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Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba

PARTICIPANTS

ORGANIZATIONS

1.	Darrell Brown – Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce	4.	Martin Petrak – Precision ADM
2.	Marshall Ring – Manitoba Technology Accelerator	5.	Éric Courcelles – World Trade Centre
3.	Kathy Knight – Information and Technology Communications Association of Manitoba	6.	Donna Roberecki – Province of Manitoba

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

- Roundtable participants communicated the need for setting specific goals, benchmarks, and targets to measure success in economic development.
- Employers and businesses need a range that everyone can measure themselves against and which is meaningful in a global context.
- Must determine who is responsible for measuring and evaluating performance on agreed upon goals.
- Pan-Western versus regional approach discussion:
 - Goals should be pan-Western so Canada's smaller provincial economies can compete globally.
 - WD could take a leadership position in such a pan-Western strategy.
 - A pan-Western approach creates stronger outputs for companies.
 - Pan-Western goals can be more difficult for Indigenous entrepreneurs because populations, economies, and access to resources vary by province.
- Manitoba is getting attention/global investment because of its undervalued opportunities.
- Investors are looking at Winnipeg but see very low unemployment.
- Chronically under-employed segments of labour force must be targeted for training aggressively.

Key Performance Indicators that matter most to Manitoba

- Employment levels and the number of new jobs is important – global talent stream focuses on start-ups but SMEs should have more access to skilled labour.
- An important indicator for economic success is the average salary per person as well as wage growth.
- The number of highly qualified personnel should be more important than total employment levels for measuring success.

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA:
WESTERN CANADA GROWTH STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT

- Export growth – including imports and exports.
- Employment is the most important metric for Indigenous Peoples.
- Increasing the number of small business owners would result in an increase in employment

Strategy Discussion – Where to begin in Manitoba’s diverse economy?

- Supporting emerging technologies would benefit many areas and spread across all sectors.
- The focus should be broad across sectors.
- It is important to maintain the base economic activities, but pursue higher risk ventures at the same time.
- Most people have become happy with 2% growth and the province’s lack of peaks and valleys.
- Manitoba’s stable, diversified economy makes businesses feel more comfortable engaging in riskier investments.
- Promote clusters that enhance areas that regions are already good at. Doing so will attract the best people to the area. Use example of Montreal’s approach to building a world-class A.I. “Silicon Valley”.
- Small Indigenous businesses survive on procurement. Strengthen Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business and include Indigenous procurement requirements for contracting.

Inclusion Discussion

- Enhance broadband infrastructure
- Increase access to capital
- Streamline procurement,
- Focus on affordable housing.
- Venture capital almost non-existent for Indigenous businesses, particularly outside of urban areas.
- Lenders are too risk-adverse in Manitoba.

Learning to Set the Bar High

- Look globally for success stories.
- Mentorship, high-quality personnel, and a skilled labour force are all required.
- Winnipeg has a closed-system that is tough for entrepreneurs to break into.
- Entrepreneurs would greatly benefit from access to typically closed networks.