

Investing in our Nation Through Economic Innovation



Norway House Cree Nation 2023 Interim Progress Report



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Message from Chief & Council



“Economic development is not about bricks, mortar, and concrete. It’s about improving the lives, dignity, and opportunities of people.”

- Muhammad Yunus,
Nobel Peace Prize Winner

An empowering message that reflects the vision for economic development in our community. It’s not just about numbers; it’s about our well-being, our culture, and the opportunities we create together. As leaders of our Nation, our hope is to build a future that enriches the lives of our community members and preserves our way of being. Our shared journey is about empowerment, unity, and creating a lasting legacy for generations to come. For First Nations, economic development is not just about material wealth but, more importantly, about enhancing lives, preserving dignity, and creating opportunities.

It has been a year and a half since we began our current term as Chief and Council of Norway House Cree Nation. As leaders of our Nation, we have sought to invest in our Nation through economic innovation. Our immediate focus has been on community infrastructure, economic development, and strategic partnerships.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Economic Development Department for leading the creation of our 5-Year Economic Development Strategy which was ratified in April 2023. With it, we now have a framework which sets the vision, mission, and overarching strategic goals for our community’s development. This Strategy will shape our economic future in a way that aligns with our cultural and social priorities.

The Economic Development Strategy and related projects aim to improve the well-being of our people, reduce poverty, create jobs, enhance infrastructure, foster innovation, and promote inclusive



and sustainable growth. This report touches upon the extensive work that we have completed to date, the investments we have received related to each project, and economic projects planned. These initiatives, tailored to the unique needs of our region and community, collectively play a vital role in our economic progress and positively contribute to the advancement of our overarching Economic Development Strategy.

Our dedication to building a prosperous and sustainable community from the outset of our term has not gone unnoticed. Norway House received well-deserved recognition as the 2023 CANDO Community Economic Developer of the Year. Our ongoing efforts to advance NHCN reflect our steadfast commitment to enhancing the well-being of our members. Our investments in Housing, the introduction of our own Police Department and the First Nation Safety Officer Program, investments in education, the expansion of recreation programming, and advancements in tourism have all been made possible through our unwavering diligence over the years in securing a sound financial position. A stronger economy is empowering us to make substantial investments in improving social services, creating employment opportunities and providing supports for families.

Initiatives like the Health Centre of Excellence, construction of the new Business Center, the fiber optic project, the joint venture with Bison Modular Homes, the FMS certification through the Financial Management Board, partnerships with mineral exploration companies, and various other projects currently underway all play a vital role in bolstering the economy of our Nation. They drive investment, promote economic diversification, and have a significant positive impact on our community's financial well-being.

Overall, \$350 million in funding has been committed to date, a remarkable achievement that we feel tremendously honored to have brought into our community. Our achievements showcase what we can accomplish when we work together. We recognize that we still have a housing shortage and other obstacles, but we are committed to addressing our many challenges.

Each success has been made possible through the collective effort of our community, and we look forward to continuing our vision of becoming the economic hub of the north. In this vision, a thriving economy leads to a community that is both prosperous and healthy for generations to come.

Ekosani.

CANDO Award Winner



2023 Economic Developer of the Year

Norway House Cree Nation won the prestigious CANDO Economic Developer of the Year Award for efforts in driving economic development in the community.

NHCN presented a five-year economic development strategy, which included construction of the Norway House Health Center of Excellence, partnerships with multiple mineral exploration companies, construction of a new business center, construction of a fiber link from the community to the provincial data network, Bison Modular Homes, and FMS certification through the Financial Management Board.

The vision of the five-year strategy is to create infrastructure, grow the local economy, create a skilled workforce, improve community well-being and establish Norway House as a hub of the north.



Skilled Professional Workforce



**Strong Local Economy/
Own-source Revenue**



Enabling Infrastructure



Improving Community Well-being & Resilience



Established as "Hub of the North"

Economic Progress To Date



Fiber

NHCN Broadband is eagerly awaiting the arrival of fiber infrastructure to the community.

We have set up an Internal Distribution Network, with nine towers providing access points within 2km of most residents. This has increased capacity and will support reliability.

