



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Economic Diversification Strategy for the Township of Ear Falls

Issued by: Chukuni Communities Development Corporation (CCDC)

RFP Issue Date: February 25, 2026

RFP Closing Date: March 18, 2026 at 4:00 PM CST

Project Start: April 2026

Project Completion: November 2026

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1. PROCUREMENT OVERVIEW

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	February 25, 2026
Deadline for Proponent Questions	March 6, 2026 (4:00 PM CST)
Final Addendum Issued	March 11, 2026
RFP Closing Date	March 18, 2026 (4:00 PM CST)
Evaluation Period	March 19–27, 2026
Proponent Interviews (if required)	March 24–26, 2026
Selection of Preferred Proponent	March 31, 2026
Contract Award	April 3, 2026
Project Start Date	April 6, 2026
Project Completion Date	November 30, 2026

2. INTRODUCTION

The Chukuni Communities Development Corporation (CCDC), in partnership with the Township of Ear Falls, is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to develop a comprehensive **Economic Diversification Strategy** for Ear Falls. This project responds to the indefinite closure of Interfor in October 2025, which resulted in significant job losses and economic vulnerability.

The strategy will provide the data, insights, and action plans required to guide future growth, reduce reliance on a single industry, and build long-term economic resilience.

3. ABOUT CCDC

CCDC is a Community Futures organization funded by FedNor. Our mandate includes:

- small business development
- access to capital
- strategic community planning
- tourism promotion
- facilitation of local initiatives

CCDC will serve as the project manager and sole funding recipient.

4. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Ear Falls has historically relied on a single major employer. The closure of Interfor has created an urgent need to diversify the local economy, support workforce stability, and identify new opportunities for growth.

This strategy will provide a roadmap for resilience, investment attraction, and long-term sustainability.

5. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Economic Diversification Strategy will:

- Identify existing and emerging economic sectors
 - Assess workforce skills, infrastructure, and market trends
 - Develop actionable short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations
 - Strengthen community resilience and reduce economic vulnerability
 - Support workforce development and talent attraction
 - Provide a communications framework
 - Establish measurable performance indicators
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6. SCOPE OF WORK

6.1 Research & Analysis

- Economic and demographic data collection
- Workforce and skills assessment
- Market and sector analysis
- Infrastructure and community asset review

6.2 Community & Stakeholder Engagement

- Engagement plan
- Workshops, interviews, surveys
- Engagement of Indigenous partners, youth, equity-deserving groups

6.3 Strategy Development

- Vision, goals, guiding principles
- Sector-specific opportunities
- Workforce development recommendations
- Communications strategy
- Implementation roadmap

6.4 Final Deliverables

- Draft Strategy
 - Community validation sessions
 - Final Strategy
 - Executive summary
 - Presentation to Council and partners
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7. PROJECT TIMELINE

Q2 2026 (April–May)

Project initiation, procurement of consultants, and stakeholder engagement launch. During this early phase, residents, Indigenous partners, and local businesses will be invited to share input to ensure the strategy reflects community priorities.

Q2–Q3 2026 (May–July)

Data collection and analysis of local assets, workforce skills, and emerging sectors. Drafting of preliminary findings and identification of diversification opportunities.

Q3 2026 (August–September)

Development of detailed action plans, communication strategy, and measurable performance indicators, supported by Community workshops to validate recommendations.

Q4 2026 (October–November)

Finalization of the Economic Diversification Strategy, presentation to Council and partners, and dissemination of results to the broader community.

8. PROPONENT QUALIFICATIONS

Proponents must demonstrate:

- Experience in economic development and diversification
- Experience with northern, rural, and Indigenous communities
- Strong facilitation and engagement skills
- Ability to deliver evidence-based, actionable strategies

9. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must include:

1. Cover Letter
2. Company Profile
3. Methodology & Work Plan
4. Project Schedule
5. Budget
6. Team Bios
7. Relevant Experience
8. References
9. Value-Added Components

10. INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPONENTS

Submission Requirements

Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format by **March 18, 2026 at 4:00 PM CST**.

Proposal Format

Follow the structure outlined in Section 9.

Conditions

- Proposals valid for 60 days
- CCDC may reject any proposal
- All submissions become CCDC property

Confidentiality

All information provided must be treated as confidential.

Conflict of Interest

Any conflicts must be disclosed.

11. Q&A AND ADDENDUM PROTOCOL

Questions

Must be submitted by **March 6, 2026 at 4:00 PM CST**.

Responses

Will be issued via addendum by **March 11, 2026**.

Addenda

Proponents are responsible for reviewing all addenda.

12. EVALUATION CRITERIA & SCORING MATRIX

Evaluation Category	Weight
Understanding of Project & Methodology	30%
Relevant Experience & Qualifications	30%
Work Plan & Timelines	20%
Cost	15%
Value-Added Features	5%

13. SUBMISSION DETAILS

Contact:

Cathy Quesnel-Loessl, Manager
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Email: cathy.quesnel@chukuni.com
807-727-3275
*PDF Format Only

14. TERMS & CONDITIONS

- CCDC is not obligated to accept any proposal
 - Late submissions will not be accepted
 - CCDC may cancel or reissue the RFP
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15. PROJECT PARTNERS

The Township of Ear Falls will provide staff support, and data