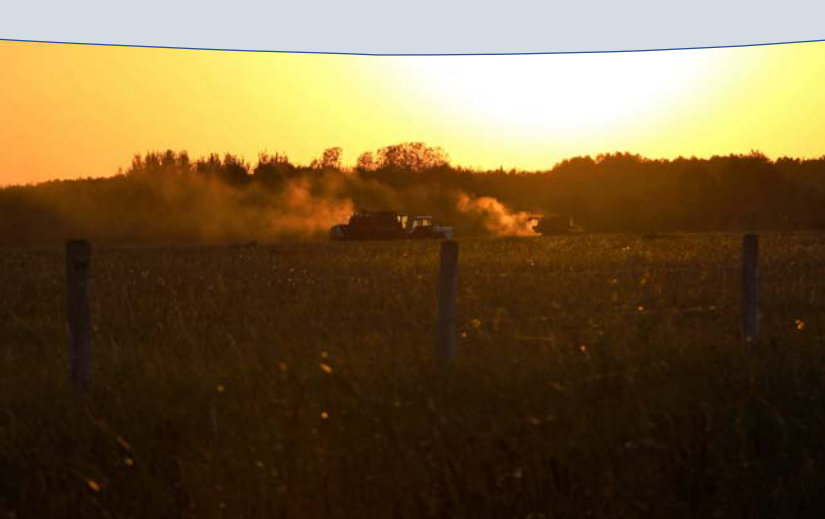


# LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2020-2026



## Rural Municipality of Alexander

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## LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING OVERVIEW

In spring 2019, the Rural Municipality of Alexander conducted a strategic planning process that identified increased economic development activities as a key priority for local area growth. According to the Municipal Act, municipalities are responsible for delivering local public services, including economic development. Based on this responsibility and priority, the Rural Municipality of Alexander hired an Economic Development Officer (EDO) in June 2019 to respond to opportunities and challenges related to local economic development. The economic development services the Rural Municipality of Alexander will provide fall within the areas of business attraction and retention; infrastructure and development support; tourism; and local marketing.

The RM of Alexander selected an “in house” municipal structure to deliver economic development services. The economic development goals, activities and budget are approved by the municipal council and the EDO reports to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Partner agencies and local residents are consulted with as required and collaborations will be formed to help meet economic development goals.



Following the hiring of the EDO, a community economic development planning process began with assistance from Community Futures Winnipeg River (CFWR). To begin the process, a meeting was held with the council, EDO and CAO to determine the priorities and parameters for the new EDO to work within. In addition, economic development related priorities and strategies from the **Rural Municipality of Alexander Strategic Plan** were discussed and elaborated on to sync them with this **Local Economic Development Strategy**. The next steps in the economic development process included research and information gathering to gain a strong understanding of the local area social and economic climate. Using this data, the **Local Economic Development Strategy** was developed to set clear direction and focus for area growth over the next five years.

## VISION FOR RURAL MANITOBA

The following 10-year future vision for rural Manitoba exists within the **Rural Economic Development Strategy for Manitoba** and will align with our local economic development plan:



## MANITOBA RURAL ECONOMIC GOALS

By 2025, the province hopes to achieve the following outcomes. The goals set in the local economic development plan are aligned and will contribute towards achieving the broader provincial goals.

- ✓ To increase the population across rural Manitoba by 150,000
- ✓ To grow existing businesses in rural Manitoba by 20%
- ✓ To increase the number of businesses by 3,000 in rural Manitoba

## REGIONAL MISSION

The North Eastman Region has determined the following regional Mission Statement to enhance economic growth in the larger trading area in Eastern Manitoba:

*To work together to create a positive and progressive economic future for Eastern Manitoba that is more diverse, sought after and competitive within Manitoba, Canada and the world.*

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC GOALS

Based on research and input from the region gathered in 2016, the following economic goals were determined for Eastern Manitoba to work collectively to achieve:

