridge • Peace Region Internet Society • Northern Development Initiatives Trust
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Other:

- Time from economic development staff and relevant District Departments
- Time from other organizations and groups including Chamber of Commerce, Geopark and building owners/landlords

Timeframe

This initiative is:

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
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Additional Information

Strategy 4.4 Façade Improvement Program

Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines

Action Steps	Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>	

Timeframe

This initiative is:

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
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Additional Information

Strategy 4.5 Strengthen the Chamber of Commerce

Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines

Action Steps	Year One Timeline
1. Meet with Chamber of Commerce to discuss how economic development can work together to help strengthen their organization. See Economic Development Strategic Plan for ideas and suggestions.	1 st Quarter
2. Future action steps dependent on discussions and outcomes from meeting(s) with Chamber of Commerce.	Ongoing

Responsibility

<p align="center">Primary:</p>	<p align="center">Support:</p>
---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chamber of Commerce 				
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	Potential Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program District of Tumbler Ridge 				
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff and relevant District Departments Time from other organizations and groups including Chamber of Commerce 					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					

Goal #5	Tumbler Ridge is an Attractive Place to Live				
Strategy 5.1	Create a Tumbler Ridge Attraction Campaign				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
<p>Samples of resident attraction campaigns include: http://powellriver.info/liveinvest/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=271&Itemid=669 http://www.investkelowna.com/how-we-help/market-development/talent-attraction/</p>					
Strategy 5.2	Track Youth Leaving Town				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 5.3	Establish a Resident Response Team				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 5.4	Assist with Medical and Healthcare Recruitment				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
1. Meet with Health Authority to determine what is currently being done to recruit healthcare workers to Tumbler Ridge.				2 nd Quarter	
2. Together with Health Authority determine what the District can do to complement existing efforts.				2 nd Quarter	

3. Develop video testimonial(s) from current doctor and other healthcare workers.		3 rd Quarter	
4. Determine ongoing steps.		Ongoing	
Responsibility			
Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Economic Development Assistant 		Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Health Authority Tumbler Ridge Health Centre 	
Resources Needed			
Funding/Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$5,000 		Potential Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Dividend Program Northern Development Initiatives Trust 	
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from economic development staff Time from other organizations and groups including Health Authority and Tumbler Ridge Health Centre 			
Timeframe			
This initiative is:			
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
			Ongoing
Additional Information			
Strategy 5.5	Welcome Home Program		
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines			
Action Steps			Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>			
Timeframe			
This initiative is:			
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
			Ongoing
Additional Information			

Goal #6.0	Tumbler Ridge has a Workforce for the Future				
Strategy 6.1	Proud to Live in Tumbler Ridge				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 6.2	Work Here Website				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
www.imaginekootenay.com https://moveupprincegeorge.ca/ https://www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com/workforce/					

Goal #7	Tumbler Ridge has an Infrastructure to Accommodate Growth				
Strategy 7.1	Plan and Approve Future Residential Land Development Areas and Infrastructure Expansion				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					2 nd Quarter
					2 nd Quarter
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 7.2	Maximize Federal and Provincial Infrastructure and Housing Grant Applications				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 7.3	Invest in Broadband Internet Connectivity				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
1. Review and consider Telus proposal					1 st Quarter
2. Complete due-diligence of alternative provides/utility networks					1 st Quarter
3. Approve expenditure for broadband expansion					3 rd Quarter
4. Determine next steps for implementation in 2019					4 th Quarter
Responsibility					
Primary:			Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council/Operations 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism Utility provider Northern Development Initiatives Trust 		
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget:			Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1.2 - \$1.5 million (this will not be an expense from the Economic Development budget) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Development Initiatives Trust 		

Other:					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Connecting British Columbia Program - https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/partner-programs/connecting-british-columbia/					
Strategy 7.4	Advance Rail, Airport, Golf Course, Cemetery, RV Parks and Landfill Master Plans				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
No Year One Action Steps					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 7.5	Apply for Asset Management Funding via MAMP Grant				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
1. Apply for funding					4 th Quarter
Responsibility					
Primary:			Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 		
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget:			Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$60,000 (FCM \$50,000, District \$10,000) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FCM 		
Other:					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Funding: Municipal Asset Management Program https://fcm.ca/home/programs/municipal-asset-management-program/funding-mamp.htm					