When Fiber services are fully operational, it will replace the current wireless connection, reducing the 160km wireless run and addressing environmental concerns. Manitoba Hydro Telecom (MHT) will deliver 10GB via Fiber, ensuring consistent service for all, eliminating weather-related outages and increasing speeds.

Future plans involve expanding capacity in partnership with MHT.

Project Status: Substantively Complete

Economic Progress To Date



Health Centre of Excellence

The Norway House Cree Nation Health Centre of Excellence project is nearly 97% complete and is the largest Health Centre project undertaken by Indigenous Services Canada in partnership with NHCN.

Its uniqueness lies with the expanded Renal Dialysis delivery units and low risk birthing suites to support the community members and allow mothers and newborns to remain close to family and support networks. It includes a professional accommodations building, providing 28 units for housing staff.

Operational readiness activities are ongoing, with a scheduled Health Division move-in of November 2023, and Primary Care Clinic and Hospital relocation in March 2024.

Project Status: Substantively Complete



Economic Progress To Date



Community Business Centre

We are excited to share the progress on the development of the Norway House Cree Nation (NHCN) Business Centre. NHCN has partnered with Bison Economic Development (BED) to lead this significant project.

NHCN's Business Centre project has been organized into three phases for efficiency: Phase 1 focuses on the Local Grocery Store with a Pharmacy, a Convenience Store, and a Food Court offering five new food vendors to the community. Design work is over 50% complete for this phase and construction will begin in March 2024.

Phase 2 will transform the Multiplex into a modern and dynamic space, with Phase 3 introducing a central public plaza, aligning with the future Veterans Hall.

Additionally, we are building strong municipal infrastructure to support the Business Centre and future projects, ensuring sustained economic growth.

Project Status: Project Moving Forward



Taylor Building

NHCN is proud to announce that it is working towards the purchase of the land and building at 820 Taylor Avenue in Winnipeg, MB.

The 200,000 square foot building is set to fit a wide range of tenants including KSMA, NHCN Winnipeg offices and medical services with an entire floor to be dedicated to Jordan's Principle.

The building will act as a benchmark for the NHCN community with hopes to encourage additional First Nation's economic development.

Project Status: Project Initiated and Moving Forward

Economic Progress To Date



Housing

The housing department currently oversees 1,258 residences, comprised of CMHC, homeowner, and band-built houses. With a rapidly growing population, we are managing over 600 new housing applications. Ongoing projects include:

- Constructing 13 bungalows within the CMHC Section 95 category.
- Building six single family bungalows within the CMHC Section 95 category.
- Setting up 23 modular homes, including 16 new four-bedroom units and seven refurbished three-bedroom units.
- Implementing three renovation programs to enhance 30 homes.
- A community initiative to construct 40 homes by March 31, 2025, with each home measuring 24 x 24 feet.

NHCN Housing is actively collaborating with the government to explore funding opportunities for expanding new housing construction within the community.

Project Status: Projects Substantively Complete and Ongoing



Tourism

Over the past three years, NHCN Parks and Recreation has focused on post-pandemic visitor growth. We have improved infrastructure with a pavilion, kitchen, and a wooden York Boat for historical insights.

Our tourism-related programs include Treaty and York Boat Days (15,000+ attendees in 2023), the Sasquatch Fishing Derby (2000+ attendees in 2023), our annual Pipoon Festival, and a new Brent Wilson Memorial Hockey Tournament hosted in Winnipeg in 2022.

These efforts aim to enhance tourism, the economy, and community events.

Project Status: Complete and Ongoing

Economic Progress To Date



Education

In the Fall of 2022, a feasibility study was conducted for the renovation of Jack River and HBO schools. The renovations were successfully completed in the Spring of 2022. Chief and Council have remained committed to advocating for a new school, with Chief Anderson engaging in discussions with the Ministers of ISC and senior staff to push for this important initiative. These efforts will persist as Norway House works toward the design and construction of a much-needed new school, given that the student population continues to outgrow the current facilities. Currently, NHCN is included in the top 10 communities eligible to receive a new school.

By the end of September 2023, the Modular classrooms were delivered and seamlessly integrated into the community. Ongoing work throughout November 2023 includes converting one of the trailers into a washroom and installing decking around the perimeter of the classrooms and between the units. We anticipate the completion of Hydro and propane connections by the end of November, ensuring the full functionality of these classrooms.