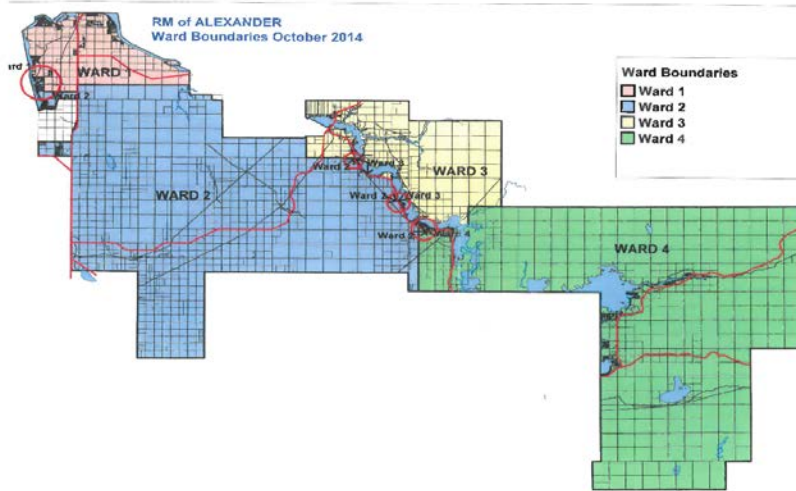
- ✓ Strengthen and diversify the economic base and workforce of the region.
- ✓ Enhance physical infrastructure and services within the region to support business development and high quality living.
- ✓ Strengthen human resource capacity required for economic development.
- ✓ Increase visitation and population within the region.

The goals set in the local economic development plan are aligned and will contribute towards achieving the broader provincial goals.

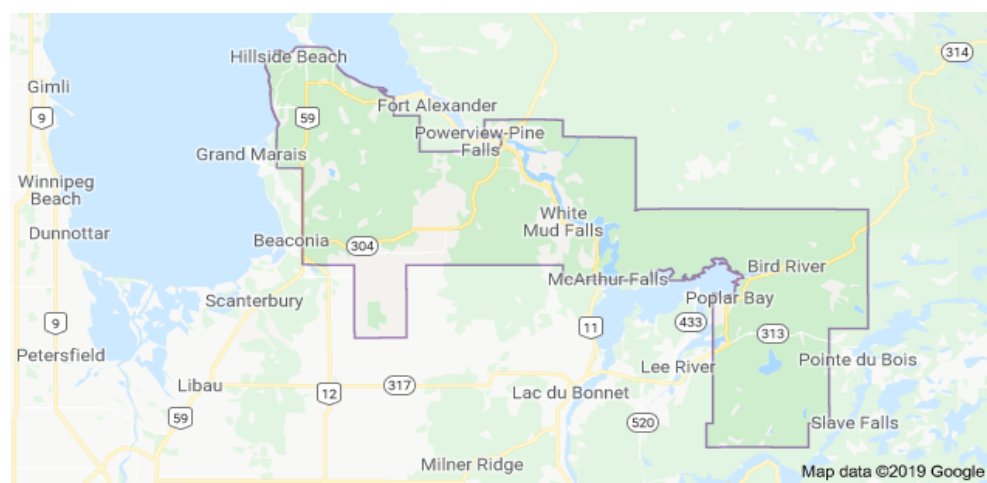


## SOCIAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Rural Municipality of Alexander is situated in eastern Manitoba, and covers 1,568 square kilometres of land area that ranges from the rugged characteristics of the Winnipeg River corridor to agricultural lands in the south to pristine beaches in the west. The municipality is located approximately 100 kilometres north east of Winnipeg, and can be accessed from the south by Provincial Trunk Highway(PTH) 59, PTH 12, or from the east by Provincial Road 317. The municipality is comprised of four wards (see map below) and is situated on the southwest basin of Lake Winnipeg, the largest lake in Manitoba. Alexander has some of the world's greatest beaches along Lake Winnipeg including Albert Beach and Hillside Beach. Great Falls, St. Georges and Stead are the municipality's largest communities with Lester Beach, Hillside Beach, Traverse Bay and Belair being other significant communities in the area.



**The municipality that  
operated as a Local  
Government District  
from 1945-1996, turns  
75 in 2020!**



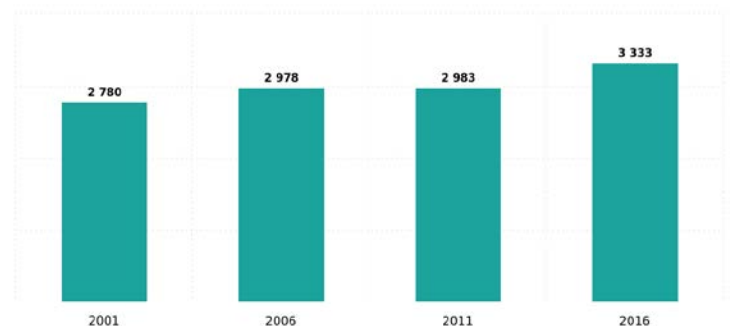
## The Rural Municipality of Alexander is a great place to live, work and start a business.