Strategy 7.6	Consider a Development Cost Charge Bylaw				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 7.7	Establish 10-year Capital Plan				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
1. Evaluate and prioritize needs					2 nd Quarter
2. Public consultation					3 rd Quarter
3. Plan adoption					4 th Quarter
Responsibility					
Primary:			Support:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council/CFO/Operations 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Economic Development & Tourism 		
Resources Needed					
Funding/Budget:			Potential Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10,000 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 		
Other:					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 7.8	Utilize Utility Reserves for Maximum Benefit				
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps					Year One Timeline
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					

Strategy 7.9		Plan and Approve Industrial Park Expansion			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					
Strategy 7.10		Expedite Sand and Gravel Pit Explorations			
Year One Major Action Steps and Timelines					
Action Steps				Year One Timeline	
<i>No Year One Action Steps</i>					
Timeframe					
This initiative is:					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Ongoing	
Additional Information					

Appendix A: Infrastructure Gap Analysis

Aspen Lands Advisory Ltd. provides this summary regarding the Investment Readiness & Marketing Plan initiative. It is important to evaluate and quantify the available capacity in the engineering infrastructure to ensure that growth and development can be supported without additional burden to the District. In particular, due to the available capacity, this report will combine the Infrastructure Gap Analysis, Servicing Capabilities and Capacities, and Trigger Point & Funding Strategy initiatives.

Key Documents & Supporting Information

- 5.3.1 Official Community Plan;
- 5.3.2 Sustainability Plan 2014;
- 5.3.3 Community Tourism Plan 2014;
- 5.3.4 Community Profile 2014
- 5.3.5 Relocation Guide 2017;
- 5.3.6 Business Directory 2017; and
- 5.3.7 Visitor Guide 2017;
- + Subdivision & Development Servicing Bylaw No 594 2012
- + Resource Directory
- + Urban Design Guidelines 2006
- Tumbler Ridge Airport Land Use Plan & Development Plan October 2009
- Municipal Asset Management Program – Grant Consideration
<https://fcm.ca/home/programs/municipal-asset-management-program/funding-mamp.htm>
- Asset Management for Sustainable Service Delivery: A BC Framework
- Evaluate grant opportunities for affordable housing & infrastructure
- + CMHC’s Affordable Rental Innovation Fund
- Realtor Listings for Residential (99) & Commercial (28) Properties
- Land Ownership: Town Centre
- Land Ownership: Industrial Park
- Water System Annual Report 2016
- Tumbler Ridge Airport Land Use Plan & Development Plan October 2009
- Asset Management Assessment and Next Steps: 2015-07-28
- 2017 Road Corridor Assessment: 2017-07-31
- Water, Sanitary & Storm Mapbooks

Analysis & Observations

Noted on the website and highlighted in discussions with Staff is the understanding that the infrastructure installed in the early 1980’s was designed to support as many as 10,000 people. The water supply, treatment and distribution systems, as well as the wastewater treatment and disposal systems are in very good condition, and operating at approximately 30% capacity based on the current population. It was suggested that growth from 2,800 to 4,500 people could be accommodated without triggering any major infrastructure upgrades.

In recent years Tumbler Ridge has undertaken regular upgrades and improvements:

- Water retrofits to meet Northern Health guidelines w. two sand filter upgrades
- WWTP retrofits w. new aerators, 2nd cell, blower replacement
- Roads: Lower Bench – full repaving & reconstruction w. cbs, valves, curb/gutter/sidewalk

Opportunities:

Based on the information provided, and some detailed condition assessments of roads and underground infrastructure, the only key component not reviewed is the asset management program under development. At approximately 35 years old for some infrastructure, key maintenance, rehabilitation, and repair/replacement options need to be costed and evaluated. A comprehensive inventory of all assets is crucial, and a program to ensure long-term sustainability is crucial. For this reason we strongly encourage the expediting of the program to ensure a comprehensive inventory, laser scanning for a current condition assessment, basic spreadsheet or complex software, training, as well as application and pursuit of available grant funding.

