Interview Guide
Business Walk - November 2026

Project Background

The District of Mackenzie has developed a roadmap for creating a diverse, vibrant local economy. The Community Economic Development Strategy outlines actions and strategies towards building an environmentally and financially sustainable local economy centred on diversity and inclusion.

A key part of moving the strategy forward is ongoing community engagement; hearing from local businesses is an important part of this. We'd like to understand what's working well and what could be improved for current and potential businesses in Mackenzie.

Interview Steps

1. Before asking business owners questions, please give them a brief introduction to the Community Economic Development Plan project and how these business walks fit into it. See Project Background above.
2. Discuss the following questions with business owners. Please use them as a guide and capture any additional responses in the space provided. Use one set of Interview Guide sheets per conversation and return them to Rachelle Richman (see contact info below) when completed.
3. Please try to keep your conversations to 15 minutes so we can reach as many businesses as possible.

Business Name _____

Name of Person Interviewed _____

1. **How has business been in the last two years? Place a checkmark in the appropriate box for each timeframe.**

	Slow/Poor	Fair/Steady	Good/Increasing
Current			
Future Expectations			

Comments:

_____

2. **How many employees do you have?**

Full Time _____ Part Time _____ Contract/Temporary _____ Seasonal _____

3. **How many years have you been in business here in Mackenzie?** _____

4. **What do you like about doing business in Mackenzie?**
   Check all that apply:
   - ☐ I was raised here/chose to live here
   - ☐ The clientele/people
   - ☐ The Mackenzie lifestyle, including recreational activities
   - ☐ I saw a market opening/niche
   - ☐ Community size and spirit
   - ☐ Other local businesses
   - ☐ Cost of doing business
   - ☐ Cost of real estate
   - ☐ Other:

_____

_____

5. **Approximately what percentage of your purchases are made locally?** _____

6. **Are there products or services you currently source outside Mackenzie that could potentially be supplied locally?**

_____

_____

7. **If we were to recruit a new business to town, what type of business would benefit your operations?**

_____

_____

8. **What can be done to help your business thrive?**

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Better communication and incentives to new business (e.g., welcome package)
- ☐ Reduced red tape (costs, development, and building permits)
- ☐ Beautification/downtown core improvements
- ☐ Increased advertising, marketing, and signage
- ☐ Assistance recruiting/retaining employees
- ☐ Better communication between local government and businesses
- ☐ Business-to-Business support (e.g., a Business Improvement Area)
- ☐ Other:

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9. **What do you think are the main challenges facing businesses in Mackenzie today?**

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Cost of doing business (e.g., taxes, business permits)
- ☐ Consumer leakage to Prince George
- ☐ Consumer leakage to online retailers
- ☐ Lack of qualified labour
- ☐ Competition
- ☐ Limits to advertising/exposure
- ☐ Vacant lots/outdated downtown core
- ☐ Other:

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10. **Do you have any ideas for how to address these challenges and/or support local economic development in Mackenzie?**

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11. **Are you interested in being a part of the implementation of these or any other actions?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. **Do you plan to retire or sell your business in the next 5 years?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If **YES**, do you have a succession plan in place? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If **NO**, Are you aware of the of Community Futures' *Small Business Resource Centre**?*** ☐ Yes ☐ No

    a) Would you be interested in a follow-up conversation with Community Futures staff regarding their succession planning services? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. **Do you plan to grow or expand your business in the next year**? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If **YES**, do you have a growth plan in place? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If **NO**, Are you aware of the of Community Futures' *Small Business Resource Centre?* ☐ Yes ☐ No

    Would you be interested in a follow-up conversation with Community Futures staff regarding their business growth services? ☐ Yes ☐ No

14. **Are you planning to make any capital investments (equipment, technology, building improvements) within the next 5 years? If not, what is preventing you?**

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15. **On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you about doing business in Mackenzie over the next five years?**

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16. **What would increase your confidence to invest or expand locally?**

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17. **Are you aware of the services that WorkBC can provide to you as an employer?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If **NO**, would you be interested in completing a more in-depth follow-up interview with WorkBC regarding their services? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. **Have you considered hiring a person with a disability?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If **NO**, would you be interested in hearing more about Work BC's services for businesses that hire persons with disabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. **Are you interested in attending or having your staff attend professional development training to improve your business services?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If **YES**, would you be interested in completing a follow-up interview with CNC Staff regarding current and future courses that could benefit your business? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. **Are there specific types of courses, workshops, or training that would benefit your operations?**

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21. **Are you a member of the Mackenzie Chamber of Commerce?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If **YES**, would you be interested in completing a follow-up interview with Chamber Staff to discuss your experience as a member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b) If **NO**, would you like to be contacted by Chamber Staff to provide further information regarding the services offered by the Chamber or discuss becoming a member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. **Are you aware of the Business Façade Improvement Program?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If **NO**, would you be interested in a follow-up conversation with District staff regarding this program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b) Do you have any suggestions for improving the program?

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23. **Are you aware of the Revitalization Tax Exemption Program?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If **NO**, would you be interested in a follow-up conversation with District staff regarding this program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

24. **Are you aware of the new Shop Local program, Explore More, Support Local, that launched last November 2025?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

25. **How would you prefer to receive information about grants, programs, and business opportunities?**

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce Communications
- ☐ Business Network Meetings/In-person Events
- ☐ Other

(please specify) _____

26. **If the District could accomplish only one thing in the next two years to improve the business environment, what should it be?**

_____

_____

27. **How would you rate your overall experience with this year's Business Walk?**

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor

28. **Do you feel participating in the Business Walk is a valuable use of your time?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ No

29. **What did you like most about the Business Walk?**

_____

_____

_____

30. **Do you have any suggestions for improving future Business Walks?**

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_____

_____

Interviewer Name: _____

Please return your filled out survey sheets to:
Rachelle Richman, Economic Development Coordinator
District of Mackenzie
250-997-3221 | Ext. 2003
rrichman@districtofmackenzie.ca

Thank You!