Alexander offers much to visitors and future businesses because of its rich resources, and varied industries. Economic centres include St. Georges, Stead and Great Falls along with neighboring communities of Powerview-Pine Falls and Lac du Bonnet. The municipality has a varied economic base with the added advantage of providing future businesses with an abundance of inexpensive and readily-available hydro power. Land is available for residential, commercial and industrial development. Manitoba Hydro is the most prominent employer with various hydro dams situated throughout the municipality. Agriculture plays a large economic role in Alexander and a thriving wild rice industry also exists. The community of Stead is known as the "sod capital" of Manitoba. Stead ships and distributes sod and peat moss to farmers as far south as Texas. Lake Winnipeg provides commercial fishing activity, while mining also occurs just to the north of the Bird River area at Bernic Lake.

During the summer months, the population swells as the rich sands of nearby Grand Beach, Victoria Beach, Albert and Hillside beaches beckon tourists, campers and cottagers to the area. Widely regarded as the province's best beaches, summer activities there include boating, water-skiing and some of the best pickerel fishing in Manitoba. Miles of hiking trail, cross country skiing and ski-doo trails also attract all manner of sport enthusiasts. Wildlife such as moose, deer, foxes, wolves, coyotes, bears and both snowy and grey owls are in abundance in the region's lush, green forests, while the species of birds and fish are too many to mention. One may also stop in to visit the regional library and new regional heritage centre while in St. Georges.

The Rural Municipality of Alexander has a population of 3,333 people. The population has grown at an average rate of 1.27% per year over the past 15 years. The population grew by 350 people, an average growth rate of 2.35% from 2011 to 2016. The provincial population growth rate was 5.8% in comparison. Alexander has a median age of 56 years old. 59.73% of the population are working-age, or between the ages of 15 to 64, compared to the provincial rate of 65.4%. Of the working age population, 57% are ages 50-64 and reaching retirement. 11.23% (19.1% provincial rate) make up the younger population that will join the labour force in two decades or less. 29.04% of the population are ages 65+ compared to the provincial rate of 15.6%.

Population



59.12% of the population in Alexander are married and the median household income is \$62,720 per year. The largest income bracket is \$60,000-\$79,000 with 17.28% of households earning incomes at this level. Of 1,600 households, 1,460 own their home, while 140 are renters. 80.81% of households are occupied by 1-2 people

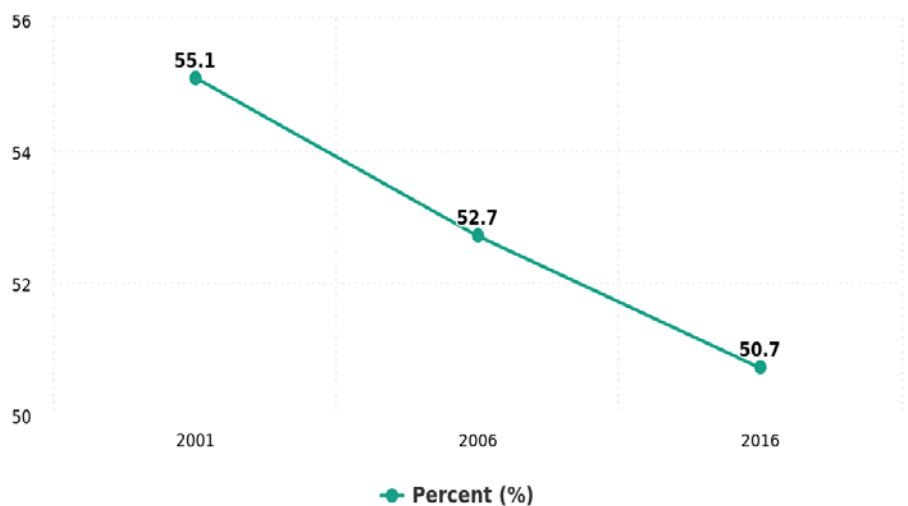
and 19.19% are occupied by 3 or more people. Average housing prices in 2016 were \$263,943 which are lower than the provincial average of \$297,444.