- Noted in the 2017 Road Corridor Assessment were recommendations for preventative maintenance budget, geotechnical assessments, utility reviews for leak detection, valve operation, and video inspections.
- The cost estimates are impressive for repair and maintenance, but the program should be expanded to account for major rehabilitation and replacement.
- Noted in the 2016 Water System Annual Report, maintenance is underway, but long-term capital planning was not addressed.

Growth areas within existing District Lands and potential Crown Land expansions represent enormous opportunities, and should be undertaken with a comprehensive land-use planning approach. Area Sector Plans/Neighbourhood Concept Plans are structures well-evolved across BC that allow for the evaluation and assessment of natural resources, environmental considerations, land-use opportunities, servicing requirements, community amenity and development potential evaluation within a public and transparent process. Consideration should be given to advancing these opportunities to shovel-ready investment/development possibilities.

It was noted that there is a reserve fund for equipment as well as water and sewer infrastructure. These funds should be leveraged for maximum benefit. Staff may wish to consider the use of Local Area Services and/or Spec.Areas in order to expand the network and recover costs through Latecomer Agreements. Expansion of the Industrial Park for example may be a valuable investment.

Staff noted that both water treatment and distribution, as well as garbage collection, do not currently operate on a full cost recovery model. While these subsidies may be warranted and appropriate, it is important that full costing be available for key decision making.

The airport and railway represent key connectivity to the community, and the required maintenance/upgrades to maximize the benefit and leverage the potential of these assets should be considered. At approx. \$12m in recommended upgrades at the airport, a value/impact analysis would be an appropriate next step. The cemetery expansion appeared to add much-needed capacity yet the long-term availability and planning of future upgrades should be planned and quantified.

Finally, it is noted that lands around the landfill may be suitable for growth/development; however, it is strongly encouraged that a Nuisance Study be commissioned to ensure that any protection/setbacks/impacts are known in advance and mitigated prior to proceeding.

Conclusion:

Tumber Ridge is in the enviable position of having very strong infrastructure, in very good condition, capable of supporting significant additional development. However, sustainable asset management and funding solutions should be determined now to allow for adequate preventative maintenance and repair. In addition, the pro-active expansion of the system to support growth will be a key actionable item in helping ensure long-term funding and working towards cost recovery.

Yours truly,

ASPEN LANDS ADVISORY LTD.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "James Kay". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

James B. Kay, P.Eng

Principal/Project Manager

Appendix B: Conference Opportunities and Assessment

Conference Direct. provides this update regarding the Investment Readiness & Marketing Plan initiative from the December 12, 2017, visit to the community. It is important to evaluate and quantify the available capacity in the conferencing infrastructure to ensure that growth and development of the sector can be supported.

Key Documents & Supporting Information Reviewed Prior to Visit

- District of Tumbler Ridge website
- Accommodation(s) and Amenities websites
- Chamber of Commerce website

Analysis & Observations

When first approached to assess Tumbler Ridge as a conference or meeting location the first step was to research the community online to find out as much information as possible. This first step is what those involved in the conference/meeting industry will do. Being born and raised in BC I have to admit I was not familiar with Tumbler Ridge and was unknowledgeable as to its location, size of the community and other basic facts. The information available online was limited, and it was difficult to find the right information on hosting conferences or meetings in Tumbler Ridge. There was information on the Trend Hotel. Unfortunately, there is no information on what type of facilities they have or any other information that would assist someone looking to host a conference or meeting. It was only during the visit to the community and the hotel itself that it becomes clear the Trend Hotel ballroom is more than sufficient for conferencing and meeting space. Information on a community needs to be found within three clicks. Otherwise those in the conference/meeting industry will move on to the next community.

There are always clients looking to host meetings for 20 – 25 people and are looking for unique or original places – Tumbler Ridge can easily meet this requirement, however, until the community is visited no one would know this.

Recommendations:

After the community visit, and combined with the online research, there are several things that Tumbler Ridge can do to improve their capacity to attract and host conferences and meetings.