Additionally, the renovation project for the teacherages on Mission Island is currently underway. This project involves the renovation of two duplexes and one four-plex, with an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. We do not have a confirmed completion date. However, we expect the renovations to be finished by the spring of 2024.

Project Status: Projects Substantively Complete and Moving Towards a New School



Mining

Norway House has made a significant investment in Flying Nickel Mining Corporation, acquiring 15,146,862 shares, which has elevated our ownership to nearly 18.1%—making us the second-largest shareholder. This ownership ensures we play a key role in shaping the company's future, aligning with our community's interests.

In addition to this, NHCN has secured \$275,000 in funding from Prairie Canada to provide training and certification, creating 10-15 job opportunities within our community. We are excited about the potential this initiative holds as we work alongside the management team to make Minago the world's greenest nickel mine. It is an exciting venture that promises a brighter future for our community.

Project Status: Funding Secured

Economic Progress To Date



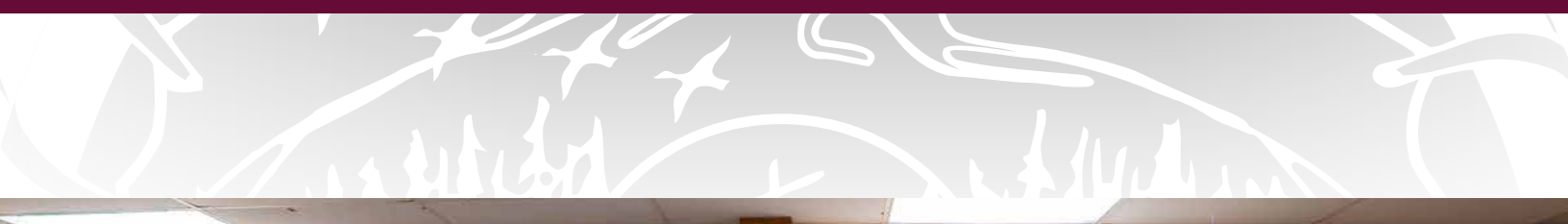
2-Mile and 8-Mile Channel

NHCN continues its efforts to remediate the lands and water that have been harmed by the construction of the 2-Mile and 8-Mile Channels.

The summer of 2023 witnessed the identification and extraction of over 700 construction debris targets at the 8-Mile Channel and extensive remediation of contaminated soils at both sites.

The project team, led by Chief Anderson, has strongly emphasized the need for long term shoreline stabilization solutions and the removal of marine debris in their future objectives.

Project Status: In Progress



Playgreen Development Corporation

Playgreen Development Corporation (PDC) remains committed to internal band projects, including housing initiatives, public works, and collaborations like our joint venture with JNR Construction.

This year, our rock crushing division has been particularly active, completing five significant blasting projects. This is nearly twice the normal amount of blasting projects, illustrating the amount of road maintenance and site preparation completed in Norway House Cree Nation this year. To enhance our capabilities, we have expanded our equipment fleet with a grader, front-end loader, two bulldozers, and three service trucks. Notably, we have successfully reintegrated staff who had previously joined JNR, a testament to our competitive wage scale and the appeal of returning to the community.

Our commitment extends to year-round maintenance of four essential winter road contracts, ensuring access to northern communities without disruption. We have also recently completed the Line 12 Hydro contract and initiated two significant contracts with Hydro, such as the Whiskey Jack access road and the Highway 6 to 2-mile Channel project, providing critical access to the 40-mile channel. For the second year in a row, PDC maintains its COR certification, enabling us to bid for open contracts in Manitoba. Lastly, plans are in place to improve our internal roads, possibly involving full paving. This year, we have achieved approximately a \$5 million profit margin. These accomplishments highlight our ongoing dedication to community development and project excellence.

Project Status: Complete and Ongoing

Economic Progress To Date



Recreation Projects

The Parks and Recreation Division plays a pivotal role in supporting our community members and visitors to provide quality programming and increase our participation rates.