The majority of the municipality's population are Anglo-Saxon. 27% of the population are of Aboriginal descent with 12% declaring as First Nations and 15% declaring as Metis. 26% of the population are of French origin. 84.66% of people speak English only, while 15.34% speak both French and English. There are also 30 visible minorities within the Rural Municipality of Alexander.

Within the adult population, 38.59% of people attained some level of post-secondary education. 35.43% of people attained high school certification, and 25.98% of people attained no educational certification. The top field of post-secondary studies were engineering, health and business.

There are 1,485 people in the local labour force. The employment rate is 45.6% compared to the provincial rate of 61.7%. The unemployment rate is 10.1% compared to the provincial rate of 6.7%. Overall, the employment rate within the Rural Municipality of Alexander is declining at rate of 0.26% per year from 2001 to 2016. A decrease in employment rates means that less working age people are employed likely because job seekers not finding employment and more people are retiring before age 65.

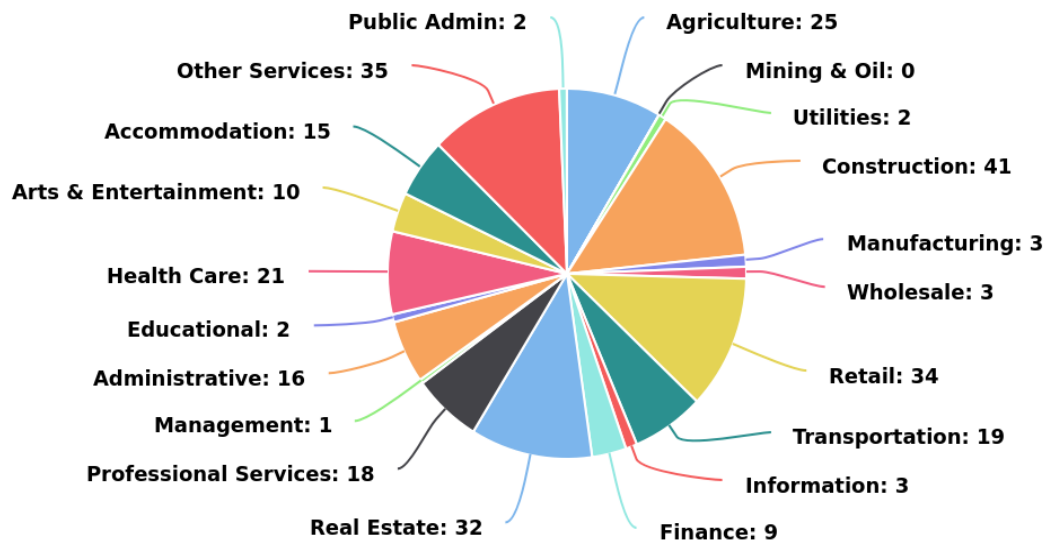
The participation rate, or the percentage of eligible work aged people that are currently employed, is 50.7%, as compared to the provincial average of 54.4%. The participation rate in Alexander declined at rate of 0.29% per year from 2001 to 2016. A decrease in participation rate means the proportion of the working population in Rural Municipality of Alexander is lower than in the past. A declining participation rate signals less people coming into the labour force or re-entering the job market after job disruptions.



Of the 1,485 people in the labour force, 1,230 are employees, 235 are self-employed and 20 do not have an applicable class. The occupation type that the largest percentage of the labour force is employed with is sales and service occupations, followed by trades, transport and equipment operators. The greatest type of industry that the labour force is employed with is health care, followed by construction, public administration and retail trade.



## Business Industries



According to the business count, 223 businesses exist within the Rural Municipality of Alexander. The largest industry by business count is construction, followed by other services, retail, real estate and agriculture. The majority (57%) of businesses in the Rural Municipality are employed by 1-4 people, followed by 20.74% of businesses employing 5-9 people. The third largest is the 10 to 19 employees industry, which accounts for 10.37% of businesses. 98.5% of businesses are considered to be small business, providing jobs to 1 to 99 employees. 1.5% make up the medium-sized businesses that employ 100 to 499 people.

Having a big portion of businesses with a small workforce generally means that the municipality is diversified, and that small and medium-sized enterprises have a huge influence on the municipality's economy.

**Sources:** Information was gathered from websites belonging to Statistics Canada, Townfolio, and the Rural Municipality of Alexander.

## SOCIAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY PROFILE ANALYSIS

Key conclusions and recommendations drawn from the local data are described in the following bullet points and will be used to set goals and corresponding initiatives in the **Local Economic Development Strategy**:

**Conclusion:** The local population is growing but at a slower rate than the provincial average. The population is aging in the municipality and employment rates are decreasing.

**Recommendation:** Focus efforts to increase the population, especially ages 0-64.

**Conclusion:** Local average housing prices are significantly lower than the provincial average.

**Recommendation:** Promote affordable housing in population attraction efforts.

**Conclusion:** The municipality is a highly desirable area for cottagers and campers.

**Recommendation:** Explore ways to develop and promote cottage and camping areas in the municipality. Seek related spin off business development opportunities such as construction, trades, hospitality, retail, etc.

**Conclusion:** Many people are choosing the municipality as a retirement destination, contributing to the aging population statistics.

**Recommendation:** Explore opportunities for additional/expanded businesses, services and attractions that can respond to the needs and interests of seniors.

**Conclusion:** Declining employment and participation rates in the municipality are a concern.

**Recommendation:** Focus efforts to increase youth and workforce populations and to increase the number of businesses and jobs available in the area. Promote and educate employers in the area to hire locally.

**Conclusion:** 57% of workforce aged people are between the ages of 50-64.

**Recommendation:** Anticipate many retirements within the coming years which should create job openings and business acquisition opportunities. Aid with business succession matching to prevent closures.

**Conclusion:** Various and extraordinary natural resources and outdoor recreation assets/attractions exist within and nearby the Rural Municipality including beaches, trails, provincial parks and wildlife.

**Recommendation:** Explore opportunities to further enhance outdoor recreational assets and experiences. Promote specific types of assets/experiences to visitors and residents through targeted marketing strategies. Seek business development and expansion in the tourism sector to encourage and respond to tourism growth.

**Conclusion:** Manitoba Hydro is a key economic driver in the region, employing many people and providing an abundance of inexpensive power.

**Recommendation:** Promote affordable, readily available power in business and population attraction efforts. Work with Manitoba Hydro to promote job opportunities in the area; encourage local hiring; and identify potential spin off business development options.

**Conclusion:** Agriculture plays a large economic role in the municipality.

**Recommendation:** Explore options for further agriculture related business development.

**Conclusion:** Mining plays a large economic role in the municipality, employing many residents at Tanco Mine.

**Recommendation:** Work with Tanco to promote job opportunities in the area; encourage local hiring; and identify potential spin off business development options.

**Conclusion:** Occupations and industries vary within the municipality creating economic diversity. Business strengths exist in construction, health care, retail, agriculture, trades and transport. Small businesses are predominant with 88% of businesses employing less than 20 people.

**Recommendation:** Focus business expansion, attraction and succession efforts on small companies in strength sectors. Also focus business development efforts in the tourism sector and on business types that complement the main economic drivers - hydroelectricity, mining and agriculture.

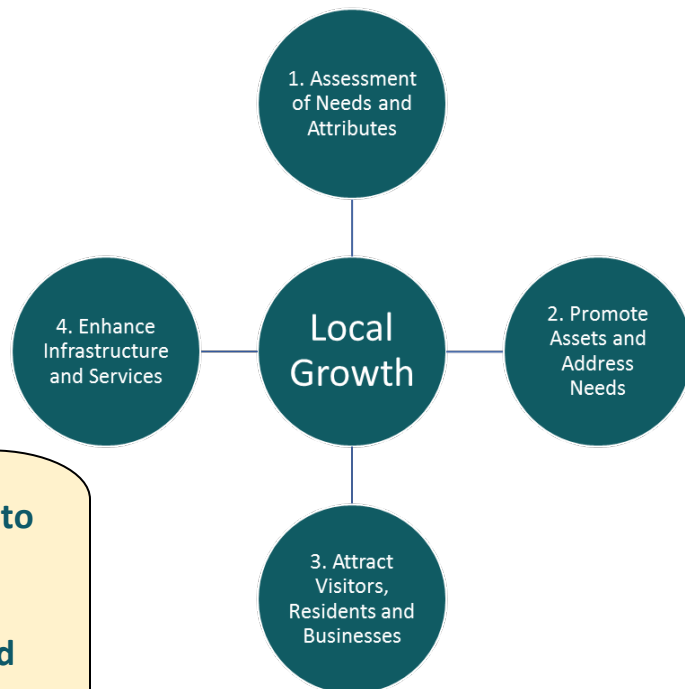
## RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ALEXANDER VISION