- “MeetinTumblerRidge” Website – currently there is little or no information on conferences/meetings/events for Tumbler Ridge. There is an accommodation page where you can then find the Trend Hotel website, but there is limited information. It is suggested Tumbler Ridge create a “Meet in Tumbler Ridge” page where meeting specific information can be provided. The page should have references or feedback quotes from events and groups that have already met there along with easy to find specific contact information for someone that will respond to questions within a 24-business hour period. The meeting trend is that organizers are looking in the year for the year (within the 4-6 week window) so any delay in response could mean lost opportunity.
- Create a summary page of meeting spaces (square feet, capacity charts in rounds and in theatre style), caterers, off-site activities; restaurant dinner buy out capacities, etc.).

- List on external websites with Tumbler Ridge specific information such as Meeting and Conventions Canada, MICE, etc. to increase online presence. Currently, there is information on places surrounding Tumbler Ridge for meetings which result in sending organizers to Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Fort St. John, Tumbler Ridge needs to ensure it can be found.
- Having a specific page on the current Tumbler Ridge website is a great way to start. Down the road, it is suggested a meetings/events specific website be created targeting meetings and specific niche markets.
- Ensure there is information available online about existing events – sporting, cultural, recreational, etc. By showing what happens in Tumbler Ridge from an events perspective helps to show that Tumbler Ridge has resources on site to host.
- Update, maintain and increase presence on travel websites – TripAdvisor (replying to positive comments, assisting travelers with questions, etc.), increase Instagram followers and design specific campaigns for meetings and events.
- Development of Meet in Tumbler Ridge package, this can be separate or in addition to the existing tourism pamphlet. The information that can be given at trade shows, on USB or mailed out to potential groups.
- Resources for potential clients or meetings/events. Look to Ft. St. John, Grand Prairie, Dawson Creek (meeting reader boards are a great resource as to who is hosting meetings in the areas)
- Offer incentive(s) to companies already doing business in the area - training meetings, their next board meeting etc.
- Signage - more of a presence from Fort St. John: Route I took was fly into Fort St. John, rental car from the airport to Tumbler Ridge and back. Beautiful drive - very dark in some parts with no lighting along certain stretches. I used Google to find my way but noticed there is not a lot of signage, directional or otherwise for Tumbler Ridge. As you get closer, and within the community, there is more signage which is very helpful to a visitor.
- Golf Tournaments – With an executive golf course on site, is there opportunity for companies doing business in the area to do fundraising golf tournaments or leverage the facility to provide exposure for Tumbler Ridge.
- Transportation - Get a better understanding (and include in package(s) and all information) on other ways to access Tumbler Ridge from major hubs. A big challenge is the fact that it takes longer than an hour to access the destination. Whistler, Banff – although significantly larger in size, capacity, etc. – are very good at marketing to and targeting the clients as well as programs that will consider that. One way to overcome the challenge is to have easy solutions with pricing at the ready; this would be either company pricing or company information included in package pricing. If an organizer knows it will cost \$500.000 per person to fly them in from Ft. St. John or Prince George from the beginning, it takes the guesswork out of it and makes it a viable (or not in some cases) option to get meeting attendees there easier. In some cases, it is a lot to ask for companies, associations, or groups to fly people in, for them to all rent cars with a 2.5-hour drive

etc. Alternatively, putting people on a bus is likely not an option for board meetings or those meetings with an expectation of higher levels of service.

- Start with Tour/Travel - the ones that will take a bus and travel that distance - 2-night stay and play packages for TT/leisure group travel. Get on their Northern BC Tour stops (bird watching, adventure tourism packages etc.).
- Push the working together concept already in the economic development strategy report is key. Hotels need to understand the caliber of experience Tumbler Ridge is marketing or wants to market to. Alongside the restaurants, caterers, activities - if they can come together and Tumbler Ridge can produce examples of 2-3 day packages or have tour/travel package pricing they can offer incentive companies or such then it is all about being ready and going out and getting themselves out there. Familiarization visits to target markets once marketing is ready, once packages and experiences are set then that will help push Tumbler Ridge forward quickly.

I fell in love with Tumble Ridge. Your community has so much going for it, and the potential is off the chart, but it will take time to develop packages and to work with local businesses to get everyone on board. I can see great one, three and five-year plans can definitely be managed and zeroed in on the steps needed to make the meetings/events a viable revenue stream in the community. The above is just a start and some initial thoughts. I would be happy to sit down with John or other community representatives again to assist any way I can.

Yours truly,
Conference Direct



Allison Gavin
Global Account Executive