Infrastructure-related recreation developments include the Fisherman's Co-op Tent, the construction of the Mission Island Community Centre, improvements to the Jack River Bridge area and the construction of outdoor rinks.

In addition to annual programming like Treaty and York Boat, Fishing Derbies, the Pipoon Festival, and the support of the Brent Wilson Memorial Hockey Tournament, we have also hosted programs such as extra good-time hockey, a basketball league, badminton nights, indoor soccer nights, floor hockey, and console gaming.

Project Status: Complete and Ongoing

Economic Projects Planned



Jordan's Principle Building

Norway House Cree Nation is thrilled to provide an update on the construction of our new Jordan's Principle facility, with a planned size of approximately 11,000 square feet.

Over the past year, we have made significant strides, securing \$254,200 from Indigenous Services Canada to complete pre-capital planning. Most planning tasks are nearing completion, with a report and cost estimate set for mid-November.

Stantec is currently developing construction drawings, and the construction tender package is scheduled for release in 2024. Construction will begin once the tender bid is approved.

Project Status: Funding Secured for Next Phase of Building

Economic Projects Planned



Feasibility Study for a Bridge

Over the past year, Norway House Cree Nation has engaged in discussions with Canada and the province to construct a bridge at Sea Falls.

The lack of a bridge has frequently disrupted food, mail, medicine, and fuel delivery, as well as access to essential services and employment.

Canada and the province have committed to a 50/50 cost sharing of the feasibility study, and a Request for Proposal is underway. Additionally, a Contribution Agreement between Manitoba and Canada is being developed, and regular meetings between Manitoba and NHCN are happening to implement the project at the earliest opportunity.

Project Status: Funding Secured



Daycare

An exciting initiative has been undertaken for Norway House—a 74-space childcare center that has been awarded as part of the Canada-Manitoba Wide Early Learning and Childcare Agreement.

This endeavor is further supported by the Provincial government through an annual operating grant, marking a significant step forward in enhancing childcare services in our community.

Project Status: Funding Secured and Moving Forward

Economic Projects Planned



Roads

For the past three years, Norway House Cree Nation has collaborated with Manitoba Infrastructure, Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations to address road improvements.

This journey began in 1980 when Manitoba sought land ownership for internal roads. In 1999, a 25-year agreement was signed for road maintenance, but issues arose due to insufficient inspections and funding. Following discussions, a Class D Estimate of \$15 million was agreed to and Manitoba requested NHCN assume road ownership. NHCN requested Canada accept the roads on their behalf.

Currently, Manitoba is in the process of soliciting internal feedback and comments for the Request for Proposal.

Project Status: MOU signed, Funding Approved



Total Funding Committed to Date: \$350 million

Closing Message & Prayer

In conclusion, let us celebrate the remarkable journey we have undertaken together, driven by our shared vision of economic empowerment, unity, and a legacy that will resonate for generations to come. Recognition as the 2023 CANDO Community Economic Developer of the Year is a testament to the dedication and hard work that our community has invested in its future.

As we look back at the \$350 million in funding commitments, the investments in housing, education, safety, and numerous projects that have bolstered our community's well-being, we see what can be achieved through collective effort and unwavering commitment.

These successes are the steppingstones to our future as the economic hub of the north, a place where prosperity and health coexist for generations to come. Together, we have the strength, creativity, and resilience to overcome any challenges that may lie ahead. On behalf of leadership, I would like to thank NHCN Council for their hard work and dedication.

Thank you for being a part of this journey, and here's to the brighter, prosperous future that awaits us!



MOU between NHCN, MKO, and the Asper School of Business

In August 2023, Norway House Cree Nation, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), and the University of Manitoba's Asper School of Business entered into a strategic partnership through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

This MOU is the result of months of discussions and strategic meetings between the three parties and is a historic step in the ongoing journey toward Reconciliation.

It is the first of its kind for the Asper School of Business and formalizes the commitment by the Asper School to work closely with Norway House Cree Nation and MKO to support the future of First Nations people and business.

It symbolizes a commitment to economic Reconciliation through business education and outlines several areas of synergy between the respective organizations.

Project Status: Complete and Ongoing

**May God
Continue to Bless
Norway House
Cree Nation**



**Contact the Norway House
Cree Nation Economic
Development Department**

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