The following future vision statement exists within the **2019-2022 Rural Municipality of Alexander Strategic Plan** and will align with the local economic development plan:

*Our vision is to see the Rural Municipality of Alexander as a highly desired tourism destination. Its scenic beauty, unique attractions and stimulating history bring visitors who want to stay and businesses that want to locate here. This movement will create community infrastructure and services that will encourage rural diversification and population growth.*

## GROWTH PROCESS

The following model depicts the key phases of the local growth cycle that the Rural Municipality will lead. The process is circular because it is continual and the phases are all interconnected. Primarily, the phases will be followed in order, but work may be conducted in multiple phases at the same time as needed.



**The desire is for local growth to be purposeful (meets area needs), planned, environmentally friendly and sustainable over time.**

# RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ALEXANDER COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

During the strategic planning process for the Rural Municipality of Alexander, the following priority and corresponding strategies were determined for community economic development. The frameworks shaped the job description for the Economic Development Officer and was used as a guide for developing this more detailed **Local Economic Development Strategy**.

## 01

Actively plan and lead community economic development strategies that enhance growth, meet community needs, and ensure long term sustainability of the area.

### **Strategy 1.1**

Increase economic diversification and stability by attracting more businesses, creating more jobs, and encouraging more local spending. A **Local Economic Development Strategy** will be created to determine needs, priorities, projects and activities. An Economic Development Officer will be hired to provide required expertise and to implement the strategy.

### **Strategy 1.2**

Encourage tourism within the Rural Municipality of Alexander by attracting more visitors that will come more often and stay longer. A **Local Tourism Strategy** will be developed to include tourism destination development, new branding and marketing materials, and target market outreach strategies.

### **Strategy 1.3**

Ensure appropriate bylaws, policies and processes are in place that support and encourage business and residential development. The municipality is a strong advocate for positive land use and development that enhances and grows the local area.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Economic Development is the responsibility of the local government. The Rural Municipality of Alexander has determined core services and has hired an Economic Development Officer to implement them. Core economic development functions/services provided by the Rural Municipality of Alexander include:

### LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING

- ✓ Provide clear leadership and establish partnerships to address local economic development.
- ✓ Develop community economic development plans that address issues/opportunities, and coincide with related local, regional and provincial strategies.

### BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

- ✓ Identify and address local needs for services/products/ jobs through business expansion, retention and attraction efforts.
- ✓ Encourage, support, and actively market the establishment of new businesses/groups that enhance local social and economic development.

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

- ✓ Work with the Council and shareholders to identify and address challenges/opportunities related to growth, diversification and retaining of residents, businesses, and repeat visitors.
- ✓ Manage, coordinate, and partner with groups on community economic development projects.
- ✓ Assist council and community groups with local infrastructure and service enhancement projects that foster area growth.

### TOURISM

- ✓ Work with tourism partners on projects that increase attraction to the local area.
- ✓ Actively market local assets and opportunities to residents and visitors.

### LOCAL MARKETING

- ✓ Develop and maintain a variety of marketing strategies to promote local area assets, attractions, businesses, programs and services.
- ✓ Enhance two-way communication between the Rural Municipality and local residents/visitors.

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Community Economic Development is based on the following core principles that help to create success:

### COMPREHENSIVE

- ✓ The economic, social and environmental objectives and impacts are integrated together.
- ✓ Decision making is comprehensive and incorporates all areas within the municipality.

### COMMUNITY DRIVEN AND COLLABORATIVE

- ✓ Community members and sectors are invested and engaged in developing solutions to local issues and opportunities.
- ✓ Local resources and capacity are used with a belief that we are stronger when we work together.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS AND INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE AREA GROWTH

The Rural Municipality will focus efforts in strategic priority areas outlined in this section along with corresponding goals and initiatives to enhance area growth. This section describes the direction the Rural Municipality will take to have positive impact on area growth and the local economy. There are many ways to advance development in a local area, so the choice in direction was determined with many things in mind including:

- ✓ The desired growth process and future vision of the Rural Municipality of Alexander.
- ✓ The greater regional and provincial rural economic development goals.
- ✓ Local area composition, assets and strengths.
- ✓ Council and community input.

