



Update from the President & CEO, February 2, 2026

As we move into a busy and important period for BCEDA, I wanted to take a moment to update you on several key initiatives underway and share what lies ahead for our organization and our members.

First, I want to acknowledge that we are actively moving forward with leadership succession planning as I prepare to retire later this year. The Board's HR Committee is deeply engaged in finalizing the succession planning framework, refining the President & CEO role profile, and advancing the supporting materials needed to ensure we attract and hire the very best candidate to lead BCEDA into its next chapter. This work is being approached thoughtfully and deliberately, with a strong focus on continuity, stability, and long-term impact for our members and partners.

At the same time, we are investing in the future of BCEDA through the development of a new website. This platform will go well beyond a refreshed look. It is being designed to deliver new tools, resources, and insights related to economic development in British Columbia, while clearly articulating the value of BCEDA membership and partnership across our programs and initiatives.

You will also notice a small shift in our communications schedule. We have made the decision to postpone the launch of our State of the Industry newsletter and survey in order to align with the upcoming Canadian-wide State of the Industry survey being launched by EDAC later this month. This decision also allows us to support our former BCEDA Economic Developer, John Perrott, in his new role as Executive Director of EDAC. By aligning our efforts, the insights gathered will help inform EDAC's national strategic planning work while ensuring BCEDA members' perspectives are reflected at a broader level. We will report on findings specific to BC, at the BC Economic Summit in May.

BCEDA is actively working with the Ministry of Jobs and Economic Growth on several priority files, including contributing expertise to the Province's Industrial Land Strategy, engaging directly with multiple ministry departments to advance awareness of BCEDA's programs and on-the-ground work, and playing a facilitative role in supporting investment opportunities seeking to locate or expand in British Columbia.

Our work across the province continues to grow. In partnership with the Northern Development Initiative Trust, we have been supporting the development of Regional Economic Development Network through the EDN-NDT initiative. Quarterly coffee chats happened throughout 2026 bringing together Economic Developers from the entire NDIT region. We are actively working on the creating of regional networks starting in the Northeast and Northwest region. Just this past week, BCEDA presented to each of the NDIT Regional Advisory Committees, reinforcing the importance of economic development capacity, strong practitioner support, meaningful partnerships, and ongoing collaboration with First Nation communities.

Finally, I want to encourage you to mark your calendars for the [BC Economic Summit](#) this May in Penticton. This year's Summit is designed to bring together economic developers, Chiefs and Council, Mayors and councillors, Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures organizations, and key

partners from across British Columbia. We encourage communities to register their full leadership teams where possible and to consider contributing auction items for our upcoming online auction, which will launch ahead of the Summit and eliminate the need to transport items to the event. We also encourage BCEDA members to attend a special MyBCEDA event on the morning of May 14th where you can help shape the future BCEDA.

Each year at the BC Economic Summit, our [annual auction](#) supports more than a great cause — it directly funds BCEDA's work to strengthen economic resilience across British Columbia. Proceeds support economic disaster recovery efforts in communities impacted by wildfires, floods, and other emergencies, as well as professional development and training for Economic Development Officers working in local governments and First Nation communities. Together, this work helps communities respond to crisis, build local capacity, and strengthen their economies before and after disaster strikes. We invite businesses, organizations, and individuals to donate an auction item and help invest in the people and programs that drive BC's economic resilience. The plan is to host this auction online starting prior to the Summit so we ask that you submit this soon by completing the [form on the Auction item](#) you are planning to provide. Typical auction items include Experiences, Getaways, Gift baskets, Local products, Consulting and other Services, Training packages, Artwork, and more!

We are also excited to announce, through a partnership with CANDO, that we will be able to provide up to five scholarships for First Nation communities to attend the BC Economic Summit. First Nations will be eligible for accommodations, event registration, and travel support to a maximum of \$500 each. Space is limited for this, so we encourage First Nation communities to apply soon. CANDO is offering this only to First Nation communities that are BCEDA members. We also hope to have additional BCEDA Scholarships with funding from ISC, but will not be able to confirm until March of 2026. For both the CANDO scholarship and the BCEDA scholarship (subject to funding from ISC), applicants are requested to complete the form that can be found [here](#).

Thank you for your continued support of BCEDA. I look forward to connecting with many of you in the months ahead as we continue this important work together.

Sincerely,



Dale Wheeldon
President and CEO
British Columbia Economic Development Association