The strategic goals and initiatives within this plan address the opportunities that are best suited to the Rural Municipality of Alexander and allow for local growth to occur in a gradual, sustainable manner.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The priorities outline the factors that must exist in order for the local area and economy to grow in its desired manner. The priorities are the areas that work will be focused upon and they act as the eight pillars of the **Local Economic Development Strategy**. The Rural Municipality of Alexander believes that for local area growth to occur, they must focus efforts on eight key priorities depicted in the chart below.



The community economic development goals and initiatives outlined in the following section stem from the above priorities.

## STRATEGIC GOALS AND INITIATIVES

Goals are general statements of desired outcomes for each Priority. Initiatives are more specific statements that describe what will be done to positively impact the goals. Initiatives require detailed action plans.

Strategic Goals	Strategic Initiative
<b>Priority: Population Retention and Expansion</b>	
<p>Goal 1a: Increase population growth rate from 2.35% (2016) to 5% by 2026.</p> <p>Goal 1b: Increase property assessment growth, especially commercial/industrial from 5.78% to 10% by 2026.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Design a marketing campaign to attract cottage developers, summer residents and retirees to the area. Promote a relaxed, rural/lake way of life.</li> <li>1.2 Explore tax incentive options to increase residential and commercial development in a thoughtful, viable manner.</li> <li>1.3 Participate in the Rural Immigration Pilot Project.</li> <li>1.4 Retain the senior population by encouraging and supporting programs, services, and businesses that address senior needs.</li> <li>1.5 Identify and address housing needs in the area (i.e. seniors, renters, various prices, etc.).</li> <li>1.6 Identify and assess vacant lots in the municipality. Promote the good ones to prospective buyers/builders.</li> <li>1.7 Promote new infrastructure and services in the municipality during business and residential attraction efforts (i.e. road and water improvements).</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 2a: Increase the number of people in the local labor force from 1485 (2016) to 1600 by 2026.</p> <p>Goal 2b: Increase the employment rate from 45.6% (2016) to 55% by 2026.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Design a marketing campaign to attract working age people and families to the area. Promote assets and attractions such as affordable housing/power, job/ business acquisition opportunities, available land, water quality, improved internet, etc.</li> <li>2.2 Promote and educate employers in the area to hire locally.</li> <li>2.3 Work with Manitoba Hydro, Tanco and other large employers to</li> </ul>

	<p>promote job opportunities in the area and to identify potential spin off business development options.</p> <p>2.4 Promote various labor skills training opportunities to local residents and encourage post-secondary education (i.e. vocational, university, college, seminars, etc.).</p> <p>2.5 Host labor skill training in the region on topics of general and specific interest.</p>
<b>Priority: Business Development</b>	
<p>Goal 3: Increase the number of businesses in the municipality from 223 (2016) to 240 by 2026.</p>	<p>3.1 Conduct a public and business survey to determine products and services that are unavailable or not meeting local demand.</p> <p>3.2 Provide consulting and information resources to support business development, expansion and retention.</p> <p>3.3 Aid with business succession matching as business owners retire or move to prevent closures.</p> <p>3.4 Seek business development and expansion in the tourism sector to encourage and respond to tourism growth.</p> <p>3.5 Focus business expansion, attraction and succession efforts on small companies in strength sectors and on business types that complement the main economic drivers - hydroelectricity, mining and agriculture.</p> <p>3.6 Encourage business development of accommodation options for short term visitors such as overnight campsites.</p> <p>3.7 As cottage and camping areas grow, seek related spin off business development opportunities such as construction, trades, hospitality, retail, etc.</p> <p>3.8 Explore opportunities for additional/expanded businesses, services and attractions that can respond to the needs and interests of seniors.</p> <p>3.9 Work with PVPF to create a hub of businesses at corner of Hwy 11</p>



	<p>&amp; 304 that collectively become the distribution center to service the north (i.e. grocery store, etc.). Subdivide commercial property to further encourage development.</p> <p>3.10 Look into setting up an industrial park – Hwy 304 &amp; 11 or old mill site.</p> <p>3.11 Encourage spin off businesses related to the silica sand operation (i.e. tire repair, welders, etc.) if it proceeds.</p> <p>3.12 Fill commercial spaces available in Broadlands Mall site and nearby land.</p> <p>3.13 Seek value added wood production businesses if Forestry Management Agreement proceeds (i.e. saw mills, biomass fuel).</p>
<b>Priority: Tourism Development</b>	
Goal 4: Increase visitation to the Rural Municipality of Alexander by 5% per year.	<p>4.1 Explore opportunities to further enhance outdoor recreational assets and experiences available in the municipality.</p> <p>4.2 Promote assets/experiences/events to specific traveler types and residents through targeted marketing strategies (i.e. hikers, canoers, bird watchers, golfers, beach seekers, historians, etc.).</p> <p>4.3 Increase promotion of available winter tourism opportunities.</p> <p>4.4 Develop experiential tourism to tap into the Pimachiowin Aki, a World Heritage site located in the Boreal Forest.</p> <p>4.5 Continue to partner with St. Clements in developing the Beaches of 59 Tourism Strategy and website – utilize marketing materials and implement attraction strategies.</p> <p>4.6 Develop a Beaches to Falls Tourism Strategy in partnership with Lac du Bonnet, Pinawa and Whitemouth.</p> <p>4.7 Develop highway signage to promote key attractions/businesses.</p>

### Priority: Economic Stability

Goal 5: Increase local spending and money coming into the local area.

- 5.1 Promote local shopping and educate the public on why it is important for the economy.
- 5.2 Encourage businesses to shop for supplies/materials from other local businesses where possible.
- 5.3 Encourage e-commerce and train businesses to sell products/services online for a wider reach.
- 5.4 Promote and support existing local entrepreneurs/businesses through business listings, success stories, etc.

### Priority: Infrastructure and Services

Goal 6: Infrastructure and services provided by the Rural Municipality of Alexander will meet residential and commercial needs and enhance local growth.

- 6.1 Explore ways to develop and promote cottage areas, campgrounds and RV parks in the municipality.
- 6.2 Utilize Biz Pal and other online services that make business development and expansion processes easy/user friendly.
- 6.3 Complete feasibility study on improved broadband and connectivity for all areas. Address recommendations from the report to improve internet and cell service.
- 6.4 Provide financial support to upgrade the trail section and bridge on RRNTA near Cocoa Cola Falls.
- 6.5 Partner with the RRNTA to complete the Blue Water section of the Great Trail.
- 6.6 Update the zoning bylaw to ensure practices support business development and make it easy for the investor.
- 6.7 Update the Development Plan to include economic development considerations.
- 6.8 Advocate for highway upgrades in the area.

	6.9 Plan for RM of Alexander 75th anniversary in 2020.
<b>Priority: Sustainable Development</b>	
Goal 7: Ensure sustainability of the environment is a top consideration for economic development.	<p>7.1 Collaborate to address negative impacts that climate change is having on the health of our lakes.</p> <p>7.2 Find ways to reduce impacts of climate change through decisions and directions selected for community economic development. Considerations will be made concerning water management, air quality, waste reduction, and energy consumption.</p> <p>7.3 Develop an Environmental Health Sustainability Policy that includes the reduction of single use plastics.</p>
<b>Priority: Area Marketing and Public Communication</b>	
<p>Goal 8a: Improve public awareness of municipal news, programs and services.</p> <p>Goal 8b: Optimize the municipality's online presence to enhance to make finding information quick and easy to use.</p>	<p>8.1 Develop and distribute a quarterly newsletter to the municipality.</p> <p>8.2 Post updates regularly on Rural Municipality of Alexander social media platforms.</p> <p>8.3 Rebrand the Rural Municipality of Alexander to better define the local image and use branding materials to create a further reaching awareness of the municipality.</p> <p>8.4 Maintain a comprehensive business section on the municipal website for potential investors/business developers to easily find relevant community data.</p> <p>8.5 Maintain community profile on Townfolio – Canada's Online Community Profile Network for exposure to investors.</p> <p>8.6 Develop an asset inventory and promote assets on the municipal website and through various target market efforts.</p>

**Priority: Community Economic Development Leadership and Capacity**

Goal 9: Provide strong and clear leadership for community economic development.

- 9.1 Develop and oversee the local economic development plan.
- 9.2 Promote the available economic development services throughout the local area.

Goal 10: Increase public engagement with community economic development.

- 10.1 Conduct a public and business survey to gain specific input on needs related to local economic development such as infrastructure, housing, child care, products, services, types of businesses, opportunities to explore, challenges to address, etc.
- 10.2 Create and foster strong working relationships between agencies and residents that help enhance community economic development.